The Market at the End of History: Literary Structuralism and Canadian Infrastructural Aesthetics

By

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Abstract

Two well-worn ideas were resurrected in the months leading up the 2019 federal election: the first was the resurgence of what's been called "Western alienation." The second was imagined as a means by which such alienation and regional division would be both literally and metaphorically fixed—what Andrew Scheer called "a national energy corridor." Scheer identified Canada's national purpose with the exploitation of resources the corridor would make possible: "Often we say that the world needs more Canadian energy; I believe that's true, but I believe *Canada* needs more Canadian energy, and we will work to make sure that is a reality."[1] My dissertation examines the origins and trajectories of both ideas, looking first at the historical and material roots of Western alienation as it pertains to both resource development and to the alienation of—the transportation and selling off of—resources outside of the national space. I analyze Western organic intellectual production to foreground how the form of value characteristic of Canada's extractive staples economy structures political claims and infrastructure alike.

In Part One, I look at the work of the so-called Calgary School of political science, the academic-/activist-/think-tank-ideologues who engineered the rise of both the Reform Party and of Stephen Harper, and who have helped to steer the way Canadian politics have been understood and performed for the last several decades. I show how these Western intellectuals draw on Canadian literary conventions, naturalist aesthetics, and structuralist narratology to disavow the nation state and maintain the objective normativity of settler culture, assimilating Canada's particular history of settler colonialism within a universal neoliberal end of history. I trace a particularly Western version of settler colonial historiography that enables the Calgary

[1] Scheer, speaking in Edmonton June 4, 2019. https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/watch-canadian-energy-independence-a-key-goal-says-andrew-scheer

thinkers to construct a universalizing common sense. I then document how this historiography—based on extremely-literal and idealist understandings of private property as fundamentally alienable—is used to posit a neoliberal market ecology, justifying, among many other things, arguments to privatize First Nations' reserve lands as well as the extractivist premises underlying the corridor concept.

In Part Two, I look at the discourse of Canadian resource development from the 1970s to the present, tracing the energy corridor concept as a periodizing scheme. Originally proposed by eccentric technocrat Richard Rohmer, the early corridor plan is a pristine example of what Maurice Charland calls "technological nationalism," or a state-led project to build the nation technologically and unite its regions and peoples. I argue that Rohmer's technological nationalism aims to produce and reproduce subjects in the image of the social and productive relations belonging to the industrialized nation-state. However, I employ a materialist methodology to show that the West's inability to alienate its resources springs from Canada's material reality as a mediation economy. Thus the logic behind Rohmer's plan requires national subjects to take the form, not of the labour/capital relation of industrial production, but of technocratically-managed human capital. Consequently, the corridor—like all the current fantasies of "nation-building" pipelines—must be rearticulated in the present as a figure of what Timothy Mitchell calls "carbon democracy." And, indeed, in the past several years the corridor plan has been dusted off and re-presented again and again: by CIRANO, a think tank associated with the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy; it's been endorsed by the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce; picked up as a cause by many industry associations; and, most notably, Scheer made the corridor plan a significant part of the Conservatives' 2019 election platform.

By periodizing the corridor, I show how the subject interpellated by technological nationalism becomes the carbon-democratic citizen, whose belonging consists of mobility and access to consumer goods. Like the literary-structuralist figures deployed by the Calgary School, the corridor idea acts as an infrastructural frame to position subjects according to their relation to natural resources. As Scheer himself says, “No concept better illustrates […] how provinces can and should work together than a national energy corridor.”

Both the work of the Calgary School and the political-economic functions of technological-nationalist state projects effect the transition to carbon democracy, concluding in the fantasy of a “market ecology” that fulfills the neoliberal idealist premises of overcoming material production and of governments vanishing into governmentality. That is, the Calgary brand of historiography and the idea of the corridor each mediate literal and figural alienation, imaginarily uniting the nation by way of ecological markets and smooth flows of goods, consumers, and energy.

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Someone may question this on the ground that even in a society of saintly anarchists, where no conflicts about ultimate purposes can take place, political problems, for example constitutional or legislative issues, might still arise. But this objection rests on a mistake. Where ends are agreed, the only questions left are those of means, and these are not political but technical, that is to say, capable of being settled by experts or machines, like arguments between engineers or doctors. That is why those who put their faith in some immense, world-transforming phenomenon, like the final triumph of reason or the proletarian revolution, must believe that all political and moral problems can thereby be turned into technological ones. That is the meaning of Engels' famous phrase (paraphrasing Saint-Simon) about 'replacing the government of persons by the administration of things', and the Marxist prophecies about the withering away of the State and the beginning of the true history of humanity. This outlook is called Utopian by those for whom speculation about this condition of perfect social harmony is the play of idle fancy. Nevertheless, a visitor from Mars to any British – or American – university today might perhaps be forgiven if he sustained the impression that its members lived in something very like this innocent and idyllic state …

Isaiah Berlin

Northrop Frye wrote that "Canada with its empty spaces, its largely unknown lakes, rivers, islands…has had this particular problem of an obliterated environment throughout most of its history." I would like to restate this problematic by reversing the terms: The Canadian problem is an obliterated history throughout most of its environment.

Scott Watson

Methodological Prologue

I'd like to acknowledge that much of the work for this dissertation took place on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others.

My project investigates how Canada's political present is both a product of its literary and historiographic past as well as a product of the ongoing work of creating that past in the present. My approach is materialist, and my methodology is interdisciplinary, combining literary analysis with cultural and political theory to foreground the historical and political-economic structures that shape knowledges and enable a diverse group of genres and texts to develop specifically political registers. Part One is an intellectual history of particular contemporary Western-Canadian political identity. I show how this identity is produced by a settler-colonial historiography organic to the milieu of a resource economy in a nation that is both post-industrial and lacking the national identity characteristic of industrialized states. Part Two looks at the structural aesthetics of development discourse and the ideology of infrastructure projects, which began in an Eastern organic intellectualism, but has become a dominant mode of understanding the relation of the individual to the state in Canada.

As this ideology has historically shifted from its particular origins to take on a universalizing scope, it allows the critic to map the workings of governmental power. My method consists in excavating a materialist basis beneath the idealist claims asserted by the texts I analyze. My project aims to show how the *politics* of mediation, like those of liberal-democratic, official-multicultural recognition, are inclined to disavow and simultaneously enforce the depoliticizing power of *instruments* of mediation. Indeed, the shared focus on the

state form—which the Western thinkers I treat see as an antagonist to an originary Nature, and which the Eastern technocrats I examine see as a force for organizing production according to a naturalist aesthetics based in the history of staples extraction—posits the state as the instrument for overcoming its historical-political function of governance by bringing into being a post-historical governmentality of subjects and mobility of resources.

A provisional definition of materialist critique would highlight an attention to the conditions and relations that structure thought and action at a particular historical moment. In this dissertation, I trace two such material moments, the structural and the infrastructural. I approach the structural by attending to rhetoric, that is, to the work performed by texts' literal and figural functions, which renders the material conditions structuring the texts I examine immediately vivid. Allow me to give a brief example. After making his ill-fated remarks on child pornography, being fired as a commentator the CBC and as a strategist for the Wildrose Party, and retiring from the University of Calgary, Tom Flanagan has gone to work for the Fraser Institute and produced a book, *The Wealth of First Nations* (2019). Its cover neatly performs what the body of the text does, expressing what I'm calling the structuralist aesthetics of a naturalist market ecology:

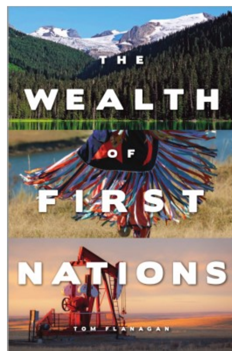

Fig. 1: *The Wealth of First Nations*

The cover is divided into three segments. The first segment asserts a naturalist synthesis of wealth, resources, and national territory. This synthetic but natural value *literally comes first*—in fact, before the word "First"; this is an image of the originary market-ecology. Second, we have "First." "First" here is cultural, a figure for traditional-looking Indigenous culture. Maybe it's a stock image; perhaps it's not; in any case, it signifies particularism, serving literally as regional or local colour or flavour. Third comes the universal: "Nations." My dissertation traces the movement from the liberal ideology of what Maurice Charland calls technological nationalism—the imperative to unite the nation through technology—into what Timothy Mitchell calls carbon democracy—or that political form of life or governmentality determined by access or proximity to energy resources. In this image, the representative for the nation is explicitly free of any technological-nationalist premise and is a perfect avatar for carbon democracy. The regional character of the pumpjack on a prairie landscape is countered by the unifying boldness of the word "Nation." The local flavour of this scene is nothing less than the material substrate that fuels the entire nation of Canada; and, indeed, as the word is plural—"Nations"—the universal form of the nation-state is the ultimate referent. This pumpjack forms the infrastructure of the Canadian nation, not in regard to connecting a polity through extraction, transportation, or circulation, and not in regard to unifying the words on the cover, the "First" with other "Nations," but through the form of the liberal individual: its figure is an upright, sovereign, phallic Robinson Crusoe embodied in literal private property.

I downloaded the PDF of this book from the Fraser Institute's website, but when I tried to copy the cover image to show it at my thesis defence, the structural and infrastructural make-up of the text came through. I clicked on the tripartite cover image, pressed "save image", and *this image* is what was saved:

Fig. 2: Material Substrate: The Figure Contained Within the Image

I clicked on other places in the PDF image, extracting these images:

WEALTH

and,

Fig. 3: The Other Embedded Images

In its entirety, the cover is a figure, but its composite construction is *literally the same as its figural meaning*—and the middle, the mediating image, the Indigenous agency between "Nature" and "Nation," came out as a woman. The image of the pumpjack is cropped on the cover, too, but the woman loses her head, her place within nature as an agent, and simultaneously as a human, too.

Fig. 4: Literal and Figural Mediation

She is not a person, nor even a being in an environment; but, you see, she is a woman from waist to feet. I don't want to make too much of this cover because it's so transparent and superficial, but that's also the point. The woman's figural and literal reproductive function is clear; in fact, hyper-literally and no doubt unintentionally, the image shows her as a womb, funnelling (or perhaps amplifying) the wealth-of-Nature—through the colourful local culture of the skirt—into the extractive work of the "Nation." The cover's narrative is obviously accidental, even anecdotal, but a materialist approach understands that it is also structurally-inevitable that the mode of producing narratives—any narrative that would take up "wealth" and "nation" in Canada—would, if it presumed to do any representational work (and not just have a blank cover), reproduce the form of value in a resource economy.

Of course, it's unlikely that Tom Flanagan designed this cover; and whoever did (the photos and the design are uncredited) clearly didn't "overthink it." But this anonymous thrown-togetherness is precisely what allows the material and political unconscious structured by extractivism and the colonial mode of production to come through so powerfully. Thus the cover shows the object for a first moment of materialist critique: the literal structuring of thoughts, ideas, and actions. Even un-planned, haphazard work follows a structural logic that doesn't just

make assumptions, but literally and structurally *determines* what can articulated, what can be understood as valuable, what's natural, how things work, where things come from, what counts as national, and so on.

Flanagan's Fraser Institute text provides, literally *avant la lettre*, a blueprint for the structure of petrocultural and extractivist discourse, for what makes the form of value—the wealth of nations—patriarchal, white-supremacist, colonizing, violent, and exclusionary before any ideas or content, the words within the text, come into play. And to be clear the text itself does the exact same work, offering statistical interpretations of the true value that ought to redound to the Indigenous peoples in Canada, once such identities are translated into demographical values of official statistics. That is, the text performs the epistemic violence that Chris Andersen critiques regarding the administrative category of Métis, by which settler-colonial official projects use abstract statuses to integrate diverse populations into structuralist taxonomies.[2] And indeed, Flanagan and his colleagues perform this colonial function through the figures of Louis Riel and Red River, which I discuss in Part One of this dissertation.

On Flanagan's cover, the naturalism of the resource wealth is the idealist truth of the nation's productive value. This value is idealist as well, represented as the sovereign subject-of-and-as-private property, or, possessive individualism. All that's required to unite the two idealist figures is the material: the infrastructural instrument of mediation. Thus, in the middle, between the resources and the nation, is the body or bodies of the people who are always-already materially and literally affected by those idealist or discursive determinations. In this case the figure is explicitly that of an Indigenous woman, but really any other haphazard image would

[2] See Andersen, "'I'm Métis: What's your excuse?': On the Optics and Misrecognition of Métis in Canada," and *"Métis": Race, Recognition, and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood*. See also Joyce Green, "Don't Tell Us Who We Are (Not): Reflections on Métis Identity."

necessarily be a superimposition on the same extractivist, colonialist, patriarchal truth, as its "meaning" is its pre-decided wealth-of-nations premise.

And as I show in Part Two, the Canadian Energy Corridor idea is an explicit reaction to Canadian history as unplanned, random, and "haphazard" development—the development of value which refuses to conform to the shape of the nation. The Corridor presumes—as Richard Rohmer puts it—to "build a nation on top of the nation." He proposes this to overcome the problem of how value can be understood as extracted and created in transportation, in alienation outside of the national space, while still needing to somehow belong to the citizens and workers of the nation. But in Rohmer's 1970s proposal, these citizens and workers were "people." He explains that when he uses the word "development," "it means making the land ready for people and for the industries and services which support them. 'Development' does not mean simply opening of the land for industry and for extracting resources" (*The Green North* 3). Rohmer registers the beginning of the shift from liberal technological nationalism to neoliberal carbon democracy. The latter moment has emerged to resolve the problem that Deborah Cowen identifies: that "Political identity and the legal architectures of formal citizenship remain tied to national territory, yet the challenges that surround us are diagnostic of a different form of connective tissue that literally, materially, holds people together today." Once again, the literality of Flanagan's book cover shows the material infrastructure of this connective tissue, the biopolitical element—that is, what counts as people in the nation understood as an idealist structure.

Critiquing US infrastructure discourse in the context of the Standing Rock struggle against the Canadian Enbridge corporation's proposed pipeline projects ranging from Minnesota to North Dakota, Winona LaDuke argues,

> what we need is those skilled laborers to be put to work, pipelines for people. I'm saying take those pipes that are sitting there in northern Minnesota, and send them to Flint, Michigan. They need billions of dollars' worth of pipe infrastructure out there. We don't need any pipes in northern Minnesota. […] I want infrastructure, for people, not for fossil fuels, not for oil companies.[3]

In very different ways, Rohmer and LaDuke register the *people* missing from the image of infrastructure in Flanagan's book cover. The difference in how these people's absence is noticed helps to periodize infrastructural discourses. As LaDuke's oeuvre shows, infrastructural work is often literally women's work, and infrastructural violence disproportionately affects women's bodies.[4] The obvious absence of people on the cover helps us see how, in 2019, the pumpjack is the figure for human capital. It's alone, private. There's no one operating it, no labour being done. *There is* a human being integrated into the machinery; there is labour, just as there is and always has been value being produced in Canada. But from the pristine raw value of the storehouse of nature to the productive, upright carbon-democratic atomistic citizen, this work and human presence is contained as an intermediating step, separated from the productive machinery and contained in the figure of biopolitical mediation itself, the work of the woman's torso. And, as soon as the slightest pressure is applied, like a cursor's right click on "save as," this entire discourse deconstructs itself; the human being's place in the structure is the most precarious position of all.

But this is only the idealist, ahistorical side of the text. Approaching the material side—that of history and difference as meaningful requires more care, and more acknowledgement.

[3] https://www.democracynow.org/2016/8/23/native_activist_winona_laduke_pipeline_company

[4] See the many pieces collected in *The Winona LaDuke Reader* (2002).

I've lived in Edmonton for a long time, but I'm a WASP from Toronto, someone Barry Cooper would call a Laurentian. Yet I haven't actually lived in Southern Ontario since the turn of the century. I did my BA and MA in Quebec, again, in Laurentia, but I'm not a Quebecer. I've always been a critic and critical of where I've found myself living, but I've also tried—and continue to try—to learn the respectful responsibility to situate myself. Not least because as an insider and outsider I've *felt* the need to. But here's where the structuralism I follow comes into play. To Cooper, I'm a Laurentian even if my friends and family in Toronto and Montreal have a right to vocally engage their milieus that I don't quite have. That is, I'm structurally positioned as a *xenos* when it comes to certain a regional perspective, but I couldn't be more at home or welcome in the petrocultural *oikos*—the white-multicultural-liberal realm of the nation. As I discuss in Chapter 3, Tom Flanagan has no difficulty overcoming such structural divisions. He grew up in the US and arrived at the University of Calgary where he "discovered" Louis Riel and set to work applying his outsider's view to dismantling Riel's legacy and becoming an "award-winning expert" on Canadian-Indigenous affairs, a frequent Crown witness—responsible, he brags, for defeating several Métis land claims cases.

I therefore must acknowledge that the work of the Calgary School has helped me to more responsibly interrogate my own subject position. My father's parents were both from the prairies; my grandmother only late in her life found the courage to admit to her family that she was of Ukrainian descent. The abject racism that she'd experienced as a child and that had so utterly determined her life and her identity was so quickly forgotten in global Western whiteness that I only learned of it years after she died. Still, this knowledge by which I could claim some particularity has been in my mind ever since I moved out West.

I knew my grandmother. She lived in faraway Regina, but she wasn't some long-lost relative. Yet as I was writing this statement, situating myself methodologically, I realized that while I'd incorporated her story into my self-understanding, I didn't even know her maiden name. So there *is* something "long-lost": I obviously don't know "her story": I'm a white privileged petrocultural cosmopolitan citizen, but the particularity—the Ukrainian "heritage" that in neoliberal multiculturalism constitutes a significant proportion of my property as a possessive individual—is a structural formality, like the consumer choice of an Ancestry DNA kit, or like the obscure heirloom waiting to be translated into history and value on *Antiques Roadshow*. That is, my story was serving to governmentalize me into the structure that Cooper's inside/outside structuralism and Flanagan's racialist science already functions to coordinate everyone within.

When I say can "governmentalize myself" I'm referring to a figure for the sovereignty of the subject as carbon-democratic private property that in my dissertation I call the biopolitical subtext of form, or, "bioform." This governmentality is immediately obvious: just now I've reproduced white settler-colonialism and the patriarchal exploitation of women's work by naturalizing my mobility through the corridor-like reproductive figure of my grandmother, and I've done all this just in trying to responsibly situate myself to critique a group of white settler professors who have made a good living by helping to naturalize such exploitation.

But this is good. I'm coming closer to recognizing my position and my imbrication in what I've been critiquing for these past few years. Because as Jenny Reardon and Kim TallBear explain, "understanding genetics—as a storytelling practice—ends by enacting an old story: in the interest of promoting 'European' knowledge, moral claims to access indigenous lands and bodies get made" (234). Reardon and TallBear also point to the fragility of idealist structuralism, the specificities of governmentalizing via genetic meaning-making. They explain that in the

modern colonial anthropological science which relies on genetic samples to reproduce its knowledge/power of social relations, "it is the indigene who potentially takes away, [who] can deny his DNA, a resource without which [...] European people will lose their past" (234). And indeed, it's this lost past that is the true referent for the end of history that Cooper celebrates (Chapter 1) and that Flanagan ruthlessly enacts (Chapter 4).

Cooper's work, Flanagan's, and that of the greater networks within which the Calgary School is embedded, aims at the continued elimination of women's work and presence, the elimination and alienation of Indigenous lands and agency, of labour as a category of experience, and of life itself as something more than carbon-democratic consumer behaviour. At the end of history, when all questions have been answered and everything understood in terms of the imperial-capitalist form of value, things organize according to a structure of radical alienation, formally related to what Patrick Wolfe—in the very specific context of genocidal colonial violence—calls the logic of elimination; and the Calgary academics work to structure both this specific elimination and the more general liquidation of value that I conclude is the function infrastructure plays at the end of history.

Such is one way to understand Alberta's current alienation—it's about the inability to liquidate and alienate resources. Neither Justin Trudeau nor Rachel Notley—nor anyone in Ottawa or Edmonton—questions Alberta's ownership of its resources. Rather, Alberta is unable to divest itself of its material reality. This is a philosophical and humanistic issue if there ever was one. The neoliberal concept of negative liberty reduces to the radical freedom, as Milton Friedman memorably puts it, "to starve to death." Friedman's figure is not just a snide retort to collectivists: it's an expression of the impulse eagerly assumed by conservatives who demand to have social safety nets dismantled, to develop and consume and exhaust the material world in the

ultimate affirmation of the liberal ideal. Premier Kenney's rage against Ottawa is a rage directed against the material world itself. Such idealist desire is the ascetic imperative to *starve to death of one's one accord*, to be the author and owner of one's own disappearance, to produce the end of materiality and transcend the physical world by turning it into abstract value. It is the ultimate manifestation of the idealist concept of *thymos*, that phenomenological talisman uniting Leo Strauss, Francis Fukuyama, and many of the thinkers I examine here.

Jason Kenney is a politician representing a resource economy; his stance toward resource exploitation is structurally determined and rigidly logical. In the case of the Western disaffection he partakes of and directs against, for example, the Liberal government that has spent billions purchasing the TransMountain pipeline and considerable political capital implementing the neoliberal market mechanism of the Carbon Tax, the logic is less-immediately apparent. And this brings me to the second materialist moment: the infrastructural moment. In Arthur C. Clarke's 1953 short story "The Nine Billion Names of God," a sect of Tibetan monks contracts IBM to help them finish their centuries-long task of calculating and transcribing all of the possible names of God. Two technicians travel to Tibet, run the machines, and discover that the monks believe that the universe will end once all that is possible to meaningfully say has been said, once all meaning is exhausted and known by human consciousness. The technicians worry that the monks will turn on them when their task winds up and the world continues as usual, so they duck out before the tabulations complete. But as they're descending from the mountains to their waiting airplane, they notice that "Overhead, without any fuss, the stars were going out."

Clarke's Orientalist fable configures the relation between technocracy and Alexandre Kojève's end of history. Kojève's work was not simply a wry conservative-Hegelian challenge to Marxism, a Marxism of the Right as he himself called it. Rather—we're learning now—it was

also the conclusion of a radically-atheistic modification of Buddhism, a global Suicide of the Self. Thus the demand for radical alienability I trace in this dissertation is a Kojèveian, end-of-history issue par excellence, and it's the ideology, the ideal image, of a world materially structured by its translation into circulation and value. I admit that I tend to see such political attitudes as examples of an "*après nous le déluge*" mentality, the attitude of a class that has exhausted itself and become self-conscious of its insurmountable internal contradictions. Such is, of course, the characterization Kojève famously provides in his Orientalist figure of post-historical Japanese snobbery. But to conclude here would simply be to affirm the idealist vogue, which Kojève started, of the market ecology based in individual competition. Worse, it would ignore the material conditions that produce the form of the individual and its structural inability to conceive of the past or the future as anything other than the present.

My thesis is lengthy, as was the course that led to its completion. In a way, as an investigation of post-historical technocracy, its object is the structure of encyclopaedic knowledge. Kojève concluded philosophy was finished; he had understood all of existence, and he went to work as a technocrat building the European Union and the first global trade deals. But he kept writing. He, like his progeny Cooper, Fukuyama, and so many unconscious others, divined the formula to derive the nine billion names, but no one has yet completed the total translation of experience into wisdom. This is no longer the philosopher's job, but the technocrat's. And while this job is a global project of translating everything into the equalizing value of alienable property, the Calgary School shows how in Canada the task manifests as ongoing colonization. In Part Two, I show how this suicidal translation project manifests infrastructurally as the vanishing of the state, the elimination of government and social agency in

the name of an idealist governmentality. Describing the Corridor plan, the Calgary School of Public Policy's Jennifer Winter says,

> What we'll see is established right-of-way where then companies can go and say 'Alright I'd like to build in this right of way'; and it's preapproved, so that will mean that the regulatory process is shorter, and we'll have a much better sense of the environmental impacts, as well as the economic benefits.

Of course, she's right—preapproving unproposed infrastructure projects will give a "better sense of environmental and economic impacts!" But here we also see how the true function of technocratic expertise is to translate environment into economy, to liquidate the world. I don't mean this sensationally: it's literal and figural, it's epistemic and ontological. It's not a value judgment; it's a recognition of the work being done in this nation, this region, this province, on these lands, the work of translating the structural form of the market ecology into the end of the world, and of building the infrastructure to make it happen.

Methodological debates over whether material infrastructures determine cultural structures are well-rehearsed. Nevertheless, in the texts and discourses I examine here, such a relation is remarkably literal and obvious. The work of Canadian liberal and neoliberal technocrats explicitly shows the narratives, assumptions, and material relations that structure agency, subjectivity, and the possibilities for thought and action. The disciplinary lenses of political economy and communications theory provide the means to see that Canada is and has always been a circulation- and extractivist-economy, and its governmental and infrastructural projects alike have arisen from the state's historical lack of an industrial or post-industrial "base." The perspectives of cultural studies, literary theory, and political philosophy allow for the diversity of objects treated in this dissertation—works of political philosophy,

historiography, policy proposals, fiction, and infrastructural projects—to be read as cultural texts, as essential parts of the greater epistemic work of settler-colonialism in particular, and of global capital in general.

Introduction: The Market at the End of History

In this dissertation I examine a group of thinkers, authors, political operatives, and public figures whose work is vaguely known to many but whose partisan, eccentric, or otherwise-specialized characters have so far dissuaded closer academic investigation. Part One treats members of the so-called "Calgary School" of political science and their think tank colleagues from the Fraser Institute, thinkers who identify themselves both with the region—the West—and simultaneously use this identification to claim a transcendent position within a market-ecological order that has superseded the nation. In Part Two, I look at the nationalistic infrastructural proposals of Richard Rohmer and the plans of those who, like Andrew Scheer, have taken up Rohmer's proposal for a Northern Energy Corridor in order to make overdetermined national, regional, and transnational claims, not at all unlike the claims of the Calgary intellectuals. I foreground the themes and premises which unite all the texts I examine to discern a narrative structuralism that enables the diverse and often self-contradictory claims and commitments to have such a strong purchase in our contemporary cultural and political environment beyond the relative obscurity of their authors.

The works of the Calgary School and the infrastructural proposals for a Northern Energy Corridor appear antithetical at first sight. In January 2020, Calgary School member Ted Morton and Jack Mintz, founder of the Calgary School of Public Policy, participated in the Value of Alberta Conference, a gathering which included former finance minister Joe Oliver and Conrad Black, and aimed at addressing a crisis: "We have a government in Ottawa imposing a blockade on Alberta. It is causing a national emergency in Canada, and there is an urgent need to think

about Alberta's place in Confederation."[5] Thus it seems like the self-styled Calgary School are regional-thus-post-national, if not vehemently anti-national. In contrast, Rohmer's statist proposal to employ an army of workers to develop a chain of settlements across Canada's boreal region and to exploit Canada's natural resources in an east-west direction to counter the encroachment of US-based Foreign Direct Investment appears to be the height of postwar liberal nationalist fantasy. And of course these appearances are true. But my overall thesis is that both the post-national claims of the Calgary School, which express the local, Western-Canadian, version of universalist neoliberal thought, and the liberal-statist development project, each assume the same—formally identical—resolution to liberalism's central historical problematic: mediating the proper relation of the citizen to the state.

That is, each approach assumes the same structural basis of political and economic life, that of a market ecology. What I discern as the market ecology is a figure which has roots in the early-modern state of nature as well as in the Romantic organicist racial-nationalist ideology of the imperialist period of world history. But it transcends its material origins by expressing a fundamental ontological truth. I will show how this figure is post-historical, in that it corresponds to the idealist end of history, theorized by Calgary School political philosopher Barry Cooper, and, upon which, of course, neoliberal dogma relies. This market ecology is also pre-historic, in that it is the retroactively-understood truth of human nature, the essence of the liberal bourgeois subject that C.B. Macpherson describes as possessive individualism. I argue that Calgary School political philosopher and media figure Tom Flanagan radicalizes this possessive individualist, this transhistorical *homo economicus*, and posits it as the true Indigenous subject of North America, in order to complete the work of settler-colonialism and commodity reification.

[5] The question proposed was, "Does Alberta have viable options and a credible case to go it alone if necessary?" The conference's website lists Mintz's accolades, one being that he "coined the phrase 'Albexit'." https://www.albertaproud.org/valueofalberta

As a clearly-figural concept, the market ecology is understood by what I call throughout this dissertation a naturalist aesthetic. When I use this term, I mean an aesthetic resemblance to nature, to the milieu, to the subject's experience, but also to the scientific order imputed to economic reason and to rational technological development. This naturalism names the aesthetic-ideological features common to the discourses I look at, features that—like the equivalences of commodity logic and multicultural recognition—allow for the exchange of figural and literal qualities, and for the exchange of values for value.

Flanagan and Cooper's work relies on these end-of-history, market-ecological premises as they attempt to refute and resolve the complex of issues that has been grouped under the term "Western Alienation." For both—and as I will show, for settler-colonial historiography and neoliberal dogma in general—the problem facing all liberal-democratic subjects is uneven access to the means of alienating property, of putting assets into motion and accumulating capital. And in Part Two, I discern how these historiographic premises, in which Nature is a market ecology inhabited by *homo economicus*, the subject endowed with the inalienable natural right to alienate, animates the Canadian infrastructural imaginary, whose primary purpose, I argue, is to alienate the material stuff of the nation—the source of value in a staples economy—in the name of realizing the ideal freedom of market-ecological Being.

A decade before Francis Fukuyama brought the thought of Alexandre Kojève into the academic mainstream, Cooper wrote his Kojèveian *The End of History: An Essay on Modern Hegelianism*, arguing that History and Liberalism were self-evidently completed, in that the Soviet Union and globalized American culture had rationalized the entirety of human experience in accordance with the shared universal value of technological efficiency. Kojève heralded the

triumph of the universal homogeneous state, which negates all particularity as irrational.[6] And Cooper has long styled himself as an iconoclast of particularities, smashing the myths of Canadian unity, not to mention gleefully playing the antagonist to Quebec and to Indigenous peoples. Throughout his career he has rebutted "Laurentian attitudes," which he identifies in Northrop Frye's figure of the "garrison mentality."

To be sure, Frye played an important role in articulating the consciousness of a "Canadian" urban, elite subject or class. And I argue that Cooper adopts Frye's structuralist and myth-critical methodology to develop a similar cultural consciousness for the West. But Frye's was a moment of legitimation crisis, in which the fading relevance of Canada's connection to the culture of the British Empire led to heightening anxieties of being subsumed within the American Empire. The moment that saw Canada's urgent project to prove itself as a liberal, modern, independent nation deserving of a cultural identity has long passed. Put another way, there's surely no present need to develop a canon of WestLit to assert a regional identity against the literary and cultural domination of the Laurentian Empire. This simple periodization reveals that it's only from the perspective of nationalist content that Frye's utility is anachronistic. And I argue that the structuralist method of which Frye partook provides the Calgary intellectuals with a vocabulary, a collection of figures and formal relations to legitimate both their identity—what counts as "Western" and what counts as imposition from outside—as well as to legitimate their own production as intellectual and technocratic expertise.

That is, particularity—for example the Laurentian identity Cooper reads in Canada's otherwise clearly assimilative motto *a mari usque ad mare*—is the form of competition upon the

[6] By "Kojève," here I mean the figure constructed by Allan Bloom, Cooper, Fukuyama, and many other conservative writers. There are many different interpretations of the enigmatic Kojève, and more being discovered all the time, as his voluminous works are slowly published and translated. While contemporary Anglophone Hegelians owe a debt to Bloom and Cooper for bringing Kojève to the English-speaking world, there are terms and conditions that ought to be examined before we repay it. See Chapter 1.

universal market-ecological reality. The nature of this form is the structure of us vs. them, what I will call *oikos* vs. *xenos*. The word, *oikos*, etymologically constellates a conceptual unity of economy, ecology, indigeneity, and naturalness, which I argue provides the crucial material for the rhetoric of settler-colonial historiography, neoliberal economics, and development discourse.[7] The *oikos*/*xenos* structure enables a liberal-democratic equality of identities that rhetorically indigenizes the white settler into the originary market-ecological *homo economicus*. Obviously, this process requires the rhetorical mediation of Indigenous peoples, and this is where the colonizing function and the expertise of the Calgary School comes into play. Exposing this colonizing function, in Chapter 1, I sketch the greater connections of the Calgary School to neoliberal conservative thought in Leo Strauss and Allan Bloom. I summarize Strauss and Bloom's influential reading Plato's *Republic*, which presents mythography as a means of indigenizing a polity; I introduce Bloom's presentation of Alexandre Kojève's work; and present the basic outlines of Cooper's Kojèveian end of history, which equates the Stalinist Gulag and the multinational enterprise within a paradigm of post-historical market Nature. In Chapter 2, I read Cooper's essay "Western Political Consciousness" as it narrates the antagonisms structured into Confederation in terms of the *oikos*/*xenos* form; and I show how this rewriting—which Cooper explicitly calls myth—leads to the rhetoric by which he and his cohorts conceptually assimilate Indigenous peoples and history into the multicultural end of history.

Indeed, this assimilation is the self-referential truth of the market ecology. And what counts for expertise in the technocratic mode of production I discern amounts to the ongoing

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[7] One of my central arguments is that the structuralist rhetoric of *oikos* vs. *xenos* is a crucial component of settler-colonial common sense, and a means to colonize Indigeneity itself, assimilating it to the white supremacist project of rationalizing human experience. I argue that each of the texts I look at rhetorically figures hegemonic liberal-democratic European subjectivity as the true indigenes, of both North America and of History in general. Thus I leave uncapitalized the terms "indigenize," "indigeneity," and "indigenous" when I am referring to the claims made by settler-colonial common sense. Of course, I capitalize the homonymic terms when they refer to the actual First Peoples of Turtle Island.

processes of colonization, the practices of assimilating, enclosing, and accumulating Indigenous history, resources, and lands, completing what "land-claims expert" Tom Flanagan calls "Civilization." Flanagan's expertise extends far beyond that of the academic think tank member. As I discuss in Chapter 3, Flanagan played a Karl Rove-type in many political campaigns; he was also a regular contributor to CBC's *Power and Politics*, until video surfaced of him suggesting that possessors of child pornography, *from a Hayekian point of view*, should not be sent to jail for their "taste in pictures." He was fired from CBC, retired from the University of Calgary, and he then wrote a book blaming then-Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence and Idle No More for framing him. He describes the research he's engaged in throughout his career as a process of making enemies, especially among Indigenous activists. In this chapter I analyze the rhetorical structuralism by which he ruthlessly sets out to eliminate "Aboriginal" as a sociological category, as a signifier with historical and political significance, and as a word altogether. I frame his "academic" work, as a "recolonization" project. I develop this term out of Michael Fabris's concept of "resubjection," or the process by which the settler state must continually modify the subjectivity it assigns Indigenous peoples as it pursues ongoing enclosure of Indigenous lands. By recolonization I mean to highlight the ongoing work of reproducing and expanding the claims to a liberal-democratic end of history. In Chapter 4, I build on Fabris's critique of Flanagan's *Beyond the Indian Act*, his plan, in coordination with economist Hernando de Soto and several First Nations, to privatize reserve lands in Canada. For Flanagan, the resolution to all social problems is better alienation; thus he works to give all the right to alienate their property.

I argue that Cooper and Flanagan play roles similar to those Frye and Marshall McLuhan played in the East, not in regard to literature (though certainly aesthetically), but through the

formal method of creating identity, as well as technocratically, through the technology of subject creation. My periodization puts Frye and McLuhan, along with Rohmer, in the age of what Maurice Charland calls "technological nationalism," or, the project to create and to unite the nation through technological infrastructure and national culture. Cooper and Flanagan belong to—indeed are the organic technocrats of—the neoliberal mode of cultural production, which I argue manifests in Canada as what Timothy Mitchell calls "carbon democracy," or political belonging in relation to the subjectivity of petrocultural consumer.

In Part Two, I shift my analysis of structuralist rhetoric towards infrastructure, following the post-historical, post-national pattern of *oikos*/*xenos* as it plays out in fantasies of post-industrial value. In Chapter 6, I discuss Andrew Scheer's Conservative plan to build a pre-approved right-of-way across the country, a nation-building initiative to finally achieve the elusive dream of Canadian unity through better alienation of the nation's energy resources. In Chapter 7, I go back to the source of the Corridor idea, Richard Rohmer's 1970 plan for the Mid-Canada Development Corridor. I read the plan as a liberal nationalist method to infrastructurally overcome the material reality of the nation—as a semi-peripheral staples economy—by realizing an idealist Canadian market ecology. Chapter 8 looks at the Calgary School of Public Policy's adaptation of Rohmer's plan and how it updates the plan for the post-national, neoliberal age of immaterial production and circulation.

I conclude with a discussion of John Van Nostrand's argument for the Corridor. In his passionate plea for rational development, I reveal the implicit market-ecological premise, the resolution of difference, of matter and history, into the totally-administered life of *homo economicus* in the post-historical biopolitical work camp.

Technological nationalism is the ideology of government; carbon democracy, that of governmentality. My thesis argues that the former understands itself as bringing about national unity, but it functions to manage the relations of production in the image of liberalism's market-ecological premises. Thus technological nationalism mediates the transition to carbon democracy. Both paradigms of subject formation and management—those of the liberal-statist-era and those produced in the era of post-national neoliberalism—are part of the same project to actualize the idealist figure of the homogeneous world state, the market ecology, in which the state or government, having mediated its own supersession into the state of governmentality, withers away or vanishes at the end of history.

I. The Calgary School: Western Canada's Organic Intellectuals

One object of this dissertation is to address the lack of critical material on the Western ideologues who have created and managed the generic and political narratives that have framed Canadian politics for the past three decades.[8] The Calgary School is comprised of Barry Cooper, Tom Flanagan, historian David Bercuson, political scientist Rainer Knopff, and politician Ted

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[8] Some very preliminary work has been done to trace the influence of the Calgary School in contemporary Canadian politics, most of it in Francophone political science, and most of it investigating the reciprocal developments of militarization in Canadian foreign policy rhetoric and practice and what the authors see as authoritarianism at home. See Manuel Dorion-Soulié, "Le Canada et le monde vus de l'Ouest : la politique étrangère de David Bercuson et Barry Cooper," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 46:3 (2013): 645–664; Ian McKay and Jamie Swift, *Warrior Nation. Rebranding Canada in an Age of Anxiety*, Toronto: Between the Lines, 2012; Christian Nadeau, *Contre Harper. Bref traité philosophique sur la révolution conservatrice*, Montréal : Boréal, 2010; Anne Boerger, « Rendre au Canada sa puissance. La politique étrangère et de défense canadienne vue de l'Ouest » in *Stephen Harper. De l'école de Calgary au parti conservateur*, dir. Frédéric Boily. Québec : Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2007; Frédéric Boily, « Le néoconservatisme au Canada : faut-il craindre l'École de Calgary » in *Stephen Harper. De l'école de Calgary au parti conservateur*, dir. Frédéric Boily. Québec : Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2007; Boily, « Un néoconservatisme à la canadienne ? Stephen Harper et l'école de Calgary ," in *Le conservatisme. Le Canada et le Québec en contexte*, Linda Cardinal et Jean-Michel Lacroix. Paris : Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2009, 35–49; Boily, « Quand les conservateurs réfléchissent à eux-mêmes ». *Politique et Sociétés* 29: 2010, 261–78.

Marci MacDonald's article on Flanagan, "The Man behind Stephen Harper" (*The Walrus*, October 2004), borders on caricature; yet this caricature represents less of a shortcoming in MacDonald's work than it does of the formal difficulty of working with Flanagan's own mode of writing, which relies heavily on (often self-) parodies of academic and political discourses.

Morton. My thesis is primarily concerned with Cooper and Flanagan, whose prolific and wide-ranging writings and political connections remain hidden in plain sight. Flanagan's specific work on proposals to change the Indian Act—to effectively privatize reserve lands in Canada—has been widely critiqued, especially by Indigenous scholars. I draw on the work of Michael Fabris, Thomas King, Glen Coulthard, and others in my investigation of Flanagan (Chapter 4). But my contribution to this body of research is to extend this work as well as work begun by Donald Gutstein and to contextualize Flanagan within a greater network of Canadian and transnational neoliberal knowledge production that uses the same rhetorical strategies in order to appropriate Indigeneity to settler-colonial culture.

Among the handful of published texts on the Calgary School as a whole, and the only one in English, is a 1998 policy paper by David Rovinsky for the Washington think tank, Center for Strategic and International Studies.[9] This history of Western-Canadian thought narrates the rise of the West as a political force, as well as of the Calgary School as its current theoretical organ, in explicit relation to oil. It posits the ideas of the Calgary School as the means and evidence of overcoming Canada's English vs. French dynamics in order to fit into a continental neoconservatism based on shared political-economic premises and resource flows. The report explains:

> Western Canada's embrace of classical liberalism, together with its increasing demographic weight within the country, has the potential to make Canadian political debate in the early 21st century much different, and probably less distinctively Canadian, than it was for the bulk of the 20th.
>
> [F]rom western Canada we see the most pervasive and enduring school of regional thought, a school whose approach has evolved and changed emphasis over the

[9] This remarkable history is available here: http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/pp0902.pdf .

> decades while remaining distinct from the other regions. The most important characteristics that have shaped western thought have been political alienation from the federal government, economic alienation from the Toronto-Montreal axis, and psychological alienation from the dualist thrust of central Canadian political discourse. While there have been several distinct periods of western commentary that will be chronicled below, our primary interest is the most recent period of western Canadian political thought, one that dates approximately to 1984. Not only has the latest school of writing applied traditional western political assumptions to the late 20th century, it puts forward general arguments that apply beyond western Canada and influence the political agenda of the entire country. (1)

It's compelling to consider the dating of this project to 1984; this is the year Cooper published his monumental *The End of History: An Essay on Modern Hegelianism*, a volume which applies Alexandre Kojève's thesis to global late-capitalism, making the case for continental integration as well as for a transnational corporate commercial empire policed by the United States. Where Fukuyama is frequently brushed off as part of the messianic fundamentalism of neoconservatism, Cooper presents a neoliberal end of history that suffers from fewer tainted associations, and which continues to act as an unstated premise in Canadian cultural production.[10] Without mentioning Cooper's essay, Rovinsky's paper presents Cooper's thesis: the West represents a body of ideas that transcends regionalism and will resolve the archaic particularist contradictions of Laurentian Canada in order to integrate the country into transnational globalization. Aesthetically, this West, like the North has done for the rest of Canada, lends an authentic ruggedness to the staid Eastern Canadian image, a cowboy

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[10] Interestingly, though, Cooper's text retains a Christian interpretive framework not only from Hegel's religious form, but from the Christian contents of Solzhenitsyn and Jacques Ellul.

confronting the effeminately-elitist establishment. These latter are no countrymen to the Calgarian cowboy who's biopolitically far closer to the Montana rancher.

Or as Tom Flanagan describes it, the West as a political identity originates in, like the expertise and enterprise that developed the oil industry, the United States:

> Western Canada is famous for its large number of central and east European immigrants; yet these newcomers, whatever their other contributions to western life, adopted rather than created the political culture. The creators of that culture were three rather different groups of English-speaking settlers: those from Ontario and the other original provinces, who brought with them the traditional Liberal-Conservative axis of Canadian politics; British immigrants familiar with socialism and trade-union politics; and American ranchers and farmers imbued with populism and Progressivism. This American influence is felt to some degree everywhere in the West but is particularly strong in Alberta, which has experienced three different waves of American immigration: frontier ranchers in the 1880s; dry-land farmers, especially Mormons, around the turn of the century; and petroleum-industry workers and executives in the last fifty years. ("Riel to Reform" 627)

The empirical truth of Flanagan's ethnography is one thing. But in a rhetorical move characteristic of the texts I will analyze in this dissertation, the empirical, or literal, fact enables a self-affirming circular argument:

> People who have grown up with the American separation-of-powers system often dislike the parliamentary system. They tend to be put off by rigid party discipline, block voting, and the polarization of all issues between government and opposition; they yearn for representative independence and nonpartisan support for major policies. Thus the legacy

> of American immigration created a political basis for movements critical of parliamentary government. (627-628)

Flanagan's claim boils down to this: the West has many people of US origin. People with the US view dislike the UK view. They tend to be put off by their reasons for disliking it. They desire the thing they like. Thus, since West has a US view, there's a basis for US view. In the strategy I identify in neoliberal rhetoric, the literal argument supplements its circularity with a figure, what Cooper, following Bloom and Strauss, calls a myth. And Flanagan next provides this myth:

> The connection, however, is even deeper. Americans coming to western Canada have tended to come from the western plains states where the populist and Progressive movements were strongest around the turn of the century. Populism is much more than a candidate wearing denim shirts to convince gullible voters he's a regular guy. Populism is a distinctive style of politics which holds that political supremacy ought to rest in the common people, whose interests and desires are fairly homogeneous; which craves direct links between people and government and is suspicious of intermediate institutions such as interest groups, political parties, and elected assemblies; and which tends to see the cause of misgovernment as rule by elites or special interests that have lost contact with the common people. Underlying all these characteristics is the myth of the popular will, and the belief that politics should consist of discovering that will and putting it into effect. (628)

For Flanagan, like for Cooper and the neoliberal rhetoric I examine, myth is not qualitatively different than literal fact. And the political consequence of such an epistemology is

that in order to compete in politics, one needs to cater foremost to myth.[11] Moreover, in this brand of political science, myth's priority is not something to be overcome through enlightenment; rather the work of enlightenment, or of what followers of Leo Strauss call "Classical Political Philosophy," is to recognize that myth is the ultimate existential truth.

II. Structuralism and Rhetoric: The Method of Taking the Literary Literally

This literal existential truth was referred to in 2016, when Canada's leading neoliberal voice Andrew Coyne wrote a piece in the *National Post* titled "Behold the literal-minded citizens who triumphed in rewriting our national anthem."[12] In it he bemoans the literal-mindedness of those who object to the line "All thy sons command," and he asserts the line's neutral meaning by likening the gendered pronoun to how "All hands on deck" does not imply that body parts other than hands are excluded from the call. Coyne provides an excellent example of a rhetoric that I argue unites the Calgary School to neoliberal knowledge production in general: *he's taking literality too literally*.

His argument presumes that there's a neutrality in figurative language because the latter does not mean what it literally signifies. Obviously, such a theory cannot accept that some metaphors or metonymies signify more than just one referent. And, most importantly, Coyne's "mansplaining" of the difference between literal and figural modes is not an argument for the richness and complexity of language (although I suspect Coyne believes it to be just that). By taking literalism literally, Coyne's argument can only imagine the literary language of "all thy sons" to have *two* meanings, the literal and the figural. It asserts a totally-settled dualistic

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[11] See Flanagan's patronizing and sexist advice to this effect in his "Re: "Canadian Political Science: Missing in Action?," by Sylvia Bashevkin," *Literary Review of Canada* December 2010. https://reviewcanada.ca/magazine/2010/12/letters/; and of course Cooper's *It's the Regime, Stupid!*

[12] *National Post* June 15, 2016.

meaning that those possessed of common sense can see, but which is bound to confuse those who overthink it.

Coyne is not a member of the Calgary School, despite being a major player in think tank knowledge production and the dissemination of neoliberal dogma; but he shares the same techniques of sophistry that collapse literality and figurative language into hegemonic common sense. The rhetorical method and philosophical theory reproduced by contemporary neoliberal knowledge production is identical to what has been called, sometimes-sensationally, Straussianism: thought deriving from the theory of “Classical Political Philosophy,” developed by Leo Strauss, and disseminated through the intellectual production of the University of Chicago and popularized by, among many others, Allan Bloom.

For his part, Tom Flanagan insists that the Calgary School are not followers of Leo Strauss. Contrary to claims on the left, he proclaims, Stephen Harper was never taught by Straussians. But, again, this protestation is too literal. Because, as Straussian Marc Henrie explains, Straussianism

> denotes the research methods, common concepts, theoretical presuppositions, central questions, and pedagogic style characteristic of the large number of conservatives who have been influenced by the thought and teaching of Leo Strauss. It serves as a common intellectual framework more generally among conservative activists, think tank professionals, and public intellectuals. (Henrie)

In other words, focusing on whether a particular conservative thinker is “literally” a “Straussian” is like focusing on which body parts are called to the deck. There is another referent, which is a method:

> Straussianism is defined by its method within the academic discipline of political theory. Straussians engage in a "close reading" of the "Great Books" of political thought; they strive to understand a thinker "as he understood himself"; they are unconcerned with questions about the historical context of, or historical influences on, a given author; they seek to be open to the possibility that in any given Great Book from the past, one may come across something that is *the truth*, simply.

Henrie is describing a labour theory, a means of producing and deriving value through what I will call the biopolitical subtext of form, or, the bioform. The author is the authority of the work, the one who fashions raw matter into a figure for the truth. And the reader, likewise, gets to that truth by working diligently to see the truth. The form of production and consumption itself, based as it is in the fundamental ownership of the text, and the fundamental alienability by which the owner can transmit the property to others, is a claim to fundamental ontology. Truth will always be self-referential truth, metafictional, the assertion that authority is authority, and that property is property. This conclusion, necessarily true if one accepts the fundamental alienability of property, reveals what I am calling the market-ecological Nature, which is presumed in each of the texts I analyze, and which is implicit referent to what will be reproduced in the discourse of Canadian infrastructure development.

As a means of intellectual production and social reproduction, this method provides a model for governmentality that can create a community of consumers through a universal form rather than through particularism, like a state or a region. Henrie continues:

> First, the method is powerful, and the effort of intellectual discipline that it requires cultivates a particularly focused kind of discursive intelligence: Straussians […] are often among the most penetrating readers of texts.

> Second […] the Straussian method may be reproduced with relative facility. It does not require field research, extensive contextual historical investigations, technical skills such as paleography, or the acquisition of multiple foreign languages. All that is necessary is a properly trained mind and a Great Book.

In other words, all that is necessary is that ideas are uniformly commoditized, alienable, and portable, that they carry with them the property relation of authorial ownership, and that the consumer is trained to recognize the naturalness of this possessive-individualist authority.

That is, the method produces the metafictional lesson of perfect self-referentiality, in which the literal and figural meaning of a text come together. That such great books lead to the "textbook" meaning of Hegel's end of history, where consciousness knows itself and form and content are united, is, I argue, the meaning of Allan Bloom and Barry Cooper's Straussian project of incorporating Hegel and Marx into the cannon of Great Books, through their translation and assimilation of Alexandre Kojève's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* (Chapter 1). Once literal and figural are reconciled in the form of the commodity, the literal textbook available to consumers and sellers; the great works of history are reconciled with the user's manual, the technocratic Wisdom of the end of history. The pedagogical pretensions of Straussian premises are clear enough to anyone familiar with Straussians.[13] But I will show that this focus on reproducing the fundamental textual form of the possessive individual is the key to understanding the fetish of representation that Flanagan's racist recolonization project aims at (Chapters 3 and 4). It is also what animates the fantasies of economic development imagined in

[13] See Strauss, Bloom, Thomas Pangle, or Stanley Rosen, among others. Lessons or ideas are always referred to as "teaching" always a gerund, never a noun. This grammatical formula renders property as vocation, which for Bloom and Strauss, is the "teaching" of the *Republic*. Also see Cooper on Xenophon's "paedia" in "Hunting and Political Philosophy: An Interpretation of the *Kynegetikos*."

the neoliberal version of nationalist infrastructural projects like the Northern Energy Corridor, especially as presented by the Calgary School of Public Policy (Chapter 8).

In both structure and infrastructure, then, what's reproduced is the form of authority-subjectivity and the form of private property. This form dictates the inalienable right of owners to alienate their property, and it retroactively mythologizes this form backward throughout history. The methodological premises shared among Straussian and neoliberal knowledge production rejects all historicism. Straussian political philosophy is concerned with "claims to rule" in terms of different transhistorical "regimes."[14] The concept of the regime allows liberals, conservatives, and other political standpoints to be dehistoricized. Choice of affiliation becomes a matter of different political attitudes and beliefs. That liberals and conservatives clearly belong to the shared set of historical values that we call liberal democracy is recognized as their metafictional truth. The historical reality is the market ecology of Nature. Liberals and conservatives are, like the Great Men in each Great Book, in perfect agreement over the ends they seek. They are quarrelling over the means to realize Nature.

At the end of history, left and right are contradictory forces. They may have emerged from the same contradiction, the historical forces that generated antagonism, but now they are simply formal antagonists. Like Bloom's use of Kojève, Cooper's *End of History* resolves the content of history into a structural relation, retaining the *oikos*/*xenos* as a relation, as narrative/structuralist Nature, rather than as the dialectical complexity of history. Once political actors have been understood as versions of the same fundamental transhistorical truth, then they must be judged on their virtues, their attitudes and behaviours. This is of course Flanagan's premise regarding the "reform" tradition in the West as an Americanism that's separate or

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[14] Such regimes are the possible best cities of *Republic*, those described in Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, Xenophon's *Heiro*, and other privileged texts of "Classical Political Philosophy." See Paskewich on "Leo Strauss's Modern Regime Cycle," and Cooper's *It's the Regime Stupid!*

distinct from what's commonly understood as the Canadian political tradition. Cooper's treatment of the Straussian concept of regime makes this even clearer: the main political argument in his 2009 *It's the Regime Stupid! A Report From the Cowboy West on Why Stephen Harper Matters* is that the Liberals under Jean Chretien were arrogant and corrupt, while Harper's conservatives are brave and honest. Canadians and Americans share the same fundamental values, but the Canadian regime doesn't have the virtue of honesty that the Americans have.[15]

In this method, history and historical conditions are conceptually contained as structural relations, and as myths, or, what I will show is the same thing, consumer choices. In Part Two I look at how such structural relations and myths are imagined to be reproduced in infrastructure. Maurice Charland has argued that myths of nation-building, like the CBC and the CPR are instances of "Technological Nationalism." For Charland, technology doesn't produce or distribute national identity, but rather reproduces capital. Cooper regularly uses the CBC and CPR to make a crude version of the technological nationalism argument, arguing that each simply imposes the elite Eastern or Laurentian view on the rest of Canada, a view Westerners adamantly reject.[16] But insisting on his dehistoricized Straussian position, he's able to ignore the fact that myths of national unity are figures for the literal unity that exists whether or not the citizens acknowledge this unity's relation to their meaning-making realities. The unity upon which capital moves through technological infrastructure is the market-ecological truth.

My method shows how the literal fact of the state is in contradiction with the figure of Western identity. Cooper, and as I will presently and briefly show Mary Janigan does, is using

[15] This argument is itself based in literary theory, as I'll discuss in Chapter 5, in David Bell's influential "The Loyalist Tradition in Canada."

[16] Just two examples are *It's the Regime Stupid* and "The Canadian 'Garrison Mentality' and Anti-Americanism at the CBC," a position paper on Canadian defence Cooper produced for the Fraser Institute.

the fact that Canadian identity is mythical and figurative to *prove* that Western identity is true and literal. This contradictory operation is effected by a particular brand of Western sophistry that takes products of literary production literally. The fact that Cooper returns again and again to Frye's literary criticism as though it were sociology, reveals how the literary is used to prove that the "us" of Central Canada is really a "them," that those who claim to be *oikos* are really *xenos* infringing on the Natural *oikos* of the market ecology.

Common to the works I investigate in Part One is the appropriation of Louis Riel as a figure for the originary inhabitant of the market ecology, who represents the mythic values of the West in its struggle against Eastern interference. I will now discuss one instance in which Riel is put to work in the historiographic/end of history premises underwriting settler-colonial historiography. Following Fabris, who shows that colonialism must continually remake the Indigenous subject position in order to further the process of enclosure, I argue that the colonial project, no matter how complete, must reproduce itself, and thus must continually recolonize its discourses. This continuous process of "completion" being the ideological or idealist manifestation of the material project of real subsumption is the aesthetic naturalism of the material, political-economic process. And as I show in Part Two, the ideology and the material, and their complex interrelations in reproduction, are then the animating force in development discourse.

III. The Rhetoric of Settler-Colonial Historiography: *Let the Eastern Bastards Freeze in the Dark*

I begin with an example of mainstream, recolonialist settler-historical common sense: Mary Janigan's 2012 *Let the Eastern Bastards Freeze in the Dark: The West Versus the Rest Since*

Confederation. My thesis is that the text exemplifies the kind of work and the product of the kind of work characteristic of neoliberal knowledge production. As Flanagan repeatedly makes explicit, the reception of such work, its success in what Hayek famously called the "marketplace of ideas," is the ultimate factor determining legitimacy or truth. In his review of Janigan's book, Daniel Beland points out how the text is explicitly a literary product, concerned with presenting characters as much as, or at the same time as, it is a history text. As such, it's a great example of the presumably highly-"academic" history and political science produced by the Calgary School. Beland helpfully describes the specific kind of work which produced the text:

> An experienced journalist who wrote for newspapers such as the *Global and Mail* and the *Toronto Star*, Janigan is now a PhD student in the department of history at York University, and this book is partially derived from research she conducted there as a Master's student. This information is essential to understand how this book is written. Although a trade book issued by a commercial publisher and endorsed by former Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed, *Let the Eastern Bastards Freeze in the Dark* is grounded in systematic archival research the author conducted in different locations across the country. (Beland)

That is, this is not an academic work addressed to a monkish coterie, but it is of the same standards. Of course, we should expect no less from a popular history text than that its producer is an expert disseminating ideas to the public. But the text is aimed at the wider audience; it is a marketable object of the esoteric realm. Again, this is completely unremarkable until we consider how the Calgary School's academic historiography follows the same approach. Janigan, Beland says,

> writes as clearly as the best journalists do but she also draws on solid historical evidence to illustrate the rich and multifaceted story she tells. This is not a social science book grounded in explicit theoretical assumptions but a well researched yet pleasant to read historical account that focuses primarily on vividly painted characters, from politicians to hard working (and sometimes distressed) settlers.

Characters are central to Janigan's book, the figure of Louis Riel in particular. Indeed, these characters and their frustrations show how resource imaginaries—and alienation—draw on literary conventions and critical traditions to disavow the nation state and maintain the objective neutral normativity of Euro-settler culture, appropriating colonialism within a neoliberal universal history.

> My claim seems to disagree with Thomas Axworthy's review, in which he says Janigan's description of "the West versus the Rest" also has implications for another region in Canada much in the news. In Canada's North, Yukon finally achieved devolution in 2003 (although not control over offshore resources), the Northwest Territories is about to do so, and this summer the federal government finally appointed a negotiator to discuss devolution with Nunavut. The North today, like the West in 1930, wants control over its land and resources. Janigan's book is a blueprint for how this last vestige of Canadian colonialism can be ended. (Axworthy)

Note it's her "description" that provides the "blueprint." Most noteworthy is the claim that the book can end the vestiges of colonialism. I argue that the text, especially in light of this review, exemplifies a historiography whose function is not ending colonialism but *colonizing decolonization*.

To be sure, the status of devolution and control of resources are indices of exploitation and unevenness. But, even this short statement reveals how racism and dispossession works in liberal-democratic settler common sense. The kind of subject to whom such power would be devolved, is, exactly like in Cooper and Flanagan, the subject with the right to own and thus alienate property. Here, "vestiges of colonialism" means the uneven application of the goal of homogenizing the territory and the world in the image of the liberal-democratic subject of private property. Really, such a claim means that "ending" colonialism is the completion of the colonial project.

As for the text itself, Janigan suggests that the history of what's called "Western Alienation" in this country is the history of a peculiar characteristic of resources—mostly oil resources—when seen from the form of property. When the Eastern provinces joined Confederation in 1867, they brought with them basic rights to the management and exploitation of their resources, which they owned as property. Some of this became the capital used when Canada purchased Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1870.[17] As the new territory was settled, its population had no claim to its resources because the territory had not brought any owned resources with it into Confederation, and because the rest of Canada, rightly or wrongly seeing itself as having paid for the land, claimed it owned the West and its resources.

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[17] Ever literal, Barry Cooper chides his colleague Rick Avramenko for repeating the myth that the land was purchased:

> Unfortunately, Rick repeated a myth that Canada bought the Northwest Territories and Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company, much as the U. S. bought Alaska from Russia. Not so. The Crown in right of Canada paid for "improvements" to the wilderness that the Hudson's Bay Company had made; the transfer of lands was from the Imperial Crown to the Canadian Crown. The Hudson's Bay Company governed the Northwest Territories and Rupert's Land as operators of a plantation, not as an owner. This arrangement was common in the 17 century, as, for example, with the Virginia Company.
>
> I would say that Thomas Scott thought he was defending the Orangemen of Ontario against the popish French, but he was not. Riel was not French. He was, and understood himself to be, a specific kind of Métis; soon there would be Polish-Cree Métis to join the Scottish- and Orkney-Cree Métis such as Isbister, and together this new nation would, if not conquer the world, at least settle the West. Tom's [Flanagan's] book Louis "David" Riel is the source of this account of Riel's hopes and intentions.

John A Macdonald's colonialist vision was to use the CPR to create a mercantilist empire in the north of the continent. The resources drawn from the western territories could be brought to the industrial centres of the east, made into goods and sent back across the dominion to be consumed. But the West felt it was a dumping ground for immigrants brought in by Ottawa's negligent development policies.

Janigan relates in great detail the racism and racial tensions building up in the West, but in each case, this important historical work is narratively framed in relation to an absentee government in Ottawa. As race and xenophobia are explained away as defensive reactions to Ottawa's encroachment, the only conclusion to draw is that Confederation, or the state form itself *as an us-vs.-them relation*, is what *caused* the racism. Such an argument would be compelling were it the thesis of the text, but unfortunately the conclusion that the centralized government caused racism is no more than a consequence of the literality and unacknowledged naturalist aesthetics of the book's premises. The text thereby provides an important example of the naïve or unintentional racism, disavowal of responsibility, assumed neutrality, or self-righteous-justice-seeking that comes from the application of a liberal-democratic multiculturalist point of view—which presumes a self-regulating market-ecology as the ideal state for human affairs. As such it is a great complement to Flanagan's explicitly deliberate, intentional, self-righteous application of this point of view towards racist purposes (Chapter 4).

Following the common sense of settler historiography and Canadian hagiography, the book posits Louis Riel as the first Western-rights-/resource-crusader. From the Western perspective—which I will show Cooper and Flanagan reproduce—the settlers and the Métis were equally ignored and abused by Ottawa. And in this text whiteness colonizes extermination via subalternity. Illustrating the textual-production process I call recolonization, which I present as

the rhetorical counterpart of the political-economic process Fabris calls resubjection, Janigan's text does what Flanagan and the Fraser Institute attempt. Framing the West in perpetual struggle with Ottawa has the convenient effect of reducing the struggle over ownership-of/rights-to the land to the struggle over *alienating* resources. That is, the struggle between First Nations and Métis and the European settlers over who has sovereignty of the land takes a backseat to the real struggle: that of who gets to *sell* the land and its resources. In Part Two I elucidate this struggle as the contradiction between Foreign Direct Investment and nationalism, embodied in the idea of the Energy Corridor, which is imagined to be solved by the Calgary plan.

I argue that settler colonial historiography, exemplified by Janigan and exploited by Cooper and Flanagan, relies on the structural relation of *oikos*/*xenos*. This structural relation allows for colonialism and racism to be disavowed and projected onto the figure of the *xenos*. For Janigan, this is Ottawa; for Cooper, it's the Laurentian regime. As Ottawa is the colonizer, Westerners are seen to become formally identical to Indigenous peoples and Métis, and white settlers assimilate First Peoples' historic position as Indigenous. For example, Janigan explains that because Macdonald wanted to avoid bloodshed, he accepted Riel's demands. "In return for provincial status for Manitoba, however, the veteran politician forced Riel to accept what would become the template for sixty years of federal domination over Western lands and its resources. Western alienation took its first breaths during those dramatic days of the first Riel uprising" (27).

In contrast, the settlers who clearly "dominated" Western lands are described entirely passively:

> In later decades, the Mennonites would regret their casual dispossession of their Aboriginal neighbours from their lands south of Winnipeg [Janigan does not explain why

> they changed their minds]. But in the mid-1870s, they assumed Western land was theirs for the taking, largely because Aboriginals and the Métis were not full-time farmers. Ottawa abetted that view. (61)

Janigan is relating the historical truth of how settler colonialism constructed Indigenous agency in opposition to Lockean labour theory to justify dispossession; as Axworthy believes, she's exposing colonialism's injustice. But in the very moment of recognizing the injustice, she diverts the responsibility for it onto Ottawa, implying the literal difference between people in the West and those in government is somehow an absolute or radical separation, and that the Mennonites were not involved in the project of settler colonialism. Thus Janigan is reproducing the most firmly-entrenched settler common sense, the thesis of the whole book and of settler colonial historiography in general: those who work the land should own it; those who own the land should be able to alienate it; and all this without foreign interference.

The slippage is effected by a typical manoeuver:

> In 1872, before the establishment of the first settlements, a prominent Mennonite merchant from Ontario had written a pamphlet about Manitoba, which Ottawa distributed to the newcomers. Merchant Jacob Y. Schantz had praised the Métis as obliging and hospitable. The Aboriginals were 'quiet and inoffensive…The Indians who once enter into a treaty will keep it to the letter.' The message was implicit: the natives were harmless relics. The Mennonites accepted their plots, built homes, and plowed the fertile soil, oblivious to their struggling neighbours. (61)

Janigan is narrating how the Mennonite settlers were duped; they were just simple western folk, not much different than the Indigenous people, who were their fellow struggler-neighbours. They were duped, just as the Indigenous people were, by the East: first by Ontario, and then by

Ottawa. But the Ontario merchant *was Mennonite, too.* In this structural narrative, white settlers are colonizers when they are on the Ontario side of the border. When they are settling opposite the border, they're Westerners. And this narrative comes as a non sequitur to the initial innocent mistake that rights come from working the land, which has nothing to do with the apology that ensues.

No doubt this structuralist simplification is generic to the kind of work, which Beland explains excels by painting vivid portraits of characters. There are limits to what we might expect from a popular polemical text. But what makes the text interesting is its demonstration of the exact same historiographic method found in the presumably more rigorous academic versions of the same history, those of Cooper and Flanagan.

My argument is that the genre or the kind of historiography Beland points out is the same which Cooper and Flanagan produce: the dehistoricized history that could allow "Westerners" to be somehow neutrally abiding in an environment that is disturbed by outsiders. This naturalist premise is shared by the Calgary School, but far more consequentially, it's the bedrock of Canadian common sense. Janigan's method, which is proclaimed (and by Liberal stalwart Axworthy, too!) as a resolution to colonialism, is rooted in the basic premise that the Westerners are interchangeable with the original Indigenous population—those whose lands and ways of life have continually been upset and exploited by the outsiders from the East.

IV. Retroactive Continuity: How to Colonize History

A major concept I employ in this project is what the science-fiction community calls "retcon," or, retroactive continuity. An oft-cited example (e.g. Clover) is that of Arthur Conan Doyle's killing of Sherlock Holmes in one book only to bring him back to life in subsequent episodes by

retroactively claiming that the death was faked. In my view, however, the exemplary instance of retcon occurs in the third of George Lucas's *Star Wars* films, *Return of the Jedi* (1983): when, after learning in the previous episode that Darth Vader is his father, Luke Skywalker asks the ghost of Obi Wan Kenobi (who in the first film had told him Vader had "betrayed and murdered" his father), if Vader really is his father, and, if so, then why Kenobi had lied to him. Kenobi replies, "Your father was seduced by the dark side of the force; he ceased to be Anakin Skywalker, and became Darth Vader. When that happened, the good man who was your father was destroyed. So what I have told you is true, from a certain point of view." Contrary to repeated claims by franchise-creator Lucas[18] that he knew all along Vader was Luke's father, it was never decided that Vader and Luke's father were the same person until production on the second film had been given a green light.[19] And after that, unlike so much of the other tinkering, adding, and revising Lucas has since done to his original trilogy, it became *structurally necessary* to impose a retroactive continuity in order to ensure the Jedi Kenobi—the exemplar of the Good, Light side of the Force, the light of truth—had not been wrong and had not simply lied. I argue that this retroactive continuity is a narrative form that is integral to the form which private property is imagined to take in late capitalism, in both its particularity as commodity, and in its generality in the legal-political context of the post-industrial nation-state at the end of history. We can see the necessity of retcon to private property and the political units which exist to protect and reproduce its form in a film aimed at addressing and resolving empirically-historical threats to myths of Canadian history and identity.

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[18] This is the only real way to describe Lucas, who was neither the writer nor the director of *Jedi*. Still, while neither author nor auteur, Lucas is clearly the *authority* on his saga. Lucas has since sold his authority to Disney.

[19] In fact, in Allan Dean Foster's novelization of the proposed second film *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*, he's not.

V. The Market Ecology as *Nomos* of the Camp: *The War Between Us*

The War Between Us (1995) follows a Japanese-Canadian family interned during World War Two as they're sent from their urbane Vancouver life to live among "poor white trash" in a squalid village in the BC interior. Through a partnership in running a general store, an intercultural hockey game, and the symbolic return of the family's automobility, the historical takeaway becomes clear that the Japanese Canadians all along represented *present* Canadian values far better than the rural, backward white community. So, the real mistake the Canadian government (and people) made in the internment was seeing the *oikos* and *xenos* wrongly: seeing foreignness in superficial and immaterial race rather than seeing the deep *oikos* of shared-humanity, which in classic liberal-democratic form, comes through in the film as the objective criteria of utility and skills. Following this realization, true foreignness belongs to the strangeness of distant history, and to the government, as it imposed this defective recognition—akin to what Hernando de Soto calls "defective representation"—in the first place.

The moral of the film is that the motives, what Cooper and Bloom define as "interests," or the imperfect historical content, behind internment were unfair, but internment itself, being simply formal, was actually an unfortunate but necessary natural process to perfect liberalism. The camp here is a paradigm for what Carl Schmitt and Giorgio Agamben characterize as the state of exception, the super-legal event that preserves the public good from the crises of political conflicts. But as it's presented from the universally-agreed-upon perspective of the multicultural end of history, that is from the perspective of exactly that public good which was preserved and allowed to develop through the exceptional event, the injustice the text addresses isn't exactly the absolute injustice of the racial state's treatment of racialized aliens; rather the injustice was the state's failure to properly recognize its subjects as formally equal. What the state did

recognize, however, was the need to reorganize its subjects in terms of a shift from government to governmentality.

The white Canadians—representing the older version of what constitutes a "nation"—had to learn what being Canadian in the modern context was all about, and the lesson was learned when the traditional insularity of the small town was disrupted and everyone was thrust into a multicultural market ecology. Since in Lockean liberal democracy property is the medium for rights, injustice is crystallized into the family's car. The film opens with their pride at having "arrived," as they've purchased a brand new car. Once they're interned they lose not just property or a status symbol of commercial belonging, they also lose their right to mobility as the population is forcibly moved. The original sin in the film is the dispossession of the "auto" from mobility. The internees are sent down the highway in open trucks to the interior, a repetition and completion of covered wagons going west. In fact, they are going to complete settler colonialism by civilizing the whites, whom, in their regional rootedness to resource-based industrial production, history has forgotten. Never tied to production, after losing their car, the family's struggle is articulated in their inability to rent and receive income from their home in Vancouver. Their class positions continue to be the index for injustice.

The whites are positively primitive, possessing neither electricity nor business sense. The Japanese-Canadians are far more technologically proficient and socially sophisticated. And, eventually, they become the welcome agents of gentrification and cosmopolitan improvement, by spreading popular culture like the jitterbug, but most notably through entrepreneurship. First assigned a menial position as housekeeper to a white woman, the protagonist is figured as the victim of a biopolitical injustice against her dignity-as-human capital, but her *natural* acumen

and value becomes apparent as she ends up helping the white woman develop her business, a shop to cater to the massive influx of internees.

The racism that the film exists to acknowledge and address is presented as an excuse to perfect capitalism. Mindlessly reproducing the formalism that presumes all problems can be solved by the market—like in the big-business boycotts of North Carolina over transphobic policies, or, really, the entire idea of Green Capitalism—the story shows a racist local shopkeeper charging the internees ¢50 to use the phone. This gives the white woman the idea to open her own store and take advantage of the *situation* rather than taking advantage of people disadvantaged by racism. Historical injustices like racism become apparent as the ecological consequences of what André Gorz calls forced modernization, and thereby are neither immanent to white supremacy nor to the global-economic forces that will end history; rather, they are actually simply part of history itself, which we can see now has been solved. That the woman's *reaction* to the racist shopkeeper was identical to her *action* to liberalize the economy proves the fantasy of immediate mediation: the bad situation generated a good situation via the natural ecology of the market!

The belated situation of the small town whites as allegorical figures for the disruptive force of modernity is further cynically articulated through class as a means of overcoming the bad, historical problem of class: the main white male character is laid off from his production-based job, and he gets a circulation-based job transporting the Japanese-Canadians.

Once it becomes apparent that "the Japs can play hockey!" the *xenos*—or non-whites—are revealed as the heart and soul of the Canadian self-image. The white Canadians realize their prisoners/forced labourers are their neighbours and fellow Canucks, and they end up having a great time together! The viewer understands that internment was wrong because "we" interned

true Canadians—ourselves! Even worse, they were middle class entrepreneurs who, in this crude allegory, understood the technology of post-labour society where the whites couldn't and (like the Chinese who built the national railway) helped the nation become the post-war multicultural utopia we recognize today. A disgraceful chapter of Canadian history is thus superficially "recognized," but it's more significantly retconned and absolved as it becomes the origin of the continuing neoliberal present: the only thing that's really "wrong" is that the government (which by not appearing in the film takes on the epic function of universal Fate, against which mortals universally must struggle) forced these realignments. If these disruptions of the traditional economy (which as production-based is only traditional from the retconned perspective of the post-industrial present) had occurred according to "natural" market mechanisms like the dismantling of labour power or migration due, say, to the high price of Vancouver real estate, then it would have been perfect! It was after all illegal for the Japanese Canadians to be, as the film's white characters wished they could be, "equal partners," so real injustice occurs when business isn't allowed to take the biopolitical form of friendship and community. The natural biopolitical form of the market is artificially stymied by the irrational, absentee government. But it's only because the government is not there that we can apprehend the liberal fantasy of limited government. As in Solzhenitsyn's Gulag—which as I'll discuss in Chapter 2, forms the literary basis for Cooper's literary-*cum*-literal equivalence of the Stalinist Gulag with the Multinational Corporation—when the inhabitants of the market-ecology are *laissez-faire*, things regulate, police themselves, and produce value by themselves. In the Gulag or the internment camp, when there's no intrusion at the worksite or in the barracks during free time, people make their own decisions and act as economic beings; they enter into voluntary exchanges or choose to shut others out if they don't like their behaviour.[20] Thus the informal economies which spontaneously

[20] Cooper derives his literary premises from Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*, but I would argue that *A Day in the*

spring up are a natural synthesis of economy and ecology. The retcon shows how, according to the Kojèveian-Fukuyaman-Cooperian understanding of the present as homogeneous universal empire, governmentality is not about force or oppression, but about choice in a market environment that expresses the perfected *oikos*.

But what then happens to the *xenos*, to the foreign that was misapprehended, but that must formally exist in order to be integrated into the *oikos* at the end of history? At a pivotal moment in the film, the white woman asks, "How did this happen? How did we end up on the wrong side?" In this allegory, the whites who appear racist are really naïvely innocent, prodded into racism by the bad government's (really, Fate's) decree and then, later, by government's interference in the ecosystem that was just about to become self-regulating. Not only is this the same as Cooper's and Solzhenitsyn's Gulag, but it's identical to Janigan's Canadian West, where historical racism against immigrants is presented as a natural response to the forced introduction of *xenos* to an *oikos* via the CPR and the National Policy. Of course, once the government leaves again, the *oikos*, like any *oikos*, resumes its social equilibrium and returns to producing value from out of this equilibrium. And better still, the lesson has been learned as the characters proclaim "I love this country, we never know what democracy is until they take it away. It's like being betrayed by your family." So the familial understanding that we're all the same is the necessary and sufficient step towards overcoming injustice, piercing white privilege, and opening access to the affects of liberal guilt, pride, and belonging determined by the homologous forces of nature, the market, alienable property, family, and appropriately-limited legal-political structures. Moreover, once the government plays its role as vanishing mediator, bringing—Fate-like—the parties into confrontation and disappearing after the resolution, true foreignness is

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Life of Ivan Denisovich is the exemplary allegory for the market ecology at the end of history. See especially the last chapter, depicting the barracks after work.

revealed to be the racist character of the past itself, of the strange and inhuman ways things were done in history, before all the important problems were solved.

VI. The Political Economy of Retcon

In "Retcon: Value and Temporality in Poetics," Joshua Clover argues that the

> epistemological rupture proffered by finance in the seventies, seeming to inaugurate a distinct mode of production, is merely a form of appearance that capital's struggle takes in crisis, beneath which the capitalist economy remains under the sway of the law of value and its source in socially necessary labor time. (9)

This form of appearance is understood in terms of fictional narrative, and Clover's intervention is to reveal and interrogate the linguistic homology by which the price of a commodity functions like the period, or *point de capiton*, which closes off and structures a sentence's meaning. The period stabilizes syntactical play into a grammatical structure, just as price marks the fixing of fluid value. But linguistic and economic stabilizations do not resolve the instability at the source of value and meaning, and Clover uses the concept of retcon to explain how postmodern economics was able to manage an epochal epistemic break separating an instrument's value from underlying commodities. He argues that narrative theory explains capitalism's self-understanding of its crises by showing how financial instruments are *like* signifiers liberated from their signified/referents,

> bringing into being the *glissement* of signification within a synchronic structure through which the instrument in its peregrinations might increase its value according to its formal, differential relation to other such notes, rather than to any positive element. (12)

This liberation of value from the materiality of production marks the emergence of "new kind of value [that] is generated through its discursive character." For Clover this apparent dematerialization of value depends on assumptions "wherein finance is structured like a language, and discourse is now a productive force." In other words, a discursive structure is taken as a relation to being, and rhetoric is taken for referentiality. My dissertation traces instances analogous to this *glissement*—in which a differential relation is taken to be a source of value or meaning—by interrogating the rhetorical premises shared by settler-colonial historiography, Straussian and Kojèveian methodology, and neoliberal cultural production. The claims central to each of these discourses are based in the basic figural structure of *oikos*-family and *xenos*-foreign and thus they are universally portable and applicable to anything structured synchronically (like a language, differentially). Following Paul de Man, I call this universal syntax an aesthetic ideology, that is, an allegorical operation by which perception is taken as cognition, or perception is taken as a given against which cognition is built. I will argue throughout this dissertation that in neoliberal knowledge production—of which the work of the Calgary School is just one manifestation—phenomenology is taken as fundamental ontology, and the narrative structures of allegory/metaphor are the structural means by which ontology is understood. And I show how, like financial instruments, like what Timothy Mitchell calls "carbon democracy," and like infrastructure projects that purport to unite and create nations, this kind of ideology 1) acts to contain the infrastructural particularity of staples temporality within a rhetoric structure of universal homogeneous space, 2) how this imaginary, idealist space (which is, after all, simply rhetorical) mediates its relation to materiality by claiming extraction and circulation as the ultimate source of value, and 3) does so by borrowing (like price borrows fixity from its difference from value) its spatial stability from the temporality it exists to disavow.

VII. The Biopolitics of Retcon: Production and Social Reproduction

Clover defines retcon as

> an annealing of logical fissures in a given backstory after they have cracked open into system-threatening incoherence in the present and, further, threaten the ongoing or futural narrative. It […] changes the backstory in one of several ways—generally categorized as addition, alteration, and subtraction—to rescue the present, which can now be rerendered with a continuous surface. (14)

In my approach, retcon is not at all a symptom of any text or subject matter that takes epistemic breaks to be a proximate concern.[21] Instead, I argue retcon *is the epistemic stability* that is the prior, immanent subtext of capitalist production and its national-liberal-democratic superstructure. And it thus enforces the authority of the property form, the *nom de père* as the right of *patria potestas*, the primal right Ouranos exercised to block his children from leaving Gaia's birth canal with his irresistible weight before Kronos severed his phallic power and time usurped space's monopoly on violence.[22] In other words, where the primal father's power embodies the primordial contradiction between the status quo (space-nature) and change (time-Geist), and where history is the narrative of productive processes attempting to resolve this contradiction, retcon allows production to be subsumed within extractivism. Retcon affirms the superiority of a rent-subscription model over a purchase-consume model, thereby removing production from the picture.

[21] Of course, neither is it necessarily so for Clover. The point is that meaning and value are dialectically capable of being both cause and effect of epistemic and financial crises whenever stability is assumed.
[22] Hesiod *Theogony*, 155-183.

Indeed, isn't the idea of Canadians or Indigenous nations as "owners" of land scandalously absent from current debates about territory and resources?[23] After all, Canadian settler-colonialism, and its doctrines of *terra nullius* used to legitimate dispossession of Indigenous lands, relies on the Lockean labour theory of value: the claim to property is based on the labour put into it; labour put into land makes it property; the owner of such property-labour is the basis for the legal person; so land is empty of persons unless it's worked. But while it's still obviously operating, this value-premise today seems like a distant origin myth. Even in the most fetishistic abstractions of property, like those of Flanagan and de Soto (Chapter 4), which characterize Indigenous peoples as victims of "deficient forms of property" living necrophilically amongst "dead capital," the idea that working the land constitutes ownership *here and now* is nowhere to be found. Even the workers of the oil patch never appear as labourers adding value to the land or to its products, but rather are figured as shut out of the land's unrealized ideal liquidity, which they only bring forth, as the "midwife" Socrates did with Ideas from the heads of his young interlocutors. (And so, adopting "Yellow-Vests," some workers who've been shut out of even the embarrassing materiality of production that subtends their biopolitical essence move into symbolic circulation, driving convoys and mimicking the motions of the life denied to their oil—just as CPR, by exchanging itself for the motions of the heart, can sometimes bring the dead back to life.) Where Lockean liberalism held the complementary/contradictory forms of "Man

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[23] Ownership is sometimes replaced with "interests," in itself an interesting collectivization of grammar, which I see less as acknowledging the social or material basis of the individual and more as the total removal of the human from the "individual." As Sheena Wilson points out:

> Tom Isaac, lawyer and Indigenous rights consultant for Enbridge, declared on CBC Calgary's The180 with Jim Brown (2014), "Certainly from my vantage point I don't see an inherent weakness in [Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline review] process. . . . What the courts have actually said . . . is that the balancing act between societal interests, on the one hand, and Indigenous interests, on the other, are to be decided by government." Isaac's binary—societal versus Indigenous interests—raises questions about how he (or the courts, governments, and industry) defines "society." Where does society end, and where do Indigenous interests begin? ("Gender")

and Citizen" (life-as-such and life-as-rights/responsibilities) together, in the world presumed by retcon, property itself—as what's given birth to—is the holder of rights.

There's a long history of conservative and pro-business arguments not just appealing to the theoretical revenue lost in whatever project is being held up but taking on a pseudo-Pro-Life rhetoric of potential being snuffed out, of innovations being denied life.[24] For example, Joe Oliver warned of the murderousness of those opposed to pipelines in a 2012 editorial open letter in the *Globe and Mail*: "These groups threaten to hijack our regulatory system to achieve their radical ideological agenda. They seek to exploit any loophole they can find, stacking public hearings with bodies *to ensure that delays kill good projects*" (Barney 100; my emph). Rona Ambrose likewise characterized Denis Coderre's opposition to Energy East as an unfair treatment of society's most vulnerable (forms of property): "for Mr. Coderre to come out and insult Albertans and *oppose a pipeline that hasn't even been built* yet is unfortunate. This isn't the spirit of Confederation, it's not in the spirit of national unity" (qtd. Tasker; emph added).

In my reading, such priority of products-property over human productive forces expresses a central contradiction of Lockean possessive individualism: between 1) the production of being-of-things, in which a thing is a property "of mine," and 2) the material and historical reproduction of life-body, of Being-as-such; not "mine," but "me." 1) is ideal and structural; 2) is reproductive and infrastructural. So, the self-as-thing is what's actually reproduced in any infrastructure based in the form of private property. For example, debates in Canada over energy projects seem to posit a mismatch between humans and pipelines, but they miss the fact that humanness is a thing-ness (the "Canadian" is a middle class entrepreneur). The thing that state-

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[24] Consider the young Alan Greenspan's moving lament against antitrust laws (1961): "No one will ever know what new products, processes, machines, and cost-saving mergers failed to come into existence, killed by the Sherman Act before they were born. No one can ever compute the price that all of us have paid for that act which, by inducing less effective use of capital, has kept our standard of living lower than would otherwise have been possible" ("Antitrust" 70).

infrastructures reproduce vis-à-vis humanity is the thingness of humans, their job-hours and employment statistics.[25] They order people by their thingness, just as the imposition of the *oikos*/*xenos* structure in the structuralism of the Calgary School orders people into syntactically interchangeable identity positions of exclusion and inclusion. What's intransitive is the being of human as Dasein or as a reproductive-material-body along a circuit of thingness. As syntactical, these positions could go back and forth indefinitely, if they weren't grounded in a universal subjectivity that structures all things.

VIII. The Biopolitical Subtext of Form, or, the Bioform

My thesis is that Canadian neoliberal knowledge production is grounded in claims that act to contain materialism within idealism and history within an ahistorical historicism. These in turn are grounded in the biopolitical subtext of form that materially reproduces the ideology of the individual as Lockean private property, which seems to produce and guarantee textual authority. This authority is proclaimed by insisting that the discourse an author produces is his own property, that it is knowable to him and transmissible through him to others with whom he chooses to communicate, and that it conforms naturalistically to both the physical body (as I discuss in Chapter 1, the Straussian analogue of the city) and to the principle of order and mastery over all bodies (the Straussian soul), but, I conclude this method of reading, shared through the Paris-Chicago-Calgary nexus I trace in Chapter 1, does little more than confer authority on the form of private property itself, extracting its human content from the humanness of social reproduction.

I construct this figure of a universal subject from a premise developed throughout the theory of the novel, from the young Lukács and C.M. Bowra, to Ian Watt, Michael McKeon,

[25] See Barney "Who We Are and What We Do: Canada as a Pipeline Nation."

Deirdre Shauna Lynch, and Mary Poovey—which I synthesize as: 1) the novel is essentially the form of the individual life story; 2) the lifespan and ambit of the mobile bourgeois subject formed the spatial and temporal limits to literary form in the post-epic age; 3) that this connection between narrative and political structure shows the novel to be the dominant literary form of capitalist production, just as it shows 4) the individual as a possessor of rights and of a life story bears an analogous structure to the commodity form of the book itself and to the form of meaning the novel takes as its referent.

My method places these theorizations of the literary form that Lockean subjectivity takes at the base of what Jameson calls the "immanent subtext" or "subtext of form" of the political unconscious.[26] I call this biopolitical subtext of form the "bioform" because 1) it's biopolitical, that is, the means by which all experience is structured follows the political configurations of subjectivity as private property; 2) because of the *bios*, or the particular form of life referred to in biopolitical discourse; but also 3) to draw attention to the utterly literary and formalistic practices by which subjectivity is figured. For example, crafting a "bio" is an authorial gesture we all make: imagining ourselves in the first person from a third-person point of view, the necessity of theorizing our lives as a move from active to passive-omniscient (whose narrative limit is no longer in our time the novel form, but that of the anthropocene); we do this especially in our discipline, but also in the whole of our culture that, based on what Macpherson calls possessive individualism, sees the individual as the author of its life story. "Bioform" then means the structure in which one's property is configured, the container-repository of human capital. But

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[26] Jameson:

> What Althusser's own insistence on history as an absent cause makes clear, but what is missing from the formula as it is canonically worded, is that he does not at all draw the fashionable conclusion that because history is a text, the "referent" does not exist. We would therefore propose the following revised formulation: that history is not a text, not a narrative, master or otherwise, but that, as an absent cause, it is inaccessible to us except in textual form, and that our approach to it and to the Real itself necessarily passes through its prior textualization, its narrativization in the political unconscious. (*Political Unconscious* 20)

it's also the literary act of producing the story and the point of view (as what Lukács would call the "type") that makes such a story possible. This is the individual version of the end of history, the borrowing of the perspective of futurity, the Solon-like telos that makes the past cohere from the imagined point of view of the future. The occupation, the narrativization of perceived gaps or diversity within a CV, the profile, the author bio, the blurb, the introduction, these all partake of the Ideal container protecting agency from materiality and economic determinism. Since there's nothing more deterministic than markets, and since the analytic *sine qua non* of any market is choice, the bioform manages this crisis by way of the authorship-work that engages the market-ecological given and makes determinism itself that which is negated by action (as we'll see in Chapter 1, through Straussian *thymos* or "spiritedness") as well as preserved through dogmatic common sense: "It's simple economics."

In each of the texts I will look at in this project, this crisis is resolved in a figure of an expert whose expertise is self-mastery. This expertise is embodied in the private-tutor of Bloom's Socrates, the orientalist Sage of Kojève and Cooper, the carbon democrats and corporate managers I discuss in the petrofiction of Canada's early-neoliberal period, and of course in the figures who move between the state-corporate worlds in that distinct bios of which the authors I take up partake, and of which Kojève is the archetype: the synthesis of bureaucrat/diplomat/ambassador/lobbyist, of the think tank expert and the dealer in the neoliberal marketplace of ideas.

The bioform is what makes the Straussian figure of the City and the Man homologous. Faced with the vulgar behaviourist determinism of the market, the bioform retains plasticity. For the bioform as container of human capital and the capacity for plasticity and resilience, the past is no longer the same kind of origin it once was: the past is no longer absolute in its

particular/contingent aspects—the traumas or privileges we received before are no longer deterministic of our character (twentieth-century history shows that Japanese-Canadians are resilient enough to not carry the baggage of the past). But the pastness of the past *is* absolute in terms of its extractive, material character, which is the aesthetic ideology of circulation and extraction as the paradigmatic source of post-industrial value. We have our life story to make sense out of, and we have to do this across the flat plane of the end of history. We have to get our oil moving, or else we're aborting ourselves and our children. Our job is to be authors of the past and to make it produce, sequel-like, value in the present. Thus the biopolitical form reproduces the infrastructural patterns traced in the political-economic and historiographic investigations of my thesis: the Corridor plan is to reproduce what Creighton called the Empire of the St Lawrence; the CPR and Trans-Canada Highway followed the route of the fur trade, etc. In Canadian infrastructural imagination, value comes from endless circulation, and production's role in creating wealth is managed by fantasies of reproduction.

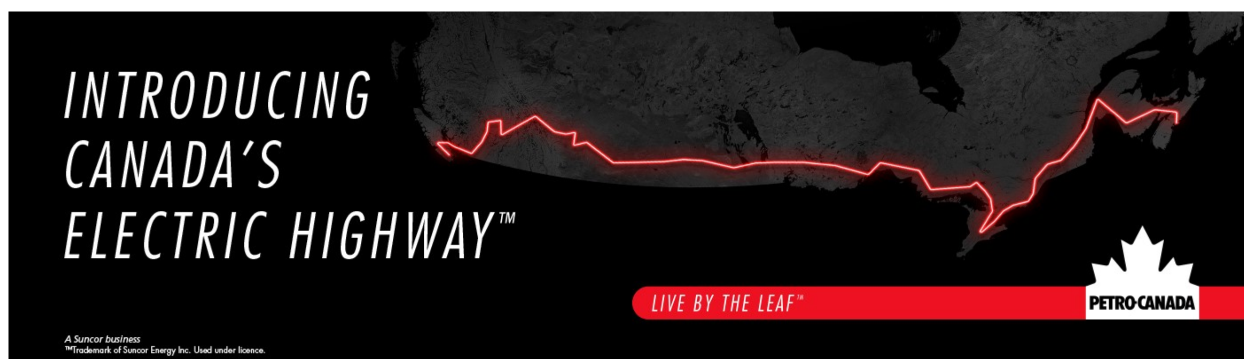

Fig. 5: Repeating the Trans-Canada Highway

This job is human nature at the end of history. History happened, and now we're this kind of producer. The past is absolute as nature. And Hegel tells us that Nature is space, and Mind is time, but at the end of history, mind is absolute time; it's not tied to space, it simply extracts from it. The bioform is thus is the figure of the mode of production; it manifests a division of

labour that is natural, preserved as given and known from above, from the domineering perspective of Cephalus's house in the *Republic*.

IX. From George Lucas to Georg Lukács: Necessary Anachronism

Kierkegaard famously distils Hegel by saying we understand life backward, but must live it forward. The retcon for Clover lends the dominant narratives of finance the fictional stability of grammar, allowing price to anchor value like a period does for a sentence. But I argue that Clover doesn't push far enough into the materiality of this temporal stability. Where he sees the temporal contradiction of cause and effect as imminent to the form of value/price as such, I argue the contradiction occurs *first* in the commodity form when taken as infinitely expansive. My methodology traces a closure as impossible as that of price and the period in the biopolitical subtext of form: in order for products to produce value, all property has to be retroactively the telos of the biopolitical form of its producer.

Expanding on Clover's discussion of retcon by developing the aspect of temporal priority helps to clarify how history might be apprehended in the present *as history*. Hegel says that when Goethe speaks of "anachronism," the poet is really talking about retcon:

> "Alle Poesie [verkehrt] eigentlich in Anachronismen" ("All poetry essentially deals in anachronisms"), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe writes in a striking aphorism from his review of Alessandro Manzoni's verse drama Adelchi (1822), which Goethe criticizes for dividing its characters into two types: the historical and ideal (837–38). "Für den Dichter ist keine Person historisch" (822; For the poet, nobody is historical), Goethe claims, because the poet cannot report past events without imparting his own moral world view to his characters, even when he purports to distil their essence. Homer, Dante, and

> Shakespeare are arch-anachronists, according to Goethe, because they domesticate the foreign country of “einer halbbarbarische Zeit” (837; a semi-barbaric past) by modernizing it so that readers will bother traveling there. (qtd. in Luzzi)

In other words, Goethe is critiquing the great dramatists for presuming an end of history, a starting point whose historical completeness and temporal stability both can be and can’t help but be projected backward. Here, it’s apparent how useful the distinction between retcon and necessary anachronism is for approaching Canadian politics, in which this play between a stable civilization which is retroactively projected as a criterion for ownership of land and belonging in the space of a nation is alive and well across Canadian discursive formations. Where retcon offers an opportunity to naturalize the ethnocentricity and racism of capitalist liberal democracy, Hegel’s *Aesthetics* (an ethnocentric, racist text if there ever was one[27]) presents an alternative to retcon *avant la lettre* precisely by way of its self-conscious elaboration of its own Eurocentricity and civilizing premises, demonstrating how the abstract equivalence of the Hegelian end of history cannot serve as a stable end or *point de capiton/capital* without a remainder—not just of old forms as matters of style as in Kojève or Fukuyama, but as the persistence in narrative form of *temporal non-homogeneity as such*. Eva Geulen explains,

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[27] In *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, Gayatri Spivak reads Hegel’s *Aesthetics* as what we could call an extractivist effort to build a German identity in circulation, an effort moreover that is rhetorically structured like the strategies I read in Cooper, Janigan, and Flanagan: “The narrative of ‘German’ cultural self-representation, within the Western European context, is therefore one of difference. Its very singularity provides a scenario of representation that would not allow the name ‘German’, a lack of unified nationhood that could only find a fuller understanding through the rediscovery of a German antiquity” (7). This difference required the creation of a national consciousness with a sense of language and kinship created comparatively with neighbouring nations (8); therefore, German identity was created comparatively rather than dialectically. Instead of acknowledging one’s other to be the fundamental component of one’s self, Spivak accuses Hegel of misreading Indian epic, which he concludes is ahistorical, thus a mere moment of consciousness. “Had Hegel the wherewithal to read [Srimadbhagavadgīta] this way? I think so. [A proper dialectical reading] requires no more knowledge of the ‘Indian background’ than Hegel himself professed to possess. It requires merely an impossible anachronistic absence of the ideological motivations to prove a fantasmatic India as the inhabitant of what we would today call the ‘pre-conscious’ of the Hegelian symbolic. […] [B]ecause Hegel […] wants and needs to prove that ‘India’ is the name for his stop on the spirit’s graphic journey, he makes his ‘India’ prove it for him” (47-8).

> In his discussions of anachronism in classical art, Hegel differentiates […] What falls under the rubric of props, concerning "merely external things," is contrasted with "the more important kind of anachronism": in which "in a work of art the characters, in their manner of speech, the expression of their feelings and ideas, the reflections they advance, their accomplishments, could not possibly be in conformity with the period, level of civilization, religion, and view of the world which they are representing." (37)

As a progenitor of genre theories like Northrop Frye's myth criticism and Jameson's structural Marxist literary analysis, in Hegel's scheme atemporal ideal form has a material aspect made up of sedimented historical content:

> "For the position we gave to classical art was that only through reaction against the presuppositions belonging of necessity to its sphere was it elevated to what it is as genuinely Ideal" (I:491). This genealogical derivation of classical art not only founds but also distorts its classicality, for the remnants of the symbolic often appear "varied and outrageous" (I:493) and contingent. "The remains of symbolic meanings peep through" (492). Even the classical artwork, in which the identification of form and meaning was to have been achieved, has echoes of earlier phases and is buffeted by obscure recollections of symbolic ambiguity. (32)

The perfected, unmotivated object of "classical" art is anachronistic as its form of expression is both much more *and* nothing less than the manifestation of the extraction and transformation of material-value from earlier "symbolic" forms. As Kojève and Marcuse both make clear, this aesthetic perfection is premised on the historical development of a division of labour which allows the beholder to possess and reflect upon the beauty-pleasure of completed labour, in the

art object, without having any necessary dependence on the labour-pain of making the work.[28] In line with Clover's analysis, this historical aspect of the completed work is the source of its value, which is obscured by the seeming autonomy of price, or the index of the work's ontological independence:

> In the instance before us, classical art of course *comes into being*, but that from which it develops must have an independent existence of its own outside of it, because classical art, as classical, must leave behind it all inadequacy, all becoming, and must be perfect in itself (2:780). (Hegel qtd. in Geulen 34)

Throughout this dissertation I will characterize what Hegel is struggling with here as the disjunction between structure and infrastructure and between individual production and social reproduction. The completed work, like the discursive value produced in finance, belongs to the idealist register of structure. In a homogeneous world empire at the end of history, there would be no need to see infrastructure (indeed the invisiblization of infrastructure is the function of Strauss/Bloom's reading of *The Republic*, as is the Robinsonnade-form of Bloom's appropriation of Rousseau's *Emile*). But, as Clover and actually-existing-history show, there are moments when materiality "peeps through." For Hegel, this materiality appears as symbolic, precisely because it symbolizes a future ideal; that is, it's still a materially-necessary link to what, once perfected, will be autonomous from it. Geulen explains that

> Hegel has good reason to risk this delimitation of anachronism. He needs to concede that classical art remains effected by the transcended symbolic protoart, for only when what

[28] And in this way, the city/man analogy/Ur-narrative of Straussian "Classical Political Philosophy" allows for the separation of use and exchange from one another and also from utility-as-necessity. In the shared Chicago-Calgary model, this liberation goes all the way down: through the market, which presents the object to the consumer; through the de-laboured abstraction of money (Bloom); and in the separation of labour from both exchange and use in Cooper's Gulag. All this formally repeats Clover's relation of production to circulation via price and value. It's based in the mistaking of necessary anachronism, which whatever other problems Hegel's *Aesthetics* may have, is clearly at issue, for retcon. In fact the recognition that labour is congealed in the completed object, what Strauss and Bloom disavow in the city/man analogy, is the reason Hegel's struggling here.

> has been overcome remains legible as a trace is its appropriation as the autonomous achievement of classical art recognizable, which "comes essentially into being only through such a transformation of what went before" (I:477). For the sake of the unrepeatable uniqueness of classical art, protoart cannot be annihilated without remainder, but must be recognizable as colonized, as appropriated, even if this sublation leads to a collision in the artistic ideal that threatens to unleash anachronism and call into question the perfection and therefore the end of art with respect to its highest determination.

The necessity of this potential crisis is obvious in the city/man analogy and its context among what Cooper, like Strauss, sees as stable, atemporal regimes or constitutions. The perfect constitution isn't only perfect in its synchronic differential relation to the other kinds of regimes. It's also perfect because it's the perfection and total domination of what's come before. The fact that I can speak of constitutions and aesthetics in the same space and then apply this differential/homology to the city/man of Plato and of Strauss shows how any claims of completion or closure are simply rhetorical or syntactical *exactly unless* necessary anachronism is addressed as the material which has been transformed into the exchangeable present.[29] So, in retcon and the bioform, necessary anachronism is what's colonized, what's aestheticized into the ideal, out of the work of history; the necessary anachronism of the city/man is the historical division of labour; the necessary anachronism of the bioform is the female, the Indigenous—the material; really, though, necessary anachronism is anything that's material in the perfected,

[29] This seeming exchangeability itself is a residue from a fundamental retcon in Straussian "Classical Political Philosophy," where diversity of the soul and the polis are evidence not of change, but of permanent natures and regimes that can then be differentially compared and judged in terms of eudemonia. See J.C. Paskewich, "Strauss's Modern Regime Cycle" and Cooper, *It's the Regime, Stupid!* Aaron Jaffe and Cinzia Arruzza similarly look at Marx's critique of Aristotle in terms of Aristotle's prioritizing of actuality over potentiality ("Ancient Philosophy" *Bloomsbury Companion to Marx*, esp., 178-183). I argue that the retconning of the contemporary division of labour into Strauss's synchronic atemporal "regime cycle" collapses any such distinction while illogically maintaining that potentiality takes priority as the highest actuality, against which the actual is nothing but a stunted perversion.

simplistic, Kojèveian silence of the Sage who's said all that can be said, the literal-idiocy of an end of history.

Moreover, unlike Kojève, Fukuyama, or Cooper, Hegel as a self-conscious idealist wrestles with this problematic *as being problematic*. His idealist Eurocentrism therefore forces him into the compositional problems that Lukács will diagnose in *The Historical Novel*; i.e., the premises by which the *Aesthetics* can be written as complete within the system of philosophy are the aesthetic premises which show idealist philosophy to be at bottom a matter of aesthetics. And for all the dismissals of Lukács as naively aesthetic-realist, Hegel's *Aesthetics* itself shows that the writing of history is always already an aesthetic issue (what Spivak calls an "epistemography").

The anachronism by which Hegel is put to use by Kojève (especially under Bloom's editing) enables the formal reproduction of the anachronistic structure by which Kojève is put to use by Fukuyama, and so on. The idealism that unites the various claims to the end of history takes the structural necessity of anachronism to be the eternal truth in the history of ahistorical ideas. I argue that in this method, the "greatness" of the past is extracted/produced in the present and projected backward, thereby absolving the present of temporality. Cite becomes site: Citations of the great books become the means for reproducing the productive site of the liberal subject throughout history. My argument differs here from Clover's in that in the retcon by which the liberal subject is the formal source of extractive value, we can see a reversal of the temporality of credit's borrowing from the future. In my understanding of retcon, value takes its source to be in the past, in the colonization of the past as a site for extraction. This process is premised on the flattening of temporality and exchangeability of things that are historical, the translation of the historical into a field of value that's eternal and fixed, i.e., the retcon of

production's separation from reproduction and from a past that can only be understood in the present via necessary anachronism. This is what the Straussian Great Books theory then allows to be resolved. What's impossible to complete in philosophy (what Hegel couldn't reconcile in his *Aesthetics*) is contained in the completed form of the infinitely-reproducible great book and its authoritative canonical interpretation![30]

In the next chapter, I will argue that the Straussian great books approach which subtends all neoliberal knowledge production, and which Cooper explicitly endorses, allows for the incorporation of Marx into the canon of great men, but only by way of his idealized, dehistoricized image of Kojève's Hegel. In other words, at the neoliberal end of history, Marx is retconned into the history of ideas. But Lukács allows us to see how any retconned history cannot be historical:

> Hegel discusses necessary anachronism in the following way: "The inner substance of what is represented remains the same, but the developed culture in representing and unfolding the substantial necessitates a change in the expression and form of the latter."

Lukács explains that Hegel, as more self-consciously historical, goes further than Goethe:

[30] In his recent biography of Kojève, Jeff Love make this point central to Kojève's whole oeuvre:

> In other words, if it is not necessary to become philosophical— and Kojève cannot claim that it is— then how can a philosophical pedagogy have any persuasive power, especially if it forces one into the structure that Kojève describes? Not only is the acceptance of philosophy the acceptance of the role of a slave but also its final destination is one whose subtraction from the world is so extreme that it resembles death itself, for the sage is in this respect the posthumous man, a ghostly presence who merely describes what he has seen in the Book.
>
> The argument that Kojève can bring against this view is that it cannot assert itself consistently. To argue against philosophy, as Aristotle noted, is to engage in philosophy. One can thus argue that there is no discourse that can wholly reject philosophical discourse, since that rejection involves an acceptance of the conventions of philosophical discourse as a condition of the rejection itself. The best way to reject philosophical discourse is through silence or action that need not explain itself. Otherwise, as soon as one seeks to provide an account of one's resistance to philosophy, one finds oneself already implicated in what one seeks to overcome. (182-3)

> Goethe is concerned chiefly with the break-through of universal human and humanist principles from the concrete basis of history. He wishes to remould the historical basis so as to allow for this break-through while preserving historical truth in its essentials [. …] Hegel, on the other hand, interprets this relation to the present historically. He maintains that “necessary anachronism” can emerge organically from historical material, if the past portrayed is clearly recognized and experienced by contemporary writers as the necessary prehistory of the present. (61)

This is how properly historical anachronism differs from retcon. The precondition is necessary for understanding the historical nature of Being. But among the present’s conditions is the necessary extension of the present back into history. Notice this is understood “by writers”: this anachronism concerns the historical mode of production understood in the present. The writer has to recognize that the job of a writer is as a bio-grapher, an articulator for the containment of the structure of value-as-property. The writer has to understand how this form of value is what for Goethe were the humanistic principles. The present for which the past must be rendered as precondition is not simply narrative, not just sense to be made metafictionally, but ontologically, too. “Then the only kind of heightening” (that is, the anachronistic formal changes necessary for inner substance to stay the same), “required—in modes of expression, consciousness etc.—is such that will clarify and underline this relationship.”

> And then the remoulding of events, customs etc. in the past would simply come to this: the writer would allow those tendencies which were alive and active in the past and which in historical reality have led up to the present (but whose later significance contemporaries naturally could not see) to emerge with that emphasis which they possess in objective, historical terms for the product of this past, namely, the present. (61)

Lukács contrasts necessary anachronism with "modernization," where the attitudes of the later developments of consciousness are placed on an age which contradicted these ideas. Modernization "arises of aesthetic and historical necessity, whenever this living connection between past and present is absent or only forcibly created." Modernization for Lukács is what I mean when I use the term retcon. The retcon of *The War Between Us* is clearly "modernization" in the sense of bringing history up to speed with Canada's present brand-identity—in Goethe's terms, "To all conditions one lends the modern spirit, for only in this way can we see and, indeed, bear to see them," or as Luzzi usefully updates the terms "bother to travel there."

And therefore, where internments and dispossessions previously justified in terms of disgraced ideas maintain their inner substance, they don't change their political-economic form, instead they're simply updated with "bearable" terms, which show that the inner substance of internments were never actually racist, but were simply structural incubators for nascent multicultural entrepreneurship. Similarly, the imperialist project of "civilizing" instead becomes (as it always was) a matter of liberating dead capital on Indian Reserves.

Chapter 1

The End of History

1.1 Introduction: On the Way to Calgary via Paris and Chicago

In this chapter, I situate the work of Barry Cooper and, by extension, the Calgary School within a matrix of knowledge production, a network of premises shared across the greater neoliberal project, tracing the textual production of Alexandre Kojève and Leo Strauss, and Allan Bloom: that of translating, introducing, and narrating French theory within the context of an Ur-narrative (or more literally, Er-(*Ηρ*)-narrative) of City and Man, which equates the soul to the polis, and acts as a container by which the division of labour is de-historicized and naturalized within the form of the private intellectual, whose pedagogy is, *pace* Socrates (if not Plato), a vocation.

It is certainly possible, and would likely be intellectually rewarding, to trace an empirical, literal connection from Cooper to Bloom, the latter of whom, while teaching at Toronto, influenced a generation of Canadian conservatives and neoliberals, who edited, translated, and popularized three foundational texts for this particular version of conservatism, and these in line with a formula laid out by the foundational thinker, Leo Strauss. I will briefly discuss Bloom's Straussian production of Plato's *Republic*, of Rousseau's *Emile*, and of Kojève's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, but the point I hope to make is that the premises common to Bloom, Strauss, and Canadian neoliberalism show it is completely unnecessary to focus so much on empirical or literal connections.

Each of the texts and authors Bloom has translated is of course paradigmatic of contradictory, ambiguous, and ambivalent meanings. But Bloom's readings follow the Straussian approach, which sees ambiguity as the sign of authorial mastery and always in direct connection with the text's utility as a reproductive instrument that recruits and trains excellent young minds

to the bourgeois cause. Thus in the canon Bloom assembles, Kojève, Plato, and Rousseau become the most single-minded spokesmen of private property grounded in a common sense of natural scarcity, use value, and the eternal truth of the division of labour. In the Straussian method, the utility of a text is mediated and purified of instrumentality through the mastery of the author/teacher, he who knows the nature of things and directs the capable toward the Good, while misdirecting those who are too simple-minded away from the radical power of ideas. This hierarchy happens to conform with Nature, with the natural market-ecological divisions of class, by which the bourgeois condition of having the means to send children to tutors is dehistoricized into a naturalist aesthetics that reflects the scarcity of ability and taste (the masses will find the pursuit of truth boring; the ignorant will not understand it anyway).

The naturalism by which class divisions and those of ability are organized is a formalism that is reflected in the nature of textual production. In his influential essay “What Is Political Philosophy?,” Strauss explains that political philosophy is the search for the true natures of all things in regard to the whole; it is also the search for knowledge where opinion holds. In “On a Forgotten Kind of Writing,” he clarifies: because opinion is the medium and element of society, the political philosopher is always at odds with society, and therefore to communicate the necessarily-subversive truths, he must engage in esoteric writing, hiding meaning between the lines of an exoteric surface message. A bright, well-trained reader can recognize the hidden truths by noticing apparent blunders or contradictions in the work of an otherwise great writer. Thus the always-radical power of philosophy is contained within a text that is ordered in relation to the container of wisdom—the author’s authority. The exoteric can dissuade; or it can do double duty by appealing to the tastes of the masses who hunger for spectacle or poetry (for

instance those Socrates flees at the beginning of *The Republic*); the exoteric might even appear as banal, boring praise of the status quo.[31]

In this chapter I provide the necessary background for my overall argument that the shared method of this Paris-Chicago-Calgary nexus consists in synthesizing a canon of great books, whereby the division of intellectual labour is likewise naturalized into the academy, and that this is necessary to understand the synthesis of commodity-exchange and use-value characteristic in the neoliberal mode of reproduction—what connects academic work with the think tank, the genres of the essay with the policy paper, and the expertise of the professor with the political operative.

1.2 On Cooper's Theoretical Background

Leo Strauss's translation of Xenophon's *Hiero* is published in the book *On Tyranny*; this text, in which the Kojève-Strauss correspondence is included as an appendix, has served as the main container in which Kojève's work has been circulated in the English-speaking world. In it, Strauss stresses the importance of returning to classical political philosophy to discern and understand contemporary tyranny.[32] Answering Cooper and Flanagan's mentor Eric Voegelin's objection that the ancients don't distinguish between constitutional and post-constitutional regimes—that is, between the tyrant and the Caesar who comes to rescue the common good after constitutional order has degraded—Strauss says the political figure of the Caesar is sometimes politically necessary, but what's justified by necessity can't be choiceworthy in itself, thus

[31] Socrates is of course fleeing the vulgar attractions promised by an all-night festival when he is symbolically arrested by Cephalus's servants and brought into the house, promised more bodily goods—a meal which never arrives, as nourishment of the soul is quickly revealed to be the order of the day. This framing narrative is not simply literarily-structural, but it recapitulates the biopolitical development of correct *paedia*, too: we know that before meeting Socrates, Plato was a gifted and award-winning dramatist who may have wasted his talents appealing to the masses had he not been similarly arrested and brought into the world of Ideas to which the name "Cephalus" alludes.
[32] Like Bloom's translation of Kojève, *On Tyranny* is a noticeably-selective representation of Strauss and Kojève's "debate." See George Grant's discussion of the missing pieces in his *Technology and Empire* 79-110.

political necessity can't pertain to the good life. Therefore, the distinction between tyrant and Caesar belongs to the realm Strauss calls "modern political philosophy," the post-Machiavellian *realpolitik* that requires the bracketing and privatization of the search for the Good. More importantly, though, the differences between the tyrant and the Caesar are too subtle for common folk to understand; therefore those teaching political philosophy cannot admit that any tyrant-figure is legitimate without seeming to endorse power's availability for dangerous men to exploit.[33] In other words, the post-constitutional Caesar figure and the pre-constitutional tyrant—while not the same in truth—are sophistically equivalent, and moreover, it's a duty of the political philosopher as part of the division of labour to produce the "noble lies" of such equivalences publicly, while reserving the differences for the private, whether in the cephalic realm of his own conscious or the Cephalus-house where tutelage takes place. Strauss's translation of and commentary on Xenophon's text then functions to provide a containment strategy to contemporary pedagogues:

> It is better for the people to remain ignorant […] and to regard the potential Caesar as a potential tyrant. No harm can come from this theoretical error [i.e., the taking of complexity and difference as simple sameness] which becomes a practical truth if the people have the mettle to act upon it. No harm can come from the political identification of Caesarism and tyranny: Caesars can take care of themselves. (98)

[33] We know from history that this is literally true within the very term "Caesar." Julius Caesar was assassinated because he had assumed the position of king—he became a tyrant. Augustus was able to actually perform the role of Emperor—literally expanding the empire—by playing up his affiliation with the *Populares*. Of course, Julius had been a *Popularis*, too; and this is where the not-entirely-honest political figure of *Princeps* comes up. Caesar is a citizen, but the first one. And this figure of the Prince will of course be the avatar of the manipulative modern political philosophy characterized by Machiavellianism.

Strauss is not simply asserting an elitist premise that common people can't handle truth; he's stressing that the understanding of difference as something other than choice among objects of taste—*judgment itself*—is dangerous.

To be sure, then, political philosophy as Strauss defines it requires intellectual dishonesty. This characteristic extends from the "noble lie" tradition of *The Republic*, and is structurally reproduced in the esoteric/exoteric categorization.[34] But I am discussing this characteristic of Straussianism in order to highlight the formal means of rendering differences as equivalences, at once making everything from truth to opinion quantitative, matters of individual choice, while also reserving the quality of truth for those elect who are determined by their natural capabilities, and, of course, by their place within the division of labour. Among the end results of this pedagogical and productive method, I will show, are Cooper's identification of the Stalinist Gulag with the Multinational Enterprise, and Flanagan's rendering of all identity and meaning as alienable private property. Straussian premises are important not because they are examples of hypocrisy, of precise, honest, careful work being given over to opportunistic expediency—although such bad faith is definitely at work in the examples I show from Cooper and Flanagan. But for all his disagreement with Kojève regarding the end of history, Strauss's method presumes the effective end of history as a process of moving towards truth or freedom (or what-have-you) as it assumes that the ends sought by philosophers have been discovered, and all that's left to be determined is the means to bring about the best of possible worlds in accordance with an idea of human excellence as the bourgeois liberal-democratic subject of private property.

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[34] This structurally-required dishonesty is the source of Shadia Drury's claim that "Straussians always lie!" (*Leo Strauss and the American Right*); see the Straussian response in Minowitz *Straussophobia*. Nor does the "lie" need to resemble the government cover up or conspiracy. The point of Classical Political Philosophy, shared by Strauss, Bloom, and Cooper, is that myth is the lie, that people choose their myths freely and that politicians and philosophers must always remember that the myth is more powerful than any truth they can attain.

I hope I'm being clear that whether or not any of the Calgary School have any affiliation with Strauss (and they mostly all do) is irrelevant. I absolutely reject the premise of individual authority that the Straussian method presumes. But as a formula, as completely portable, the great books approach articulates an epistemic model that unites all the thinkers and the texts I examine. In other words, what the Straussian method or premise effects is the "modernization" that Lukács contrasts with necessary anachronism; Strauss's reading of great works forces the past to be the present. But it does so by way of the naturalization of the city/soul analogy.

That is, the Straussian approach to figuring the unity contained within diversity is an immanent way of canonizing and prioritizing. Thus if, say, *Emile* seems somehow out of place among the rest of Rousseau's work, the theme of the enigmatic text is then taken against the theme of most paradigmatic text, which forms basis for unity.[35] The quality that calls the cohesiveness or mastery of the subject into question becomes visible as the evidence for that mastery. The theory of labour, of work and of production, then requires that an oeuvre is not to be understood as a collection of lesser and greater works; the oeuvre itself is revised as the work and *the essential property* of the great thinker, as a synoptic scale against which "lesser" works are retconned into great treatments of lesser themes, which though lesser are still integrally important to the whole. This reading strategy is an allegory, which effects a movement from body to soul. The body of work is contingent, like the physical body, vulnerable to material concerns, to praise and to censure. But the flesh's weakness has no bearing on the strength of the soul; indeed, sacrificially the flesh can be martyred to the greatness of the idea. However dramatic or grandiose my claims regarding Straussianism sound, they are explicitly evidenced in

[35] Indeed, in Bloom's "Interpretive Essay" in his translation of *Emile*, he explicitly—and, frankly, *outrageously*—warns students not to read other Rousseau works without keeping *Emile* in mind as the master text.

Bloom's treatment of Socrates and of Kojève, in which he makes each thinker a Christ figure who is sacrificed for his class position.

The Straussian reading strategy teaches students to treat uneven works in terms of a unity circumscribed by the bioform (as long as those works are produced by great authors!). Works are never "orphaned" as Socrates discusses in *Phaedrus*; and, if they appear to be, then their interpretation needs to be revised in light of the unity of the author's mastery of his own works as his property, property modelled after the self-ownership of his soul. It is this bringing together of the body, which is the characteristic function of the polis—both literally and figuratively, individually and socially, spatially and conceptually—that will make apparent the matters of the soul.

The synoptic form, the gathering-as-political, is what makes the transhistorical order—the end of history—intelligible. And the origin of order in the political form explains why the contingent and instrumental functions performed by the text must be discerned. As Cooper argues regarding Northrop Frye's garrison mentality, political interests inhere in texts. The text will always be an object produced in and for a political context. As such it expresses what we might be tempted to call a political unconscious. But despite beginning with acknowledgement of historical, material conditions, the Straussian method is idealist through and through. The body is impossible to shed, but the immanent treatment of the body leads to the transcendent position of spirit. Just as the soul is always tied to the body, and philosophy is always tied to politics, the eternal teachings regarding the soul are always tied to the specific transhistorical form of private property. The author's authority is the form of originary unity. The author's body is transubstantiated into the body of work, and then this is apotheosized into the canon of those saints who sheltered the work of history's talented few from the decay of what Strauss calls the

"regime cycle," preserving the classical knowledge to be brought to light again for those talented middle or upper class youth who can escape the cave. In sum, this method allows instability and inconsistency to be interpreted as the firmest surety of all, and renders, like Kojève's Sage who has achieved the final wisdom that renders discourse complete, the canon (Bloom's particular fetish) as a collection of great works, each saying the same thing. The work of history has been to affirm the liberal-democratic present, to contain change within the unchanging subject modelled on the bourgeois form of private property. Great minds literally think alike.

1.3 Bloom's Socrates: The Rhetorical Containment of Political Economy

In the "Preface to the Second Edition" (1991) of his influential translation, Bloom explains how *The Republic*, as a subversive text, is of perennial interest. As popular music became more culturally important in the 1960s, students roused to indignation over Plato's calls for censorship. Most interesting for the 1990s, Bloom says, is the text's treatment of "the gender question." He argues the text shows that "reason can penetrate to the essentials at any time or place." Women, Socrates says, must be admitted to city even as soldiers, thus, even biological differences must be suppressed in the best regime. By giving over child-rearing to the community, women gain control over their bodies, "synthesizing the opposites man/woman into the unity, human being." Socrates might not be convinced of the factual equality of the sexes, but, Bloom claims, Socrates

> marks the starting point of something that would be unimaginable if he had not thought it through. One can search in other historical epochs and cultures, but the foundations of this perspective will not be found elsewhere. They are inextricably linked to the founder of political philosophy. (ix)

This claim is interesting because it seems to be clearly false. The foundations of the political and social equality of the sexes in the Greek/Western tradition are Pythagorean, and everyone knows Plato is deeply indebted to Pythagoras.[36] However, Bloom's last sentence contains the crucial distinction. It's in political philosophy, that is, *in the city* that the truly radical and novel character of gender equality comes to light: "the founding myth of his city treats men and women as literally rooted in its soil." For the Straussian political philosopher the polis is the *sine qua non* of philosophy. Even if the proto-communist cult of Pythagoras, like other cults in the ancient world, instituted such radical innovations as prescribed in the *Republic*, Plato is writing for the Athenian. This is the difference.

The city, then, is—like in the Straussian example of popular understanding—where structurally-necessary limits to agency are articulated. Moreover, these limitations are natural, expressing nature. But they are man-made by definition; they express human nature, the nature proper to the human animal. Bloom applies Straussian dogma to nature, arguing that

> Platonic dialogues are a representation of the world. […] The only difference between the dialogues and the world is that the dialogues are so constructed that each part is integrally connected with every other part; there are no meaningless accidents. Plato reproduced the essential world as he saw it. Every word has its place and its meaning, and when one cannot with assurance explain any detail, he can know that his understanding is

[36] Moreover, Pythagoras amassed his "foundations" from earlier, Eastern sources in his cosmopolitan travels. The Eastern influences persist throughout Greek philosophy, for example in the Platonic doctrine of recollection, in Socrates's image of shedding the body to get closer to truth, and they are also to be found in the closing lines of the *Republic*, where Socrates discusses Er. Socrates rewrites Karmic cosmology to foreground the importance of wisdom in choosing the best life. Er recounts that in the afterlife, the dead are given the chance to *choose lots* for their next lives. Because the nature of the soul depends on the nature of the life, only the chooser is to blame for any misfortunes to come because they can see the life before they choose it. Thus, as Bloom points out, it's of the highest importance to know how to choose right from wrong in order to choose the best life to have the best soul. This Pythagorean/Karmic choice/necessity even persists on to *Aeneas*, where choice is in conformity with civic duty, so the best Roman ghosts choose to be soldiers again. In other words, it's not at all clear how searching outside of Plato's Socrates "the foundations will not be found."

> incomplete. When something seems boring or has to be explained away as a convention [as Bloom claims previous translators have done], it means that the interpreter has given up and has taken his place among the ranks of those Plato intended to exclude from the center of his thought. It is always that which strikes us as commonplace or absurd which indicates that we are not open to one of the mysteries, for such sentiments are the protective mechanisms which prevent our framework from being shaken. (xxii)

All this sounds well enough coming from one convinced of Plato's complete mastery of his craft. But the world itself has insignificant accidents and unconnected things. If the world is so rich, then why does it need these? If nature is the standard, (and moreover, nature as *physis*, physical nature), then why would its representation be more integrally constructed than its standard? Bloom is framing Plato's teaching, as he will with Kojève's, as a mystery cult, an esoteric interpretive community. This then puts the previous strange statements imputing Pythagoreanisms to Socrates in a stable, transhistorical context. The initiate will come to enter the form of mystical knowledge, an exclusion built into the form of the texts and the history of philosophy in which it is a part. The initiate will eventually see that actually Pythagoras was a precursor, like the Old Testament prophesies pre-figured Christ.[37] In this method, the social nature of the text, the undecidable factors of interpretation, reception, and historical contingency are contained within a presumption of total authorial mastery.

There are, then, two natures: the natural *oikos* that partakes of the individual bioform, and the market ecology that organizes access to knowledge of this form. The natural world outside

[37] That Bloom begins his master-interpretation of the *Republic* by referring to music likewise offers an apparent inconsistency. He argues later that Socrates concentrates on speech and truth "while subordinating rhythm and harmony. It is Socrates who rationalized *music*." It's again striking that Bloom gives Socrates credit as the founder of yet another Pythagorean innovation. To be sure, this might be an invitation for the student to realize that there's more to Socrates, that there's a subversive history in Greek philosophy rooted in an exotic, esoteric Orientalism. But as much as it's an invitation to historicize the cosmopolitanism of Western thought, this is a Socratization of Pythagoras, a retcon, an assimilation of historical difference into a paradigmatic bioform of Western culture.

the city is the source of the Good, but it's unavailable to humankind except by way of the structural conditions that allow for the division of labour. Philosophers cannot achieve wisdom if they need to tend to their bodily requirements. This is a decent materialist argument! But instead of acknowledging material necessity as the untranscendable necessity of the ideal, the hierarchy is mythologized according to a naturalist aesthetic. What connects the pieces and the whole, the Natural world with human nature, is exchangeability. In Bloom's reading, philosophy and poetry are equal in that they are both discourse, and they are in competition for the public's attention as well as its money: poetry is more oriented to bodily desire and aimed at the masses; philosophy is a higher-order option aimed at the best men. Of course, this is a political/polis-based hierarchy, but it's natural, too. A modern Torontonian who's bored could reach for a magazine or a leather-bound copy of *Πολιτεία*, but there are differences—natural ones like ability and excellence, as well as conventional ones, like leisure time, education, etc.—that will affect this choice. The point is that differences that emerge from the division of labour are not only naturalized by the city as the transhistorical universal form through which regimes compete to organize life, but they are necessarily rendered as equal in abstract exchangeability.

The lesson of *The Republic*, then, is to see that Socrates has to defend his class position, to show that philosophy is better than poetry as a way of knowing the Just and the Good, but it's hard to do so because philosophy questions justice. Bloom's thesis is that *The Republic* is Socrates's "real" *Apology* (307). *The Apology* is directed to a jury who sees justice as law-biding. *The Republic* tries to define justice and the science that could ground it. Socrates's statements about Philosopher Kings *suggest* a perfect harmony between the city and philosophy, but Bloom says the clever reader sees a paradox: if philosophers are natural kings, then they're enemies of current ones—philosophy is always conspiratorial. As Socrates is an Athenian, he's necessarily

an enemy of Athens: he's actually guilty! But he is not unjust. In all actual regimes, the philosopher is dangerous and always in danger.

In this reading, Strauss's great lesson is reproduced: the radical nature of philosophy is not historical. Philosophy is persistently dangerous. Socrates didn't die because of old prejudices, but because political philosophy has essentially different interests than cities. That these differences are understandable as class differences and structured by the mode of production is even more evidence that these differences are eternal: "the proper staring point […] is the nonphilosophical orientation of the city in which philosophy must take its place. Hostility to philosophy is the natural condition of man and the city" (310). Clearly the end of history was achieved when the first philosopher discovered how to get by in the city, to make a living without, to use a Platonic reference, rocking the ship of state.

In *The Republic* Socrates is compelled to remain with Cephalus and explain himself to powerful men. So, the text is literally the apology for philosophy. He needs to convince those with power to let him be: "He will only give as much of himself as is required to regain his freedom. This situation is a paradigm of the relation of the philosopher to the city" (310). Socrates shows he's materially-pious to city, but his thoughts don't belong to it. As he attempts to go on his own way, Polemarchus orders a slave to catch him. This is order: the rulers control the many and the philosophers, too. It's thus in the philosopher's interest to come to terms with the powerful. Power is always at odds with wisdom. "All political life will be founded on such compromises" until it becomes possible for philosophers to rule. In Bloom's retconned reading, the rest of *The Republic* is evidence that such a possibility has already been achieved.

1.4 The Biopolitical Naturalism of Social Class

So far I've discussed the historical milieu assumed by the premises that I argue unite the Chicago and the Calgary academics, if not most conservative and neoliberal thought in general. I will now quickly expound on the social and political-economic premises that Bloom's Strauss's Plato's Socrates illuminates. The contemporary bioform of the bourgeois possessive individual is retconned into the perfect city, an origin myth for the aspect of the soul that characterizes liberal-democratic desire.[38] In order for the Sage's freedom to be naturalized as something that is not materially-dependent on the labour of others, a new class must be imagined. Bloom does so, again following Strauss, discussing *thymos*, or "spiritedness"—that aspect of the soul which Fukuyama makes so central to his end of history thesis.

That a philosopher can only exist within a sufficiently-developed division of labour is uncontroversial enough. But this freedom to pursue truth, and to protect oneself from those to whom the truth is necessarily a threat, must be naturalized. Thus Socrates presents a new class figure, that of the Warrior. Warriors are characterized by spiritedness, by anger and willingness to fight. Spiritedness is contrasted with desire or hungers, which originate in lowly bodily needs. Thymotic pursuits are those which overcome desire by sublimating desire to higher purposes, thus transcending reason as well.[39] *Thymos* negates given existence by forsaking preservation of the body in favour of asserting the self. And this negation has a social function, too, as the individual is willing to overcome its narrowly-defined self-interest:

> Moreover, the desires related to the body—which are the only ones that have appeared thus far—all have a self-preservative function, whereas spiritedness, on the contrary, is characterized by an indifference to life. It may indeed aid in the preservation of life, but it

[38] See Judith Butler *Subjects of Desire*.
[39] Naturalizing sublimation is a main theme in Bloom's reading of *Emile*.

> can just as well place honor above life. The city may exist for the sake of life, but it needs men who are willing to die for it. (348)

Spiritedness is a class consciousness that naturally emerges from the only environment in which humanity can develop as human, the polis. But keeping in mind the city/man metaphor, it's an essential psychic component of a harmonious soul who rules a healthy body.

While the Warriors look like other classes, Bloom says,

> they are really the first ruling class and introduce the first principle of hierarchy into the city. […] spiritedness at first sight seems to be just another quality of soul, like the qualities which made a man a farmer or a blacksmith, but it really represents a new part of the soul, one which will rule the desires and establish a principle of hierarchy in the soul. (349)

Other arts are all aimed at body-satisfaction and done for money, so they are abstractly-equivalent. However diverse the activities, mere life is the goal:

> They do not represent any fundamental diversity of principle. The warriors' art, however, is really different, and its services cannot be measured by money, for money is a standard for evaluating the contributions made toward the satisfaction of desire or the preservation of life. Spiritedness is beyond the economic system. (349)

Bloom is saying that *thymos* is beyond economic rationality, but he's glossing over the fact that it obviously emerges from the economic system, the division of labour, in the essentially-Maslovian narrative by which the satisfaction of simple needs generates more complex ones. To be sure, contra Maslow's ultra-crude model of historical progress, Straussianism dictates that complex needs articulate the greatness of the human as such, but nevertheless, in Bloom's phenomenological narrative, the emergence of complexity ("diversity") is identical to

economistic psychology, and in any case the warriors only emerge in response to the abstractions of fear and anger corresponding to the (if not material, then at least) concrete situation of amassed property, or the polis they wish to defend.

Warriors are not, then, beyond the economic system; they are of it in the sense that the philosopher is of the political system: philosophy can only develop along with the leisure produced by the division of labour; it can only develop along with the higher needs of the soul once the body is satisfied. But like the Warrior, the philosopher *is* beyond the logic of practical reason which characterizes the instrumentally-bodily-concerned activities of the polis. Thus Bloom proclaims that philosophy and human excellence utterly transcend economism:

> The founders of modern economic science, who wanted it to be a universal political science, could do so only by denying the existence of spiritedness or understanding it as merely a means to self-preservation. Only men who pursue self-preservation and the gratification of bodily desire can be counted on to act according to the principles of economic 'rationality.' (349)

It doesn't take much to see the trick here: money has been substituted for rationality. But this again is nothing more than a description of the structural givenness of the city. However, because *thymos* is of a higher nature than desire,

> Now there are two classes in the city, and the distinction between them is a purely natural one: one class is motivated by bodily desire, the other by spiritedness. The former can be counted on to pursue what we would call the economic goals. The latter has liberated itself from the single-minded concern for mere life. (349)

As I will show Bloom and Cooper do with Kojève, here Marxist insight is appropriated to prove the naturalness of capitalism. The felicitous development of the division of labour leads to

the transcendence of material-rational-economics, and now we have a new kind of person, the Warrior-Guardians, who, in pursuit of pure prestige are the real proletariat (the current order based on money has nothing to offer them). But rather than being, as the proletariat are, antithetical in their very being to the mode of production, the Warriors are perfectly integrated. That is, instead of having values that transcend the material conditions that created them, like Marx's proletariat, the Warriors' essential separation from the economic order that created them and cast them outside is retconned as the logical affective connection they have to the city. One must admit that, as a figure for false consciousness, the Warrior *is* like the worker who votes conservative; but, again, Bloom is presenting an idealist representation of the mode of production as evidence that the necessity of production has been overcome, and the ideal has overcome the material.

All of this is to say that by reading *The Republic* as *The Apology*, Bloom retcons the history of Western philosophy to be an apology for the present. Bloom's reading of *Republic* naturalizes what I call the biopolitics of form. In Bloom, what Socrates calls "learning how to die" is translated into the bourgeois pursuit of a kind of knowledge that can understand itself as being outside of materiality. To be sure, this is basic Platonism. But unlike Platonic idealism, in the Straussian reading the material isn't overcome except in discourse. *The Republic* can only be Socrates's "real *Apology*" because, in Cephalus's home, the individual as private property is safe from having to compromise too much with the social—that mass from which he derives his leisure. Thus, Socrates can be *ideally* understood, as Bloom puts it, as taking from no one and exploiting no one (350-351). Bourgeois production is not simply allowed by a division of labour, but as the expression of *thymos*, it's not connected to labour; it doesn't "exploit" or take from others.

Thus the origin Bloom locates in Socrates, the “starting point of something that would be unimaginable if he had not thought it through,” refers to the birth of the form of value that sees itself as the expression of the possessive individual, not tied to others, even though it can only emerge in the city.[40] This structural premise is the key to my whole argument: the city/man structure by which phenomenology is equated with Nature makes it logically and rhetorically possible to argue that truth has been radically severed from labour and that value has been severed from material production, but this separation is presumed *a priori* by the social relations naturalized in the image of the city, where the split between expediency and truth happens. That is, the only actual political truth or wisdom that one can attain through the Straussian method is that classes are natural—though not necessarily hereditary or preordained—and some should rule (and not *govern* like in the hated Athenian democracy) while others should follow according to their place, determined in the archetypal phenomenology of the city.[41]

1.5 Literality and Indigeneity: The Mythographic Structure of the Universal State

In this section, I summarize Bloom’s completion of Strauss’s project of political philosophy, which as I argue in the next chapter, Cooper uses in his structural approach to Western-Canadian historiography in order to assimilate the presence of Indigenous peoples to what he calls Western Political Consciousness. Bloom’s Socrates tells us that poetry is like the Warriors; it needs to be

[40] This image is the kernel for Milton Friedman’s Robinson Crusoe figure, by which the division of labour is a phenomenon that comes into being by the decisions of people already fully formed in the image of human capital (see Friedman 19-20). The myth—what constitutes affective belonging to the city, or “piety” without “giving”—is that the head is free, like the Cephalus-house, a room of one’s own, i.e., the poetic relation of the body to the polis (for a treatment of the “cephalic” that enriches the *Republic*’s city/man analogy, see Giorgio Agamben’s discussion of Kojève in *The Open*). This figure of the private sphere’s necessary relation to the public, forming the whole, makes sense of Bloom’s next incorporation, his translation of *Emile*, in which, we recall, the only poetry allowed to young Emile is *Robinson Crusoe*.

[41] In one way, it’s noteworthy that Fukuyama extends the figure of *thymos* to explicitly conclude that Strauss’s reading of the *Republic*, and his paradigm of the city/man, is the exactly the same as Kojève’s master-slave-struggle; that is, both are forms that make sense of all experience, synthesizing historical, social, individual, and perceived data into a simple formal relation. But in another way, it’s utterly unremarkable that a method whose truth consists in revealing that everything is the same as everything else would reveal yet another instance of sameness.

controlled; spiritedness must be softened and reason must be hardened. For Plato, poetry is dangerous because it is imitation; it creates objects of desire. Poetry is myth—it is not true. But Socrates shows how it can be moderated, and the danger reduced. Bloom's reading of Socrates, which posits the philosopher's duty to use and control myth to manage political life, sheds light on the focus of my thesis—the literality that's taken as the referent for the transhistorical market-ecology of Nature. Like Bloom's Socrates, the Calgary thinkers and neoliberals like Coyne take the literal as the least dangerous form of discourse, as it's the mode of discourse that's incapable of meaningful distinctions, which would complicate the premises of the post-historical and post-material universal homogeneous state.

Socrates explains that in the best regime, warriors are to be controlled with art in order to love the beautiful. Bodily desires require conflict, but with proper poetry, Warriors will be taught to sublimate their desires; in a formula that strongly resonates with Tom Flanagan's Hayekian view on child pornography (Chapter 3), the Warriors will thus disdain tyrants and thieves "not as a result of moral principle but as a matter of taste." Like in the case of Justin Trudeau's purchase of the TransMountain pipeline, it's not the rational principle of a government building a pipeline that spurs some Westerners' rage; it's the supra-rational thymotic matter of pride.

The city/soul analogy again orders social forces. The body is healthy if the soul is healthy. Moderation is the key to each. The proper myth—the noble lie—will ensure moderation. This myth proposes a market ecology, in which all are equal as consumers, and this equality is manifested as freedom to choose in accordance with reason, desire, or spiritedness. Bloom's reading of Socrates's origin myth, the myth of Er offered as the proper myth for the best regime, asserts a market utopia of personal responsibility. The myth must explain that all members were

born from the soil and were educated prior to emerging from it. Blood ties them to city as to family. It identifies the city and regime with the nation. As Bloom puts it,

> Short of a universal state, nothing but such a tale can make a natural connection of the individual to one of the many existing cities. Moreover, in this way, the regime is lent the color of naturalness. […] functions which the regime has educated the citizens to fulfil are attributed to nature; the citizens grown into their political roles as acorns grow into oaks. (365)

With differences thus homogenized through formal equality, entelechy is the image that unites the artificial with the natural. Differences naturalized, the political divisions are legitimized, including tyranny, or what Bloom calls the rule of the stronger. But, if all believe the same myth, then justice was present at the origin of the political—retconned as the origin of the political—therefore no one can claim that justice is expedience; there can be no justification for rebellion, because all difference inheres in the indigeneity shared by all subjects. Bloom summarizes: "Such are the advantages of autochthony" (365).

Synthesizing the great works of Western civilization into the universal bioform of the possessive individual, Bloom explains that, as in Kojève's theory, rhetoric is the final stage of wisdom. Poetry doesn't create anything, it reflects. Socrates's famous quarrel with the poets pertains to how Homer presents gods, which the latter didn't make and has no knowledge of, just as the shadows on cave's wall are imitations and not things in themselves. But poetry does, for example in the cave myth, *put things together in light of whole*. Homer doesn't explain well enough how he grounds the whole he presents. There's no praise of the poet's part in Homer, no way to comprehend the work the poet is doing. That is, Homer is not self-conscious; as Lukács

says, the Homeric world is immanent and not critical or *alienated*.[42] Therefore Homer cannot instruct the reader to comprehend what wisdom is. Socrates criticizes Homer for celebrating heroes, and thus for subordinating thought to action, speech to deeds. "Socrates accuses Homer of not reflecting on himself, and hence making a world in which there is no place for himself." However Homeric poetry, as imitation, is "animated by a view of the whole," but Bloom insists that in the lack of a "basis for that view," "Socrates is legitimated in treating him as though he were merely a universal imitator of the arts to be judged by every artisan, or an incompetent statesman" (430).

The real matter of poetry, then, the real theory of literature in *The Republic*, is concerned literally with the marketability of the claims to be made. Moreover, far from eschewing distortions, the philosopher must, Strauss-like, embrace them as his duty—as the most literal interpretation of the Oracular imperative to "know thyself!" Bloom concludes,

> At all events, the teaching of the myth is a strictly human one—man in this life, without being other worldly—can attain self-sufficient happiness in the exercise of his natural powers and only in this way will he partake of eternity to the extent a human being can do so. Otherwise stated, only the philosopher has no need of the myth.
>
> On this note the discussion ends, Glaucon having learned his lesson in moderation, and Socrates thereby having made his apology —the apology of a man who benefits others because he first of all knows how to benefit himself. (436)

[42] To be completely accurate, the Homeric world—the world of "first nature"—technically *is* alienated *as art*, but the art reflects an immanently-meaningful totality, an unalienated world. See Michael McKeon (179-184), and Lukács's introduction to *The Theory of the Novel*.

1.6 Bloom's Introduction to Kojève's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*

In this section I quickly present Bloom's introduction to Kojève. Bloom figures Kojève's work as a Straussian Great Book decoupling Marx, Hegel, and Kojève from history and materiality. In so doing, the relationship between Marx, Hegel, and Kojève is rewritten. Instead of participants in a mutually-constitutive (literal and figural) dialectic, they are made over into paradigmatic (though for all that, completely-exchangeable) individuals, individuals who are each arguing the same theory of history. Lastly, the individualized Marx, Hegel, and Kojève become proper names, which function as containers for the division of labour. This makeover of the most radical historicists into the transhistorical figure of Straussian Great Man is of course the most ironic transvaluation. But it is effected by the literal resolution of irony—the alterity between appearance and reality, between what is and what ought to be—into the authorial bioform of the bourgeois possessive individual. Most ironic of all, though, is the dissolution of the material and social history, the character of labour, that Bloom's volume on Kojève performs: the form of the Great Book assimilates the work of Kojève as an interpreter of Hegel via Marx and Heidegger, whose lessons were transcribed by Raymond Queneau, whose notes were reviewed by Kojève, whose "book" was written then, literally, by Queneau, and was then edited, annotated, and commented upon by Kojève, and selected and translated into English by Bloom, and then distributed within the marketplace of ideas vis-à-vis Kojève's relation to Strauss on the right and the burgeoning Anglophone market for French theory on the left, as well as by Cooper, and again years later by Fukuyama.

My thesis is that Bloom's Kojève, practically the only Kojève available to the English-speaking world, functions to dehistoricize history, presenting a Hegelian historicism, as Bloom puts it in "permanent light of Hegel's teaching"; it makes, that is, the end of history the premise

rather than the conclusion to *Geist*'s journey. Bloom's Kojève's "Marxist" Hegel uses historicism to prove that there is no history.

Bloom begins by claiming that Queneau's collection of Kojève's notes "constitutes one of the few important philosophical books of the twentieth century, a book, knowledge of which is requisite to the full awareness of our situation and to the grasp of the most modern perspective on the eternal questions of philosophy." Citing a lengthy quote from "hostile critic," Bloom casts Kojève's teachings as inaugurating an esoteric cabal of elitists initiating other "progressivist intellectuals," leading ultimately to the works of Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, of *Temps Moderne*, and *Esprit*. Since his seminars, "we have breathed Kojève's teaching with the air of the times." And, importantly, Kojève is credited with being the first to "propose the successful ménage a trois of Hegel/Marx/Heidegger."

In the first half-page of the book, then, we have heard the following praises, and all from a "hostile critic," no less: 1) Queneau's Kojève is the most essential philosophical text of the century; 2) "Kojève is the unknown Superior whose dogma is revered, often unawares, by that important subdivision of the 'animal kingdom of the spirit' in the contemporary world—the progressivist intellectuals"; and 3) Kojève's work "was effected by means of oral initiation to a group of persons who in turn took the responsibility of instructing others, and so on." This knowledge is not only necessary, but esoteric and all powerful. It's the medium from which "progressivist" intellectualism and politics are formed. By citing this conservative critic, Bloom is performing a clever rhetorical strategy, which appropriates Kojève's leftist legacy to Bloom's own conservative project: the reactionary imputation of "progressivist" is hysterical, so the conservative who's making fun of the reactionary gets at once to ridicule the reaction and to

retain—sublated—the affect or imputations of the progressive badge. (Tom Flanagan's use of this formula will be a major site of my dissertation's critique in Chapters 3 and 4.)

With this formula Bloom is demonstrating the most vulgar Hegelianism, how the Other is appropriated by the self. This appropriation foreshadows how Canadian conservatives will use Indigeneity as the basis for Western-Canadian identity, as well as how the political strategy of outrage works, which I will show in regard to Flanagan and Ezra Levant. The imputation, so exaggeratedly-scandalous, of Hegel-Marx-Heidegger (an association that for a literal-minded Marxist would disqualify Kojève outright), is precisely what's going to be taken most seriously by the Kojèveians going forward: Bloom has made Kojève a Marxist. Those who are not initiated to the proper reading of Kojève think they understand Marx, but as they are not among the elect, or the cult, they don't even understand that Marx was a Hegelian idealist.

To wit, Bloom's critic relays that Kojève's "dogma is revered, often unawares" by leftists. Bloom is taking the new Marxist figure and using it to ridicule communists and Marxists who don't understand the religious form of Kojève's function. The form of religion, that all-pervasive totem of Young Hegelianism, is imputed to the Left, and to any structures or affiliations based on any relation to Hegel/Marx; and these are ridiculed by way not being self-conscious: Kojève's epigraph to the book cites Hegel saying "masses form unconscious material of new epoch of spirit." The Left, then, is not aware of its religious form. However, the followers of the Straussian formula to contain philosophy as great works ordered by the eternally-true myth of the author-authority, *are the real followers of Kojève*. They understand the religious form and indeed know it to be the fundamental organizing structure of politics as such. Classical political philosophy is the truth and contains the truth by which the elect can live in among the fallen, by

which Socrates can live in the private home, and by which conservatives can thrive within humanities departments. Kojève is their prophet.

So it is that Bloom proclaims the end of history with the utmost clarity and confidence:

> Now, the most striking feature of Kojève's thought is his insistence—fully justified—that for Hegel, *and for all followers of Hegel*, history is completed, that nothing really new can again happen in the world. To most of us, such a position seems utterly paradoxical and wildly implausible. But Kojève *easily shows* the ineluctable necessity of this consequence *for anyone who understands human life to be historically determined*, for anyone who believes that thought is relative to time—that is, for most modern men. (my emphasis x)

Right away one notices how grabby Bloom is being, how much he sweeps up in his reach. His statement is not only rhetorically sweeping or encompassing, but it literally takes up all of "Hegel's followers," anyone who believes in historical determinism, which is, he says, everyone! Those who would argue against the ineluctable necessity that history is complete are those leftists, who, "unawares" argue in the name of a Marx-Hegel who has already proven them to be wrong.

Clearly, the proposition that "most modern men" see "thought as relative to time" is laughable, except from the literal position that we are modern, we believe in modern life, modern life comes after history, so we're after history. Moreover, this post-historical perspective can only be figured by means of retroactive continuity:

> For if thought is historical, it is only at the end of history, that this fact can be known; there can only be knowledge if history at some point stops. […] It is precisely Marx's

> failure to think through the meaning of his own historical thought that proves his philosophical inadequacy and compels us to turn to the profounder Hegel.

Whatever the reader's theoretical sympathy, the retcon is clear. Marxists know that Marx's entire critique of Hegel amounts to Hegel's failure to transcend philosophy and arrive at a critical theory; Hegel failed to historicize his own thought in relation to his class position. Hegel inaugurated this process by paying attention to the historical nature of property, but did not push this to its conclusion. Bloom's Kojève retcons the condition of possibility for a true historicism—that possibility in the face of which Hegel balked—as the conclusion of historicism.

Where Fukuyama's crude rhetoric casts off material origins altogether, explaining the necessity of the "return to Hegel and Hegel's non-materialist account of History, based on the 'struggle for recognition'" (Fukuyama xvi), Bloom's more sophisticated method collapses origin and end allowing for a rhetorical trick: he claims either history or reality must be right, or they're both wrong. "If Kojève is wrong, if his world does not correspond to the real one, we learn at least that either one must abandon reason—and this includes all science—or one must abandon historicism" (x). But, having alarmingly raised this epistemic crisis, Bloom explains that what matters comes down to attitude and style, or taste: "More common-sensical but less intransigent writers would not teach us nearly so much." Kojève's attitude is what teaches us; being intransigent is identical to rejecting common sense, and this is equated with knowledge being taught: "Kojève presents the essential outlines of historical thought; and, to repeat, historical thought, in one form or another, is at the root of almost all modern human science."

One more thing is needed, however, to prove the end of history in the triumphant idealist advent of *Geist*. So far Bloom's only discussed Kojève's *teachings* about our thought; it's about

everything that we know and could know and which we must abandon if Kojève is wrong, but it's still just thought. What's rational has to become actual. And so Bloom concludes his introduction with this post-scriptum:

> [Shortly after the completion of this statement I learned that Alexandre Kojève had died in Brussels in May, 1968]

Literally, Bloom's statement is complete: Kojève is incorporated into the pantheon of Great Men. He has transcended his empirical reality as a man working with others and by completing his labour, showing all the contradicitons to be resolved, Minerva's Owl has alighted. Turning back, we see that the material body has already passed from this world.[43]

1.7 Barry Cooper and *The End of History*

In 1989 Francis Fukuyama raised academic hackles worldwide by pronouncing the completion of the work of understanding and rationalizing the world in accordance with the liberal-democratic idea of freedom. Despite clearly explaining that he was only saying history had ended *in Hegelian terms*, he was clear that these terms indeed heralded the advent of the universal homogeneous state. Fukuyama was ridiculed for treating the empirical evidence that the Cold War stalemate was finished, that the battle of two great competitors had ended along with the USSR. But perhaps he needn't have bothered arguing that this resolution—such as it was—had occurred. After all, five years earlier, Barry Cooper had published a tome on Kojève also claiming that the work and the story of history had ended, and his evidence was, just like Kojève's, that the West and the USSR were in a stalemate. For Cooper, the Multinational Enterprise (which Cooper abbreviates "MNE") and the Stalinist Gulag were only competing in

[43] He'd given his life to those unawares in May '68, where, Cooper is fond of saying, he cut his teeth. See Cooper's "Weaving a Work."

terms of content; they shared a rationalized structure that was homogeneous in that throughout the world, the entirety of nature had been humanized through technology, and life had been completely rationalized and administrated.

For Cooper the concentration camp, just like the internment camp in *The War Between Us*, signifies the rendering of all subjects as *oikos*, configuring all of life by resolving the ecological into the economic. Cooper cites Alexandr Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* as evidence that this market ecology as an administrative context—however horrifying—perfects the rationality of human freedom. And indeed, in Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, one finds that there's freedom in the barracks, and life is that of a political animal, who uses its cleverness, skill, desire, energy, or whatever to attain what it chooses.

As in the Kojève that Bloom, and as I will briefly show in this section, Cooper, presents, at the end of history, the ideal is total, and the material has been transcended. A short look at Cooper's Kojèveian end of history will provide the historiographical analogue to the city/man scheme, in order to discern the epistemic claims for neoliberal rationalization that Flanagan proposes and that underwrite the ideology of infrastructure, which I will examine in Part Two.

My argument is that Cooper's equation of the MNE and the Gulag is formally sound, but it's only possible to render everything as *oikos* by excluding history and particularity as *xenos*. So, as we'll see with Flanagan, whatever appeals to the excluded *xenos*, to history and materiality, exemplifies racism, unfairness, the bad stuff of the past. But there is still content to contend with. I therefore argue that the Gulag, or the camp, no matter how ubiquitous the biopolitical governmentality of our contemporary security state, retains a specific historicity. The concentration camp, as Arendt, Agamben, and Cooper show, is a paradigm of administration and a *nomos* of the modern. But it is so historically; that is, it emerged as part of industrial

production. The camp is the ideal or governmental complement to the productive or material reality of the modern—the industrial mode of production.

Cooper begins his book by stating its immediate Straussian context:

> It would clearly be an exaggeration to say that Kojève is unknown to English-speaking political science. Yet it is certainly true that his is a familiar name only to specialists and to a small circle, many of whose members were pupils, or pupils of pupils of Leo Strauss. Kojève was more widely known in France. (9)

Cooper explains that, in his book, Hobbes is "the beginning," and the rest of the text "reviews three prominent features of post-Hegelian political practice: the emergence of multinational enterprises as the successors to nineteenth-century colonial imperialism, the system of Soviet concentration camps, and the supersession of them both in the technological society." Acknowledging that Kojève's Hegel is not universally agreed on, Cooper says,

> Scholars have disputed Kojève's interpretation. It is not balanced. It is not fair. It is a wilful distortion of Hegel's meaning, a cunning reading that finds in the text what the commentator put there. None of that concerns us directly. The Hegel scholars are probably correct to say Kojève has vulgarized Hegel. So far as political science is concerned, that is not necessarily a fault, nor does it detract from the value of his argument. (3)

Thus the reading begins by synthesizing the intransigence Bloom applauds with a structuralist presumption of utility. Such a reading is, to be sure, legitimate, but only as a referent to the great man/great book theory! In this epistemic context of greatness, authority, and attitude, Cooper muses that perhaps the scholarly detraction of Kojève's interpretation is but the reflection of self-righteous anger at the desecration of a mystery:

> Hegel has, for a long time, been considered as one full of secrets. […] It has been said, quite rightly I think, that Hegel wrote in code. Kojève's importance in this regard is that he decoded Hegel. By turning Hegel's encoded wisdom into a straightforward, almost common-sense idiom, Kojève has made it widely accessible. Now it may be judged, mocked, laughed at, hated, by nearly anyone. (3)

He continues, "Thought 'negates' finite things by turning them into concepts, the proper medium of discourse. […] Everything having been said and done, these things and sayings may be totally accounted for in the one system of science or wisdom" (4).

We notice right away that this Hegel is de-materialized, de-historicized, rendered completely ideal and discursive. The "vulgar" "desecration" signifies that something more than just a mystifying sheen has been stripped away in the translation of Hegel's esoteric idiom into common language, newly-available to the masses through Bloom's *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, and through Cooper's present text. What has been stripped away is, of course (if one believes in such a distinction), the substance—the content of history that ties the panoptical security state to the industrial mode of production it has since superseded. More than simply popularizing Hegel, Kojève marks the moment in which substance, content, material, and history have been homogenized into the ideological complement to the post-industrial mode of production: the liberal idealist equation of process with value.

As a process-circulatory theory, Kojève's work illustrates the difference and the importance of the difference between retcon and necessary anachronism:

> Hegel's most accessible work, *The Philosophy of History*, ended with an account of the empirical triumph of liberalism. Now, the task of a Hegelian sage is to account for the historical rationality of the actually existing world. Kojève […] can adopt the role and

> continue the story to include events after […] Hegel, the first and paradigmatic sage, died. […] Liberalism, however, is not the clearest of concepts. Perhaps one should not call it a concept at all but rather a collection of opinions that optimally expressed a complex of sentiments at the time of its origin but subsequently was overtaken by events. In this way, liberalism has been forced to change and alter its content in order to reveal the meaning of a new configuration of events as being contiguous with the earlier, optimally true opinion. (7)

The historical necessity of anachronism requires that we see how liberalism and conservatism were produced of the same historical substance. This substance is the material basis or real-world conditions that the different ideologies were constituted in response to. However, formally, the shared historical origin allows for the chiasmic reversal, the retcon position to be articulated, which emphasizes the identity of the products rather than the circumstances of their production. So Cooper explains that the original uses of the terms "liberal" and "conservative" were overtaken by events, and after the revolutions from 1848 to the mid-20th century,

> liberals, in the nineteenth-century sense, have taken the role originally played by conservatives. It seems quite reasonable, then, to argue that liberalism, whether in its nineteenth- or twentieth-century form, is a phase of a continuing revolutionary movement. The dramatic beginning of that movement is 1789. (7-8)

Naturally, to accept my distinction between necessary anachronism and retcon requires that one generally agree that Hegel's formula "what's rational is actual and what's actual is rational" is only applicable after material conditions have resolved, which is, of course the position generally assigned to "Marxism."[44] Without such agreement that grammatical

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[44] This general position, the inversion of the Hegelian dialectic, is a *formal* characteristic common to the most vulgar and the most sophisticated Marxian theories. However, the difference between the vulgar and the sophisticated is far

reversibility does not extend to the world of referents, the formula falls apart, and leads to the following type of claim:

> To argue that Hegel's is both the last word in political science and an accurate description of our present world, one must make sweeping and ingenious interpretations. Clearly, some things have changed. […] The question at issue, however, is whether our present regime is essentially or fundamentally different from its nineteenth-century predecessor, however described. (287)

Here Cooper seems to make a distinction, one that would pertain to the distinction I've brought up: if liberals and conservatives are formally interchangeable, then does that not say more about idealism than it does about idealism's apparent triumph over its material origins in the nineteenth century? But Cooper's distinction is itself simply formal, simply a restatement of the original premise that sweeping, ingenious interpretations are necessary.

Cooper goes on to answer the question he's raised, explaining that James Doull, for example, argues that revolutionary will indeed turned into objective freedom in the nationalisms of the nineteenth century, but that in the twentieth century the nation is no longer the site of power. Cooper agrees, but stresses Hegel and Kojève's interpretations still hold,

> if one distinguishes the meaning or essence of Hegel's argument from the contingent configuration in which it was cast. […] Accordingly, the state, even in the *Philosophy of Right*, is historical in form and so subject to empirical alteration. Thus one must distinguish between nineteenth-century contingencies, such as the difference between the

more fundamental a matter than one having better content than the other. The vulgar—with its simple attention to materiality as an important part of the dialectic—is apparent in Isaiah Berlin's characterizing of his Hegelian protégé Charles Taylor as a "Marxist," and Taylor's reception as one (e.g. Ian Fraser *Dialectics*); the sophisticated version would be Althusser's extremely complicated analysis in "Contradiction and Overdetermination."

> state and civil society [i.e., those Doull cites], and the essential or fundamental feature that both elements shared, namely the desire for recognition. (287)

This is a pure formalism: if one agrees that there is a determinate content to a process, then that process will reveal the most sweeping and ingenious interpretations are no different in premise from the most banal common sense. The fact is that liberalism and socialism are the same in principle. They both agree on the fundamental goal and legitimacy of human freedom. Thus Cooper proclaims that liberalism and socialism lead to "a stalemate so far as principles are concerned, and debate turns upon tactics":

> The opposition between liberalism and socialism (including Marx's variety of socialism) is not, by this account, fundamental. Tactical differences may be profound and the pragmatic results may even be violent, but that is not in itself evidence of fundamental disagreement. A fundamental disagreement would be involved, for example, if one side upheld the privileges of the nobility or of the clergy or denied that the highest goals in life could be gained by self-actualization. (8)

So, naturally, all empirical data conforms to the sweeping premise, and national liberation struggles, religious and ethnic strife, all conflict is, despite self-understandings, means of reconfiguring the actual to the rational:

> in any event, the revolt of the rest of the world against the West, as Toynbee called the phenomenon, has been less a counter-revolution against westernization or modernization than its continuation under local management. Colonization and decolonization, then, are moments in a single process, 'the painful birth of the modern world itself. None of the former colonial peoples remember it with gratitude for it was alien rule; but none of them wish to turn back the clock, and this is its historical justification.' (289)

The low-profile quote[45] and its musing speculation about putting omelettes back into eggs, shows a sophism that will become much more prominent in the Calgary School's work, in Cooper's occasional political writings and in Flanagan.

Empire is likewise the exclusively formal link between the past and the present:

> This discussion of modern imperialism has centred upon three points. First, the Napoleonic empire and the power configurations that succeeded it were not simply extensive real estate holdings but were informed with a spiritual meaning derived from the ideological outburst that accompanied the French Revolution. Second, the context of Western imperialism was partly framed by the increased knowledge that Westerners had of other civilizational units. This knowledge, in turn, exploded the early Christian myth that ordered the events of history on a meaningful time-line starting with God's creation of the world and ending with the Apocalypse. (296-297)

In this narrative, modern, post-Christian historiography registers the naturalist knowledge of other civilizations, races, etc. This historical understanding leads to a naturalist understanding of power: "Instead of history being the story of god's way with mankind, it was the story of the rise and fall of power units and civilizations endowed with specific biological or cultural characteristics." And this naturalism is accompanied by a dizzying instability in regard to the place of humanity in history:

> Third, the actual expansion of Western power over the rest of the world moved from liberal confidence expressed in Seeley's famous and silly remark delivered in 1881, 'We seem, as it were, to have conquered and peopled half of the world in an absence of mind,'

[45] The quote comes from a 1961 essay, "Colonization and the Making of Mankind," by Herbert Lüthy. Cooper's note refers to this essay and another "For an account of the pre-history and the claims and demands of 'have-not' nations"; and he explains "What the original 'have-nots' didn't have were colonies" (372n4). This is no doubt true, but like usual, it's a conclusion contained in the premise of the nation state itself, that some places "have" stuff; to have it requires a nation.

> to the remarkable sight of Britain and France on the brink of war over Fashoda in 1898. (297)

Such "political neuroses," Cooper explains, "express an anxiety that a decade later erupted into a general war that was without a statement of clear political purpose by any of the participating Great Powers." While the appropriate ideology, or content, was eventually catching up with world events, however, the formal movement of imperialism, the extension of the process of which liberalism partakes, continued irrespective of content:

> At the same time, however, imperialism in the sense of metropolitan control of colonies was in retreat by the close of the nineteenth century. The actual divestment took another fifty years or so. But by then a new and more flexible instrument of power was in place, the multinational enterprise. (297)

One notices that Cooper's specific details are substituted with the suggestive but vague figure of "by then." How did the "new instrument" come to be "in place"? If the multinational enterprise is the historically-contiguous manifestation of human revolutionary will and of liberalism, then surely its advent—in specific detail or in phenomenological terms—is of interest, is it not? As if responding to the reader's interest in historical specificity, Cooper switches modes to recognize that substitution requires care.[46]

> A word of caution is in order. We know [from Arendt] that imperialism played an important part in the genesis of totalitarianism. But imperialism is not totalitarianism. The presence of Hegelian elements in modern imperialism as well as in the multinational enterprise (MNE) and in the Gulag does not mean that they can be equated. (297)

To describe the MNE, the Gulag, and "modern imperialism" as "characteristically different institutionalizations of the Hegelian idea of the state in no way contains the implication that they

[46] Note my discussion of Flanagan's similar thematic treatment and performance of substitution in Chapter 3.

are interchangeable. It takes very little common sense to distinguish *Fortune 500* from the islands of the Gulag" (297). While Cooper's caution is indeed prudent, it's hard to see exactly what it refers to other than an accusation that Cooper is saying modern consumer society is exactly the same as the Gulag. Fortune 500 companies and the administrative apparatus of the Gulag are easy to distinguish, but we're dealing with, as Cooper says in regard to liberalism and socialism, the question of whether the MNE or the Gulag is "essentially or fundamentally different from its nineteenth-century predecessor," and, obviously, Cooper has spent hundreds of pages explaining how they are not. The Fortune 500 and the Gulag are both expressions of the essential naturalist premises of the market ecology.

In any case, the argument is that history was completed by 1806, and so, presumably, the explication of how the MNE came to be is nothing more than empirical detail. Thus, while paying the appropriate symbolic homage to difference—that "recognition" of difference that characterizes neoliberal thought—by declaring that "a word of caution is in order," Cooper's section titled "Multinational enterprises" starts with the presumption and assertion of post-historical homogeneity, while gesturing to difference: "Only recently have non-Marxists not been embarrassed to use the term empire to describe the political and economic order centred in the United States."[47]

Cooper explains that "an economic interpretation of imperialism is not the same as economic imperialism." Literal differences aside, he continues, "The activities of MNEs, however, are chiefly economic, and for this reason they may be identified as the most important agent of contemporary capitalist imperialism, the direct descendent of bourgeois emancipation." In a note, he clarifies, "By capitalism I mean no more than a developed market economy, to be

[47] In other words, following the structural chiasmus of 19th-century liberals and conservatives, non-Marxists are now playing the role Marxists traditionally played.

contrasted, according to the United Nations classification, with developing countries and centrally planned economies" (374n24). In other words, the word capitalism refers to the market ecology, and not to the empirical details of how that ecology is organized:

> In considering MNEs, we largely ignore differences between manufacturing, processing, service, and extractive operations as well as the specific historical contingencies (and competing explanatory accounts) of the origin of European or American direct investment in foreign countries.[48]

Cooper is writing at the time of neoliberal reorganization, when the national-oriented ideologies that had governed the 19th-century as well as the post-WWII period, were losing steam. And his end of history shows that it is not capitalism or even multinational enterprises, but the market ecology that represents the ultimate rational actuality. As history is the story of wars for recognition and consciousness constituted from symbolic or real violence, the MNE's goal—its self-understanding—is to "help achieve the apparently universally desired goals of peace and prosperity by ending the violence and suffering inflicted by the politics of the nation-state." Cooper is clear that this is mostly rhetorical, self-serving and "systematic lying." But, the truth beneath the rhetoric is "that multinationals discourage 'irrational' beliefs and thereby erode institutions that stand opposed to their operations. Chief among these irrationalities are nationalist and ideological loyalties." The periodization Cooper's essay is performing is clear. Flanagan and Hernando de Soto will make the exact same argument, but they will not need to appeal to anything as concrete or specific as even the universal homogeneous state in order to claim that First Nations' land regimes are irrational and should join the market ecology.

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[48] He continues, "We focus, rather, on the relation of the MNE to the principles of homogeneity, universality, and technology, all of which, as has been argued, are essential elements of the universal and homogeneous State." It's worth taking a moment to reflect on this remarkably-circular statement: considering MNEs, we ignore differences and focus on the relation to the principles of sameness, which are essential elements of the premise that everything is the same.

Cooper demonstrates how neoliberal dogma equates to naturalism:

> That the operations of MNEs are not always in harmony with even the peaceful interests of the nation-state is hardly news to Canadians. For those who have overcome their parochial national sentiments, however, 'the multinational corporation, precisely because it is a threat to the sovereignty and independence of the nation-state, may well be the harbinger of further evolution of human society, out of barbarism towards a more humane, equitable, and non-discriminatory civilization.' (300)

The age of the MNE is that of "trans-ideological order," in which "Following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, for example, no existing co-productions agreements were cancelled." The naturalist rationality of which the MNE partakes transcends, as freedom did in the nineteenth century, all ideological divides. The MNE is the avatar of technology, "the third essential element of the universal and homogeneous State"; and technology implies "that maximizing long-term profit throughout the world means pursuing the 'one best way' in all areas of activity." To be sure, prioritizing efficiency lead to a rather absolute "elimination of discrimination," and "The results can be grotesque if judged by the obsolete criteria of historical rather than post-historical standards." For example, I.G. Farben's decision to locate his synthetic rubber plant in 1941 " 'at Auschwitz was based on the very same criteria by which contemporary multinational corporations relocate their plants in utter indifference to the social consequences of such moves: wherever possible costs, especially labour costs, must be minimized and profits maximized' " (Richard Rubenstein, qtd. 301). To claim that history is ended requires precisely what Strauss urged the philosopher to pursue: the elimination of discrimination-as-such, the containment of distinction as a formal possibility within the strictest limits of the subject of private property. For this subject to be actualized, eggs must be broken, and whether the eggs are

historically distinguishable as capitalist eggs or socialist eggs, they're all the same in the omelette.[49]

1.8 The Gulag and Technology: from the Camp to the Corridor

Cooper explains that the Gulag is the *nomos* of the post-historical state, a realization available to the work camps' inhabitants, the zeks:

> According to Kojève, consciousness of death was a "metaphysical necessity" for the self-formation of the fully self-conscious citizens. Now, the chief product of the camps was death, a state of not being there any more, a condition when time, not just history, stops for an individual. Eventually this happens to everybody, hence the genuine universality of death. […] Camp terms and exile involved very long periods. Moreover, a zek could be sentenced to an additional term simply by administrative decree. Inside, one must submit to the ceaseless repetition of the same situations: roll call, searches, labour, poor food, cold, mosquitos, dirt, inadequate sleep, submissive gestures – all this, undertaken by innocent individuals, is as close as one can imagine to the experience of time having come to a stop. In short, the sheer organization of camp routine had the effect of instilling a consciousness of death. (307)

Terror was likewise consciousness-inducing. Particularities can be neither privileges nor disadvantages when arrest and interrogation happens for no reason and for no objective.

[49] Obviously Cooper's argument falls apart if one takes historicism to mean something more than ahistorical structuralism. The famous and likely apocryphal story in which Emma Goldman tells Lenin she sees eggshells everywhere and asks him where's the omelette is instructive here. The proof of any omelette is, of course, in the eating. Cooper has simply reversed the positions between material and product, finding proof of the omelette in the fact that in the twentieth century so many people have been eaten by the production process itself. A perspective willing to consider relations of production would argue that Cooper sees himself as identifying Stalinist totalitarianism with transnational capital's totalizing of the empirical world as value. But he's really simply discerning the industrial mode of production shared by Stalinism and Fordism. Still, my point is to show how such rhetorical equations and dehistoricizing operations allow for the mistake to be so pervasively understood as real and actual.

Moreover, the Gulag's *nomos* extended outside its walls; everyone in Soviet society was equally vulnerable. "Thus," in the society of the Gulag, "did there occur the internal melting of consciousness and the disintegration of all stable supports, just as was demanded by Hegel" (308). "In short, the universality experienced by the zeks in camp was of their own mortality and finitude" (309). The focus on universality leads to the Kojèveian interpretation: "our rejection of what presently appears as grotesque is merely prejudice based upon a deficient understanding of the deeper rationality of what is actual" (314).

What's actual is that in totalitarianism all history is condensed, along with the spectrum of possibilities of human experience. To experience the camp, then, is to be wise. Cooper describes how after his release Solzhenitsyn went out of his way to address party officials as an equal: "he wrote like a peer: he recognized the Soviet leaders and gave them the opportunity to recognize him in return" (316). Nor was his extraordinary literary talent of crucial importance to the wisdom he exemplifies. His experience is identical to that of millions of others, an experience which was, "both personal and common and was, therefore, equivalent in meaning."

Cooper explains that "History, according to Hegel, was the actualization of all human possibilities. When one enters upon a world where all things are possible, one has swallowed, in a concentrated dose, historical experience itself. The rest, one may say, is post-history." And this experience is wisdom. Wisdom transcends the particularities of time and place, and shows how the camp is, not simply the manifestation of totalitarianism, but as Agamben says "the *nomos* of modernity." Like in *The War Between Us*, the camp is, literally, the worst imaginable place, but it leads to perfect equality and to the understanding of the true value of life, including the true meaning of race and community. Solzhenitsyn says "It is a good thing *to think* in prison, but it is

not bad in camp either … a free head – now, is that not an advantage of life in the Archipelago?" Wisdom, once attained, cannot be lost or taken away, and Solzhenitsyn explains that zeks

> are used to the worst the world can do, and nothing can depress them. I am proud to belong to this mighty race! We were not a race, but they made us one! They forged bonds between us, which we, in our timid and uncertain twilight, where every man is afraid of every other, could never have forged ourselves. (qtd. 317)

The freedom that emerges from the complete actualization of rationality, from the universalization of human possibility, has been achieved. Whether or not one needs to undergo the literal, or empirical, experience of life in the camp is not entirely clear, but Cooper says that since the West has

> already experienced the whole of history whereas the Slavic world, in 1806, had not, it may not be necessary to concentrate historical time so much as to recollect it conceptually. This means, of course, that we must grasp its rationality, a rationality that is common to both MNEs and the Gulag, and most perfectly appears so in the technological society. (317-318)

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The Idea has triumphed and spread. Now the material must catch up. Continuing his peculiar practice of using Christian eschatological thinkers to prove the rightness of the most radical of atheists,[50] Cooper grafts Jacques Ellul's theory of technology to the end of history thesis. For Ellul, "Technique is rationally standardized in accordance with explicitly described logical norms. It is artificial and automatic in the double sense of preparing a new generation by training them in technical skills and by replacing unspecifiable criteria of choice with efficiency." As the identity of liberals and conservatives showed that the Idea was agreed upon and all that was left

[50] On Kojève's atheism, see Love, but especially, Kojève's recently translated and published volume *Atheism*.

to contest were the means, technique is the completion of what remains empirically unresolved: "It is self-augmenting, an irreversible progress in which means have established an absolute primacy over ends" (321). I will argue that technique is like technological nationalism: as it is intransitive of content; as Cooper puts it, it's "beyond good and evil," as "no one rationally chooses the third best way" (321).

Cooper's "technique" is the unwieldy subject/agent akin to what Imre Szeman calls techno-utopianism, and what Amitav Ghosh calls the "language of solutions" (Szeman "System Failure"; Ghosh "Petrofiction"). For example, Cooper explains that pollution is understood to be important, but it "is clear that modern, post-historical humans consider these problems as technical challenges." And protests against, say nuclear energy, are often simply "propaganda techniques" in favour of other sources, which are implicitly understood to be more efficient. Thus I will argue that the rationalization that constitutes the identity of the camp and the MNE, is, in Canada, manifested as the extractivist form of alienable, liquid property.

Finally, Cooper's equation of the camp and the transnational administrative entity of the MNE reveals the character of the Calgary intellectual within the neoliberal mode of production. Moreover, this mode of production enacts the totalization of liberal-democratic recognition. At the end of history, as all experience in the world is interpreted through technique and valued in terms of efficiency, the technocrat emerges as the post-historical class, who by being most efficient, is most worthy of recognition. "And efficiency, one scarcely need add, is an attribute of the free, mortal, historical individual, and is not a reflection of gender, nationality, race, or family."[51] "The technicians" are agents of governmentality who "use a special technique,

[51] Surely, current examples like NASA's lack of women's space suits, the standard size of hand grips on power tools, and automatic faucets that don't recognize non-white skin might challenge this assumption that technological rationality is devoid of particularity. But one could tidily respond that efficiency means design in accordance with the average, and that those who complain that they don't fit are clinging to their "parochial sentiments."

propaganda, to ensure that their efficiencies are truly recognized, namely, by compliance." They aim not at transforming opinion, but encouraging a feeling of participation among those who have no political activity as such. "The post-historical result," Cooper cites David Lovekin to conclude, "is the traditional goal of thought, 'the overcoming of the bifurcation between the world and my idea of it'" (322-323). This "precisely, is wisdom: the world is as it is conceptually described" (324).

The technological society as Cooper describes it is

> an expression of human will, the cool imposition of form, measure, and line upon an irrational, vibrant, pulsating nature. Technical man, in principle, is liberated from all natural constraints. Obviously, humans are not liberated purely and simply. The regime of pure freedom, Hegel taught, was terror. Rather the constraints are the constraints of technique itself. Whether these constraints are more severe than those of nature, as many contend, it is idle, for present purposes, to inquire. What can be said is that liberation from natural necessities was coeval with the construction of the technological society and submission to its necessities. Concretely it is peopled by technicians, functionaries who command technique, and by others who consume its results. But all are at home there and know it for what it is. Both the Gulag Archipelago and the regime of the MNEs may be understood without distortion as variations of the technological society. Both, under distinct historical, cultural, geographical, economic, and perhaps even ethical or spiritual circumstances, have put into operation the 'one best way'. They are, therefore, equivalent insofar as they express variations of the same post-historical regime, the universal and homogeneous state.[52]

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[52] Cooper emphasizes that "any fool" can tell that life among McDonalds restaurants is "more sybaritic" than life in the Gulag, but that the "meaning" of each is equivalent. He also concludes that the reality of atomic war, and its

Having sketched out the theoretical background, I focus the remainder of Part One of this dissertation on the actuality of Cooper and his colleagues' roles as technicians. Despite its terribly jejune ring, Cooper's identification of post-historical knowledge as "propaganda" is simply the restatement of Bloom's Straussian Socrates's noble lie, in the Kojèveian idiom. It is Myth, that technique of governmentality that ensures "efficiencies are truly recognized, namely, by compliance," and that appeals to the affects of belonging.

Cooper, following Strauss and Bloom, has rationally described the rationality of the post-historical market ecology that constitutes the perfection of human experience. In the rest of Part One, I will examine Cooper and his Calgary colleague Tom Flanagan's work in this market ecology, the technocratic production circulated in what Hayek called the marketplace of ideas.

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absolute transcendence of everything—through, he quotes a *Wibakusha* as saying, "the power to make everything into nothing"—ultimately unites the Gulag and MNE, as resistance to life under either form is rendered impotent compared to now-always-imminent thus immanent destruction of all meaning.

Chapter 2

Barry Cooper: The Myth of Western Alienation

> In a book on the art of writing which has been justly noted because it is truly noteworthy, Leo Strauss has reminded us of what has tended to be too easily forgotten since the nineteenth century—that one ought not to take literally everything that the great authors of earlier times wrote, nor to believe that they made explicit in their writings all that they wanted to say in them.
>
> Alexandre Kojève "The Emperor Julian and His Art of Writing"

2.1 Myth as Method

In this chapter I argue that nowhere is the myth of Canadian unity more alive and productively thriving than in the preoccupations of those who would refute it. I analyze Barry Cooper's reactionary polemics against the Eastern, Loyalist, "garrison mentality" to show that his arguments—far from negating these myths—effect their elaboration, expansion, and *reproduction*. Reproducing these myths—precisely in order to refute them with new, Western myths—is the necessary work of the brand of political philosophy I have been tracing.

Cooper's presentation of what he calls "Western political consciousness" concludes that Eastern myths do not apply to the West, and therefore other myths are necessary for the West's distinct identity. Cooper's critical method, which he draws from Eric Voegelin and Strauss, as well as from W.L. Morton, sees the mytho-poetic as the literal expression of identity, while naturalizing history and materiality into a timeless structure. I argue that Cooper's political science consists of taking Canadian structuralism and myth criticism absolutely literally; he takes, in effect, Northrop Frye's literary theory as though it were sociology in order to posit a naturalist market-ecology in which political questions are dehistoricized and translated into narrative choices. My thesis is that in Cooper's mythic structure the regional, indeed all identity, acts as an alibi for, or expression of, the universal homogeneous state. This conclusion is both enabled and necessitated by Cooper's end of history premise, in which regionalisms are simply

expressions of homogeneity circumscribed within a liberal-democratic, multicultural choice model.

Introducing Cooper's essay "Western Political Consciousness," Stephen Brooks says Cooper "draws on a wide variety of literary and historical material in arguing that political thought in western Canada is mistakenly viewed through concepts developed out of the experience of the East" (Brooks 9). In this chapter I will examine the widely-different claims enabled by this "wide variety," arguing that in Cooper's textual practice the postmodern insights that knowledges and signification practices are discursive—that social science must be apprehended through concepts like metahistory or historiographical metafiction—are inverted. Cooper, in this essay and throughout his career, takes Morton's historiography and Northrop Frye's literary criticism not as two discourses working together to highlight disjunction or connections between discursive modes, or as illustrating an essential textuality of signification that produces meaning out of instability between figural and literal modes, but rather as rhetorical means of stabilizing the liberal-democratic subject. I will examine Cooper's literalist adaptation of Canadian structuralist criticism to contain historical and particular difference. Following the Great Men formula, the "variety of material" from which he draws are translated into documents and discourses each making the same claims. The wide variety allows the concepts to develop a normative homogeneity upon which variety then appears as liberal-democratic choice grounded in a naturalist analogy to geographic regions. And since (some of—or at least one of) these regions *literally* predate the nation, they cannot be understood through ideas like "national unity." The variety of discourses Cooper draws on, and which I will show characterizes both settler-colonial historiography and the work of Cooper's fellow Calgary alumni, such as Tom Flanagan, renders the distinctive critical power of each discourse into

affirmations—as Cooper explains, *myths*—so many structuralist consumer choices from which to construct identities of liberal subjectivity.

Asserting that identities are local myths competing on an underlying structuralist order grounded in naturalist figures like region and geography, Cooper pursues his project to dismiss Western alienation as an ill-fitting claim. He thereby disclaims the demands of the sociological tradition that would address material and historical differences like those of race, colonization, or class. Cooper pursues this by dehistoricizing Frye and Morton's work, bundling the critique of Donald Creighton's historiographic Laurentian thesis, Harold Innis's political-economic staples thesis, and Frye's literary-critical figure of the garrison mentality in order to highlight the "imaginary" nature of national understandings. Cooper begins by claiming "Regional identity is at the heart of Western political consciousness. For many Westerners, as for many francophone Quebecers, the significant public realm is not Canada but the region or province" (213). This regionalism, which I argue Cooper posits as market-ecological "Nature," shows that Canada is already at an end of history since, for a good number of its citizens, the nation is akin to the post-historical transnational corporation (which in the form of the Hudson's Bay and the Northwest Companies provide the historical-material origins of the West): the nation is, like the corporation or the Gulag, "first and perhaps last, a legal structure that performs certain administrative functions." The nation is not "a collective political reality, nor an important source of meaning or pride, save under exceptional circumstances. In contrast, the region, the West, carries a constant and positive emotional valence: it is here and us" (213). In other words, in the West, Northrop Frye's famous question "where is here?" isn't a question at all. Cooper explains that Frye distinguishes "between national unity and regional identity," arguing that the "question of Canadian identity," is "badly posed." According to Frye, identity is "local, regional, cultural and

imaginative; unity is national and political" (214). Cooper then takes Frye's starting point—"the essential element in the national sense of unity is the east-west feeling…expressed in the national motto, *a mari usque as mare*"—as though it were Frye's central conclusion:

> If the tension between unity and identity dissolves into either of its poles the result is either "the empty gestures of cultural nationalism" or "the kind of provincial isolation which is now called separatism." The east-west feeling, he said, has developed historically along the axis of the St. Lawrence drainage system. (214)

Cooper's suggestive figure of a sewer imaginatively connects the prior, natural geography of region, through an image of infrastructure, to the artificial figure of the "garrison": "Frye summarized his impression of the way that the Canadian imagination has developed as being characterized by 'what we may provisionally call a garrison mentality'" (214). Cooper discerns the structural features of Canadian literary history as a repetition or reproduction of colonial-imperial knowledge production (of course, this is Frye's point, too): "The earliest maps of the country showed only forts […] The cultural maps of a later time also showed only forts, according to Frye." But by literalizing the rhetorical and "provisional" equivalence of geographic texts and literary texts, Cooper is able to use Frye's figures as evidence of a naturalist ecological structure upon which regional experiences struggle.

Knowledge claims reproduced on the basis of the Eastern myth (that Canada is experienced as a garrison) presuppose the political-form of the garrison: "Now, a garrison is a closely-knit, because beleaguered, society, held intact by unquestionable morals and authority. Motives count for nothing. One is either a fighter or a deserter" (214). Cooper next establishes the genealogy of the garrison, in the process synthesizing Frye with Margaret Atwood. And to be sure, as the mode of academic cultural production reproduces disciplinary discourses, there is

some truth to this conflation, but for Cooper both critics partake of the same homogenizing project:

> As Margaret Atwood, one of Frye's most gifted pupils, put it: 'The central symbol for Canada—and this is based on numerous instances of its occurrence in both English and French Canadian literature—is undoubtedly Survival, *la Survivance*.' The point of garrison life, evidently, is to survive. Garrisons are also sites of military and administrative rule. (215)

Not simply part of the same institutional or disciplinary apparatus, Atwood and Frye are here agents of Eastern governmentality. This follows from Cooper's initial Kojèveian historiographic equivalence of the Gulag and the transnational corporation as being united in the form of law.[53] Hence, the *nomos* of the garrison: its "unquestionable morals" reflect that everything has been decided; that "motives count for nothing" reflects the concreteness of the formal structure. As an administrative form, the garrison represents the actualization of universal human reason, but its actualization is still particular. Cooper is claiming that the garrison as a form of administrative governmentality is one ahistorical "regime" among others, and the rest of Canada has chosen different forms.

Cooper's theory is remarkably assimilative and synthetic: he combines Frye and Atwood with Dennis Duffy, combining the imaginative and the real, the literal and the metaphorical, the literary and the socio-psychological into one blunt assertion that further renders Eastern prejudice and administrative rule indistinguishable.[54] Cooper's garrison thesis, to which he

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[53] In other words, the *Recht* that Hegel developed out of Kant's political theory, and to which we will return in the conclusion to this dissertation.

[54] This synthetic capaciousness is, as I showed in the example of Bloom's introduction to Kojève, typical of the Straussian approach. For his part, Frye certainly does distinguish between literal and figurative garrisons:

> In the earliest maps of the country the only inhabited centres are forts, and that remains true of the cultural maps for a much later time. Frances Brooke, in her eighteenth-century *Emily Montague,* wrote of what was

repeatedly returns for diverse purposes and in various genres throughout his career, is that Frye's "identification of imaginative Canada with the political unit" provides the key for decoding the mythographic structure beneath all contemporary Canadian politics. For Cooper, Frye is absolutely right, except in scope. The garrison mentality is true in that it expresses genuine cultural experience, but not for the rest of Canada. In other words, Frye articulates the Eastern experience so authentically, that we can be confident he's wrong about the West.

Of course this authenticity presumes a Romantic expressionist naturalism in which geography, while not *determining* ethnic genius, is the milieu from which such genius emerges. Frye's articulation is so genuine because his agency consists in what W.L. Morton calls "deliberate" action within his geographic and mythical context. Thus I argue that Cooper's work, like the work of Flanagan, is not (as Frye's is) *about* the literary imagination, but is rather a product of the literary imagination: Cooper's work is imaginative literature.

I hasten to add that my thesis is not so glib as it might sound. I'm claiming Cooper's political theory assumes extremely literal structuralist premises that take the priority of a subject's environment as the basis for an ecological naturalism. Moreover, by coordinating this structure with a Kojèveian end of history, Cooper's literal myth-critical method forecloses any possibility of historical difference based in actual material differences of experience, like we find in Bakhtin or even in Frye. At the end of history, myth is all there is. Thus what is thematic in Canadian literary criticism—the themes of Atwood's *Survival: a Thematic Guide*, or, the ultimate self-referentiality of structuralist schemes—is taken in Cooper to be normative rather than descriptive.

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literally a garrison; novelists of our day studying the impact of Montreal on Westmount write of a psychological one. (*Bush Garden* 224-225)

Nor is my claim that Cooper is writing myth *ad hominem*: his philosophy of history clearly posits its own mythic character. As we see in the epigraph to this section, for Kojève, the already-achieved status of truth means that post-historical writing is instrumental technique, or what the Straussian tradition of "Classical Political Philosophy" calls poetry. While Strauss would contend that technique is what protects truth from being discovered and abused by the unworthy masses, each thinker agrees that the great questions of history have been solved, and that writing and philosophy is the technique of employing historiography towards mythography.[55] Cooper's literal use of Frye allows him to collapse the distinction between statements about the literary imagination into the literary imagination itself. Moreover, by equating the structural similarities shared by narratology and geography (since these are both discourses, and therefore literally "the same" as structures of signification) with the truth underwriting human action, Cooper constructs a mythographic theory in which Hayden-White-style metahistory is equal to historiographic metafiction; but instead of leading towards a postmodern *abyme*, in this mythography the radically-decentred "meaning" of "signification" is radically centred in the absolute authority of the liberal-democratic subject, the Great Man, the possessive individual, or the bioform.

Cooper takes the phenomenological priority of the local environment—the "it is here and us"—to make the historical claim that the ecological milieu is literally prior to any other experience, like those which presume a national scope. He takes his phenomenological point of departure from Frye, whose "east-west feeling" was never meant as an empirical or ethnographic claim, but is an articulation of the ambiguity of settler experience, the origin of the immigrant's ambiguous relation to new geography and the conduit for the nation's conflicted and developing

[55] This is the conclusion of Strauss and Bloom's influential reading of *The Republic*.

psyche.[56] The east-west thrust is not simply a narrow assertion of what counts as Canada, but a figure for tracing the course of Western civilization, of commerce, and especially of empire. This movement does not begin in Montreal and end in Toronto: "The original impetus begins in Europe, for English Canada in the British Isles, hence though adventurous it is also a conservative force, and naturally tends to preserve its colonial link with its starting-point" (*Bush Garden* 217). What Cooper presents as the Laurentian outlook is already self-consciously mythical—and more importantly, self-consciously *critical*—in Frye. Frye isn't "proposing" Canadians adopt this myth or playing the role of a native informant, giving the key to his region's values; he's describing the peculiar "tendencies" of English Canada in the explicit terms of myth. Frye is not, as Cooper takes himself to be, describing a particular "political consciousness."

But Frye is a myth critic as well as a structuralist, so his work provides the formal patterns by which Cooper can posit that the Laurentian identity Frye supposedly claims unites the nation is only one identity among a great variety, and that these identities belong to regions that literally precede any union, as, for Foucault, resistance precedes power—since power is always exerted *on* something prior to the exertion. Not quite like Foucault's theory, though, these pre-unified subjects are those of the Robinsonade—liberal individuals. That the primordial environment is a region understood in local myths structurally presupposes other regions and other myths, all equally legitimate. Thus what in Romantic philosophy was seen as ethnic or racial genius emerging out of the *volk*'s organic relation to its environment, i.e., the particular

[56] But, in Cooper's method, empirical and phenomenological are actually synonyms! "Empirical political science includes the analysis of consciousness by the consciousness of the analyst. *This* consciousness is always somebody's, and that somebody is engaged in a permanent effort at responsive openness to reality and reflective verification. It is hard to conceive of anything more empirical" (Cooper quoted in Avramenko 41). In addition to being indistinguishable from phenomenology, such empiricism is also "critical theory"—that is, from a decidedly-uncritical phenomenological standpoint that assumes the observer to be a stable *a priori* subject, of course.

"nation" whose *telos* is the universal State, becomes in the post-historical context "style," lifestyle choice, or "taste." That such racial-national development is essentially historical—the material and content of History and change—is stabilized as Cooper grounds identity in a changeless structure by way of the Straussian concept of transhistorical regimes.

And Strauss's place in Cooper's approach becomes even clearer in regard to the difference between the liberal elements of his theory—that individuals are particular actors in a market ecology—and those more "conservative" residues from Grant and Morton, the retained grand narratives that allow for Strauss's great men and for Voegelin's insistence on the literal reality of good and evil.[57] In this post-historical historiography, the market ecology at the base of the universal mythographic structure cannot be deterministic, as this would simply affirm the materialist theories Cooper and his colleagues are arguing against. Rather, market ecology requires this agency be accountable, that choice is the individual's deliberate pursuit of "interest." This is apparent in the theory undergirding Cooper's critical method:

> When the discourse of sensitive and intelligent minds contains elementary contradictions, these are not necessarily errors, that is, accounts that are not adequate to reality. Assumptions may not have been sufficiently clarified, of course, but more to the point, Frye's account in interested. I do not mean by this that Frye did not intend to tell the truth nor that he did not tell the truth, but that truth is never disinterested. It is always limited, always deployed against another truth and so never independent of power, never not at the service of a particular interest. (214)

Here power is a structural relation occupied by contingent interests. In this essentially-Schopenhauerian-Nietzschean-Foucauldian model, the structure is the horizon of events, and

[57] See Voegelin *Political Religions*. Cooper regularly puts these Voegelinian moral claims to work in his reports for the Fraser Institute, the Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies, and in books like *New Political Religions, or, An Analysis of Modern Terrorism* (2004).

History is the narrative of particular interests' changing coordinates within the structure. To use McLuhan's suggestive term, these interests are "figures on a ground"; the ground is, for Cooper, literal, and the figures are, obviously, figural. But Cooper's own "interest" becomes apparent in this scheme as well, in that this Foucauldian statement provides the structure to be employed in the service of a Straussian thesis.[58] As Cooper elsewhere explains,

> As most students of political philosophy know, Strauss was a careful reader. His interpretative principle […] was that "if in a given case [an exceptionally talented author] apparently happens to do a bad job as a writer, or as a thinker, he actually does it deliberately and for very good reasons."[59] (31)

This combination of a Foucauldian relation of power to interest, stabilized in the Straussian container of individual mastery and authority, has the happy effect of permitting past greatness—which is necessary for claims that one regime is better than another—by further containing history in the *pre*-post-historical past (as racism is in *The War Between Us*). In short, for Cooper, as in Kojève, significant differences in values occurred only in the past. Consequently, unlike the Great Men and their Great Books, modern writers are to be taken literally, and their apparent ambiguities express, not guile in concealing the truth from others' interests, but that their "truth" is identical to their interests.

Cooper presents Frye's "contradiction":

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[58] Cooper published a book-length study of Foucault in 1982. Cooper also recounts that Voegelin gave him the resources to account for the variety of experiences in Canada, resources further enriched by his study of Foucault, with which he

> examined the study of western politics from a base in central Canada as the deployment of 'power-knowledge.' For example, Pierre Burton wrote a very popular book on the Canadian Pacific Railway called *The National Dream*, but I can recall my grandfather discussing the CPR as if it were a vivid nightmare both for him and his neighbours. What did this conflict in interpretations, symbolism, and experience mean? (Cooper "Weaving a Work" 380)

[59] Quoted in Cooper "Hunting & Political Philosophy." Strauss's entire quote is far clearer regarding the degree to which the great writer's mastery is total and therefore the ultimate authority regarding his reception. See Strauss "The Spirit of Sparta or the Taste of Xenophon."

> In the present example Frye maintained *both* that identity is regional and local and imaginative, which is why the literature of one's own country can provide the cultivated reader with "an understanding of that country which nothing else can give him," *and* that there is a Canadian mentality expressed imaginatively in a Canadian literature. If one holds to the first insight, by implication Frye becomes something of [an] emptily gesturing cultural nationalist [i.e., the opposite of a separatist]. That is, the survival of the garrison, which is by all arguments the symbolization of an identity of some kind, has become an expression of a national identity.

Cooper would be correct—*if* Frye's garrison were the only symbol, or an Ur-symbol, for Canada, or even a dominant one, which it's not clear is the case. But in any case, even if Cooper's claims were not made of words he put in Frye and Atwood's mouths, their literary criticism would not amount to a very consequential cultural nationalism since few people other than literary scholars even know about it. This is not to diminish the important work of tracing the literary establishment and the university system's roles in intellectual production and the culture industries, or of tracing the regional or national biases at work in disciplinary formations like structuralism or myth criticism. But such work is clearly not Cooper's "interest." Put simply, what Frye says about popular literature doesn't determine what consumers of popular literature think. The "contradiction" that Cooper identifies is only a contradiction because Cooper puts it in a "both/and/then" form. Even without looking at Frye's essay, which I will do below, it's clear that the "contradiction" is formal, a sophistic substitution of relations for attributes, which has nothing to do with content. Because, to be sure, identity can be *both* local *and* belong to an entire

nation, even a large one containing many geographical regions, as Cooper himself asserts in the case of the United States.[60]

Cooper's sophistic substitutions continue: "In the quotation given above, the 'country' is identified with the abstract political unit and not with the concrete and etymological sense of land lying opposite an observer, which is to say, a local meaning."[61] With this, we've arrived at the literal/figural crux by which the distinction becomes possible that allows for the Western identity to be based *on* and not *against* Frye's supposedly-universal Eastern identity: "local" is abstract, too, that is, part of a structure, a system of relations (the coordination of meaning within which, is, for Frye, the work of the faculty he calls "imagination"). This literality leads Cooper to state, "Now, Frye has said that the national sense of political unity is an east-west feeling centred upon the St. Lawrence. This, let us say flatly, is nonsense. There is no Laurentian feeling in British Columbia. The dim memories of such a feeling on the prairies are mostly hostile." Cooper moves past this crux figurally by way of another conflation, this time combining myth-criticism and the sociology of literature. He cites Duffy, who concludes his own myth-critical book on the literature of Upper Canada by saying he's found himself "standing at the corner where Mythology runs into Politics." Having presented his case regarding mythology by way of literary criticism, Cooper likewise turns to "Politics."

He cites Rousseau and Robespierre to emphasize the dangers of claims to national unity. Unity "inspired by a single will" leads to instability, as it can radically change its direction without losing unity. The exception is when the "many become one when confronting an

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[60] (as Cooper and Flanagan's renarration of the West's origins in the United States presumes.)

[61] (There's no indication which quotation contains this identification because, as Cooper says, Frye distinguished between national unity and regional identity; the latter is local, regional, cultural and imaginative, the former is national and political. Thus, the only Frye quote—"the essential element in the national sense of unity is the east-west feeling…expressed in the national motto, *a mari usque as mare*"—is about unity, not identity. It's possible that Cooper's referring to his quote from Atwood.)

external and threating other" (217). Because post-Confederation Canada has never experienced the actual, literal, threat of war, it has no unity. "In short, only in the presence of an enemy can such a thing as *la nation une et indivisible* exist. And Canada, the peaceable kingdom, has never experienced the requisite enmity." Rousseau's idea of the *volonté générale* helps to explain Canada's persistent calls for "national unity": "Rousseau tacitly identified will and interest, with the assumption that will is a spontaneous or automatic interest. Thus, the *volonté générale* is, according to him, the interest of the people or the nation: it *is* national unity." Since the general will actualizes in opposition to "each individual interest and will," each particularity contains the general will's enemy, leading to a threatening dynamic that

> has the convenient consequence that the doctrine of national unity can be broadcast in the absence of any threat […] because the image of national unity is sentimental, and like all sentiments it is boundless. Thus it can be enjoyed independent of any political realities. In Canada the sentiment is expressed, with nauseating regularity, by whining phrases such as: if only Canada were united, then…Then all things would be possible. The century would be ours.[62] (217-218)

Cooper's critique of the desire/sentiment for national unity is sound enough. But it's increasingly difficult to make out the conclusion he draws: is Cooper's argument literal or figural? Is the "whining" proof there is no real unity? Or is it evidence of a real—and therefore pernicious—unity that seeks to be realized? The confusing warnings continue:

> Furthermore, since will, and by Rousseau's reasoning, interest too must be made concrete and institutionally actual, it can be concentrated in a small body of men, and even in the soul of one man. The danger of tyranny in such a view has been explored by Rousseau's

[62] On this last point, at least, Cooper and I agree. Such whining is regularly deployed in pathetic appeals to "nation-building," "unifying" behind infrastructural projects like the Northern Energy Corridor, which I look at in Part Two.

> critics and is also apparent to practical men who understood and opposed those political events in modern history that bear the mark of Rousseau's reasoning. (218)

The reader will note the lack of clarity in claims such as "the danger of tyranny" resides "*in*" "such a view"; these lead one to wonder if Cooper is arguing that Frye and Atwood are endorsing Rousseau's political theory (and then, if they were, how this would be anything but farcical that literary critics are playing Robespierre from the Ivory Tower). The confusion comes from Cooper's practice of putting people—like Atwood, Frye, and Duffy—and other unlike things together. He starts the discussion with Robespierre, who, by putting Rousseau into practice, indeed unleashed dangerous tyranny. But the figure for the agency that would actualize this threat then is hopelessly obscured through shifts in tenses and constructions that confound any logic of transitivity: the danger "has been" critiqued, and "is" apparent to critics who "understood and opposed" the "events" that "bear" Rousseau's mark.

Cooper leaves off lingering questions like: were the Loyalists Rousseauvians? Are they still? Was, perhaps, Rousseau a mythographer who provided the universalizing formula that the descendants of Loyalists fill with their particular content? Cooper instead returns to the purely rhetorical strategy of resolving the confusion between literal and figural, between past and present, with an assertion of the most literal clarity: "These remarks on Rousseau's political thinking help clarify the matter of unity and identity." Thereby, he concludes, "national unity is a symbol expressing 'Canadian' identity, the identity of the Loyalist heartland" (218). The Loyalist identity was "formed under the strenuous circumstances of exile," and, through the War of 1812, "maintained by strength of character." It was and is, he explains, *literally* a garrison mentality.

2.2 Taking the Literary Literally: The Mythic Origin of Settler-Colonial Historiography

Continuing to take the literary critic as a literal social scientist, Cooper maintains that Frye and Atwood are absolutely correct in their phenomenological and thematic structuralism, but they are wrong in their conclusion, which he imputes to them by refuting, "the West is not a transplanted imaginative Ontario garrison" (219). Taking up a very-Frye-like mode,[63] Cooper explains that European explorers of the West were faced with very different landscapes than their vocabulary could articulate, and this experience forms a theme in the Canadian literary tradition:

> After the early explorers, who were more interested in markets than landscape anyhow, descriptions turn technical or fictional; from about the nineteenth century, economics and calculative reason parted company with imagination and emotion. Explorers were supplanted by expeditions, hastily scribbled journals by official reports, by scientific accounts and scientific speculations about rainfall, flora, and isotherms. Maps were drawn on grids. From the start, then, the West has felt the impact of the most advanced technology of the day. Unlike the great technologies of central Canada, Western ones were concerned directly with resource extraction not industrial manufacturing. At the same time, however, they were subordinated to central Canadian technologies. Consider, for example, the prairie town. The "hugeness of simple forms" that Wallace Stegner evoked congealed in towns into the mass production of identical elevators, banks, and railway stations, a main street called Main Street, and a dirt road beside the tracks called Railway Avenue. It was as if the CPR had one blueprint and people had to fit it. (220)

The history of the West is the story of the encroachment of modern administration and scientific rationalization: explorers replaced by expeditions, descriptions replaced by statistics.

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[63] That is, Cooper takes to explaining the settler experience as in part a negotiation of the fundamental inadequacy of Old World concepts and ways of seeing, a negotiation Frye examines in "Colonial and Canadian Painting," and, for that matter, in *The Bush Garden*!

Cooper claims that, “not until recently has the balance between landscape and technology shifted decisively in favour of the latter.” Now, “technological activity has transformed the prairie space into an imaginative void, at least for the most sensitive minds.” Cooper admits it’s doubtful the actual modern farmer shares “the poetic sensibilities that discover a sense of nothingness in the existence of a high-tech multi-section Saskatchewan wheat farm”; nevertheless, “Western identity, such as it is, has been made articulate in the past by imaginative writers who found meaning not its absence.” From the start, the landscape was meaningful and was the site of the conflict with imperialist technology that would render it concretely, as mass-produced abstract-equivalence, and literarily, as imaginative nothingness. Cooper traces this technology and the political subjugation it brought with it to Easterners: “The earliest settlers, from Britain and Ontario, and the earliest writers clung to the cultural forms they left behind. Consequently, they made inappropriate responses to the new environment.” That is, *the literary devices* available to the earliest settlers caused them to respond inappropriately to their surroundings.

There’s a lot happening in this literary history of the West. First of all, the settlers came from Europe, so they literally followed an east-west direction. In this Frye is correct. But Cooper’s argument requires that Frye *is* correct, in order for Cooper to find things that show he’s not correct in the right way, that is, in terms of the correct attitude or *regime*. Second, though, the settlers’ sentimental vocabulary was inappropriate and caused them to act badly. Thus, it’s in the realm of the sentimental that the supposedly unifying east-west feeling is inapplicable to the West. The early settlers applied the wrong terms or words or images to the new milieu. Cooper’s history is (like McLuhan’s and Morton’s) “composite”: it’s structural, substitutional, and metaphorical; it’s figurative in that *things from Europe* like explorers and journals were replaced

by surveys and reports, but it's also literal. And still there's something missing. Between the explorers and the imposition of the CPR, there had to be the event of the first Europeans to "live" in the West—those who are then "indigenous" or whose priority is not simply that of being the first in a series, not just one thing to be replaced by the next, but grounded in stable history. The clue to this originary subject is its opposition to the first explorers, who, Cooper tells us, "were more interested in markets than landscape anyhow." This missing, naturalized subject who both *is* and *is subordinated by* the "earliest settlers," is, in other words, the subjective conscience interpellated by the narrative, the subject who feels and believes the truth of this myth-history, the conscience for whom the Western landscape is an issue. This consciousness, native to the West, emerges from the landscape itself. Or, at least, so Cooper's story goes.

Indeed, stories—Cooper cites Aristotle, Cicero, and Herodotus to say—are constituent elements of human experience. Again invoking and responding to Frye, he says, "historical literature also shows who we are and where is here because it recounts what was done and said." If we take these claims literally, we see a surprisingly candid methodological claim by which to read Cooper's arguments, which are supposedly *about* historiography, *as* historiography.

In Cooper's narrative of settlement, when "the railway to Collingwood gave Toronto access to the upper Lakes," and "the work of the Geological Survey provided knowledge of the Shield," "ambitious and expansionist men" were able to discover the "fertile belt" beyond the Great Lakes and incorporate what is now the West into the project of building the Canadian nation. For a Foucauldian, Cooper thinks very small (or perhaps too literally) when it comes to what counts as knowledge or science, arguing as though the earlier settlements in the area of Red River belonged to a different episteme than the national project, and as though new empirical knowledge akin to discovering a deposit of minerals constitutes an epistemic break:

> This deployment of knowledge ended the indigenous self-understanding of the Selkirk settlement: Red River acquired a destiny. It ceased to be a link between the wilderness and the maritime civilization of Europe, as Alexander Ross had declared as late as 1856, and became an outpost with a future tied, in the eyes of the eastern expansionists, to Canada. (222)

By using the figures of "deployment of knowledge" and epistemic shifts, he's equating the arrival of the surveyors in Red River to a first contact. And to be sure, this arrival did deploy European knowledge to end "indigenous self-understanding," but this was the *continuation* of the process that had begun earlier, with the first explorers. The fact that earlier explorers were replaced by more organized expeditions doesn't amount to an epistemic shift. Both the explorers and the expedition constitute the shift. Cooper is bracketing history to create an origin myth.

Like the settlers who both were and weren't European, knowledge here is deployed along implicitly-natural regional lines rather than as part of an immanent European episteme that orders areas as regions. Cooper narrates the story of Canadian historiography of the West, making a convincing case that the West was annexed in accordance with interests and attitudes based in central Canada—interests and attitudes that were not shared by those who were annexed. But this isn't exactly the argument he is making. The important political point—that the West is not a smooth extension of Upper and Lower Canada, that it was created by appropriation and struggle which continues today—is undone by Cooper's equation of epistemology with mythography. Rather than a struggle between diverse and international European settlers, with and against diverse Indigenous peoples, over lands, resources, and political powers, Cooper makes history a struggle of attitudes. Consequently, the historical conclusions he draws look like this:

> The Canadians believed that the inhabitants of Red River were united in their desire for annexation; they equated opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company with affection for Canada. […] Annexation would bring civilization and progress. In the eyes of the Canadians these were unambiguously good things. Accordingly, the resistance was incomprehensible. (222-223)

The historical character of the conflict—what might be understood as a struggle between competing interests and ideologies is resolved by way of the prior determination: "True to its garrison mentality, Ontario saw itself as patriotic and dissent as treason" (222-223).

He goes on to detail revisionist and propagandistic examples of "expansionist" history writing characteristic of Canadian works that assume a national perspective. Against these examples he describes the "resistance" of regional historiography, like the work for which the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba was founded to encourage.[64] Throughout his discussion of historiography he struggles to make the case that expansionism, which is imperialist, Anglophile, Loyalist, mercantilist—what we would call today settler-colonialism—is also caused by a hegemonic but insular garrison mentality.

One wonders: why insist so tenaciously on the omni-relevance of the garrison figure? Is grinding the axe with the "Laurentians" worth sacrificing the cohesiveness of Cooper's otherwise plausible and significant points? Once again, he's been quite candid in providing the literal keys to decode his message. If we recall his Straussian formula—"When the discourse of sensitive and intelligent minds contains elementary contradictions, these are not necessarily errors, that is, accounts that are not adequate to reality"—then we can see his true objective or "interest." By so outrageously forcing the point about the garrison mentality, he's able to simultaneously ridicule

[64] This same society, founded in 1879, would award its 1992 book of the year prize to Tom Flanagan for his *Métis Lands In Manitoba*, the book Flanagan brags "contained the evidence that, when I presented it in court as an expert witness, caused the Métis claims to be rejected" (*PNG* 18).

false equivalencies—pointing out the foolish equation of opposition to the HBC with love for Canada—while exploiting the same manoeuvre, appropriating Indigenous struggle into a history of the West to which it certainly belongs in order to equate Indigenous and Westerner in opposition to the history of the East.

Cooper quite aptly concludes that the West's "early historiography," that is, the regional resistance posed to colonial, central-Canadian history writing, was gradually overtaken by hegemonic histories that rehabilitated or at least re-narrated the reputations of the Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies and re-imposed a pastoral, garden myth on the West: "By 1900, Bryce was confident enough to praise the Hudson's Bay Company as an integral part of Western history, an edifying contrast to the "eastern" Nor'Westers. […] The very title of his 1909 work, *The Romantic Settlement of Lord Selkirk's Colonists*, expressed George Bryce's mature views: the chapter dealing with the Canadian annexation was entitled 'Eden Invaded'" (225). But, having combined the origin myth with the history of conquest, Cooper is able to acknowledge the project of Eastern assimilation while disavowing the fact that he's assimilated Indigenous history into "Western political consciousness":

> The significance of this early historiography is that it testifies to the experience of a real distinction: the history of the West was not the same as the history of eastern involvement in the West. Politically speaking, [the establishment Selkirk's settlement in] 1811 was to the West what 1812 was to Ontario. Even for the immigrants from Canada the Loyalist myth proved unsatisfactory since it corresponded not at all to their Western experience. The myth of Red River, in contrast could be adopted by all settlers. (225)

In a rhetorical manoeuver I will trace more deeply when I discuss Flanagan, Cooper starts by arguing that his opponents are revisionists, and in doing so performs not merely a revision but a

reversal of history (not least by way of figuring Selkirk's residents in opposition to "immigrants"). The revisionist, propagandist, nationalist historiography of central Canada, he argues, incorporated the Red River myth to shore up the inadequacy of the European vocabulary to describe Western experience as well as the regionalist Loyalist experience. Doing so, it assimilated and erased genuine Western experience. But in performing this critique, Cooper indigenizes the Red River experience to the Western settler experience; he's recognized that it's a construction projected *a posteriori* onto the West by the East, just like Frye's Canada-as-garrison; but in the same breath in which he articulates the "real distinction"—the fact that Western history is not identical to the history of the East's relation to the West—he posits this relation as the structural basis for Western experience. In terms of historiography, by exposing the figure of the Garden as an Eastern myth, by arguing that myth is the form of all experiences of identity, his concludes that history is myth.

History and myth are two names, substitutable words, for the narrative structure within which struggle takes place. The Eastern myth and the East's subsequent myth of the West are both incorrect, which suggests that the Red River experience consists of actual facts, and not myths. But it's all myth in Cooper's literalist structuralism, and so the authentic Western myth, by distinguishing itself from the inauthentic Eastern myth, need not distinguish historical diversity or differences, and Métis history becomes the story of the West's fight against the East, of the settlers against the garrison.[65]

[65] That White Settler identity and political structures have and continue to appropriate the stories of Riel and of Métis history is a well-accepted argument. See Andersen. My contribution is to show the structuralism that unites the historiographic and political premises put forth by the Calgary School with mainstream historiography and with literal dispossession of Indigenous land and political power. These structuralist connections form the infrastructure upon which Canadian neoliberal multiculturalism and extractivism operate.

Like the garrison mentality, Red River has been a go-to mytheme for Cooper throughout his career. Robert Meynell summarizes Cooper's *It's the Regime Stupid!*:

> His is a polemical call to arms in the spirit of the American Revolution. For Cooper, Stephen Harper represents the political arm of the "cowboy resistance," the cultural descendants of the Métis. Cooper

2.3 Myth and Western Historiography: The Market Ecology

Discussing Western historiography, Cooper cites W.L. Morton to show that the nation form was an artificial imposition upon a prior, transnational economy in which the West was naturally connected to other polities by trade. Cooper explains that,

> Prior to Confederation, the "neo-archaic" economy of the prairies was integrated, not with Canada and not even with the continent, "but rather by the sea with the British Isles—a reminder that the prairies were, to a degree are still, a maritime rather than continental hinterland." Continental integration began seriously in 1844, when the railroad reached St. Paul, Minnesota. The first HBC outfit to the Canadian Northwest travelled via St. Paul in 1858; in 1878 Winnipeg and St. Paul were linked by rail, and four years later the CPR arrived, putting an end to the old water route up and down the North Saskatchewan. Meanwhile, out West, regular traffic still moved along the cart road between Fort Benton and Fort Edmonton. The neo-archaic economy, then, had begun its process of disintegration when Riel was hanged, separating Indians and Metis from the modern settlers and ending forever the neo-archaic polity. (225-226)

In Morton's historiography, and in the myth Cooper builds from it, the polity was an indigenous (though not Indigenous) economic community long before integration into Canada, but it was integrated, primitively, into the British Empire with which it was connected via the US. Here the conventional and quite-literal historical interpretation that the original settlers and their Indigenous and Métis neighbours formed the original "Westerners" within what would only later become British North America is superimposed on a mythic-archetypal form. Their economy is

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claims that, politically, all North Americans are liberals. There is no conservatism in Canada, and there is no Canadian cultural identity distinguishing us from the U.S. The only difference between Canadian individuals is that some of us are corrupt while others are virtuous. (45)

natural, both despite and because of being tied to empire, until new political events impose unnatural economic relations.

Cooper quotes Morton to this end: "For over two generations the Red River settlers had outrun the Industrial Revolution. They could escape it no longer."[66] Throughout his career, Cooper has used Frye's garrison mentality to claim Confederation, the CPR, and the CBC are instruments of the East's narrow-minded arrogance. In Morton, too, technology is understood in terms of particularity, belonging to the East (which for him includes the UK as well as Laurentia) and not to a greater—but no less literal—epistemic "environment," the epistemic or historical situation that, for example, includes the complex history and relations between governments and multinational corporations that allowed Earl Selkirk to purchase the environment from which his originary Westerners chose to eschew industrialization.

Morton's narration of technology as an appendage of the East—as nothing more or less than a version of the "east-west feeling" penetrating into the West—again allows the historical narrative to be reversed. As Cooper stressed regarding Western-Canadian literature, the prairie town was a modern creation and an alien form imposed from without. But the town-form's modernity was imposed on the already-thoroughly-modern subjects who inhabited them. Again, taking this narrative appropriately literally, Morton and Cooper, by characterizing the Red River settlement as "neo-archaic" are clearly arguing the settlement was not prehistoric, but post-historic. The polis-form of the prairie town, brought to the West through the "*political* subordination," is imposed on a pre-existing "*polity*." That is, the West was not primitive or "wild," but a modern ecological-economic way of political life adapted by rational agents in

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[66] This is Morton's claim, as he explains that the Selkirk settlers' agricultural attempts did not replace Indigenous, "nomadic" subsistence like hunting but resulted "in a hybrid economy, at once nomadic and sedentary." See Morton, "Agriculture in the Red River Colony."

accordance with the environment they chose to live in. Cooper's Kojèveian theory of history handily explains how for the settlers economy and ecology were part of post-historical identity—their *oikos*.

Here, the Selkirk settlers were both modern and originary, and the technology that they had avoided was simply that technology inappropriate to their *oikos*. To be clear, I'm not arguing that Morton follows a Hegelian teleology[67] or that he's claiming that the settlers were Kojève's post-historical human-animals. Rather, the structuralist-myth-critical premises upon which his historiography relies figures the settlers as outside of history. Like Cooper, Morton argues against the particular image though which the mythical origin is posed, in the process reaffirming ever more strongly and more literally that history and politics follow a mythical narrative structure.

Morton stresses a unified Canadian identity cannot be based on the Garden image because "The severity of the winters and the attacks of wolves ensured that no pastoral economy developed in Red River." The consequent hybrid economy of hunting and agriculture

> resembled not so much any contemporary one as the then vanishing economy of the Mandans on the upper Missouri and their extinct predecessors of the great river valleys of the high plains to the southwest of Red River. Those primitive societies are described by W.R. Wedel in terms which have a close application to the hunting and farming economy of Red River. (Morton "Agriculture" 307)

Morton acknowledges "The comparison is admittedly not to be pushed too far; the Red River settlers were, in varying degrees, the representatives, if isolated, of the dynamic society of western Europe." In other words, the settlers were not *literally* indigenous to the West. But if, like Cooper, one choses a narrative that emphasizes only figural resemblance by dehistoricizing

[67] Although J.W. Daly does suggest this to some degree ("Conservatism" 50).

and decontextualizing particularity, then "The resemblance, nevertheless, if not exact, was fundamental" ("Agriculture" 307). The *resemblance* is *fundamental* because, like the chiasmic structure that allows liberals to play the part of conservatives (last chapter), it refers to a relation and not to a substance.

Like Janigan does, Morton and Cooper equate literary naturalism with historiography. Locating the essence of identity in resemblance, in a relation rather than in a (perhaps equally-problematic) substance produces a view of the natural as that which accords with that resemblance. So, Cooper asserts, "The United States, moreover, was less a threat to Red River than an economic partner." This claim relies on Cooper's distinction that poses Selkirk's settlers as "genuine," i.e., non-nationalistic "settlers," who seemingly challenge the standard nationalist history by the fact that "Selkirk settled Red River without Canadian involvement or Company opposition" (223). Once again, the claim is based in the literality of the terms involved—Selkirk wasn't literally connected to the Dominion's government, nor was the settlement explicitly opposed by the Corporation that previously owned the land; therefore, "technically," it was outside of the ambit of colonialism and imperialism. The settlers, then, were basically Robinson Crusoes in a natural economy who chose to do business with the US.[68] In regard to the experience of perceiving the US as a threat, perhaps the typical resident of Upper Canada would have considered the possibility of US expansionism and imperialism more frequently than the Selkirk resident. But even fears of Manifest Destiny would not require the "Canadian" to deny that the US was an important trading partner, indeed, a neighbour. In fact, annexation was chiefly a threat because of this trade relationship! There is, that is, a difference between the

[68] One can't help note the "fundamental resemblance" between the literal and the literary in the originary, pre-mythical/historical man upon whom Defoe's Crusoe was based, the famous castaway Alexander *Selkirk*!

national and individual perspective that corresponds to the object of the threat.[69] However, by taking Frye's distinction between unity and identity literally, Cooper assumes that there is a unity within the identity as well—that in Loyalist country, everyone sees the US as a threat in general—thereby collapsing the difference altogether. Surely, the average Canadian citizen doesn't habitually view the United States as a threat to his or her or their literal property, even if he/she/they do worry, say, about American concerns gaining market access to socialized sectors of the Canadian economy. I myself enjoy ordering items from the US on EBay, but I could still worry without contradiction about US foreign direct investment. "Red River" here—despite the literary-critical truth that it represents a distinct, local identity—is not an identity in a vacuum or within a natural economy. The Garden and the Robinsonade mythemes are what allow trade with the US to be figured as part of a natural economy based on the literality of the fact that Red River was located on territory that was not "in Canada," despite simultaneously being defined by its location opposite the US border.[70]

Thus even Cooper doesn't try to argue that the Red River settlers were trading with US-based isolated neo-archaic communities, or even tribes; trade *with a nation* proves (as Morton's imperial connections do) that there are several overlapping spatial perspectives: individual, community, national—all of them "local." But, remarkably, Cooper simultaneously acknowledges and eliminates this complexity as he translates it into a naturalist economic idiom:

> Until the Canadian government provided an alternative transportation system and an artificial barrier to trade in the form of the tariff, lengthening cart brigades and

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[69] This is my point in Part Two. See especially my discussion of the function of the Northwest Mounted Police as the military arm of the CPR (Naylor 16) and the object of the contemporary Canadian military (Morgan) in Chapter 5.

[70] Note how Flanagan uses of the technical reality of present-day borders to explain that many of Canada's First Nations were actually historically located in the US. See Chapter 3.

> steamboats on the only major and navigable river that crosses the border told of strong ties to the commercial capital of the region, St. Paul. (226)

Here, it is clear that the formal reality of the natural economy is Nature, and particular content expresses political artifice. The "alternative" is natural in that it's a part of structure of competition. But, it's accompanied by the interested, artificial barriers imposed by alien political agents. Like the pre-existing polity Morton posits, the temporally-prior routes signal the natural economy's spontaneity. With this structuralist assumption firmly in place, Cooper can complete the argument Morton began, that materialist attempts to understand cultures and their self-understandings and development, like those of Innis, lead to the most self-evident refutations in the face of actual immigrant-settler experience:

> In the past much has been made of […] economic/technological facts as if they somehow explained Western politics. But in addition Morton insisted upon culture, *living* culture, and *conscious* adaptation. The Americans had political ideas as well as barbed wire; so did the Icelandic communities, the Ukrainians, and even the British. And none of them arrived with the expectation that they would be assimilated to Canadian, that is Ontario, colonial life and institutions.[71] (226-227)

This naturalist structure in which competing values are represented by particular racial or ethnic geniuses (in other words, Strauss's regimes) assigns the ills of modernity, technology, economic exploitation, anomie, etc. as so many diverse contents whose alterity consists in little more than trying to fit into the wrong space.[72]

Thus, instead of presenting an argument against hegemonic, capitalist, bureaucratic, or even vaguer targets of Canadian conservatism as formal threats to the cherished contents of

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[71] Cf. Morton "Clio in Canada."
[72] Just as Janigan attributes Western racism to "Ottawa."

important values, Cooper argues using terms like "symbols" and "intension"—terms describing particular contents assigned by special interests to *otherwise neutral* rationalization processes:

> The Dominion Land Survey is perhaps the best symbolic expression of the homogenizing intensions of the annexation by Canada. The survey was indifferent to natural terrain and social customs; land was nothing more than a commodity, "to be cut and sold like broadcloth on a counter. It was emphatically not an expression of social community, much less the cradle of a race. The square survey was rather a sieve through which people would be shaken onto mixed and diverse settlement."

As "symbolic expression," the literal dispossession and literal domination is displaced here into the literal symbols of geometry. In this structuralism there are many discourses, each literal and all equally expressive of truth. Therefore, people and lands were not assimilated into the expanding nation, because there is (literally) no (literal) national unity. Rather, this theory requires that people and territories were dispossessed of their own symbolic regime and assimilated into an alien one. Cooper is positing that, like the end of history, Canadian history presumes that a corporation or a nation form is the natural administrator of polities. In this historiographic mythography, the literal isn't distinguishable from the symbolic, so the powerful example of national expansion and domination is phrased in the passive wordiness of a "symbolic expression of the homogenizing intensions of the annexation by Canada." For the Western subjects of this domination, the struggle is with the literality of the figure: the square shape didn't fit on the Western homestead. The West was denied its own shape by which all land would be parcelled and commoditized into alienable private property.

The fact that the Square survey was absurdly blunt in its rationalizing of the landscape obscures the fact, even in more careful analyses, that rationalization is not a regional

phenomenon (Moffat 125). For example, Ben Moffat cites Kaye and Moodie: "As was common to many parts of Canada, the surveyor preceded the settler. [But] In no other part of the country however, has the cultural landscape been more completely patterned by the land and railway surveys than by the settlers themselves." Moffat continues, explaining the Square survey's

> imposition of a strict, true grid system on any landscape can be seen as the overlay of a human-constructed and scaled model. Straight lines, intersecting at right angles, ending at particular graticule points and jogging at correction lines are not part of the natural environment. That they then guide agricultural settlement, an activity whereby people try to earn a living working on and with the land, can only be seen as ironic.

Yet, even though Moffat's thesis is that this irony consists in the fact that "For farming, which entails a large set of very specific relationships between people and the natural environment, to be based on planar geometry is an overwhelming manifestation of the modernist project," he concludes, agreeing with Morton, that it was the particular nation, and not the state form, that "By trying to force the grasslands, wetlands, lakes, rivers, boreal forests and coulees of the west into a conveniently distributed, assigned and divided map, Canada tried to impose its rationalist idea of order and organization onto the landscape" (125-126).

Despite making various critical points, Morton, Cooper, and Moffat's critiques remain aesthetic rather than critical. Surely a more naturalistic approach to administration and commoditization would be preferable to the absurd abstraction of the Square-heads. But this does not then suggest, as Cooper clearly posits regarding the surveyors who descended on Selkirk, that such naturalist fidelity would preclude the effects of commodity reification, or the unevenesses of experience as pithily described by Morton: "The West, for example, has long faced the problem of paying fixed rates of interest with returns from a very "unfixed" rainfall"

("Clio" 47). The logical conclusion of this approach, which bases reason in the natural environment and poses no objection to rationalization as such, which even Morton admits was endemic to the "dynamic society of western Europe," is the formula of the end of history. All the great questions—like *Should everything be parcelled and commoditized? Should all territory be administered according to an instrumental reason and rationalized into a universal market-ecological harmony? Should the homogenized citizenry's dignity consist in respecting the local colour of particular territories?*—have been answered. The ends have been decided; all that's left to do is agree on the means. Struggle consists in the details of execution.

The instance of Canada's annexation of the West, then, provides yet another example that the figures of market-ecology and of the liberal-democratic end of history are far more appropriate "symbols" for modernity's homogenizing processes than are the garrison or national unity. We can see this when we compare the remarkably racialist vocabulary by which Morton stages his arguments with the way Cooper argues that Laurentian identity cannot account for Canada's cultural diversity. Summing up the impact of Frank Underhill and Donald Creighton's work, Morton says each "saw Canada as being, for good or ill, an extension of Ontario…Neither had a sense of the vigour of regional sentiment in the various parts of Canada, including their own province" (qtd. "Western" 235). Morton's claim concerns the settlement patterns of the various European ethnic stocks as expressed in their sentiments, and his historiographic aim is to figure the place of Romantic racial-nationalist ideas within a modern context, which, as the Square survey demonstrated, was "to a degree hostile to ethnic grouping" (Morton "West" 16). By removing the last vestiges of historical specificity from mythic form, Cooper translates Morton's historical claim about modernity into Canada's postmodern multicultural vernacular:[73]

[73] Original is in Morton "Clio."

thus, between Underhill and Creighton, Cooper concludes, “Neither had a firm grasp of Canadian pluralism” (“Western” 235).

One could make a convincing case that Innis’s staples theory and Creighton’s Laurentian hypothesis were combined within Canadian institutions and apparatuses of intellectual and knowledge reproduction to marginalize and assimilate particularities within a pseudo- or fully-official national culture.[74] But by rendering all of the ills of capitalist modernity into particularist contents squabbling within a formal dynamic in which a region attempts to impose its particular, limited self-understanding on other regions, Cooper and Morton reproduce the discourse they are reacting against. For example, Cooper quotes Morton’s critique the Laurentian hypothesis, producing a conclusion that could have come straight from Innis:[75]

> Such a reading of Canadian history told nothing more than a story of commercial exploitation and imperialist methods of domination “aiming not at political justice but at commercial profits.” Accordingly, “Confederation was brought about to realize the commercial potentialities of the St. Lawrence. Where self-government existed it was recognized; where the people of the territory annexed resisted, it was granted but starved of the means to live; where they had an alternative and were too distant to be intimidated, it was granted in full.”[76] (228)

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[74] Such is, in fact, the threat that Morton is intervening against. Indeed, something of the sort forms the standard critique of materialist methodology, explaining for example why George Grant is an anti-capitalist but no materialist.

[75] The move from history to postmodern multiculturalism repeats the process I discussed regarding *The War Between Us*. The liberal-democratic perspective tends not to register what Gorz calls “forced modernity” in terms of the nation as a political-economic agent, seeing it instead as pertaining to the anachronism of nation form as such; this perspective thus implies the neoliberal tenet that the proper role of the state is vanish at the end of history. Here, Confederation—which for Innis was obviously about formalizing what Morton calls biases of political subordination—is not understood as structured bias, but rather as representing the outdated attitude of the “Canadians.” The Western attitude, as it was in Red River, has always been post-historical.

[76] Michael Fabris reads a similar strategy in Tom Flanagan and Manny Jules’ proposals to reorganize First Nations’ administration. See next chapter.

While Innis would agree with this essentially-materialist interpretation of Confederation's practical implementation, Cooper's regionalist premise—that different regions have fundamentally different values—requires there must still be a literal, human, agent whose *interest* is being pursued. Thus what in Innis would be a perhaps-too-straightforward economic argument—*i.e., that Confederation is literally a structure of political-economic interests!*—for Cooper is a struggle to construct a rhetorical subject on whom "interest" can be projected. It's not that "Creighton was insensitive" or that he overvalued commercial profits: "Rather it was that an emphasis on commercial development brought about by imperial Dominion rule, with its attendant cultural uniformity, inevitably has led to a split between political allegiance and local identity" (228).

Just as the reader wonders, bewildered by the shifting tenses and the impossibility of a clear referent for "it was that," if this "split" is in Creighton's psyche, Cooper finishes by explaining, "That split appeared, and still appears, as a sense of sectional or regional injustice." In other words, the Easterner's self-alienation, the psychical split between nation loyalty and local experience, is the source, the fundamental resemblance, and the origin of Western alienation.

2.4 On Alienation

Discussing "Western alienation," Cooper instructs the reader:

> The term itself is significant. It derives from a Latin verb meaning to make something another's. What is alien belongs to another. To the extent it makes sense to speak of Western alienation, then, the central experience is political. The simple loyalties of which

> Morton spoke [i.e., "religion, race, and region"],[77] loyalties that express a sense of place and time, of here and now and us, have their legitimacy attacked when they cannot be expressed politically. (230)

Cooper makes it clear he's concerned with the literal definition of alienation: "That is, when the public realm belongs to another and what is to count as legitimate discourse within that realm is determined by another, then it makes sense to speak of political alienation." Having defined the term literally, he concludes, "There is, therefore, nothing psychological, economic, or sociological about Western alienation properly speaking." Alienation is formal. As such, "It is a political phenomenon whose basis can be found in […] political subordination." Nevertheless, it has a sociologically-measurable effect. Cooper cites Doug Owram: "The West has never felt in control of its own destiny. None of the wealth of recent years has eased this feeling. In fact, the tremendous wealth of the region merely sharpens the contrast with the political powerlessness that exists on a national level" (qtd. 230).

To be sure, alienation is a matter of possession, dispossession, or lack of possession. But the reader is left wondering what a non-alienated form of possession or ownership, gestured at in Owram's figure of "its *own* destiny," might take? Does the lack of political control sharpened by the advent of tremendous resource wealth refer then to Morton's simple loyalties? The answer points to the actual semantic issues at play—Cooper is figuring alienation as *literal* in a *metaphorical* sense. Figuring the West as being literally alienated from a (myth-based-thus-metaphorical) political sphere that belongs to the East obscures that the "West" that would have

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[77] As Cooper cites Morton:

> "it was the fate of the West to become the colony of a colony, which brought to its new imperial role neither imagination, liberality, nor magnanimity." Responsible government and Confederation dissolved many of the imperial controls in Canada; in the West the old controls were replaced by those grated the Dominion under Sections 90 and 91 of the *BNA Act*, 1867. "Before the old restraints had been forgotten, before communal and local rancours had been dissipated, there were new bonds to chafe at, a new claim to allegiance to stifle the simple loyalties of religion, race, and region." (227)

its "own" destiny cannot put its resources in motion towards becoming political power without transforming the resources into value. Western alienation looks like alienation from the essentially-metaphorical process of substitution by which a thing becomes a value, by which economic value becomes political power. This argument is common today: Alberta isn't able to alienate its resources by building an oil pipeline, for example, because of the unevenness of political power structured into Confederation, which allocates (or as Cooper would have to say, *alienates*) significant decision-making power to those who do not own the oil. Of course, Confederation isn't *only* a means by which one region leverages its power over another—it's a structure of ownership that, as Janigan points out, felicitously already provides all provinces with the ownership of their resources. Therefore, the political sphere—the sphere of regulation, consultation, interprovincial and intergovernmental negotiations—is, in a way, an *a posteriori* imposition on (in this case) Alberta's fundamental ownership of its resources, ownership that is clearly only meaningful as the effective power to alienate what it owns.

Framed this way, very real political injustice is not determined or inherent in the people or the region; it is precisely the consequence of political subordination. But Cooper's logic dictates that, instead of being a matter of structural unevenness by which some are subordinated to others who should be their equals (i.e., those whose myths should be understood as regional and not universal), political (or political-economic) subordination is subordinated to "economic" and "sociological" factors: the West owns its resources but can't exchange them for the political power that would counter those who presumptuously impose a garrison mentality. Cooper's literal take on alienation-as-dispossession requires that the advantage, or, if you like, parochial arrogance, of the East be understood as a consequence of the priority of economic power—which shouldn't be a surprise; ownership is an economic figure, after all, and liberal-democratic

political rights derived from ownership are based on the essential inalienability of the natural right to own—and therefore to alienate—property. This literal basis for alienation—which is "economic" and "sociological"—comes up against Cooper's other main premise, the Straussian regime premise, which, like Morton's understanding, requires that alienation is simply a matter of the wrong people with the wrong myths being in charge in the wrong way.[78] Finally, it is the incommensurability between Cooper's two theses that generates the "psychological" experience of alienation, which is clear in Cooper's conclusion: "Under such conditions the actual content of policies implemented by the Dominion government may be less important than that the Dominion's citizens in the West were not consulted regarding their formation" (230).[79] In other words, the problems of Western alienation amount to a struggle for recognition. It matters little that such recognition pertains to myths instead of socially-agreed-upon values, the fruits of dialogue, traditions, ethnic or religious identity, or national origin, what Charles Taylor would call "irreducibly social goods," or other forms of value found in the more traditional, non-Kojèveian, Hegelianisms associated with the Canadian "politics of recognition."

Cooper's claim that alienation is not economic, sociological, or psychological, coupled with his argument that clearly explains that alienation is economic, sociological, and psychological is, obviously, contradictory. But to dismiss it as such would be to radically miss the point of the *kind of argument* he and his Calgary colleagues engage in. Cooper's discourse shows that claims for recognition depend on wresting literal freedom from deterministic structural relations by means of sheer will, or attitude—exactly what *thymos* accomplishes in Strauss and Bloom's city/man figure, as well as in Fukuyama's end of history scheme. Cooper's

[78] A premise, which, by the way, is not logically tenable even when it's clear the wrong people are in charge!

[79] As I've shown regarding the Kojèveian/Straussian fetishization of *thymos*, and like Michael Fabris argues regarding Tom Flanagan, it seems that even the most conservative of Canadian ideologues based their theories on the politics of recognition! See next chapter.

analysis of Western political culture takes its stance of fighting determinism through determination by analogy to Morton's naturalist premise that the original Westerners "deliberately" adapted to nature. Akin to the non-psychological, non-economic, and non-sociological character of alienation, Cooper relates the West's "local strategy of deliberate adaptation to the environment." He posits the original Westerner as *homo economicus*, a sybaritic zek, within a milieu in which technique and administration are inseparable from the economy or from culture. Despite never having an originary Garden to be exiled from or return to, it's only the literal meaning of the Garden myth that's inappropriate in the West. The Westerners' natural essence—self-consciously actualized in the Western environment—is as much an originary Nature as the cultivated gardens of the East, but its local flavour is an agri-culture, and its originary, indigenous, historically-contingent form was the neo-archaism of the "hybrid economy" (i.e., not a matter of institutional "economics") in Red River: "In Morton's words, 'agricultural techniques and political administration have been purposively reduced to complete co-operation by scientific research and instruction and by an unusually wide and deep diffusion of political power in Western society'" (231).

This ecological naturalism, which emerged from the deliberate adaptations to the environment in Métis experience, and whose organicism and racial genius was crushed (as was that of Quebec's *habitants* at the hands of the *têtes carrées*) by the Dominion's garrison form of technological abstraction, is the underlying reality upon which sociological and economic forms are employed as techniques. Thus Cooper's next sentence continues,

> There is no mystery about Western populism; certainly it has nothing to do with industrial socialism. Private property and individual entrepreneurship were a consequence

> of frontier necessities and established legal institutions, not psychological traits of rugged individualism. (230)

In other words, there was nothing deterministic about either prairie political or productive forms. Rather, politics and production were always instruments for the proper alienation of goods—the perspective from which the US was a natural partner and the Dominion was an artificial threat: "Even though co-ops have meant a compromise with the right of an individual to dispose of his or her own resources, this has not conflicted with a commitment to private property." This is an important point, which historicizes prairie political forms, and in the following quote from Bennett and Kohl, Cooper explains the material, historical role productive and transportation technology played in the state machinery that produced the original bias of political subordination. But in order to disavow the primacy of a material causality that would contradict the agency of *homo economicus*, Cooper inserts an idealist thesis ("the reason"), reversing the order of causality, making material causes the consequence of idealist mastery:

> *The reason is a consequence of Western political consciousness: co-ops were understood to be* 'a collective strategic response to the pressures and constraints imposed on the Prairie producer by the organizations of the national and international market: the grain companies, the railroads, the banks. In short it was a response to exploitation, or rather, to the inadequacies of individual entrepreneurship in the face of exploitation by outsiders.' (Bennett and Kohl qtd. 231 my emphasis)

Put this way, the industrial-socialist forms of production in the West were simply tools "deliberately" employed by the *a priori* possessive-individualist entrepreneurial subject to counter anti-liberal mechanisms and further individual accumulation of private property.

Moreover, tools like co-ops were not spontaneous resistances that might indicate a locus of political power in collectivism, nor were they simply historical developments in response to contradictions of modern industrial production in a staples economy. No, strategies like co-ops "were understood" as strategies. The Westerners, that is, were always-already *homo economicus*, always-already sagely acting in accordance with their naturalistic economic interest regardless of the alien form of economic logic imposed on them.

Still, contradictions disrupt this figure of market ecology. For example, the individuals' "collective strategic response" was "a response" to two different things that Bennett and Kohl render synonymous with the conjunction "or rather." The first is exploitation. The second is the relative weakness of the individual's class power "in the face of exploitation *by outsiders*." This is the populist moment, the figure which I'll show in the next two chapters undergirds Flanagan's claims about alienating property, and which Cooper and Rainer Knopff struggle with in the case of Alberta's "hunters acting like socialists."[80] The exploitation inherent in the capital-labour relation, made to appear as though it were synonymous with a literal *oikos*/*xenos* figure, forms the structure that allows alienation to be a figure of the alien power that controls the space in which the West's "own destiny" and its ownership of resources that could otherwise be controlled by the Westerner's self-mastery as *homo economicus*. In other words, like the ills of modern industrial civilization, the relations of production, exploitation, class struggle, and the inability to alienate property are all so many attributes of the arrogant East, which, imposed on the West, precludes the return to the mythical, literal Western market ecology.

But Cooper's narrative is a metaphoric or mythical interpretation of what's literally described. Co-ops were means of *alienating* private property. The literal facts are that Western

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[80] See Knopff, "When Hunters Act Like Socialists," and especially his contribution to the *Festschrift* to Cooper, "Hunting for Cowboys."

producers-as-entrepreneurs were in a subordinate position to the Eastern bourgeoisie. They thus adapted collectivist methods to counter the collectivism of monopoly—the transportation and manufacturing cartels in the East—in order to sell their commodities and accumulate capital they wouldn't get without using these tools. Cooper thus makes a crucial point, namely, that there's nothing socialist about such collective methods, just as there's nothing necessarily socialistic about the postwar liberal order's balance of power between organized labour and capital.[81] But what *is* necessary is an identity in which to locate the "interest" Cooper tells us we can discern when we notice apparent errors or contradictions in the otherwise entirely-masterful (or "deliberate") work of keen minds. That is, to locate the injustices of social relations within an outsider. Such an identification has the added, populist benefit of allowing the local insider to disavow his/her/their subjectivity as a relation to the universal. By that I mean garrisons, cartels, and co-ops are formally identical—each is literally a protectionist structure to supplement individual power and to overcome disadvantages in competition. By rendering what's formally-indistinguishable as particular "interest," the universality of social relations can be projected onto a transhistorical pattern of outsiders subordinating insiders. Thus for the "Westerner," the white, middle class, Anglophone settler is absolved of his imbrication in subordination, indeed, he is a victim of subordination just like the indigene; the settler becomes indigenous through the Red River myth.

And such a settler *is literally indigenous* … but he is indigenous to the market-ecology that is logically prior to the imposition of the state form. This naturalistic figure articulates the phenomenological truth of the settler's deliberate adaptation—that subjective position which equates political threat with pestilence and predators, of strife with outsiders and with nature, which Cooper demonstrates in the next sentence:

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[81] See discussion of Teeple in Chapter 5.

> Western political consciousness, then, may be characterized as one of pragmatic flexibility in defending local and regional interests in a comparatively hostile environment that historically has encompassed frost, grasshoppers, uncertain markets and the predatory political and economic institutions of the central garrison. (232)

Cooper derives this market-ecological naturalism from Morton, but despite claiming that he's analyzing western historiography, Cooper's use of Morton shows he makes no distinction between history and historiography. Morton's famous 1946 essay "Clio in Canada" is the source of many of Cooper's *literary figures*, figures that are not literal or historical, but are historiographic—pertaining to the *writing* of history. Morton warns of the Rousseauvian "homogeneous popular will" ("Clio" 49); it is Morton who characterized Confederation as "held together by a 'Protestant garrison'" (48), transplanting the British metaphor into a New World context; and it is Morton's essay that frames Canadian culture in terms of a thematic focus on "survival," the historiographic images and themes from which—much later—Frye and Atwood would draw.

These literary figures are Morton's historiographic means of articulating that different regions experience different environments, and that a central-Canadian, national perspective is not easily able to adjust its understanding of economic relations to real environmental differences. The historiographic lesson, the critical point to be taken here, is that literary figures that more closely resemble local conditions than cold facts are just as capable of homogenizing differences into samenesses. Read critically, Morton's historiography shows that Westerners could no more outrun the abstract rationalization of the modern episteme than they could hide from the industrial revolution. Even regional analogies and first-hand experience are means of rationalization:

> indeed the sectionalism of the West is, in different terms, as justified as the French nationalism of Quebec or the British nationalism of Ontario. […] Not only is there driven between East and West the blunt wedge of the Shield. Not only is there the clash of economic interest caused by difference in resources, climate, and stage of economic development. There are also environmental differences so great as to be seldom appreciated. The West is plains country, with few, though great resources, a harsh and hazardous climate, and an inflexible economy. So domineering is this environment that it must change people and institutions greatly from those of the humid forest regions of the East. The West, for example, has long faced the problem of paying fixed rates of interest with returns from a very "unfixed" rainfall. (Morton "Clio" 47)

This passage shows how Morton's rhetorical technique is rooted in a very real historical context, exactly the context Cooper removes. Clearly, Morton's naturalism provides an alternative vocabulary to articulate the experience of staples and centre-periphery unevenness, one more phenomenologically-attuned to regional *experience* than those of Creighton or Innis. In the West, environmental features are both unique to the region and equal to one another and to the universal value of "threat." Morton is conflating the particularity of local experience with the fact that, phenomenologically, threats always come from outside—which does not mean that they are not local. Put another way, an *oikos*/*xenos* relation is simply a relation, not a substance; as was the case in his remark about "fundamental resemblance," a relation cannot "recognize" any fundamental ecological reality. So Morton, in articulating differences, effectively renders differences into the phenomenological structure of sameness, in which difference is only registered as inside vs. outside, us vs. them.

Cooper retains the argument against the Laurentian thesis by stabilizing the us-vs.-them structure, which he's only able to do by abandoning precisely what makes Morton's resistance to the thesis "regional." Morton brought up figures like the general will, the garrison mentality, and survival to craft an argument concerned with the homogenizing power of a centralized, colonial education system to convert particular facts into universalizing dogma. And Cooper's excision of this historical, material, and political-economic context from Morton's historiography leads Cooper to reproduce the object of his own critique. For just as Cooper takes Frye to be correct, Morton himself insisted that for his part "No quarrel, of course is intended with the [Laurentian] thesis as such. […] it is a legitimate approach to Canadian history; its results are the most enlightening yet achieved in Canadian historical scholarship. Among scholars and intelligent laymen it can have none but stimulating and fruitful effects." However, in the absence of a moral content Morton warns "the danger inherent in" the Laurentian thesis,

> will become apparent when, after many processes of digestion at least as crude as that to which it has been subjected here, the Laurentian thesis percolates downward into the text-book and the schoolroom. Then its implications cannot but be misleading both to those brought up in the metropolitan area and those brought up in the hinterlands. Teaching inspired by the historical experience of metropolitan Canada cannot but deceive, and deceive cruelly, children of the outlying sections. Their experience after school will contradict the instruction of the history class, and develop in them that dichotomy which characterizes all hinterland Canadians, a nationalism cut athwart by a sense of sectional injustice. ("Clio" 46-47)

This passage illustrates that Cooper is actually borrowing more from the rhetorical form of Morton's argument—the indignant imputation of the opponent's correctness and subsequent

construction of a more regionally-correct alternative—than any of the historical content that might serve as the basis for the appropriate Western mythology. Therefore I argue that this rhetorical, formal structuralism shared by Morton and Cooper aims, in the end, at the universalization of particularity: at multicultural, liberal-democratic recognition.

Morton's warning and the target of his critique is, in other words, the lack of a united cultural identity, the lack of a nationalism that won't be cut athwart by observed injustice. He wants to ensure that the narrowness of the methodology that yielded legitimate and enlightening historical knowledge be understood holistically, within a federation of regions that is attuned to its diverse make-up. In short, he's not, as Cooper is, taking issue with a provincialism that sees itself as national; he's not lambasting historians for pursuing cultural imperialism as regional "interest." He's saying that regionalism is the pre-eminent fact of Canadian history, not economic development. In short, he's arguing the traditional point of Canadian conservatism—what unites Red Tories like Grant with prairie populists—namely, that idealism has priority over materialism. What also unites conservative thought in Canada is that idealism doesn't refute materiality. The Platonic/Christian tradition is one of relation, of order between ideas and matter. Whether spatialized as the divided line, as the cave and the outside world, as the polis and nature, the City of Man and the City of God, or as Grant's adoption of Strauss's Jerusalem and Athens, the object of idealism is a proper relation of unlike things within a structural hierarchy.[82]

Morton's critique of Laurentian historiography proposes an alternative arrangement of ideas and material. He proposes that recognition of the experience of Canadian diversity be considered within social processes, within the reproduction of history and identity that links Red River to the Manitoba school question, and Central Canadian indifference over Western experience to metropolitan views reproduced in nationally-distributed textbooks. In contrast,

[82] See Strauss *Jerusalem and Athens*; also George Grant, "Tyranny and Wisdom."

Cooper radicalizes this argument for idealism, rendering everything as like quality, making idealism the only milieu of human agency. Here myths, stories, facts and ideas compete in an eternal structure of relations, and determinism is held at bay by determination. Cooper's project, then, his "interest," becomes apparent as an effort to imaginatively reconcile the triumph of the liberal-democratic Idea—the deterministic market-ecology of neoliberalism—with the conservative tradition of moral freedom.[83] As his purported refutation of Frye's thesis works by affirming and preserving it, this radical idealism reifies the material as the structural basis for the ideal, preserving the "idea" of idealist subordination of the material, but in effect disavowing materialism by containing it as the structure, making material reality the naturalist ground upon which ideas manifest as choices or competing regimes.

What Cooper excises from Morton dismantles his own argument as an argument or mytho-poesis, exposing it instead as what Frye calls rhetoric. Morton explains the relation between the particular and the universal as he names not only the people whose work he's engaging with, but the institutional-structural agency that allows one to distinguish between simplistic "interests" and greater processes of social reproduction. Even though he invokes the spectre of Rousseau's general will, Morton doesn't leave it to the reader to wonder if Creighton, Innis, or Underhill are—like Cooper's Frye and Atwood may or may not be—endorsing a cultural, CanLit Regime of Terror. He reasonably, *sanely*, distinguishes between the authors and their institutions, and discerns the places where interests overlap. Cooper, however, removes any such distinction, not equating Frye with the institution of social reproduction (not even with the University of Toronto!) but equating the man, the ideas, the themes with which he's engaged, and the objects of his study, with the region, with the "Laurentian regime." There is no

[83] Like, as I explain in Part Two, Richard Rohmer's project is to reconcile the liberal state with neoliberalism—the unity of technological nationalism with the universality of carbon-democratic governmentality.

difference between the personal and the political—not because the political materially determines the personal—but because political institutions are containers or garrisons invested with personal, competitive interests—they are bioforms.

Chapter 3

Tom Flanagan as Sage, or, the Pot Telling the Kettle Joke

Of course, the need for race precedes race. But let's ignore that for the moment.
Thomas King *The Inconvenient Indian* (29)

3.1 The Bios of a *Persona Non Grata*: "their actions are not that different than those of a lynch mob."

In 2013, Tom Flanagan's career changed forever. Retiring from his post at University of Calgary and dropped as a CBC contributor, Flanagan quickly wrote a book—*Persona Non Grata: The Death of Free Speech in the Internet Age* (*PNG*)—describing his new status. However, despite his being deposed from positions within the mode of intellectual production, his new book served as well as ever to disseminate his narrative. For example, in his review of *PNG*, *The Toronto Star*'s Robert Collison accepts Flanagan's interpretations astonishingly literally. He sums up the events, claiming they read "like Tom Flanagan's Passion Play": "On that fateful February day" Flanagan was in Lethbridge giving a talk on the Indian Act. Collison explains that "Over the course of his political and media career, Flanagan has – […] in his own words - made numerous enemies, including aboriginal activists in the Idle No More movement and that day they were lying in wait. Payback time." "Out of the blue," Collison relates,

> an activist named Levi Little Mustache queried Flanagan about remarks he's made a few years earlier about child pornography. A little off-topic, but the ever controversial Flanagan couldn't resist the Temptation and dove right in, making these comments on how best to punish consumers of kiddie porn: "I do have grave doubts about putting people in jail because of their taste in pictures ... it is a real issue of personal liberty to what extent we put people in jail for doing something in which they do not harm another person."

Even worse,

> Unknown to Flanagan, another activist, Arnell Tailfeathers, was videotaping his "performance," and quickly posted it on YouTube with the tag line, "Tom Flanagan okay with child pornography." Tailfeathers even had the unabashed gall to "not" delete the line, "Gotcha, Tom" from the video. Overnight his professorial musing went viral, and the next morning an unsuspecting Flanagan received a call in his car from the Alberta Opposition Leader's assistant. "I've got good news and bad news. The good news is you're going to have a lot more spare time. The bad news is your career is over."

That the tale resembles a "Passion Play," that it occurred on a "fateful" day, that the enemy emerged "out the blue" and "unknown to Flanagan" reveals that, as unsuspecting and innocent as Flanagan was, he's still the master of narratives, of translating events into familiar, digestible structures. Chief among these narrative conceits is that of "being taken out of context."

In this chapter I will examine *Persona Non Grata* alongside one of Flanagan's earliest texts, dealing with Louis Riel's place in Canadian historiography, in order to discern exactly the context, or the narrative structures and places within intellectual production that enable Flanagan to function within the greater neoliberal project. My aim is to show that Flanagan's latest texts and his early ones demonstrate a remarkably consistent project, and that they provide the key to understanding the structural and rhetorical means of translating difference into sameness that characterizes Flanagan's far more consequential work, *First Nations? Second Thoughts*, which I examine in the next chapter. I conclude by discussing the Kojèveian figure of the Sage, who, having achieved Wisdom at the end of history, says the same thing again and again, and/or is silent. Kojève's figure allows me to correlate the neoliberal homogenizing project of universal history that Cooper presented with its local deployment in the Canadian context. The local form

is the rationalization process of settler-colonialism, and Flanagan's work, which could not be more consequential and threatening to so many, consists in completing the colonial project of eliminating difference.

Flanagan opens *Persona Non Grata* by referring to Philip Roth's 2000 novel *The Human Stain*, which was, as he says, "a novel that dealt with, among other things, academic life in the age of political correctness." In Flanagan's summary,

> The protagonist, Dr. Coleman Silk, is an aging classics professor […] [who] has recently retired after long years as the dean of arts, in which he made many enemies by ceaseless attempts to upgrade the college's standards. Now he has returned to teaching. […] he regularly takes attendance to help him learn the students' names. After several weeks, he notices that two students have never been checked off, so he asks the others in the class, "Does anyone know these people? Do they exist or are they spooks?" Both absent students happen to be African American, so they complain to the university authorities about the alleged racial slur. Then comes an academic mobbing, in which staff members whom Dr. Silk has hired and befriended turn against him while a weak president does nothing to defend him. An inquiry is set up, Dr. Silk retires, his wife dies from stress – and then things start to get really interesting, but you'll have to read the book or see the movie to find out more about this sprawling and engrossing story. (1-2)

Despite not being a literary critic, Flanagan is absolutely correct that the novel's primary conceit, its *mise-en-scène* as it were, is the late-1990s academic culture of political correctness; but he's also correct that the novel dealt with this subject "among other things."

To be sure, both he and Silk were victims of political correctness. But Flanagan has left out some important literal differences. Silk is a far more complex character than the phrase "he

made many enemies by ceaseless attempts to upgrade the college's standards" suggests. Silk was *himself* of African-American descent; the great irony and pathos of Roth's self-consciously-Nella-Larsenesque tale comes from the fact that the professor was passing in the predominantly white, liberal, academic milieu. So there are fundamental differences between the white, privileged Flanagan and Silk, not least of which is the fact that Flanagan prides himself on making enemies, and not for "ceaselessly upgrading standards," but for courting controversy. Silk's students heard something different than Silk meant. (It's not at all clear that they were simply too dull to notice or care about the possible meanings of "spook.") In Flanagan's case, he was speaking on the Indian Act; his antagonists—Indigenous activists whom he's made a living antagonizing—showed up; they asked him what he thought on a subject he'd spoken on before; and he decided what to say. There was no misunderstanding involved on the part of those listening. The listeners lying in wait were not lacking the literacy to grasp fine points. If we are to believe Flanagan, they engineered his downfall precisely by exploiting the ambiguities and fine points within words.

On the other hand, Silk's racial background, while providing the key twist in Roth's story, is far from clear, and this is probably the element of the story most relevant to modern liberal-democratic individual freedom, the element that is the human element, and upon which the "human stain" does not rest easily. Silk's story is not just related through but *created by* Roth's *character*, the fiction-writer Nathan Zuckerman. As in all of Roth's Zuckerman books, the life story presented is imagined by Zuckerman. Zuckerman isn't a biographer; he's a novelist, one who happens upon an interesting anecdote and runs with it, producing the novels in which he appears.

But perhaps most importantly, if we take Roth's story as a morality tale about freedom of speech rather than an ironic study in the dangers of treating grey areas in black and white terms, then we might miss that the illiteracy that is at issue is that of a world that is unable to read its subjects according to the racial and institutional structures that assign those subjects meaning. Let's assume along with Flanagan that Silk's students represent the politically-correct mob—rousing to shrill indignation first, and asking questions only later— and that they lacked the urbane refinement that they would eventually get from a liberal arts education to understand the multivalence of the term "spook." In that case, the play between literal and figurative modes, and between the word's history as a marker of particularity and its formal, universal, or neutral meaning as a synonym for "ghost," would offer a profound teachable moment in both the classroom and in civil discourse in general. But here, Silk remains silent. The ultimate irony and instance of illiteracy is that Silk himself is (at least in Zuckerman's speculation) the subject of lifelong misreading; a man who could if he chose to—and again Zuckerman has to guess at this—have assumed the position of writer, not just in his protest of being taken out of context, nor simply for his authorial intention or what he "meant," but as the literal authority over which terms for African-American he chooses to use. Flanagan of course has such authority uncontestedly. He is literal.

In this chapter I will read several of Flanagan's texts to argue that he is the *author of illiteracy*; his rhetorical practice consists in making distinctions impossible to apprehend. And to top it off, as he's done with Roth's text, presenting it as an allegory completely *out of context*, Flanagan does exactly what Roth's Zuckerman's Silk refused to do: in conservative parlance, Flanagan "plays the race card." Superficially, Silk and Flanagan are the same, both liberal-democratic subjects robbed of their freedom to speak, along with their jobs. But, they are also

different, and like the process of assimilating Indigenous struggle as a means of forming a Western identity—a process that I will show Flanagan has engaged in even more systematically and successfully than Cooper—here the multicultural politics of recognition allow him to appropriate US racial injustice to his cause.

Perhaps most egregiously (though that's hard to decide), like the Straussian method of foregrounding undecidability in order to use the undecidable to claim the ultimate authority of the liberal-democratic subject, Flanagan's greatest contribution to neoliberal and conservative discourse is his method of rendering figural things literal. As a consequence, as I will argue below, Flanagan "colonizes" undecidability, irony, or ambiguity, instrumentalizing the production of meaning in order to reassert the most colonial, heteronormative, and racist narratives of progress and civilization.

Roth, at least, has his Zuckerman muse over Silk's motives: perhaps Silk was uneasy appropriating Black struggle after having enjoyed a life of white privilege. Flanagan has no problem appropriating the entire gamut of complex and contradictory and conflicting particularities within a simplified generality: in the novel the technical literality of the act, the harm the students felt in absentia, and the value of the ties that were severed cast the incident as a paradigmatic grey area, which was judged in "black and white." Flanagan takes the black-and-whiteness as the moral of the story, and he deploys it as the initial gesture towards his consistent goal of appropriating Indigenous grievances for his own purposes. Roth also, as both writer and as his fictional alter-ego Zuckerman, has made a career of using identitarian material to fashion his work; it was he who dared to manipulate the sacred figures of Jewish identity and write alternate histories of Anne Frank—in the book, literally (perhaps even "*spook*-ily"?) called *The Ghost Writer* (as well as in the final Zuckerman book, *Exit Ghost*). But of course Roth is the

preeminent Jewish-American author, so there's a complexity and an irony to Roth's working over Jewish-American historical material that resembles the irony of Silk being accused of using an offensive term for African Americans. Disregarding such fascinating grey areas, Flanagan narrates the entirely-uncomplicated origins of Roth's novel:

> *The Human Stain* is based on real events. Roth's friend Melvin Tumin, a well-known sociologist teaching at Princeton, used exactly those words when calling role in class and was subjected to an inquiry for similar allegations of racism. He was exonerated, but the very fact that he could be subjected to an inquiry is sinister enough. (2)

But while Roth—Zuckerman-like—took an episode and constructed a complex story around it, he was not interested in creating a controversy that would outshine his artistic feats. Flanagan has the opposite approach, which he cannot restrain from showing us, thus he says:

> the very fact that he [Tumin] could be subjected to an inquiry is sinister enough. And stupid as well, like the case of the Washington, D.C., city staffer who was fired for using the word *niggardly* (fortunately this man was quickly rehired after the mayor consulted a dictionary).[84] (2)

To recap, Flanagan argues that his situation is *just like* that of the fictional and complicated one Coleman Silk faced. Both he and Silk were victims of illiterate bullies. Not only

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[84] Again, like Roth, David Howard (the fired staffer) has a far more insightful grasp of the situation. Not only does he not indignantly insist on his right to literal and correct interpretation, but, notably unlike *the professor* Flanagan, Howard articulates the incident in terms of teaching, learning, and recognizing the difference between subjects' experiences:

> Howard, 44, said yesterday that he never felt "victimized" but that the experience has given him "a certain awareness" he did not have before the incident occurred.
>
> "I just feel very pleased that this whole thing has a silver lining," he said. "The silver lining is that this has led to a discussion that can help everyone understand each other better. . . . I used to think it would be great if we could all be colorblind. That's naive, especially for a white person, because a white person can't afford to be colorblind. They don't have to think about race every day. An African American does."

"D.C. Mayor Acted 'Hastily,' Will Rehire Aide" Yolanda Woodlee, *The Washington Post* Thursday, February 4, 1999; Page A1 https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/longterm/williams/williams020499.htm.

Flanagan is clearly relishing this same rhetorical strategy ("not that different than" anti-Semitism) that allows Ezra Levant to refer to Tseporah Berman as "my friend and fellow Jew" (Levant talk at Petrocultures 2014).

is Flanagan like Roth's fictional character, but *he's also like* the real-life victim who inspired the text, whose situation was "stupid as well, *like* the case" of the staffer who was fired for using a word that *sounds like* the n-word. Obviously, in Flanagan's retelling, the stupid mayor and his coterie were offended because they were illiterate, too. Incidentally, like Silk's students, they were African American as well.[85] Flanagan's story leads to the well-worn conclusion that the innocent white male is the real victim of racism. People who accuse others of racism are usually the actual racists. Flanagan has played the race card.

Having played the race-card, and played it out of any context that could possibly have to do with him, Flanagan claims he was "mobbed." He tells us that "Academic mobbing is now recognized as a subspecies of workplace mobbing, and a lot has been written about both." No definitions or citations are provided—is such mobbing actual physical violence? Is it bullying or harassment of the kind that Flanagan has advised women MPs to toughen up about?[86] That is, is

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[85] In his editorial in the *Washington Post*, Colbert I. King scoffs at those who are offended by the sound of words, those Howard understands "have to think about race every day." Rather than feeling discomfort triggered by an injurious sound, he says, they should learn how to read:

> In a recent conversation with a couple of workers about the need to be thrifty, Howard used the word -- be still, my heart – "niggardly." NIGGARDLY. Say it slowly: nig--gard--ly. Now faster: niggardly, niggardly, niggardly. Say it any way you want -- at the top of your voice, under your breath, in the shower or in the park. It matters not. Niggardly is not the nasty N-word; it never has been. Look it up. (If there's any saving grace in this whole sorry episode, it is that maybe more people will open their dictionaries.) Unfortunately, the offended employee, a Williams campaign staffer named Marshall Brown -- whose real claim to fame is a life of faithful service to ex-mayor Marion Barry -- never cracked his Webster's. Race became the convenient proxy for pressuring the mayor to move Howard out of a coveted position. Challenged, Williams wilted. Instead of tearing Howard's resignation into shreds, ordering him back to work -- and handing Marshall Brown a New World dictionary -- Williams accepted Howard's decision to quit, accusing him of having exercised bad judgment.

But, as Flanagan well knows, if we're being completely literal, then we have to admit that the word he and King throw around so blithely *literally sounds the same as the n-word*. And King is not only rubbing the salt of phonemic literalness into the wounds of racialized sensitivities, but he uses the same technique with his clever word play. Marion Barry is of course known for being the first mayor of a major city to be caught smoking crack; unlike Rob Ford much later, Barry had neither white conservative privilege nor Canadian "hoser" credibility but was treated as a racist stereotype. King here reduces Brown to his "life of faithful service to ex-mayor Marion Barry" and then drolly quips that Brown "never *cracked* his Webster's." "Much Ado about an N-Word," *Washington Post*, January 30, 1999 https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1999/01/30/much-ado-about-an-n-word/97b0e36d-a977-4377-9176-f9ba4cf2fb56/

[86] Reacting to Justin Trudeau's measures to confront sexual harassment on Parliament Hill, Flanagan writes in a *Globe and Mail* editorial that

the mob and the mobbing literal or figurative? Left ambiguous, the lynching or pogrom imagery has been deployed, another racially-charged card played. But, having played it, characteristically, Flanagan explains this isn't his point: "What happened to me […] was something similar but also different." Different from what—actual violence and bullying, being unjustly dismissed? Yes and no. He seems to mean different from what happened to Roth's out-of-context fictional character: "Colleagues at the University of Calgary didn't try to take me down […] Rather, I was assaulted by multiple political organizations and media outlets outside the university." Technically, his treatment wasn't literally violent:

> It was a 'virtual mobbing,' in which almost everything happened online. No one grabbed me and snarled Up against the wall, motherf—er.' No one put a dunce cap on my head, Cultural Revolution-style, and forced me to sit on a stool in front of jeering students. […] Hardly anyone spoke to me at all. Everything happened through email, websites, and social media (death by Twitter). (3)

In other words, Flanagan was the victim of something "like" what Mao or US countercultural thugs had done, and, more unjust still, this former party strategist for the Reform, Conservative, and Wildrose parties, director of multiple leadership and election campaigns, former Chief of Staff for Stephen Harper, this CBC media personality, was taken by surprise by the new world of social media. While his mobbing wasn't literal, some of his mistreatment was. Hardly anyone spoke to him. To further emphasize the seriousness of his injurious treatment, he begins as *zoon politikon*, becomes a Socratic martyr, and ends up being lynched:

> MPs are not helpless children or naive interns. They are mature adults who have been toughened by public struggles for nomination and election. Because the competitive process of getting elected predisposes them to levy charges against opponents, we shouldn't make it even easier for them to start making career-destroying allegations of sexual misconduct.

"Trudeau's rush to judgment" http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/trudeaus-rush-to-judgment/article21486194/

> Human beings are social animals, so shunning, ostracism, and exile are cruel tactics, even when they're not completely successful, as they weren't in my case. Remember that Socrates was given a choice between exile and drinking poison. He drank the hemlock because he thought being sent away from friends and community was a fate worse than death. Those who engage so enthusiastically in virtual mobbing should stop to think that their actions are *not that different than those of a lynch mob*. (emphasis added; offensive reductionism in original 3)

To be absolutely fair, there is a structural similarity, a meaningless formal pattern, in which what happened to Flanagan was "like" a lynching. But in order to claim such likeness, one must relinquish any concept of substantive difference. However, Flanagan seamlessly shifts back to claiming he was denied his due distinctions: "Media outlets everywhere in the country posted inflammatory stories on their websites, based on the completely false tagline of a single YouTube posting: 'Tom Flanagan okay with child pornography'" (3). But the tagline is not exactly "false." It simply lacks Flanagan's rhetorical subtlety; that is, it ought to say something like "Tom Flanagan voices opinion *not that different than those which are* okay with child pornography."

In fact, he is "okay with" possessing illegal material like child pornography because his supposedly-Hayekian approach requires that one not make meaningful distinctions. I have no doubt he's disgusted by the actual fact of such pictures, not to mention the acts they portray. But the fact that his political philosophy translates the question of photographs *as instruments of violent crime* into photographs as literal objects and containers for consumer choices or taste in pictures, like the equivalence that allows social media postings to be called not just "actions," but

actions "not that different from those of a lynch mob," is what makes the taste an explicit endorsement of freedom.[87] He is, by his own definition, "okay" with these pictures!

Nevertheless, political correctness has led to a virtual lynching. But even this isn't the actual problem: it's Indigenous activists, it's women, it's his cowardly friends, it's everyone else. Flanagan insists his remarks were misunderstood against a backdrop of moral panic over child pornography; the 1980s hysteria "started by radical feminists [his enemies] as part of their crusade against male power, was appropriated by conservatives [his friends], who have now created their own version of political correctness around the issue of child pornography" (4). Indeed, the true issue is that in their behaviour, conservatives' "actions were not that different" than those of the left:

> I have spent decades challenging the political correctness of leftist ideologues, who don't want anyone to ask whether the nuclear family is more than a lifestyle choice, or whether those on welfare bear some responsibility for their condition, or whether Aboriginal peoples have to adopt Canadian norms of behaviour if they hope to share the Canadian standard of living. Ironically, I now found myself shouted down by the ideologues of the right, who proved to be just as intolerant of other opinions as the ideologues of the left. (5)

In *First Nations? Second Thoughts*, Flanagan undertakes to trace the term "civilization" in order to begin a philological recolonization, which *Beyond the Indian Act* completes in the economic figure of "reversionary title." Here, he likewise performs a philological genealogy of the term "political correctness" in order to posit an ironic twist of illiteracy: "The term *political*

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[87] That such radical libertarianism requires that taste is always "okay" was not lost even on ultra-cautious politicians. Then-Premier of Alberta Alison Redford condemned the remarks by calling them a "perfect example of an ideological argument taken too far." http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/former-tory-strategist-tom-flanagan-apologizes-for-child-porn-remarks-1.1175925

correctness became common in the 1990s when conservatives [...] started using it to satirize the extremes of left-wing identity politics." It refers to

> a craze for politeness, mania for euphemisms, a sort of belief in word magic, a desire to believe that renaming something will change the reality. In my own lifetime, the polite word for a person of African ancestry living in North America has gone from *Coloured* to *Negro* to *Black* to *African American* or *African Canadian*, yet the racial divide has not disappeared. *Indians* have become *Native Americans* in the United States and *First Nations* in Canada, yet their social and political problems are as severe as ever. (5)

Flanagan wrote this in 2014, in the middle of Barack Hussein Obama's second mandate; to be sure the racial divide between US whites and blacks had not disappeared, but it would be quite astonishing to hear an argument that in the time since the first term he gives for an American of African ancestry had been preferred, much had not changed for the better. Moreover, the fact that Indigenous activists had been able to effect the "virtual mobbing" of a privileged white professor who had made a living contesting their status as "Indians" and "First Nations" (not to mention characterizing them as refusing to adopt "Canadian norms of behaviour") shows that even if the "social and political problems" facing Indigenous Canadians "are as severe as ever," some things have definitely changed!

Nevertheless, Flanagan is again asserting his literal approach to meaning. Political correctness begins with "too much trust in euphemisms." But things get worse: "Politically correct language is almost always adopted with an eye toward entrenching unexamined premises as part of the conventional wisdom." Thus the champions of political correctness mistakenly believe language has a power it doesn't have, a figurative power to affect the literal referent. But they also take unfair advantage of language's power. The work—the entrenchment—of political

correctness is to install interestedness into neutral signification. Flanagan is describing Gayatri Spivak's concept of "epistemic violence." The blatantly illogical and contradictory arguments Flanagan is crafting here are not, of course, innocent mistakes, they are means of discrediting those who would, as Sartre puts it, "use words responsibly." Flanagan's arguments are, literally, "epistemic violence," or violence against the very means of knowing. The equation of literal meaning with true meaning creates a common sense impervious to both simple and complex arguments.

It's rare and exciting to see classic philosophical lessons materialize in real life, but here is just such a case: Flanagan is "like" a classical sophist, he's literally making the weaker argument appear as the stronger! As such, the credibility of claims and discourse, in either complicated or simplistic forms, will redound to the reader, the consumer's choice, or, "taste" in arguments. Clearly, those with common sense will recognize that words can't magically change the world; they're just "expressions": "Take the politically correct terms *Native American* and *First Nations*. Both expressions imply that there is something special about being first, that the *First Peoples* (to use another expression) of the Americas should have special rights" (6). It's understood that in this scheme the literal is the basic, neutral meaning. But how then is the literal not itself a euphemism? That is, doesn't the argument require that the literal's lexical priority, its firstness, deserves "special treatment"? This theory of signification in which the literal is naturally-first reveals the source of what Flanagan bemoans as the irony of conservatives having adopted political correctness: he has nobly, but alas naively, placed too much trust in the euphemism of meaning. Nevertheless, the error belongs to the illiterate, those who do not see that the literal meaning is natural, like the city and the man, or like white-civilized behavioural

norms. Against such referential neutrality, any other competing definition is the product of interest.[88]

The naturalist premises shared among white supremacist, settler, and neoliberal common sense require something exactly like what Flanagan calls the "chronological principle"—the very principle to which he claims terms like "Native" and "First Peoples" appeal. But, Flanagan instructs,

> the chronological principle is hard to defend, and in fact we generally don't follow it. The same people who advocate for special status for American Indians because they were here first would be horrified at discrimination against recent immigrants because they have arrived later. Insisting on political correct terminology is a way of preventing anyone from asking whether chronological priority should lead to special status. (5-6)

To those left wondering what then should bestow status, special or otherwise, it's a mix of controversy and approbation. For Flanagan awards and popular reception indicate that public opinion is the most convincing evidence for truth.[89]

Having completed his PhD with Cooper at Duke University, the American-born Flanagan was hired to the University of Calgary in 1968. He recounts how he at once began "reading as much as I could about Canadian history and politics." He promptly "discovered Louis Riel, whom I had never heard of before crossing the border," and set to work dismantling the "politically-correct" view of the Canadian icon:

> The typical view at that time, enshrined in George Stanley's biography *Louis Riel*, was that Riel was a gifted political leader with an unfortunate streak of insanity that had

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[88] On interestedness versus neutrality see my discussion of Mitchell, Chapter 5.

[89] Even the text that represents his self-identification is universally-acclaimed: "*The Human Stain* won many prizes, became a best seller, and was turned into a Hollywood movie of the same title starring Anthony Hopkins and Nicole Kidman" (1).

> expressed itself in religious monomania. But coming from the outside, and not knowing anything about the constitutional and linguistic battles that had swirled around Riel, I saw him in a completely different framework—as a prophetic and millenarian religious leader. [...] Riel looked to me like a medieval prophet of the Last Days who had somehow landed in nineteenth-century Canada. (16)

Taking this narrative as literally as Flanagan himself claims to read texts, we see a chronology.[90] 1) he was able to see Riel differently than Riel scholars because he knew nothing about Riel; through this fortuitous lack of context Riel looked like he had "somehow landed" in the time and place he inhabited. Flanagan then set to work, with Gilles Martel, editing and publishing Riel's *Collected Writings*. Together, they

> revolutionized the understanding of Canada's best-known and yet most enigmatic historical figure. My book *Louis 'David' Riel: Prophet of the New World* was well received and even won best Canadian biography of 1982. Readers found it a bit perplexing that I had sidestepped the old, sterile debates about whether Riel was a traitor or a hero, and whether he was "really" insane. I depicted him rather as a Métis Joseph Smith, claiming to be divinely inspired and founding a new version of Christianity. It was provocative, but not controversial, because I wasn't taking sides for or against Riel and the Métis.

So, 2), Flanagan narrated Riel according to a universal type: a narrative type instead of a sociological type. And this narration was objectively accorded a special status, through the awards it received.

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[90] Economy requires that we allow his claim that through his reading he "*discovered* Louis Riel." (However, he's not, notice, saying that he discovered Riel like one "discovers" a rewarding and henceforth treasured work.)

To recap: 1) was the result of his literally neutral, completely objective outsider's view; 2) is politically neutral because he did not take sides. Now 3), however, *is* controversial because his neutral claims offended those who were not neutral, those who were motivated, or as Cooper puts it, interested: 3) "I started to become controversial shortly thereafter because, as part of my editorial work for *Collected Writings*, I had to review the history of the North-West Rebellion." Taking on the utterly neutral passive voice of duty, Flanagan describes his impartial position as a conduit for documentary truth! "Study of the sources, including some newly discovered manuscripts, convinced me that the Canadian government had in fact dealt fairly with the Métis land grievances, that Riel had provoked the rebellion for his own reasons." Well, if Riel hadn't been mad, then he must have been motivated. Thus, "his treason trial had been fairly conducted by the standards of the day." Still, suffering the fate of so many impartial messengers in history,

> When I published these findings in numerous articles and in the book *Riel and the Rebellion: 1885 Reconsidered*, I became not only controversial but almost radioactive in Métis circles because my interpretation undermined the mythology they had constructed in support of their contemporary land claims. (17)

In other words, an ahistorical, acontextual, apolitical approach let Riel be seen differently than he had been through his historical moment and the historical trajectory he initiated. When this new objective position (the "findings") was released to the world, its conduit became "radioactive" because the findings undermined Métis "mythology," that is, the findings challenged received history by suggesting that what was understood as history might be myth. But (just as the politically-correct stupidly believe that language has a power it does not have, *and* unfairly take advantage of that power) the mythology is not the history of a particular culture or people who had not yet been visited with the objective truth of the new information; it had always-already

been the deceptive mythology of the present, used by motivated interested people to "construct" historical-sounding premises for their "contemporary land claims."

Detailing the next stage of his career, Flanagan explains that his work has always seen him follow the research: "As a result of this research," he was hired in 1986 by the Department of Justice "as a historical consultant and expert witness in the *Manitoba Métis Federation* case, which had already been percolating since 1976." Once again, he is an unbiased-because-uninformed observer: "I hadn't made a detailed study of the Manitoba claims, but the department was willing to pay me to do the research." Like his disinterested perspective, his motives, being purely financial, set him apart from interested experts: "The Crown has a lot of problems finding expert witnesses in Aboriginal cases because most of the historians and anthropologists who work in this field consider themselves part of the Aboriginal political movement and won't testify for the Crown." Here Flanagan is showing the priority of literal identity and interest: the experts choose to see themselves according to an identity and therefore they will not testify for the Crown. Interest is inherent in identity, and has nothing to do with, say, the Crown's position or the particular case, let alone their beliefs in the facts of the cases at hand!

And therefore the disinterested neutral actor receives the ultimate approval:

> Most of my research findings appeared in my 1991 book *Metis Lands in Manitoba*, which won best book of the year on Manitoba history from the Historical Society of Manitoba.[91] I loved consulting with Crown lawyers and getting the academic recognition symbolized by the prize, but it made me even more unpopular among Métis political leaders.[92] (18)

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[91] This is the descendent of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, which Cooper cites as being founded to counter the garrison mentality of Ontario-based and Eastern-biased historiography—a perfectly reasonable claim, except for the tacked-on part about the garrison mentality.

[92] Elsewhere Flanagan provides this humble brag:

> My work on Riel led the Department of Justice to hire me as a historical consultant in the Manitoba Métis Federation land claims case. The case did not actually come to trial until 2006, but my book *Métis Lands in*

It seems like every time Flanagan wins an award, he makes more enemies! Today, we're all too familiar with this Donald-Trump-style of plaudit-dropping, which makes the public and the elite the arbiters of the general, universal common sense truth, and, consequently casts the particular as interested and wrong. He made a name for himself by doing what was recognized, but those who were interested by things other than honest work and scholarly prestige misread him as making his name by ruining their sacred-cash-cows. For Flanagan, it's just business…literally. Those who take things personally are both misreading him and defending their own misreadings of reality.

Flanagan repeatedly emphasizes that his work is motivated by research and pay; it is enabled by his lack of any prior knowledge; and it is ultimately legitimated by awards and more money.[93] He thereby presents himself as a figure for the mode of knowledge production belonging to the think tank age. Here research is no more or less than a commodity assembled by a disinterested technologist. Fruits of market transactions, such products—whatever their content—are literally neutral. Moreover, they are literal in that they don't claim anything beyond their use. The neutrality of his labour allows further claims for the fundamental reality of the market ecology. Flanagan did good work for the Department of Justice; and so he became recognized as an expert, amassing skills in neutrality as well as a store of important findings. Naturally, these qualities of professional integrity and useful knowledge are marketable, so once they produced a sufficient quantity, he released these as a book. Since these neutral products

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> *Manitoba* contained the evidence that, when I presented it in court as an expert witness, caused the Métis claims to be rejected. ("Legends of the Calgary School" 26)

The reader will note how much this narrative is mediated through passivity: his "findings" led to his hiring; the book contained the evidence, which he then presented as part of his expert knowledge. His motivations are completely neutral, that is, there's no interest except pay for honest work.

[93] Flanagan recounts "additional expert witness work," including when "the federal Department of Justice asked me to write a report on the early history of the Lubicon Lake dispute. The case never came to trial, but my work led to several articles demystifying some of the Lubicons' claims." Then came "two high-profile Indian cases, one for Treaty Six and one for Treaty Eight." Once again he clarifies, "I hadn't previously done original research on these specific topics, but the Crown was willing to pay me to do the necessary work" (*PNG* 18).

originated in disinterested work they retain their benign status as they move into circulation. And, therefore, those whose work and motivations originate in "interest"—those who would criticize the author and his idea-commodities—cannot see that the latter are completely innocent victims of misreadings.

But, at the end of the day, this is still Tom Flanagan, and while he may be the very model of neutrality, he's also a perpetual victim and a braggart: "By and large, I enjoyed my thirty years of controversy over Métis and First Nations." Despite literally belonging to the means of intellectual production, not to mention his prominent CBC position, he claims,

> They [i.e., his Métis and First Nations opponents] had more media and political support, but my work had academic heft. All my research had been published in university presses and refereed scholarly journals. I wasn't sure I was right about everything, or even anything [...] I saw myself, in the spirit of John Stuart Mill, as serving the public interest, challenging conventional wisdom by putting forward contrary arguments. (20)

To put it another way, Flanagan is just the kind of entrepreneurial spirit to persevere and flourish in a natural market ecology by which "All these projects as a consultant on Indian land-claims litigation made me a lot of new enemies." This underdog-technocrat would never be cowed by the vast strength wielded by those he calls the Aboriginal orthodoxy. Instead his work and his consequent enemies

> drove me toward a deeper examination of questions of Aboriginal rights, expressed in my 2000 book *First Nations? Second Thoughts*, a heat-seeking missile aimed at the emerging orthodoxy that Indians were sovereign "First Nations" capable of dealing with Canada on a nation-to-nation basis.

Surely “politically correct” readers might be put off by the language of a weaponized-academic-“examination,” but they would be proven wrong, as his book

> became a best-seller by academic standards and won two prizes, including the $25,000 Canadian Donner Prize for the year’s best book on public policy (I quickly used the money to buy a new Buick because friends kept approaching me with semi-jocular ideas on how I could spend the money to their advantage).

Not only does objective research naturally produce enemies, but having prestige and wealth naturally turns even friends into would-be-beggars. Flanagan pithily summarizes the process by which, starting from perfectly ethical neutrality leads to ethical problems being imposed from the outside: “More controversy, more acclaim, more prizes ... and more enemies” (18-19).

Flanagan’s autobiographical summary returns in the end to the realm of literary roles in which it began:

> I’ve loved every minute of my diversified career. […] I wasn’t anywhere in particular but seemed to be everywhere at once - in the university and in think tanks, in the newspapers and on television, in the backrooms of politics advising party leaders, in the courtroom fencing with lawyers. That irritated a lot of people, particularly because I was obviously having fun playing Don Quixote, tilting at windmills of conventional wisdom and settled opinion. After all, if you’re a Hayekian, you can’t help but be critical of many policies in a left-leaning social democracy such as Canada.

To the literal-minded reader thinking, “wait, Quixote is literature’s most famous fool!,” the response is he was playing *the role of* Quixote, just as he’s played the roles of martyr, of Socratic gadfly, and of the victim of racism and intolerance. To criticize or take offence at his work is to

misread that he is playing roles within the mode of intellectual production, media roles through which the literal and formal messages of post-historical market ecology are reproduced.

As I will discuss in the next chapter, Flanagan functions within the neoliberal marketplace of ideas. Hayek invented this model, in which ideas or talking points are produced and circulated by what Hayekians have called "second-hand dealers in information." Of course producers and dealers are often the same people. As I'll discuss in the case of Flanagan's work on the Indian Act, a think tank like the Fraser Institute will commission a study to explain why something is bad, and then the study's authors and their colleagues in the media will discuss the study as though it were a separate event, and a "public debate" will take place in terms decided by the interests behind the study. This is the "echo chamber" model of public discourse, and Quixote himself was caught up in it.

By beginning with Roth's character and ending with Cervantes' hero, Flanagan shows how literature is both an allegory for and material to be circulated in a marketplace of ideas. The literate individual, that is, one who is both well-read and a good reader, is an author engaged in a kind of production. He, she, or they produce their biopolitical narratives—complex or simple, aimed at niches or general interests—and the pubic chooses which appeals to it, thereby determining the author's authority. These premises are fundamentally identical to the Straussian concept of the "political." The politician, having to constantly appeal to the public, cannot lead. Poetry and myth has the practical purpose of rendering qualitatively different discourses into compatible and exchangeable objects. Thus, as I will argue in rest of this dissertation, fiction, policy proposals, expert testimony, and other genres express different versions of same thing, like sequels, episodes, and mass textual production.

A Quixotic character is characterized by being a consumer of second-hand information, one who has taken such information to be referentially literal. But as Cervantes illustrates in the episode where Quixote visits the print shop and is enraged to find counterfeit sequels of his *Life and Times* being produced by opportunistic hacks, entertainment or choice—or, *taste*—is not formally different from knowledge or truth; they are all shaped by and produced by the forms of media. Thereby Quixote is the archetype for the way of reading Flanagan endorses, in which being well-read is equivalent to, or "not that different than," illiteracy. Flanagan's role is to be literally highly-literate, and to use this literacy to foster a definition of literacy deliberately illiterate to the figurative dimension of language. From claiming that his downfall resulted from too many believing what they read in a YouTube tagline, to ridiculing those for whom words have more than one meaning, Flanagan's entire story of becoming persona non grata relies on both the premise and the practice of dumbing down.

The moral of *The Human Stain* isn't that people are dumbed down, even if that is part of the story and is both clearly true and clearly false. All of Roth's work (if not all contemporary fiction) is engaged with the historiographic questions of postmodernism, or more specifically, of the epistemic environment in which all things are qualitatively equal as exchangeable objects. Thus their most basic "moral" relates the fact that one can never know the true story, but can in effect make anything into a story. Such works do not constitute a conservative argument against stupid people! Nor do they represent pleas for common sense.

Flanagan's story leads from his innocent discovery of Louis Riel to his fateful talk about the Indian Act, when he failed to heed an email that Idle No More protestors might show up (imagine!).[94] Had he done so, he might have been ready for the "gotcha" question. But, this is the

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[94] Flanagan explains that when he arrived at the University of Lethbridge, "everything about the event […] had put me in academic mode." But he should not have been so passively put at ease: "I should have paid more attention to

point: he's always been, he claims, vulnerable because of his objective observer status, not to mention his truth-telling.

3.2 "Insanity and Prophecy": Recognizing and Recolonizing Louis Riel.

> The recent practice of calling the right of aboriginal self-government "inherent" is a way of claiming that history doesn't matter, that aboriginal communities had, have, and always will have the right to govern themselves, no matter what happens. But history does matter.
>
> Flanagan *First Nations? Second Thoughts*

In this section I look at one of Flanagan's early (1977) pieces on Louis Riel and Canadian historiography to elucidate the trajectory of Flanagan's career-long project to recolonize Indigenous history and retcon contemporary neoliberal dogma as the originary pre-historical market-ecological nature. In Cooper, in Morton, and in Canadian historiography in general, Louis Riel has played a complicated role as both heroic opponent of hegemonic, Anglo-Saxon assimilation, and as a figure for official projects aimed at such assimilation.[95] Throughout his work Flanagan exploits the alterity of certain subjects, equating the way they fit in relation to a dominant subjectivity to a universal structural relation, rendering particularity as a formal position within a universal structure. Here he does so in order to colonize Riel as the first Canadian victim of poor choices incentivized by an oppressive collectivism.

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an email a Lethbridge friend had sent me that morning, warning that Idle No More supporters from surrounding First Nations were planning to attend." It's hard to see what he might have done differently had he "paid more attention." The notice that local Indigenous people were planning to attend a talk from a noted white professor and conservative operative discussing the Indian Act did in fact compel him to forward the email to the colleague who had invited him to Lethbridge: "she had asked security to be on hand, but I wasn't too worried about it." In his narrative what was fateful that day was that his opponents would *behave* so differently than they had in the past: "I've spoken to native audiences before and things had remained on respectful terms, in spite of profound disagreements. But this would be very different. The room was packed with obviously hostile people, and more were standing outside the doors, unable to get in because of university fire-safety regulations" (*PNG* 44-45). It's hard to see how paying more attention to the email would have done anything to change this unruly crowd—willing to flout fire regulations. The crowd, in other words, did not conform to what Flanagan calls "Canadian norms of behaviour." Daniel Coleman would argue that, for Flanagan, the crowd did not perform white civility.

[95] See Fabris.

In Flanagan's assessment, Riel "believed he was endowed with a special mission to renovate religion in North America and indeed in the whole world." The ups and downs he faced were acts of Providence, "purifying him through suffering." But despite the context of his beliefs and milieu, Riel was also formally good at his work: "His greatness consisted in being a prophet, who communicated God's revelations to men." And among these revelations were "The Métis were the chosen people of the present age." Riel started out to reform Catholicism; then, "when his ideas found no support within the hierarchy, he decided to break with Rome," planning instead to move the papacy to St. Vital, Manitoba. There he would recommit to Mosaic Law and rites, which, Flanagan explains, "was appropriate because the Métis, through their Indian blood, were actually descendants of the ancient Hebrews (Riel believed that a ship bearing a group of Hebrews crossed the Atlantic around the time of Moses, thus establishing the Indian race)." Thus understood as "descended from the Israelites, Riel styled himself Louis 'David' Riel, a modern sacred monarch, priest, and king in one person. For good measure he also awarded himself the title of 'infallible pontiff', even though strictly speaking he did not plan to be pope of his new church in North America" (18).

Having presented this summary of Riel's project, Flanagan frames it within a sociological context:

> Admittedly these beliefs appear rather strange at first glance, particularly to a modern observer in a rationalistic climate of ideas. However, this strangeness is a result of the unfamiliarity of Riel's ideas. The tenets of the major religions may appear less peculiar to us because they are more familiar.

That is, Riel's "strangeness" is just that—literal unfamiliarity. When approached rationally, Flanagan says, "in principle, it seems to me, a secular rationalist should maintain that all

religious dogmas are equally unprovable, and hence equally strange." There is no doubt truth to this claim. Like language, or particularity in general, everything meaningful is on some level arbitrary or contingent, so from a structuralist point of view, one symbol, tenet, or rite is just as literally as strange as any other. But in Flanagan's liberal-democratic model, the formal arbitrariness of signification does nothing to diminish the authority of the individual's rational agency, and hence Flanagan presents the secular rationalist with this example:

> Take the man who announces he is Jesus Christ, or that he is being persecuted by a conspiracy [...] He may speak, read, and do arithmetic perfectly well; but he nonetheless holds beliefs which strike other men as patently absurd. Madness is therefore a term used to describe individuals who depart from the social consensus about what is reasonable.

Setting the dubious syllogistic logic aside, this argument leads to a reasonable point: "There is some safety in numbers. If a man tells me the pope is infallible, I don't think he's mad, I think he is a Catholic. But if a man tells me he is himself infallible, I may call him mad."

I have shown that the approbation of numbers (his many awards) is exactly what Flanagan refers to in order to claim his legitimacy, his recognition in terms of public common sense, as well as his scholastic and official expert recognition. However, the statement that the pope is infallible, even in the "normal speech" that Flanagan claims to be working with, is not the same kind of claim that a person claiming infallibility might make, not because, or not only because, of numbers.[96] Obviously the signifier "the pope" as used in ordinary speech recognizes that the pope's infallibility is part of a performative process. Flanagan is correct to point out that infallibility is the product of an institutional structure the ordinary man is not part of. But the meaning-making power of this structure is not reducible to its quantitative numbers.

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[96] Flanagan's object in this essay is to answer whether "after even the most careful analysis of the legal issues surrounding Riel's trial, the ordinary person would still want to ask, 'Does it make sense in normal speech to call Riel insane, regardless of the lawyer's special concerns?" (15).

I point these logical problems out not to quibble with the arguments they enable, but to show how such arguments are enabled. What Flanagan has done here is remove history as a perspective against which meaning is claimed. Riel's claims are not simply strange because they are literally "strange"—"alien" or "unfamiliar." The strangeness of a common man claiming to be infallible comes from the phenomenon of recognizing a modern subject within the imaginary of an earlier, pre-historic, epoch. The man's claim would be taken differently if it were made deep in the catacombs under the Vatican, surrounded by mystical arcana. This historical-strangeness is why transatlantic crossings on ships, or on spaceships, seems so out of place in religion. The strangeness of beholding the present in the religious—that is, pre-historic—past is what scribes have always sought to avoid; it's why, for example, the Homeric epics and the King James Bible were deliberately composed in language that was already old fashioned at the time of their production. Like all sources of authority, religion draws its authority from the past, from its relation to origins; like all authority it must obscure its nature as a thing reproduced in the present or, worse still, as a product of modern times. Religion, as a familiar thing, is a means of narrating between the present epistemic environment and past ones.[97]

Flanagan's thesis is that numbers are the source of legitimacy. But this legitimacy does not trump the authority of the individual. Without his supporters, the pope's infallibility would be considered madness. And this madness-faith resides not in the pope, but in those who grant him his power. His followers don't understand, as the secular rationalist does, that they're alienating their own individual power. Thus Flanagan presents the familiar Marxist form of

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[97] What appears uncanny in the religious context, for example in Kant's Christian musings regarding extraterrestrials whose perfection increases the closer their home planets are to God, appears absurd in the post-historical context. I will discuss this in regard to Flanagan's out-of-joint claims that Indigenous people are the first immigrants, and first European settlers, below. (See Kant *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* (1755) and *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798).) The appearance of absurdity is that of retroactive continuity, whose opposite or complement is the epiphanic, anachronistic force of seeing the religious vision in the present, which in Northern countries is also a spatial out-of-jointness, as we can see for example in Brueghel's "Census at Bethlehem" or even better in Kurelek's quintessentially-Canadian *Northern Nativity*.

religion as "inverted world consciousness," but he contains it within the most familiar structure of all, that of the individual in competition. If an individual can convince other individuals he is infallible, then maybe he is. What's lost from the Marxist understanding is that while the power of religion indeed resides in those who grant it unawares, the interest such power supports is not that of one man—even a pope—among other men competing for believers, but rather the interest of a collective subject, or, a class (which contains its own interests in harmony and in contradiction with its individual constituents' individual interests).Thus, Flanagan concludes with the market-ecological end of history claim: "Madness is a sort of residual category used to describe those who make individual aberrations from common opinion, as opposed to those who espouse beliefs supported by a group" (16).

The judgment of sane or insane is an archaic form of the transhistorical, rationalist judgment of successful or unsuccessful. Each form is decided by the public, and the individual is, like Flanagan found himself to be, vulnerable to the fickle or ignorant whims of the mob. And, thereby, historical and institutional differences—those differences we would tend to call "structural differences," for example in "structural racism," or structures that reproduce colonial power relations—are rendered as mere structuralism, the difference between two different particulars. That Flanagan's method of eliminating difference aims at recolonizing Canadian history is clear. Numbers-wise, "Riel's creed is no more bizarre than, let us say, Roman Catholicism, it is simply less familiar because it has had many fewer followers" (19). But the ideology of the sovereign individual is essential to making this argument, hence: "Furthermore, and this is of crucial importance, a man's ideas should only be evaluated in the context in which he lived" (19). Flanagan insists "history does matter." As we've seen this is not the history embedded in the differences between claims for the pope's infallibility and those of some

random guy, rather the "man's ideas"—as transhistorical legitimacy of individual responsibility and choice—are what need to be evaluated in the historical context.

Flanagan is *recognizing* history while, like Strauss does, quarantining the great man from historicism by asserting the literal self-evidence the great man's ideas as the ultimate context. Like for Strauss, this "history that matters" consists in showing that the great man had to act a certain way because he was *homo economicus* in a time when such rationality was not permissible.[98]

> Psychiatrists have argued that Jesus Christ was insane because he believed, among other things, that he was the Messiah. But to contemporary Jews, Jesus's messianic claim appeared either true or false, sublime or blasphemous, but not irrational or lunatic. As Albert Schweitzer has shown, modern psychiatric arguments for the insanity of Jesus (or of Mohammed, Socrates, etc.) are ahistorical.

If we look closely, we see that what is "ahistorical" is not disregarding the epistemic climate of the time, but judging the individual without taking his contemporaries' beliefs into account. That is, we must trust the individual completely, and this trust requires we suspect the aims of the individual's associates, retinue, fellow citizens, or culture in general with the most extreme prejudice.

Indeed, against the authority of the individual, all others—whether friends or enemies, other individuals, tyrants, or states—are structurally identical as antagonists. Flanagan explains the market-ecology of competing interests in which Riel found himself:

> Riel, disappointed with the role of politician, decided to play the role of prophet. (When I speak of "playing a role," I am using the phrase sociologically, not dramatically. That is,

[98] Cf. Straussian Thomas Pangle's similar conclusions regarding Euthyphro's prophetic message in "The Platonic Challenge to the Modern Idea of the Public Intellectual."

> Riel was not cynically playing a part, either as politician or prophet. He did both out of sincere conviction. But he was playing a role inasmuch as he was following socially established conventions of behaviour.

From Weber, Flanagan derives the dramaturgical, i.e., *decidedly ahistorical*, structuralist formula for reading Riel's history:

> As we noted earlier, it is individual dissent or non-conformity which has no strength in numbers which is most in danger of being called madness. In 1875, Riel, as a prophet without followers, was precisely in that position. His associates refused to accept his prophetic claims, countering them with the imputation of insanity.

To gain his success, Riel made decisions that led to his role as a prophet. But these were not wise choices, and his claims had little popular purchase. Thus weakened, Riel was vulnerable to having others' choices and roles imposed on him. His friends decided his role:

> One cardinal fact must be kept in mind at all times: *Riel did not seek the role of the mental patient* [i.e., to protect himself]—*it was forced on him by others*. Now these others were his friends, who thought they were acting in his own best interests; but in fact there was a definite clash of interests.[99] Riel [...] wished to play the role of the prophet. He did not feel in the least sick. He believed that he had a message from God which it was supremely important for men to receive. His friends, on the other hand, did not wish him to undertake his mission to the world. Had Riel emerged as a prophet, they would have been embarrassed both as his individual acquaintances and as supporters of the French Canadian cause, of which Riel was at the moment a prominent symbol. (21)

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[99] In this extreme negative liberty, only a man can "know" his own interests. Friends who deign to do so are like Flanagan's friends who wanted his prize money.

Flanagan's method relies on trusting the individual's claims over those of others. Riel's own writings declare he did not feel sick, so the judgment of sickness must have been imposed upon him. Putting aside the fact that the clichéd, legalistic definition of insanity is precisely the state of not knowing whether one's actions are "right or wrong," we notice that while psychologizing an individual is ahistorical, psychologizing those around him is perfectly legitimate. Moreover, imputing motives to Riel's friends is what provides "evidence" that Riel is psychologically sound! Like in Strauss and Bloom's city/man analogy, the individual is the ultimate authority, and the extra-individual or the social makes up the individual's material context. The public to whom the philosopher must appeal are the division of labour that supports the philosopher's existence. The philosopher cannot alienate his patrons by offending their vulgar tastes, and registering these tastes is what, for Strauss, Cooper, and Flanagan, counts as historical fidelity. The individual is transhistorical, and the extra-individual is historical.[100]

Having exposed the absurdity of psychologizing an individual, Flanagan confidently explains how Riel's friends feared embarrassment should Riel continue leading their cause:

> In that cause, in which nationality and religion were one, Riel could hardly be a leader, or even a participant, if he suddenly began to preach a novel gospel which was, at best,

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[100] Undoubtedly, the givenness of structuralist transhistorical archetypes permeates Canadian culture. But to take such Weberian or Jungian models seriously requires a sophistication incompatible with Flanagan's simplistic (and simply wrong) equation of "role" with "choice." For example, in Davies' *Fifth Business*, the protagonist Dunstable assumes the name of "Dunstan," a modern version of Saint Dunstan, acknowledging how both he and the saint were *historical* players of the structurally-identical, *trans*historical role of "fifth business." The Jungian aspect of the structural schema is clear in that while it is Dunstan's personal "choice" to play a role that appeals to his ideal-ego, Dunstan's role is equally a role required and imposed by others (i.e., the first, second, etc., "businesses"), and that this choice is only available to him after the role he has been playing all along has been discerned by a textbook dramaturgical example of what Mead calls a significant other. Such is the distinctively Canadian literary myth-critical and structuralist-sociological version of the gothic or the epic trope of the revealed birthright. The role-as-choice is the character's telos, revealed and understood only after it has manifested concretely. This is the communal or social character of the bioform: the irreducible sociality of dramaturgical models is incompatible with any serious claims for the priority of individual choice.

Flanagan (literally as *persona* non grata!) has experienced this drama as well: his friends and conservatives cast him in a role he both did and didn't choose, depriving him of his freedom—his vital needs as *zoon politikon*, and of speech, but instead of registering this dynamic as that of social life as such, he chooses to see it as the individual betrayed by other individuals, Socrates betrayed by Athens, etc.

> difficult to reconcile with orthodox Catholicism. His friends, confronted with this unpleasant situation, chose to believe in an ideal Riel instead of the real one. They discredited his prophetic claims as insanity, which was their justification for taking control over his life. His friends did what his enemies could not—they deprived him of his liberty. (19)

Riel's and others' interests are equally rational. Each party pursued its interests. And the criterion for success is numerical. Riel's friends were more numerous, so they were right. But is numerical might all that's necessary to be right? If so, then Riel cannot be fully to blame for his lack of success. He had been bullied into subjection. Where does the all-important conservative shibboleth of personal responsibility fit in? Flanagan explains that even before he was locked up, "Riel was already a prisoner of his own cause. From the time he had come east in late 1873, and indeed even before that, he had no longer been self-supporting. He had lived exclusively by the largesse of friends, who gave him food, shelter, and often money" (20).

Riel was then and must be understood now to have been *homo economicus*, even if the mores of his time—which guided his friends—were blind to natural market reason. Riel made poor choices, locking himself up "prisoner" in his own bad decisions. And the worst decision of all was giving up his financial independence:

> Now certainly his many friends did not begrudge their generosity, and they had a real affection for Riel; but they knew and loved him only as Louis Riel, the heroic Métis defender of the French language and the Catholic religion. They naturally wished to save Riel from himself when he wanted to become Louis "David" Riel, God's prophet—and they had the power to do so, because Riel, utterly without means, had sacrificed his independence. (21)

In other words, Riel imprisoned himself within a stifling nanny-state, leaving himself open to manipulation, which would have worked fine if he stayed useful to his friends as a defender of their Catholic and French interests. But by straying from his friends' interests—the commonly-accepted social goods legitimated by numbers—he was judged to be irrational. Without the defence or protection of wealth, he was unable to choose his own interests within a society of self-interested economic actors. If he'd made better choices, "Had he been wealthy, or even self-supporting, he could simply have broken with his friends, and gone about his business. He could have preached on street corners, or he might have become an author" (22). Of course, it's hard to contest this argument—which amounts to saying that if one had the means to do what one wished, then one could have—whose historical-political-economic meaning is the common sense notion that one needs to secure the means before one attempts to bring about ends. Riel was not prudent in his choices. Had he been, then he would have had a chance to bring about his "wishes" "decisions" and "choices" (the terms used throughout this essay); he would have succeeded or failed; he would have had the rationality or irrationality of his wishes and choices decided by the neutral market—as Flanagan's awards will do so many years later, even, or especially, if his "friends" try to leech off of him or throw him under the bus, essentially disclaiming him as irrational.

Like a university grad who moves back in with the folks, Riel made poor choices that led to his *naturally* being unable to take responsibility. What could he have become?

> Who knows? He might have become the successful founder of a new church. But he did not get the chance at this time because his friends, using their leverage over him,

> restricted his liberty and ultimately arranged for his confinement. Ironically, Riel, who had sacrificed everything to his cause, was now himself sacrificed.[101]

Sacrificing everything only to be sacrificed, even if intelligible, isn't ironic, except from the position of the individual who had tried to act as a free agent to change his life or the world and then by effecting this change had his status as free agent taken away, or in the sense of "primitive accumulation," by which one sacrifices present interests with the hope of fulfilling future ones. Flanagan is saying the former, but, ironically, in words that suggest the latter. The point, however, is that in Flanagan's method, irony is impossible to discern. It is ironic, though, that by figuring Riel's friends as placeholders for economic self-interest, Flanagan repeats the error he imputes to "all who have written on this part of Riel's life, whether psychiatrists or historians," that is, he, like them, has

> taken the friends' point of view. Having accepted at face value their assertions that they were acting in Riel's best interests, they have failed to see there was a struggle between Riel and his friends. He wished to become a prophet and a religious founder, they wished him to do nothing that was not in keeping with his previous character. To achieve this, they were willing to take away even his liberty *even though he never committed, nor was even close to committing, a violation of criminal or civil law in Canada or the United States*. (22)

I've shown through Cooper and Morton that Riel and Indigenous struggle has been appropriated by settler culture as the basis for Western identity, and that Riel plays the role of the mythical origin for the Western struggle over resources. In this myth, Indigeneity and settler-

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[101] One can only wonder, then, what Marx might have been able to achieve had he been self-supporting, and able not only to avoid dependency, but, like Flanagan was with his Buick, to deflect any dependency or impositions from friends! But, then again, Marx might have stubbornly "chosen" to hold to Erasmus's adage *amicorum communia omnia*.

colonialism are synthesized into the figure of *homo economicus*, or the originary market-ecological beings. But even someone as untroubled by generalizations of historical particularities as Flanagan is needs to acknowledge the fact that there were Indigenous people in the New World before Catholics and settlers—even if these Indigenous people, according to one of their greatest spokesmen, came from the Old World, in effect as the first pilgrims. One must acknowledge, too, that the descendants of these first inhabitants have continuously made claims that contest such assimilation. In the next text I examine, published 23 years later, Flanagan will baldly assert that Indigenous peoples of the Americas couldn't possibly be literally "indigenous," but were simply the "first immigrants." By appealing to old stereotypes of Indigenous peoples, and, crucially, by inventing new ones, Flanagan sophistically argues that the troubles Indigenous communities face result from irrational social and economic forms that encourage the same lack of responsibility and incentivizing of bad choices to which Riel fell victim.

Such irrationality prevents the proper development of *homo economicus*, and leads to the stubborn fact that Flanagan has been trying to raise all along, that "Aboriginal peoples have to adopt Canadian norms of behaviour if they hope to share the Canadian standard of living." To recognize this last fact requires explaining how Riel didn't adopt the correct behaviour. Thus Flanagan figures Riel as an originary welfare recipient; someone whose poor choices allow his community to support him. Without the proper means of ensuring personal responsibility, market behaviourism will lead to a nanny state, further reducing personal responsibility, leading to a cycle of dependency, and forcing all actors to play harmful roles:

> Fundamentally, as Riel knew perfectly well, he was being confined for his thoughts and words, not for actions. "But," one may ask, "did he not also act in a peculiar way?" Yes, he did, but as I proceed to describe these actions, I will show that *they were produced* by

> the way he was treated. His friends, in treating Riel as a lunatic and taking away his liberty, forced him to resist. (emph. added 22)

Riel's friends treated him as incapable of choosing for himself, which is the evil of collectivism and of the nanny state—he wasn't allowed to take responsibility and govern himself. But one of the main premises Flanagan will spend his career insisting upon is that Indigenous peoples in Canada have neither the legal right nor the historically-provable level of civilization to make sovereign choices, that is, to claim or execute self-government. So Flanagan must show how the cycle of dependency that Riel's poor choices initiated is self-reinforcing and structurally perpetuated precisely by the social character of power. Instead of cutting ties with Riel, his friends insisted on managing him wrongly because of their love and care for him: "Every act of resistance was then interpreted as further proof of madness. After all, why would a sane man struggle against those who were trying so hard to help him" (22). This is the forced-to-be-free form of positive liberty, what unites political correctness with communist re-education camps. It's the nanny state.

Flanagan's thesis is less concerned with proving that Riel was not "insane" than it is with arguing Riel was fully rational and therefore responsible for his poor choices. His failure to secure his own free agency led to the irrational state in which he could rely on his friends' charity. This literalized the negative liberty figure of freedom as spatial, in which irrationality is the inevitable consequence of spatial confinement. Liberty equals space; when confined or constricted, people act irrationally, against their interests, against nature. So, Flanagan's great objective reading of Riel's story and his unconventional "findings" consist in translating Riel into a libertarian allegory. Moreover, there's nothing correct or incorrect about his reading as it's structural, highlighting the roles played by the actors. Riel's friends are playing the role played

by the caring but stifling Canadian state; Riel represents Canada's dependents—Indigenous people(s) and the French.

But not literally, of course! One could apply any identity to this form. And this is Flanagan's technocratic production method. Like he does for government commissions and for think tanks, he retrieves information and assembles it for public consumption. He concludes his essay with a frank summary of his methodology:

> In this paper I have, with a few minor exceptions, not presented any new facts about this period of Riel's life. The materials on which my argument is based have been available to all researchers. Past writers have almost all accepted the view that Riel went insane in 1875 and that insane people should necessarily be confined, for their own good and that of society. If one accepts this view, then everything that was done to Riel falls in place quite nicely. The poor sick man was helped by kindly friends to find himself again. But I reject this approach. Why start with the story as told by others? Why not start with Riel's version? (35)

Why not, indeed! Doing so allows for the paradigm of alterity in Canada to be appropriated into colonial common sense. To take the man at his word is to recognize the subject's rights to thought and speech: "I accept Riel's original assessment of himself that he was a prophet, not a madman. Other people imposed the latter label on him to control his thought and speech." The individual subject is the ultimate authority. By starting with Riel's version, Flanagan is not only closing the historical figure off to interference by later readers, he's containing history within the subject of the individual! The work of history becomes the work of reading what certain individuals' words literally mean, and judging them by the legal-relations of the contemporary subject of liberal-democratic rights. Flanagan's method of producing historical knowledge

consists of organizing the past into reproductions of the present. One assumes Flanagan's "secular rationalist" perspective prevents him from truly *believing* that Riel was *factually* a prophet whose people came from Israel on a historic mission to found a new religion in the New World. Rather he accepts Riel's authority regarding his own life. Nevertheless, Flanagan insists that the strangeness of Riel's beliefs does not justify diagnosing him to be mad or treating him or his historical posterity as though he were.

By the time Flanagan "discovered" him, the traditional discussion of Riel as traitor or hero, as madman or criminal may well have been due for some shaking up. But Flanagan is not suggesting a new historical perspective; he's retroactively projecting a current perspective onto the past. In Flanagan's retconned retelling, Riel's story is one of choices freely made that led to the loss of freedom, and both "choices" and "freedom" are exactly congruent with contemporary liberal-democratic subjectivity. Hence the conclusion, "Under the camouflage of institutional psychiatry, Riel was punished for heresy, or as we would call it today, for free speech" (35). By presenting Riel as a rational agent, engaging in free speech, succumbing to laziness-inducing-incentives, and so on, Flanagan is re-colonizing the already-much-colonized figure of Western and anti-Loyalist struggle. For someone so deeply engaged in historiography it's remarkable how little Flanagan cares for the historicity surrounding Riel's beliefs. For example, while Riel never won sufficient public approval to warrant our taking his claims that Indigenous North Americans were lost Israelites and therefore the first settlers, Flanagan's objective stance takes Riel's racial-geographic theory and "accepts" it as being as potentially-legitimate as any other competitor. Riel simply didn't succeed in gaining the popular acclaim that would establish his claim as legitimate-thus-true. Flanagan is absolutely correct to critique the psychologizing of long-dead figures, as well as those who might take religious claims as historical arguments. But by

removing the psychological aspect from consideration, in the guise of historicist fidelity, Flanagan has retconned the contemporary psychological norms of self-interest and rational choice behaviourism of *homo economicus*. In short, he's replaced the dubious claims of psychology with the dogmatic economistic common sense of the present. Psychology cannot diagnose history because history is already completely understandable in terms of liberal-democratic market ecology.

This mode of historiography retcons the politics of recognition in its narrow formulation, in which recognizing means transforming the one recognized into a subject of contemporary rights, just as in *Beyond the Indian Act*, Flanagan will attempt to "restore" neoliberal freedoms to Indigenous communities.[102] And Riel is here recognized as an originary figure for personal responsibility, one who, like Socrates and Christ (and Kojève) before him, chose to face his mistakes: "The question of insanity was injected into his treason trial—again by Riel's friends—as a manoeuvre to save his life, but Riel had only contempt for that strategy. To his very great credit, he wished to be judged on the issues" (36). Friends, in this structural pattern of the one versus the many, are equal in their paternalism to the state, each making personal responsibility impossible:[103]

> If we disregard the comfortable rationalization of madness, we are left with uncomfortable questions about men's responsibilities for their own actions. The government must be held accountable for its many mistakes in policy in the Northwest, and particularly for its shabby treatment of Riel, going back to 1870. The Rebellion of

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[102] That such restoration is entirely about fabricating a past in the present to modify the future according to the past—retcon—is also clear in Scott Watson's analysis of how Canadian cultural production has been a project of restoring whiteness to nature by taming the wilderness. Watson shows how the Group of Seven managed the process of enshrining the *image of nature* as the truest articulation of the territory. See "Race, Wilderness, Territory and the Origins of Canadian Landscape Painting."

[103] Socrates's friends, we recall, offered him "a manoeuvre to save his life," to which he responded like Flanagan's Riel: "To his very great credit, he wished to be judged on the issues."

> 1885 was not just the crazy venture of a madman; behind it lay a long story of unresolved grievances. But responsibility is a sword that cuts two ways. Louis Riel must also be held accountable for his actions. One cannot ignore the fact that he precipitated the Rebellion only after the failure of his private efforts to extract a sum of money from the government and that the Rebellion itself was a foolhardy effort which marked the submergence, not the emergence, of the Métis as a people. (36)

In this passage Flanagan performs several rhetorical feats: first, he presents an all or nothing fallacy, arguing in essence that if one wishes to impugn the behaviour of the state, to assign it responsibility for its actions, then one must also accept that Riel was equally responsible. This logic requires a city/man analogy that both the state and Riel were free agents, and each is ultimately responsible for its own actions. (That Flanagan's market-ecological premise requires the domineering state be judged to have acted as badly as the welfare-case Riel is highly convenient!) Moreover, the fact we "cannot ignore" is that Riel was originally *financially* motivated. So, he began with completely rational (if ill-advised) "private efforts" to "extract money," and his behaviour and goals only became less rational once failure caused him to drift beyond the private realm and be exposed to outside interests.[104]

Second, Flanagan retcons contemporary struggles between Indigenous communities and the state as a matter of "restoring" prior market-ecological Nature. He posits that only by restoring the dignity of rational agency to the originary, mythic figure can the people who

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[104] In 2019, Flanagan elaborated on this peculiar usage of "extraction," by which he equates Indigenous economic issues with extracting money from the state, writing,

> Let me introduce a distinction between what I call "making" and "taking." […] "making" means the creation of wealth by offering for sale or lease something owned by the makers. […] makers enter the economic marketplace through exchanges for mutual benefit in voluntary transactions. Makers have things that other people want, and they are willing to exchange some or all of these things for different things that will make them better off. "Taking," on the other hand, is involuntary. It means using the power of the state to appropriate the wealth that others have generated through voluntary transactions. It is part of what Acemoglu and Robinson call […] "extractive institutions." (*Wealth of First Nations* 6)

descended from Riel free themselves from backwardness and emerge as rational actors in the present. In other words, Riel's racial descendants must be willing to take responsibility for their own situation. Riel must have his truly historical nature—as a transhistorical market-ecological subject—restored. And, third, like Riel's choices and the constraining, state-like behaviour of his friends, the terminology of "madness" in which Riel has been understood stifles any notion of personal responsibility. Therefore Flanagan concludes, "In a sense, I would like to see this paper rehabilitate Riel's reputation. I would like to see his name cleared of the unjustifiable smear of madness which has become attached to it." Once this unfinished business, this work of translating Riel into the modern liberal subject, has been completed then recognition will have played its part in recolonizing Riel and his progeny as subjects of natural market ecology: "If he regains his dignity as a rational being, Riel has much to answer for. That is as it should be" (35-36).

Extending far beyond the revisionist historiography of Cooper's Red River, Flanagan's Riel reverses history, making the origin of anti-settler struggle into the telos of settler common sense. Riel is a figure for the original relation between the state and the individual, between collectivism and entrepreneurial independence. He's still the founder of a tradition, but what religion, race, psychology, history, and nationality could not complete, the *homo economicus* figure does. He is now fully-colonized as a structuralist archetype, and the present is the past. And if his myth-critical assumptions were not enough, Flanagan—while rejecting the contemporaneous social science discourses of psychology and historiography—appeals to the structuralist authority of Weberian roles.

Since Riel was fully responsible for his choices, he was *rational.* He wasn't insane. He just made the wrong choices and acted in the wrong ways. He was a failure not because of a lack

of talent; rather the role he chose was too grand and overlooked the "way things work." Roles are transhistorical, but Riel chose the anachronistic role of the prophet. Flanagan explains:

> The prophet, following Max Weber's classic analysis, should be carefully distinguished from the priest. A priest is an official, a functionary, who owes his position to the organization he serves. A prophet is supra-institutional; he has the authority of divine charisma, manifested in his holy life, his visions and revelations, his ability to work miracles. (20)

In other words, the figures/roles of prophet and priest circumscribe the very difference that Flanagan ignored regarding the pope and the ordinary man who claims infallibility. It's clear that Weber's distinction is actually not at issue in Flanagan's argument, as it's not the contents of the roles but the structure that Flanagan takes as given. The man claiming infallibility doesn't have the numbers on his side. This lack of support means he cannot possibly be performatively pronounced and believed to be infallible; this proves for Flanagan that the man has made the wrong choice of role to play. Even if Riel had managed to fulfil the role of prophet, including, say, working miracles, the rationality of the market (the lack of consumers willing to believe his performance, and the lack of money to market himself) dictates that there's little chance that he could make it as a prophet. If he were self-supporting, he'd have had a shot. And, indeed, this is Flanagan's point regarding Riel:

> In the Judeo-Christian tradition, there is no lack of prophetic models to imitate; and Riel, a theologically well read person, knew exactly what to do. He was good at his role. He had visions and heard voices. […] He promised mercy to the elect and punishment to the wicked. Ultimately he aspired to found a new religion. (20)

Riel was an imitator, but not at all inauthentic; just as his friends genuinely loved him, he and they simply made the wrong choices in acting on their love and zeal; they chose the wrong roles. The role, like the choice of a university major, a vocation, or a LinkedIn profile, is first of all a position in the marketplace of ideas. Only after that position is well performed and sanctified by success can the other goals be considered. Riel misjudged the public appetite for prophecy, and made the marketing mistake of offering an obsolete product:

> In short, Riel was an excellent prophet. There was only one difficulty. His chosen role had become an anachronism. The secular mentality of the nineteenth century, while not destroying religion in general, had undermined confidence in some of its more dramatic aspects such as miracles, prophecy, and direct revelation. Most Christian churches had gratefully consigned prophecy to the distant past, a manoeuver which allowed them to honour prophets without being embarrassed by them.

Flanagan's essay announces a choice: was Riel mad or was he a prophet? The truth is that he was a competitor engaged in a marketing game. Those who wanted to brand him as mad won the day. They succeeded in controlling the narrative, but their success does not change that Riel was a rational agent who deserves to be recognized as a subject who chose to be a prophet, who deserves to be held responsible for such foolish decisions, and who deserves to have his reputation "rehabilitated" and updated as an example from which his followers may hopefully learn. Such is, anyway, the perspective afforded by Flanagan's unique outside observer's position, his principled refusal to judge Riel ahistorically, and his insistence that "History does matter."

3.3 *First Nations? Second Thoughts*: The Pot Telling the Kettle Joke

> Never believe that anti-Semites are completely unaware of the absurdity of their replies. They know that their remarks are frivolous, open to challenge. But they are amusing themselves, for it is their adversary who is obliged to use words responsibly, since he believes in words. The anti-Semites have the right to play. They even like to play with discourse for, by giving ridiculous reasons, they discredit the seriousness of their interlocutors. They delight in acting in bad faith, since they seek not to persuade by sound argument but to intimidate and disconcert. If you press them too closely, they will abruptly fall silent, loftily indicating by some phrase that the time for argument is past.
>
> Sartre "Anti-Semite and Jew"

In the course of recolonizing Riel, Flanagan exclaims that "Madness is not a neutral term. It is assigned for the purpose of controlling other humans" (16). But what about "civilization," is that a neutral term? To one who presumes a natural market ecology, the answer is yes. Civilization is simply the rational development of market freedoms, and history is the process charted by progress. In this section I analyze Flanagan's vaunted "heat-seeking missile," *First Nations? Second Thoughts* (*FNST*). This book provides the "secular rationalist" view that Flanagan claimed was essential to understand Riel and history; and it also provides the perspective from which cultures can be measured against a universal history of civilization. In this universal history, particulars—individuals, cultures, races, or really anything—are formally equal competitors in the natural market ecology of *homo economicus*. The crypto-normative, state-racist, and Eurocentric assumptions of the white supremacist, settler-colonial project, are baked into this naturalism, and any offence these might produce simply serves as rhetorical icing on the cake.

Because the text is clearly designed to offend (and bait or troll) those familiar with Indigenous issues and to confirm and encourage the uninformed prejudices of those who are unfamiliar. Yet underneath the bellicose ornamentation and demeaning attacks, the argument is not essentially different than that of Flanagan's vanquished political foe, Michael Ignatieff. As Ignatieff says in *The Rights Revolution* (which appeared in book form in 2000, the same year as

FNST), the spatial and temporal priority on which some Indigenous claims are based do not handily conclude in special status.[105] His metaphor of seats at the multicultural table—the idea that participants' status do not diminish as more seats are added—not only suggests the actual priority of a stable economic structure over any identitarian claims, but also an economistic idea of value as infinitely scalable. In *FNST*, such claims to historical priority may or may not be legitimate, but, Flanagan argues, the very idea of firstness cannot even be intelligibly claimed without proof of an uninterrupted, completely homogeneous culture, discoverable and assimilable into the standards of Western historiography. Flanagan uses the diversity of history among Indigenous peoples and cultures in North America to argue that the first peoples were really the first immigrants in a multicultural market ecology. He therefore concludes that Indigenous claims to "special status" are really examples of racism, which would never be tolerated by liberals were they argued by other immigrant groups.[106]

In a significant way, Flanagan's use of liberal-democratic multiculturalist politics of recognition does a great service to those who work to expose the injustices and inequalities structured into official multiculturalism, and which remain hidden under the platitudes of liberal politeness and inclusion.[107] The essential compatibility of Flanagan's race-baiting with Ignatieff's gentle paternalism helpfully highlights the shared common sense between liberals and conservatives in Canada. In turn, Flanagan's radicalization of liberalism's racist ideology sheds light on the structural racism of "official" projects. Where many critics of settler-colonialism

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[105] On the vanquishing, see next chapter. On Ignatieff's white supremacist premises, see Sherene Razack "When Place Becomes Race."

[106] (It's not clear how more recent racist ideas from Harper Conservatives like Kellie Leitch and Jason Kenney might jibe with this claim.)

[107] See Audra Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Sheena Wilson, Sunera Thobani, Himani Bannerji, Daniel Coleman, Sherene Razack. Flanagan provides the formula from which Levant draws his sexist stereotype "Zoey"—simply use your opponents' concepts and claims to prove that what you're arguing is the most genuine version of these claims. If your opponents are anti-racists, then you'll inevitably prove that they're actually the racists! See Levant's 2014 talk at Petrocultures: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vf2WFoLkS0Y.

expose how racism operates behind the scenes of liberal-democratic structures, as I will discuss in the next chapter, Michael Fabris shows how, in Flanagan, racism is on full display. From this perspective, official projects which aim to steer as clearly as possible away from racism or offensiveness are just polite packages for the same content. In the market-ecological Nature, economics are prior to clash or settlement, and First Nations peoples were thus always-already traders: Flanagan shows how immigration and mobility and fickle-lifestyle-choices were prior. *The War Between Us* showed how immigrants are real Canadians with economic value and diversity of skills and backgrounds: Flanagan (in *FNST*, and especially in *Beyond the Indian Act*) explains how real Canadians were always immigrants.

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Flanagan recounts the origin for his disinterested research into the validity of Aboriginal claims to Indigeneity. In 1997, he spoke at a conference regarding the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and its Report. Being among the small minority of experts who disagreed with the Report's recommendations and with many of its main premises, he found himself "politely ignored." Realizing there were powers vested against such neutral-minded thinkers as he, he set out to describe and analyze these interests. His research led him to conclude there is an "Aboriginal Orthodoxy," that is, an

> emergent consensus on fundamental issues […] widely shared among aboriginal leaders, government officials, and academic experts. It weaves together threads from historical revisionism, critical legal studies, and the aboriginal political activism of the last thirty years. (4)

As if the qualitative differences and logical incommensurability of these threads were not threatening enough, Flanagan alarmingly warns:

> even though only a few of the RCAP proposals have been implemented, the *Report* itself stands as a monument to the new orthodoxy, and the people who share those beliefs are actively pushing the federal government to move in that direction. Unless there is serious public debate, sooner or later we are likely to end up where the RCAP wanted us to go. Canada will be redefined as a multinational state embracing an archipelago of aboriginal nations that own a third of Canada's land mass, are immune from federal and provincial taxation, are supported by transfer payments from citizens who do pay taxes, are able to opt out of federal and provincial legislation, and engage in "nation to nation" diplomacy with whatever is left of Canada.

Far from addressing historical and ongoing social problems, the RCAP and its attendant orthodoxy threaten the nation's future. As Flanagan earnestly puts it, this aboriginal orthodoxy has emerged to menace the good old days:

> That is certainly not the vision of Canada I had when I immigrated in 1968 and decided to become a Canadian citizen in 1973; I doubt it's what most Canadians want for themselves and their children. But it's what we may get if we don't open the debate on the aboriginal orthodoxy. (5)

No doubt the stakes are high! Surely, we need a "debate" about these issues. But what exactly do we need to debate? Literally, Flanagan is saying we need a debate "on" the thing that doesn't necessarily exist, but Flanagan hopes to make a thing, the "Aboriginal orthodoxy."

My reader will understand that in our field we commonly say things like, "neoliberalism assumes this and that"; we analyze such assumptions and claim, "they really mean this and that." As such, I admit that in moments I've wondered if my own practice is as reductive and generalizing as Flanagan's is. Is there a difference between claiming that neoliberals exist and

think a certain way and Flanagan's self-consciously fictitious figure of the "Aboriginal Orthodoxy"? Or, even worse, could Flanagan actually be justified in positing his straw man? If I were to point to Andrew Coyne and say, "while he has never described himself as 'neoliberal,' his hysterical criticism of supply management—which we know Canadian neoliberals hate—strongly suggests that he is a neoliberal shill," would I be repeating Flanagan's distasteful technique? On the other hand, we can say without controversy, Flanagan calls himself a Hayekian, a "classical liberal," a libertarian, and a conservative, which everyone knows are the preferred self-identifications of neoliberals.

I expect Flanagan could point to a certain person's works and say these points are here, here, and here, so, this person is expressing the Aboriginal orthodoxy. But I think the very prudence that cautions one against seeing similarities and attributing these to a collective subject points to real differences between Flanagan's method and those of responsible academics. Flanagan's postulated group, which "weaves together historical revisionism, critical legal studies, and the aboriginal political activism of the last thirty years," draws from choices within a field of options; that is, its freedom is that of *homo economicus*. This is precisely the choice available to those who, self-consciously or not, choose to assert neoliberal dogma. Flanagan's main project is to translate particulars like identity into choice, but until he succeeds, the identities he lumps into his straw man orthodoxy remain particular. If such an orthodoxy were to exist, it is obviously based in particularity; if neoliberalism exists, it's clearly based on the premise of universality.

Positing a trend or a worldview and then assigning individual works, people, or groups to it demands scrupulous caution, but here is the way that they are the same: however many differences there are in kind between neoliberalism and "Aboriginal orthodoxy," the claim of

Aboriginal orthodoxy is based in the discursive divisions and categorizations of the liberal project—that there are classes, and races, and "ideologies," and interests. Even still, this is fair. Hopefully no one would say "Western" isn't actually a thing, so there's no point talking about Western political discourse. But the actual evidence or the characteristics identified with the Aboriginal orthodoxy, *and* the material or real stuff such a categorization is meant to organize, *and* the political claims such a categorization is meant to enable are neoliberal premises, purely and simply. So, the Aboriginal orthodoxy, instead of cautioning us to be careful not to generalize about neoliberalism, proves that neoliberalism is indeed a thing and a pernicious and invasive one at that.

Indeed, shortly after proposing the framing exercise/fictional sketch of the Aboriginal orthodoxy, Flanagan lists the propositions they purportedly propose; once the list is complete, he's confident enough to say: "Eight of the propositions in the Aboriginal orthodoxy are particularly dubious"—not, notice, eight of the propositions "common to writers or activists or whomever"; no, the orthodoxy is a subject that has propositions. My point isn't that this is sloppy rhetoric but that Flanagan's performing the argument he's making, creating the debate *ex nihilo*. But nor is this to say that the issues he's organizing in relation to the terms he's creating are inconsequential, that he's making a fuss over nothing. He's placing real issues within a structuralist form, removing them from history and context and placing them in the form of public "debate."[108]

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[108] Bringing together literal "debate," performative rhetoric, the Calgary School method, and their influence on think tank and party politics, *Maclean's*' Colby Cosh cites Danielle Smith's recollections:

> Smith may have the professional resumé of a policy nerd, but she has long harboured a performing artist's hunger for interaction with the public. "Do you remember Speaker's Corner?" she asks with excitement, recalling the noon-hour debates she attended and participated in as an undergraduate at University of Calgary's MacEwan Hall. "I loved being part of that scene, watching [Naheed] Nenshi and Chima [Nkemdirim] and Ezra [Levant] and Rob Anders hammer out ideas in a public setting. But for whatever reason, I ended up with a career that required me to be non-partisan at almost every turn." Only Smith's brief time as a Calgary school board trustee allowed to her to exercise the skills of a political candidate. Her

Thus in this peer-reviewed academic book, written by a successful, established university professor, a political scientist and philosopher, published by McGill-Queen's University Press, marketed with the subject headings of "native studies/political science," and sold in the Native Studies sections of Chapters stores across the country for more than a decade after its release, the propositions are announced, put "up for debate."

The first proposition is, "*Aboriginals differ from other Canadians because they were here first. As "First Nations," they have unique rights, including the inherent right of self-government.*" To this Flanagan responds,

> Aboriginal peoples were in almost constant motion as they contested with each other for control of the land. In much of Canada, their present place of habitation postdates the arrival of European settlers. Europeans are, in effect, a new immigrant wave, taking control of land just as earlier aboriginal settlers did. To differentiate the rights of earlier and later immigrants is a form of racism.

The ease with which Flanagan has revealed that Indigenous claims are racist makes one wonder why the orthodoxy would propose such a flimsy proposition in the first place!

To the second proposition, "*Aboriginal cultures were on the same level as those of the European colonists. The distinction between civilized and uncivilized is a racist instrument of oppression*," Flanagan retorts,

> European civilization was several thousand years more advanced than the aboriginal cultures of North America, both in technology and in social organization. Owing to this

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media career as a *Calgary Herald* editorialist and Global TV news host called upon different gifts, and the rest of the time was spent working for advocacy groups, like the Fraser Institute or the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, wherein any hint of partisanship would have jeopardized their tax-exempt status. "One wild rise for one wild rose: Inside Danielle Smith's campaign to topple Alberta's most powerful political dynasty" *Maclean's* April 20, 2012 https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/one-wild-rise/.
On Levant's personal and family history as a debater, see Richard Warnica's "Inside Rebel Media," *National Post*, https://nationalpost.com/features/inside-ezra-levants-rebel-media.

> tremendous gap in civilization, the European colonization of North America was inevitable and, if we accept the philosophical analysis of John Locke and Emer de Vattel, justifiable.

This proposition contains two separate and very different claims joined in a non sequitur. It's legitimate to assign positions to your opponents, but the non sequitur is Flanagan's alone. Again we see that the rebuttal isn't an argument, but a performance. (And in his performance Flanagan handily proves that the first proposition's distinction between civilized and uncivilized—with its objective measures like "same level" and "advanced per years" is a great instrument of oppression!)

Responding to the third proposition, "*Aboriginal peoples possessed sovereignty. They still do*," Flanagan answers, "Sovereignty is an attribute of statehood, and aboriginal peoples in Canada had not arrived at the state level of political organization prior to contact with the Europeans." The eighth proposition reveals how the retconning of modern liberal-democratic immigrant status onto Indigenous peoples is necessary to the greater neoliberal thesis that Flanagan, the Fraser Institute, and Hernando de Soto will seek to implement a decade later—to privatize reserve land in Canada. The Orthodoxy supposedly argues that "*Aboriginal people, living and working on their own land base, will become prosperous and self-sufficient by combining transfer payments, resource revenues, and local employment*." What Flanagan wishes the orthodoxy knew is that, like Riel's case proves,

> Prosperity and self-sufficiency in the modern economy require a willingness to integrate into the economy, which means, among other things, a willingness to move where jobs and investment opportunities exist. Heavy subsidies for reserve economies are producing

> two extremes in the reserve population – a well-to-do entrepreneurial and professional elite and increasing numbers of welfare-dependent Indians. 6-8

Keeping in mind that the propositions are not actually proposed by anyone other than the straw man he's constructed, the reader notices that having just called people names like "welfare-dependent Indians," Flanagan gestures to fairness and presents the labels with which he prefers to be identified:

> because I presume to analyse the political views of others, I should briefly sketch out my own. In terms of contemporary labels, I am happy to be called either conservative or libertarian, if that means "classical liberal." My views on politics and society owe a great debt to Friedrich Hayek, now widely recognized as one of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century.[109] (8)

Having concisely presented and handily rebutted the beliefs of the opponent whom he's debating, Flanagan then presents his own "core beliefs," which include the belief that

> Society is a spontaneous order that emerges from the choices of individual human beings. The indispensible role of government is to make and enforce rules of conduct that allow society to function. Individuals naturally congregate in families and other associations, but these must be voluntary if society is to be free and prosperous.

The market-ecology of which Selkirk's settlement is an origin myth is the model for this spontaneous order. People exist primordially as equals, living among equals. Temporality or history only arrives as an artificial imposition: "When government sorts people into categories

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[109] Flanagan repeatedly asserts his identity throughout his work. *Persona Non Grata* is not properly a memoir or an autobiography, but the very title of his book is a performance of subjectivity, of performing as a certain kind of victimized subject. Moreover, in interviews Flanagan is clearly engaged in a carefully-negotiated play of identities. Responding to a question from Evan Solomon on *Power and Politics*, he says, "I'm not a pioneer of attack ads; I'm just a Hayekian political philosopher."

with different legal rights, especially when those categories are based on immutable characteristics such as race and sex, it interferes with social processes based on free association."

His core beliefs, in other words, start with an end of history, where the individual and free choice is the origin of the political. Flanagan may as well be stating, "As a political scientist I believe that when God created Adam, he endowed him with the capacity to make choices." Allow me to stress *this isn't an exaggeration*. It's one thing to say that society should be understood as a collection of individual choices. But it's another to say this when discussing history, whether archaeological, anthropological, social, racial, or any of the other kinds of history this book undertakes to clarify. No doubt, taking Locke as a historian will inevitably "justify" a social contract theory whose historical sense is understood as an emergence from a state of nature. But here we see Flanagan's sophistic sleight-of-hand: the state of nature is, even for Locke or Hobbes, a figure and not an empirical *historical* situation. For *individuals*, the state of nature is pre-contract time; from this perspective one could surely argue that it's quite natural for a more advanced society to conquer one that is less advanced, as a stronger individual will dominate one who is weaker. But, as Kant explains, the state of nature—in terms of *society*—*does exist empirically and historically*, not at the beginning of history, but as the product of history. The nation-state form creates a state of nature between the nations.[110] The argument implicit in this rational choice model of society is, therefore, that North America's Indigenous population were not a state, so, vis-à-vis other states, they were not even in a state of nature, but were part of nature, to be perfected through the spread of civilization.[111] And as Flanagan says,

> Threads of progress are visible in the fabric of civilization. […] Although the word "progress" is out of fashion, there is no other term to describe such achievements.

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[110] Kant "Universal History."
[111] Cf. Wolfe.

> Although human history does not march towards a utopia, it has brought about demonstrable betterment of the human condition.

Perhaps the most important example of this betterment is the fundamental equality of access by which every interest can present its case, and have its "beliefs" judged by public opinion, in the form of the great debate:

> Although I call these points "beliefs," they are not untestable value commitments but empirical propositions to be weighed against historical evidence. I think the evidence supports them, but I realize that people at least as intelligent and well-informed as I am do not agree with my views. This doesn't cause me to change my assessment of the evidence, but it reminds me that I (like everyone else) may be wrong in my conclusions.

Such platitudes, like Riel's responsibility, are "double-edged swords." If Flanagan admits he might be wrong, then, necessarily, so are his opponents. But this does not lead to hopeless relativism; rather, Flanagan stabilizes such uncertainty within the absolute certainty of the Kantian model of universal history, in which history and progress tell the collective biography of mankind: "Respect for individual belief and decision is important precisely because every person's intellect and knowledge is so limited" (9).[112] And the marketplace of ideas is, like civil society is in the liberal-democratic tradition, and like Flanagan's many awards show, the venue in which truth is determined: "In a world where everyone might conceivably be mistaken about almost everything, the only corrective is constant testing through the confrontation of ideas and evidence." Flanagan has set up the table and dealt the hands. To argue now is to be interpellated by the terms of the game, to necessarily become the straw man.

Flanagan is presenting a form as though it were content (in the terms of Cooper's use of Morton's method, he's presenting a relation as though it were substance). This is the

[112] Cf. Kant on individual lifespan in "Universal History."

radicalization of liberalism: a formal equality, in which all views are contenders, fairness and open-mindedness are functions of public tastes, and consumption provides the measure for might (of numbers) and right. Expertly walking the line between high school textbook rhetorical strategy and cloying patronization, Flanagan praises his straw man's great merits:

> Although I think that the proponents of the new aboriginal orthodoxy are mistaken, I admire their energy and moral conviction. As a political scientist, I particularly admire their success in influencing both public opinion and the decisions of the federal government.

This saccharine *concessio/refutatio* again follows kettle logic. Just as we're objecting, "wait, to whom does 'their' refer?," the pot is calling the straw man a skilful manipulator of public opinion. Moreover, Flanagan is acknowledging he's just an underdog who has his work cut out for him: "They are among the most talented players in the contemporary game of politics. In this book I pay them the highest compliment of taking their ideas seriously.[113] I invite them to reply in kind."

And so we arrive at the end of the game. Debate as a possibility is finished. There's no way to take seriously arguments that invent (not to mention arguments that do their best to offend and discredit) the people who are then exhorted to take the inventor seriously! Flanagan's opponents have been forced *a priori* into a game while being "obliged to use words responsibly," against someone who claims "the right to play" and to "discredit the seriousness of their interlocutors," as Sartre says. The points aren't real! Seriousness has been disarmed and poisoned. Game over.

[113] Cf. Levant's "Zoey."

3.3.1 (A Brief Pause)

In *S/Z*, Barthes leaves off his reading of Balzac's "Sarrasine" halfway through the story, concluding that it's not necessary to reach the *literal* end of the text, since analysis or reading can never exhaust the plenitude of a text's meaning. Critically reading Flanagan and the other authors I examine in this dissertation poses particularly Barthesian challenges. The patience of my readers is constantly on my mind, compelling me to ask, is it necessary to go beyond the method Flanagan explicitly sets out—is the text not simply evidence, as Barthes says, that "Ultimately, the narrative has no *object*: the narrative concerns only itself: *the narrative tells itself*"? (213). Put differently, I admit that having read Levant's *Ethical Oil*, I feel confident that I needn't read his follow up, *Shakedown*, about fracking, even though it's of great importance for me to follow the developments of extractivist ideology, and my research is clearly interested in the Canadian energy discourse emerging from the Calgary School. But again, the matter of distinguishing quality from quantity resolves any apparent problem. It's certainly not necessary to read the same thing again and again in different books. However, I do think it's important to read a little further into *First Nations? Second Thoughts*—not to spend time taking bait and arguing against claims that are self-evidently false. My point in presenting Flanagan's "arguments" here is to highlight a kettle logic that displays Sartre's anti-Semite's bad faith. "Frivolous," and "open to challenge," this kettle logic proclaims quantity's utter triumph over quality, demonstrating the methods of those who "like to play with discourse for, by giving ridiculous reasons, they discredit the seriousness of their interlocutors." For all their appeals to public debate, such players negate debate itself as a possibility, "since they seek not to persuade by sound argument but to intimidate and disconcert." Not literally, of course, or at least not completely literally, since for racialized readers, the targets of his "missiles," Flanagan's remarks

and words are clearly aimed at hurting and silencing, results he admits give him great enjoyment. Tilting at windmills is really poking at wounds.

To be clear, I'm not being libellous: Flanagan is no more of an anti-Semite than Ezra Levant.[114] I'm simply saying his (like Levant's) actions, words, and argumentative techniques "are not that different than" those of anti-Semites and racists, or better, not that different than those who play the transhistorical "role" assumed by Quixotes from Sartre's time to our present moment.

In *FNST*, despite its ruthless dumbing-down and simplistic sophistry, there's an obscene abundance—overcoding, overdetermination, and kettle logic. And, still, remarkably, between this *too much* and *nothing at all* even more is happening. Flanagan's doing more than producing bad arguments that are unfortunately regarded by policy makers as legitimate and expert opinions. As an expert, a professor, a mainstream media figure, and a technocrat (as opposed to some internet troll or blogger), Flanagan's intellectual capital is that of the bioform. Here, in the authority of the author and his place in the division of intellectual labour, the "amusement" Sartre discerns mingles with what Barthes calls "pensiveness," or "the signifier of the inexpressible, not of the unexpressed" (216).

I suggest that this mix of the playful and the ineffable is characteristic of the Kojèveian Sage, he who knows the truth: silence and discourse are identical. Hence the steady flow of words and books, each espousing the revealed truth *ad nauseam*. Sartre says, "If you press them too closely, they will abruptly fall silent, loftily indicating by some phrase that the time for argument is past." But as Kojève himself demonstrated, falling silent does not necessarily mean the literal end of words: the Sage who achieves wisdom at the end of history continues to

[114] Levant's delight at intimidating and disconcerting is apparent in all of his performances, but again, is especially noteworthy in his comments regarding Berman, cited above. On Levant's fascinatingly-complex relationship to anti-Semitism, again see Warnica "Inside Rebel Media."

reproduce and circulate that wisdom. More practically, words and texts continue since the philosopher is after all *homo economicus*, and as Flanagan points out repeatedly, his intellectual production pays well. And while it's tempting to call Flanagan a sophist and be done with it, I argue the post-historical figure of the Sage also illustrates how Flanagan's rhetoric performs a colonizing function, removing history and difference from discussions, simplifying complexities into the easily-reproducible, debate-style format. Here the overdetermined arguments are based in a temporality and history that is finished—and in which the completely incommensurable literally-epochal qualitative difference of pre-history, ahistory, and history are rendered as liberal-democratic, multicultural equality, which can only be done from a post-historical perspective. It is this epistemic situation in which the pot can legitimately call the kettle whatever it pleases. In this marketplace/debate format, contradiction and hypocrisy do not reflect badly on those who employ them, but on the game itself. Flanagan calls this, as I will discuss in the next chapter, "dirty tricks." Add to this the leaky-kettle logic, by which more things said equals more compelling or more overwhelming evidence—and, of course, any of this evidence might be wrong anyway, as Flanagan has already admitted he might be wrong, but nevertheless other arguments do not make him revise his conclusions—and the debate will end in public assent or public apathy. Attempts at any other goal will only produce exhaustion rather than any higher truth or understanding or compromise or winning.[115]

In the brief reading that follows, I will show that not only is Flanagan throwing everything at the wall to see if something sticks, he's systematically ridiculing and disarming

[115] As Mark Simpson says of Flanagan's protégé, "Levant's rhetorical fluency and slipperiness will instance – and assist – the 'metaphorical blitz' identified by LeMenager as a key feature of 'the contest of meanings' about Albertan bitumen" "Lubricity" (313-314n17.). Discussing misinformation on a recent episode of NBC's *Meet the Press*, security analyst and author Clint Watts explained,

> You can make lies faster than you can refute them. And so if you're a propagandist, you know that. Just continue to ask questions. Question more, […] the motto of a certain Russian, state-sponsored outlet, is exhaust the audience with so many possibilities, you can't know the truth. And the audience will walk away. (*Meet the Press* December 29, 2019).

each discourse he takes up. For example Flanagan uses linguistic theory and racialist science to conclude that science is confusing and inconclusive. But in showing how useless such science is, Flanagan is putting it to use! Finally, I will show how each discourse he takes up he colonizes. I don't mean this simply in the figural sense that he's producing works that express a settler-colonial mindset. His work, like that of the Calgary School, functions structurally to ensure the ongoing colonization of those things that settler common sense doesn't even realize are in need of decolonization. Thus, as the rest of this dissertation will examine, the work of the Calgary School and their methods, their intellectual production, their connections to policy-making, and their place in the marketplace of ideas are instrumental in the ongoing work of settler-colonial social reproduction.

3.4 Europeans Deserve a Seat at the Table, Too: "History Matters"

Flanagan opens his chapter "We Were Here First" with an epigraph quoting Assembly of First Nations Chief Phil Fontaine, saying "The fact is, we are a special people. We were here first." Flanagan then literally restates this quote as "One of the most powerful themes in the aboriginal orthodoxy," namely, "that special rights flow from having been here first." Such firstness, moreover is even "implied in the phrase" (though *literally* it's not implied, but explicit) "'First Nations' […] as well as in the more technical term "aboriginal," derived from the Latin words *ab*, meaning 'from,' and *origo*, meaning 'origin.'" To summarize: "To be the people who were here from the beginning – put here by the Creator, as Indians often say – is the basic idea of aboriginality." Moreover, this idea is also

> prominent in Australia, where most Aboriginals claim to have occupied their particular homelands forever, since the time of the Dreaming, the mythical time of origins when

> supernatural beings shaped the features of the earth and created its population of plants, animals, and human beings. (11)

Setting the matter of "orthodoxy" aside, most readers will understand that many Aboriginal peoples argue that their homelands have been their homes since the beginning, and of course, no one can go all the way back to the beginning genealogically without recourse to pre-historical forms like religion or myth, so what such claims mean is that the *origo* is the *beginning of history*. The claim in the "basic idea of aboriginality," then, is that since the beginning of time-as-history, a people have dwelt in a space.

The next paragraph, though, sets up the clear, scientific refutation of the literal interpretation of the spiritual and epistemic claims: "Aboriginal people routinely use phrases such as "thirty thousand years of history" to emphasize the supposedly great period of time in which they have occupied Canada." Flanagan is correct that at least two charges of inconsistency now can be applied to the "orthodoxy's" argument. First, there isn't any recorded history going back thirty thousand years, so it's a semantic contradiction. And, second, one can't technically say one's been here since the beginning *and* only thirty thousand years. But each of these charges would require differentiating between the concepts like history, time, origin, etc. Indeed, rather than use the literality of the number of years to rebut the literality of the origin claim (for example: they say they were here from the beginning but the world began 5 billion years ago, and humans have only been around for a hundred thousand years), Flanagan sets out to undermine the numbers themselves. He cites historians and anthropologists who variously claim 40,000, 30,000, or 27,000 years, to which he remarks,

> Arthur Ray follows a similar rhetorical strategy when he entitles his history of Indians in Canada *I Have Lived Here Since the World Began*. The evidence, however, does not

> support such great time depth. The famous Old Crow hide flesher to which Miller refers, once thought to be twenty-seven thousand years old, has been radiocarbon dated to less than three thousand years before the present (BP). (11)

Claiming to identify a “rhetorical strategy,” Flanagan suggests there is an interestedness at work. But one notices a “strategic” obfuscation as well: what’s “not supported” by the flesher’s age? Is it the 27,000 year figure or the figure of “since the world began”? Flanagan’s own conclusion is that it’s only clear that humans have inhabited the Americas for 12,000 years. Well, actually, he continues, while there *is* evidence that *some humans* were there earlier, like in Chile 13,000 years ago, “there is no verified route of migration.”

For Flanagan, the lack of a “verified route” is a serious weakness for the validity of the earlier figures, especially in the face of such solidly-verifiable data as skin colour, which can apparently quite confidently indicate the homogeneity of world-space:

> The physical appearance of Indians from the Arctic to Terra del Fuego is remarkably similar. Moreover, equatorial South America is the only tropical region in the world where the indigenous people are not dark-skinned, suggesting that the South American tropics were settled as part of a relatively recent and rapid wave of immigration across the New World. (12)

That is, evidence of Indigenous inhabitation depends on the verifiability of the “route of migration,” but *immigration* (to the *New* World) can be verified by skin colour.

Next among the unshakable evidence is the fact that megafauna didn’t go extinct until a certain time, indicating that the earlier figures are incorrect. In his anthropology, no historical change could have made hunting easier and led to extinction at a certain time—extinction would

have had to be instantaneous because the first immigrants would have been as advanced as they always were. Flanagan cites anthropological evidence:

> “(In no more than 3,000 years, between 12,000 and 9,000 years ago, nearly 40 species of large mammals became extinct.)” The most plausible explanation is that Early Man entered the Americas at this point in some numbers and had a field day hunting large animals that, having evolved apart from human beings for hundreds of thousands of years, did not have a healthy wariness of human hunters.

Flanagan hedges again, allowing that if Early Man had been there before, “the numbers were scanty,” and this smallness somehow disproves the firstness and the length of time. It is clear that the numbers-game that proves a man’s sanity or saintliness in the Riel essay is hard at work in prehistory as well, determining what counts as official status for occupying an area! But we also notice that Flanagan concludes this speculation as though it were syllogism, when he is simply restating his initial premise: “If human beings were present earlier, their numbers must have been small, for they would otherwise have exterminated these species earlier” (13).

Having presented his scientific case, Flanagan proposes to complete the colonization of the prehistory of the New World by presenting political geography as Nature, arguing that national spaces and boundaries pre-exist any settlers:

> most relevant to the theme of this chapter, even if Early Man was present in the New World long before the conventional date of 12,000 BP, he would have lived in South America, Central America, or what is now the United States; he could not have lived in Canada because it was totally covered with glacial ice, except for a few islands and promontories along the coast of British Columbia and the dry, cold plains of the northern Yukon.

If the ancestors of Canadian First Nations lived in the Americas before 12,000 years ago, they weren't literally in "Canada," so how can they claim to be literally "*First* Nations"?

Prudently looking past such literal-mindedness to the form of the argument shows that, in each example, Flanagan marginalizes Indigeneity through his hedges. He's saying First Peoples weren't here. Then he's saying that he's not saying that they weren't here then or there, but that if they were, they weren't nations or grand civilizations, they were simply a small number of primitive stragglers. His argument is that there was never anything that resembled what we respect today as a civilized culture, so there wasn't anything to take over. And this is the ultimate truth of his extreme recognition politics. Prior to contact, there was nothing that could be recognized as a liberal-democratic subject of rights, to whom recognition is due. There's nothing to retcon as the origin of the present. (Flanagan's work in *Beyond the Indian Act* will resolve this problem!)

Clearly, Flanagan is not actually arguing against priority or location—on what principle could it matter if the number were 12,000 or 30,000? How could it conceivably matter if people weren't on the "Canadian" side of the border thousands of years ago, especially when Canada's borders have changed numerous times after the Europeans arrived? The argument is against the status of Indigenous peoples as people. And the kettle logic is at work mediating that status. There's a labour theory: if they'd killed enough animals—i.e., worked the land—then maybe we could say there were human subjects here. But that's actually not the point, because the fact that they did in fact kill the animals proves they were not indigenous peoples, but immigrants from the Old World.

This kettle logic serves to retcon market ecology as Nature. Flanagan has explained that "Sovereignty is an attribute of statehood, and aboriginal peoples in Canada had not arrived at the

state level of political organization prior to contact with the Europeans." Naturally one might further say that immigration is an attribute of statehood, and, moreover, that the absence of the state structure is exactly what defines who is "indigenous" to a place. But Flanagan equates the naturalist fact of migration, or the movement of people with its statist form, immigration. Thus, he assimilates the tools of historical research to posit the utterly historical and modern concepts of nation, borders, immigration, and subjecthood determined by residence, mobility, and priority as natural and transhistorical. He thus superimposes the present onto pre-history and colonizes the history and space of North America.

Flanagan next surveys linguistic research to suggest that the presence of Indigenous populations can be measured in terms of similarity and diversity in dialects. "A likely implication" of the facts he's presenting "for migration and habitation is that,"

> whatever the remote history may have been, the direct ancestors of the Indians living in Canada (other than coastal British Columbia) at the time of contact with the European explorers could not have arrived at those locations earlier than a few thousand years before; otherwise their languages would have become more divergent. (Of course, the Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples may have absorbed or driven away earlier inhabitants). This is a conclusion about the continuous existence of peoples as identified by their language, not about human habitation as such. (15)

Someone taking Flanagan's points seriously, as he supposedly so respectfully does his own interlocutors, would need to point out that a few thousand years before contact would qualify as before history—that is, from the *origo*, in so far as the *origo* is considered a scientific or meaningfully specific term, and we know he does consider it to be so because of his patient explanation that it's a Latin word which means "origin." But, however respectfully and seriously

Flanagan takes his opponents' views, he clearly has no respect for the process of argument, in that he's already shown that his evidence doesn't do anything. What else can one make of his characteristic hedging, that no people lived in Canada other than in "British Columbia"? To take the argument seriously would mean accepting that there's no argument here, and that therefore all "arguments" are simply choices among theories that do or don't appeal to consumers and their "taste" in theories.

And yet, this is not simply the Ezra-Levant-method of obfuscation and offence. Flanagan's rhetoric functions to recolonize discourse. It's no doubt true that the literal meaning of the evidence he selectively cites suggests that experts disagree more than they agree. But another literal implication of his evidence is that most scientific research and knowledge clearly proves that Indigenous peoples were in the Americas for thousands of years prior to European contact. Thus all this evidence clearly supports the epistemic project of decolonization, by which history and sciences are to be understood as relying on colonial ideologemes like progress and civilization having been brought to "discovered" and "empty" lands. But, precisely because it so obviously proves that Western historiography is based in racist-imperialist ideology, this science is, then, in the service of special interests. Therefore Flanagan's claims to objective neutral disinterestedness purport to rehabilitate, as he did for Riel, the modes of knowledge production to once again do objective work, or, support the colonial status quo. Science, then, can only legitimately be used to negate particularist claims.

That is, despite all the disagreement and interestedness, science is real; it's instrumental as a specific function. Flanagan cites Joseph Greenberg's theory that all North American languages are part of the same group. He offers "confirmatory evidence […] from biological research into the dentition and mitochondrial DNA of American Indians," which suggests that

"Athapaskan speakers constitute a second wave of immigration more recent than the original arrivals in the New World" (15-16). And,

> The Inuit are the most recent of all. Again, their language is obviously different from either [Greenberg's postulated super-group "Amerind"] or Athapaskan. Some linguists, including Greenberg, classify it as part of a macro-family known as Eurasiatic or Nostratic, very distantly related to Indo-European and other families sharing a first-person pronominal marker in *–m* and a second-person marker in *–t*. Be that as it may, Inuit does not seem to belong to any other language family of North America.[116] (16)

Literally, this evidence confirms or may confirm that all Indigenous peoples did not arrive in North America at the same time. But Flanagan seamlessly narrates such movements into the utterly modern and colonial terminology of "waves of immigration," literally recolonizing the already colonized, racialist, Eurocentric potpourri of discourses he's tossing around.[117] Thus the critical reader immediately notices that Flanagan's linguistic evidence and the clever way he presents it slyly suggests that Inuit-language-speakers are actually more closely related to Europeans—who after all are related in some way to Indo-European speakers—than they are to the other Indigenous peoples of North America!

Of course Flanagan claims the "relation" here is about linguistics, not race (physiognomic measurements like "Sinodont pattern of shovel-shaped molars, triple-rooted lower first molars, and single-rooted upper first premolars" aside). Obviously, this relation is

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[116] Also, the Inuit are more recent only because they "absorbed or displaced" earlier residents—the pre-Dorset and Dorset cultures, so the Inuit, then, who were civilizationally-superior ("distinguished by differences in stone and bone technology"), are basically no different than the civilizationally-superior Europeans, despite still not actually being a civilization. (16-17)

[117] To be clear, I'm not saying that dentition, skin colour, and other linguistic and anthropological data are always necessarily imbricated within racist epistemology (although that certainly may be the case). But I hope it's obvious that such data, used to justify—and explicitly *naturalize*—the "technologically superior" and "civilized" culture's conquest of peoples who are then proven with the same data to be primitive and uncivilized, is literally imbricated in the 19th-century state-racist epistemic project.

empirically-provable and light and flexible enough to "prove" that Canadians of East Asian descent whose first language is English are "related" to Indo-Europeans. And more challenging still, in order to completely sever facts from any critical context, and to show the true message of this genre or strategy or episteme, Flanagan declares, "The Amerind family posited by Greenberg and his followers is highly controversial, indeed rejected by most specialists in native American languages, who regard Amerind as the worst sort of 'lumping'." So this evidence is again evidence for the weakness of science to support claims for historical difference. What "lumping" is, is not explained, but in any case, even lumping doesn't convincingly address the matter of how long Indigenous people have lived in the Americas:

> Johanna Nichols, another prominent linguist, argues that, even if Amerind forms a genuine unit at some level, its internal differentiation is so great that its time depth would have to be closer to forty-thousand years than to the twelve thousand years that Greenberg posited when he took over the conventional dating for the first human arrival in the New World. Nichols concludes that "the New World has been inhabited for tens of millennia." (16-17)

In other words, the evidence Flanagan has led with is rejected by most specialists. And the moral of the story is that there is great debate in the field. And therefore Flanagan's conclusion follows the familiar climate-denial form by which information overload causes confusion, and, thus confused, facts are rendered useless. The reader must decide. "Although there is no consensus among archaeologists and linguists about these very early dates, the differences between the Inuit, Athapaskan, and others seem more widely accepted." The argument embedded here is 1) that consensus—not scientific, but some form of agreement—is necessary to legitimate important claims to "special" status, and 2) that there is actually a consensus, but difference is

the only thing that's agreed on. Therefore, "That alone means that the now popular image of aboriginal rights based on '30,000 years of history' is highly misleading." But the "history" at issue isn't the history of one group. The lack of specific, expert consensus (which Flanagan demonstrates through his confusing flurry of information) provides evidence for his following sentence: "There must have been three or even more major waves of immigration from Siberia to America." Here the lack of consensus and the diversity of Indigenous occupation of the continents are evidence against the figure of 30,000 years as a claim to *ab origo*, or to pre-history. If that pre-history isn't entirely homogeneous, then it instead supports the thoroughly-modern concept of "immigration"—and not as meant by the anthropological term used in linguistics. Someone who would school the reader on the Latin origins of the word "origin" should recognize the historical anachronism of applying the term "immigration," but that would necessarily entail acknowledging that a word can have more than one meaning.

Moreover, natural science confirms that this immigration must have occurred at more than one time, "As the glaciers covering Canada retreated, groups took up settlement at various times and places" (17). So, it's practically impossible that all Indigenous peoples were literally in the Americas for 30,000 years. But even if time remains problematic—after all, if there's no consensus, then we can't actually prove that the 30,000 year figure is *incorrect*—spatial arguments are wrong too: "it seems very unlikely that bands, tribes or peoples occupied land as the glaciers receded and then stayed there continuously until the arrival of the French and English." Flanagan presents evidence from the earliest Europeans that "aboriginal peoples contested with each other for the control of their territory and that conquest, absorption, displacement, and even extermination were routine phenomena," and he provides a page of examples (17). This testimony from the original European settlers suggests that tribal warfare

caused displacements; this proves that peoples moved from place to place and therefore cannot claim that their territories were eternal. Moreover such movements were "not caused by aboriginal people losing their own lands to white settlers, but by their taking advantage of new technology secured through trade." Once again, before we take this bait, which posits that Indigenous peoples were originary market beings who made choices according to their perceived advantage, we must pay attention to how this claim leads to one of Flanagan's most nauseating non sequiturs:

> Thus even though the events [i.e., tribal warfare conducted with guns] occurred after contact with European colonists, they suggest a pattern of behaviour that *likely prevailed* in earlier centuries; it seems *clear* that the Indian peoples' collective control of land was fundamentally based on power. An increase of numbers or an improvement in technology led one people to probe the territory of another, with results depending on the relative balance of power. (my emphasis 19)

This purely fallacious speculation on stilts concludes that "All of this means that the standard definition of aboriginal rights is a legal fiction; aboriginal peoples cannot justifiably claim 'property rights which inure to native peoples by virtue of their occupation upon certain lands from time immemorial.'"

In the next chapter I will discuss how Thomas King characterizes Flanagan's *Beyond the Indian Act* as the work of "latter-day terminators," who want to privatize tribal lands so that "the properties can be picked off by real estate agents or shot at from moving trains" (199). But even here Flanagan's epistemic violence is clear enough. Just as the Inuit have literally (but only in linguistic terms) been colonized as recent immigrants of Indo-European descent, here Indigenous people were the original perpetrators of genocide. Extermination was far more a project of the

victims than of the European settlers, about whom, alas, there's no consensus that they sought to exterminate Indigenous populations, and even if they had, they did not succeed as well as the first settlers did.

All of this is to say that those who would be called First Nations were modern, mobile subjects, living in a market ecology and making choices that led to their current status. Ultimately, they weren't even really inhabitants of the lands they claim:

> There may be specific cases where a native community has dwelled continuously upon the same territory for thousands of years (if such cases exist in Canada, they lie on the coast of British Columbia), but, in general, native peoples in Canada, like hunter-collectors around the world, moved a great deal. In many cases, the patterns of habitation upon which the land-surrender agreements of the nineteenth century were based were only a few decades old. "From time immemorial" means only "prior" – not necessarily "a long, long time, a very long time, or even a long time." (19)

Once again, we will resist being distracted by Flanagan's non sequitur and recognize that "Time immemorial" does not "mean" "prior." Both literally and as a figure, "time immemorial" refers not to a quantity of time, but to the quality of being beyond time. But if Flanagan's main argument is that First Nations weren't nations and had no sovereignty, then the agreements with settlers marked the historical event of legal time—indeed the beginning of the form of "legal fiction" (what claim to rights is not a reference to a legal fiction?), and so, "a few decades" would still be prior to this time, and especially if the reasons First Nations "moved a great deal" had been, as Flanagan argues, due to the introduction of guns and settler-colonial activities. So, the actual meaning of the claim based on habitation literally refers to "time immemorial," and not 30,000 years (the figure attributed to the Aboriginal orthodoxy), nor "since the world began."

Of course, if we are taking things literally, then it's hard to see how the lack of consensus is not the best evidence that Turtle Island has been inhabited since time immemorial, because even with the prosthetic memories of scientific knowledge and the sophistry to order them towards whichever particular end, literally no one remembers exactly.

Thus, for Flanagan, is the literal legitimacy of "Aboriginal" refuted. Yet, there is still the matter of priority. Literally, those who claim aboriginal status or firstness were here first. Flanagan tackles this inconvenient fact by citing a primary source of the legal fictions he's exposing:

> Chief Justice Lamer wrote in his *Van der Peet* decision (1996) that
>
> > the doctrine of aboriginal rights exists, and is recognized and affirmed by s.35(I) [of the Constitution Act, 1982], because of one simple fact: when the Europeans arrived in North America, aboriginal peoples *were already here* [emphasis in original], living in communities on the land, and participating in distinctive cultures, as they had done for centuries. It is this fact, and this fact above all others, which separates aboriginal peoples from all other minority groups in Canadian society, and which mandates their special legal, and now constitutional status. (Square brackets emphasizing the emphasis in the original in the original 20)

Flanagan retorts, "With respect to the chief justice, emphasis is not a substitute for logic." The Judge "offers no reason *why* ancestral priority requires creation of a special regime." Still, "Admittedly temporal priority is one of the great ordering principles of human society, memorialized in such proverbs as 'first come, first served.'" If one were to take his joke about a

market analogy seriously as an argument, the naturalness of the priority is signified by the model that purportedly disproves the specialness of priority. Since,

> We follow rules of priority in such daily-life situations as standing in line to pay a cashier or waiting for a speaker to finish rather than interrupting. When I go trout fishing on a stream and I find another fisherman already working a pool, I don't cast into the same pool, I walk away to find one that is unoccupied (by fishermen, not by trout!). (20)

His second joke emphasizes "distinction"—he means people, not animals!—while performing the most facile substitutions—in a literal market, we follow the market principles of standing in line; in the market-ecology, the sport retains the structure of the division of labour that allows for the leisure activity: the fisherman, as per labour theory, has claim to the pool he's "working." Now, "emphasis" may not be "a substitute for logic," but nor is substitution any more logical than emphasis. Flanagan is substituting the present's ahistorical, formal, and structural priority for actual, historical priority. Linguistics and grammar allow one to compare very different things, but as Wittgenstein reminds us, while it's absolutely logical to say your left hand gave your right hand money, to say so doesn't *mean* anything.

And of course, even the brief quote of the Judge's speech does contain meaning; the issue only arises once Flanagan substitutes meaning for emphasis. The Judge clearly explains the "why" behind special status: because Indigenous people were living in communities, on the land, in distinctive cultures, moreover doing such things for "centuries," which meets even Flanagan's truncated timeline for what constitutes Indigenous occupation. The "why" that's not addressed concerns rhetorical equations like "ancestral priority" which suggests that ancestors are separated from individuals in the present and implies separation within the now-familiar historical and post-historical breaks rather than cultural continuity, which is obviously and literally what the

justice says (the why also is not about the creation of special "regime."). This difference between the ancestral and the individual is Flanagan's point, and it's he who makes it. Whatever else the Judge is doing, he is not missing a distinction.

Rather, Flanagan ignores the distinction and the why. As Glen Coulthard, writing of decisions like *Van Peet* and *Delgamuukw*, puts it, "even though the Court has secured an unprecedented degree of protection for certain 'cultural' practices within the state, it has nonetheless repeatedly refused to challenge the racist origin of Canada's assumed sovereign authority over Indigenous peoples and their territories" (qtd. in Dempsey, et al. 233-234). Clearly, what Judge Lamer did not say, Flanagan does; that is, Flanagan here asserts the racist *origo* of sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and territories. If there is a special regime—one that's not justified by sufficient explanations—then it's the present arrangement. Accordingly, Flanagan's examples are present and very modern:

> The importance of temporal priority is shown by how people react when it is violated. How angry do you feel when someone cuts ahead of you in a queue or zips into a parking space for which you've been waiting? Yet we do not follow temporal priority blindly and inflexibly. Passing in traffic is allowed as long as conditions are safe. (20)

Passing in traffic is not taking someone's place—it's not anything! And while Flanagan's examples share an *origo* in the past few decades of petromodernity and urban consumer society, none of them is analogous to temporal priority. Yet they do all prove a point: they legitimate emotional reactions. Surely everyone feels indignity when perceived entitlement is perceived to be violated. Flanagan's examples are legitimately annoying! But they're exactly *not* legal

matters, let alone constitutional ones. It's actually legally permissible to take a parking spot someone's been waiting for, as expressed in the proverb "I don't see your name on it."[118]

Flanagan's translation of the emotional stakes involved in claims to priority aims to show that not only are Indigenous claims not legally sound, but like the affronted students in Coleman Silk's class, they are examples of illiteracy. The Aboriginal orthodoxy just doesn't get that they're part of a modern world whose ordering principles are those of the market ecology, visible in the naturalness of traffic and standing in line for services, in which the first come is the first served. Once again, the lengthy trip through philosophy, history, legal studies, and other discourses has led to the simple phenomenological fact that frustrating things are frustrating. But the figural meaning is that there is a natural order, and now First Nations are emerging to disrupt it. The content of Flanagan's argument is, in other words, that those represented by the racist orthodoxy think they can skip to the front of the line.

Because there are some who are so illiterate, Flanagan explains, "We have to look more closely, therefore, at the role of temporal priority in aboriginal politics." In order to illustrate "an obvious but often overlooked distinction between individual and ancestral priority," Flanagan volunteers to go first: "As an immigrant from the United States, I arrived in Canada in 1968. I now have been here over thirty years, longer than most aboriginal people now alive have lived in Canada," which he supports with empirical statistics: "in the 1996 census, 53 per cent of aboriginal people were younger than twenty-five." Despite this scientific data,

> even though I am individually prior to most aboriginal people in Canada, they would all claim to be ancestrally prior to me by virtue of having one or more direct ancestors who

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[118] And this is how Flanagan's previous hedging—that people couldn't have occupied Canada, or at least not for very long, or not in the same spots, or if so only a few spots, one really—performs its function: It's the ethnographic historiographic translation of Indigenous claims into Canada's mythical dramaturgy of peaceful settlement: "This is my spot, I just got up for a minute," "I don't see your name on it. It was *terra nullius* when I got here."

lived in Canada (in some cases, actually in the United States) before any of my ancestors lived in North America."[119]

This mansplaining moment—schooling the caricaturized ignorant orthodoxy who claim priority over the nation without even understanding that their ancestors might have been indigenous to another nation—expresses Flanagan's point, as well as the reversal of history he's performing. This reversal is literal, as the phrase "(actually in the United States)" obviously reverses time's arrow, retconning the nation onto what Daniel Heath Justice calls "territories now claimed by Canada and the United States" (xviii). It is, though, technically true that some of these people's ancestors weren't even in what's now Canada but were in what's now the US. Their ancestors were there before Flanagan's ancestors were in the US. "They," then, were just immigrants from the US, like him! No historical claim to priority is permissible because, in the terms of the "debate" Flanagan has set, temporal priority is always-already structured by the present time, a structure in which, like the present, habitation must be continuous and geographically-bound. Thomas King offers the corrective for Flanagan's error, explaining that, in regard to the Canada/US border, "for most Aboriginal people, that line doesn't exist. It's a figment of someone else's imagination." King, moreover, helpfully distinguishes between immigration and other kinds of movement, explaining "I get stopped every time I try to cross that border, but stories go wherever they please" (*Inconvenient Indian* xvi).[120]

Flanagan's arguments or assertions or points are thereby rhetorical colonizations of the past—each a tidbit of the status quo that couldn't possibly have anything to do with anyone's

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[119] (As anachronistically out-of-place as Riel's figure of a lost tribe sailing to the New World through the mists of time, "one or more" is not a figure that anyone would use to describe pre-historic ancestors, or to claim "they" were "ancestrally prior" *ab origo*.)

[120] As a recognized expert on Métis history, Flanagan surely also knows what King further explains: "Historical figures such as […] Louis Riel moved back and forth between the two countries, and while they understood the importance of that border to Whites, there is nothing to indicate that they believed in its legitimacy" (xvi).

ancestors, projected not *into the past*, but *establishing the past within the eternally-consistent present*. In this present, like Riel's competing view of Catholicism, all examples are equally-applicable to all arguments, as long as readers will accept them as such:

> In Canada, as in most contemporary liberal democracies, individual temporal priority figures only indirectly and accidentally in public policy. Examples are the age requirements to obtain a driver's licence and the residency requirement to obtain citizenship. Arriving in Canada ahead of another immigrant means that I will be eligible to become a citizen before him or her, but only as an indirect consequence of the legislated residency requirement. Once we are citizens, we will both have the same legal rights, which will also be the same as the rights of all other citizens, both natural born and naturalized. (20-21)

To be sure, Flanagan is a leading figure in the settler-colonial project of social reproduction—one who, unlike most, doesn't feel compelled to hide behind formalisms like the "same rights of all other citizens," but who instead goes out of his way to generate offensiveness that generates his capital in the marketplace of ideas. Still, liberal-democratic multicultural formal equality is the bedrock of his claims. But even this fact doesn't mean that his arrival in Canada in 1968 was at all the same as the arrival of the first Europeans, who of course were not "immigrants," in that there wasn't such a thing as "immigration." Neither the European explorer nor the first people needed to apply and obtain citizenship, like he did. But once again any such responses are rendered moot, disarmed by the dazzlingly-bold sophistry by which he concludes this instructive discussion: "In any case, the issue is not individual but ancestral priority as far as aboriginal people are concerned."

Flanagan's rhetorical substitution of things that are prior with the distinctions of priority is not distinction but a "lumping," a conflation, a sophistic tactic. Neither the Judge nor the fictional Aboriginal orthodoxy is talking about ancestral or individual priority, nor are they missing a distinction. They aren't even talking about "priority" as a matter of one thing coming before another thing. Rather, they're claiming that Indigenous peoples, like the Judge said, *were already here*. They didn't "come" in the sense of being first to be served, nor as immigrants. Priority here is absolute, *especially as* a "legal fiction." The kind of inhabitation of the land was a different kind of inhabitation than that imagined in the prior legal fiction, which Flanagan prefers—that is, the fictional distinction between civilization and savagery, the distinction which has supported the Doctrine of Discovery, *terra nullius*, and so on. Moreover, cases like *Delgamuukw* and *Van der Peet* show that any legal assertion of sovereignty over any land requires that there was an *origo* which applies to both parties. As Brian Egan explains regarding British Columbia (which is, by the way, the place that even Flanagan admits settlement may have been continuous),

> In the legal formulation of the courts, "Crown sovereignty" in BC – defined as being established in 1846 – was "burdened" by pre-existing Aboriginal rights to land and resources. Indeed, in the landmark *Delgamuukw* (1997) case, Aboriginal title is posited to have come into existence or "crystalized" at the moment when Crown sovereignty was asserted. (Egan 212)

In other words, in 1846, there was an event that transformed both the parties and their relations to land into matters of "historical" time. If sovereignty is a substance belonging to the state form or to civilization, as Flanagan claims in his response to the proposition that "*Aboriginal peoples possessed sovereignty. They still do*," then the (imputed) Aboriginal claim to sovereignty is not

based in the pre-historic or even "prior" form of community, but is acknowledged as the claim *of a nation* to statehood. At least, at any rate, this is the Judge's view of "why."

Still, Egan shows, even with substance having been determined beforehand, that is, with the pre-history of both parties assimilated into legal relations of state—now, the process takes over: "The unburdening of the Crown was to come, it was argued in *R. v. Van der Peet* (1996, para. 31), through "the reconciliation of the pre-existence of aboriginal societies with the sovereignty of the Crown" (212). Of course, Flanagan knows all this; he's an expert whose work has led to land claims being denied. Nevertheless, Egan argues, the Crown has effectively chosen to see the process of reconciling substantial problems as the substance itself, thereby moving in the direction that Flanagan endorses:

> In time, the Crown has come to see reconciliation as a vehicle to move beyond the challenges posed by Aboriginal title and rights. From its perspective, what has been important is the shaping of this vehicle to its own ends – in other words, controlling the definition of what reconciliation is and isn't, as well as what and who is to be included and excluded in reconciliation processes. (Egan 212)

Thus, Flanagan's project cannot rest contented with having eliminated "Aboriginal" as a sociological category and as a lexical entity. The Aboriginal must be eliminated as a legal category. Flanagan still needs to exclude those who were here first from civilization. Here the leaky pot calls the kettle black, throwing everything but the kitchen sink at the wall to see if it sticks: Flanagan performs the manoeuver he accused the Judge of, substituting a barrage of disparate claims of the "way it is" for the "why":

> there is no doubt that some (but not all) aboriginal peoples in Canada receive benefits from the federal government partly because of who their ancestors were – benefits that

> are not available to others. For example, the federal government, under the rubric of Non-insured Health Benefits, pays medical expenses for status Indians – drugs, eyeglasses, prostheses, ambulances – beyond what Medicare provides for everyone else. The program cost over half a billion dollars a year in the mid-1990s. It is not an unalloyed benefit, since the provision of free prescriptions increases drug abuse among aboriginal people, but it is nevertheless a financial advantage.[121]

Some, but not all, receive benefits from the government, which cost a lot of money, and which are not all benefits, in fact they are significantly harmful, but are, nevertheless, advantages.

Flanagan makes it clear he's not simply interested in making terrible arguments, but the quality of the arguments fulfil his ultimate task of demolishing the epistemic conditions by which any meaningful distinctions can be made. As Kojèveian Sage, Flanagan here enacts the two fundamental premises of the end of history. First, he reconciles nature and culture in the purely-discursive and infinitely-exchangeable realm of multicultural identity;[122] next, he demonstrates how action-as-negation has come to an end. The human being's work or labour of becoming has produced its final product: human *Being*:

> Canada treats status Indians as a separate racial group. Call them Siberian-Canadians. The attribution of privileges to Siberian-Canadians on the basis of ancestry is anomalous in a liberal democracy because it contradicts a fundamental aspect of the rule of law – treating people for what they do rather than who they are. Indians did not do anything to achieve their status except to be born, and no one else can do anything to join them in that status because no action can affect one's ancestry.[123] (22)

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[121] This anthropological gem is cited to a *National Post* article: Richard Foot "Ottawa aims to limit supply of free drugs on native reserves" 13 Nov 1998.

[122] For a Kojèveian take on Canadian multiculturalism, see Cecil Foster *Genuine Multiculturalism*.

[123] Flanagan writes "The term 'Siberian-Canadian' was inspired by [William A. Henry, III], *In Defense of Elitism*."

The collapse of action into being is utterly complete. If *being* born is "doing" and not "being," then the historical difference between the categories has resolved into abstract exchangeability. The point is that all these claims are perfectly true and relevant *if* we accept that universal history has ended in the homogeneous world state. But if that's the case, then all differences are stylistic or consumer choices, preferences, or tastes—difference has been eliminated both as something that ought to be discussed (through work or labour or negation), and as something that can be discussed (being and silence). The decisions have been made in advance. All lives matter.

Thus even the hedges that protrude from Flanagan's anthropology in *FNST*, and the similar hedge that his enemies' "actions were not that different" disappear in the universal figure of the market ecology based in the modern episteme, the episteme of *terra nullius*, and in the postmodern, post-historical realm of abstract exchangeability. Here, "like" and "not that different than" translate into "just as." Thereby, Aboriginal peoples are not First Nations because in the speculated waves of immigration, "Only the first migrants, whoever they were and whenever they came, found a truly empty continent. Later arrivals had to push their way in *just as* the European colonists did" (emph. added. 23). Since Aboriginal communities moved around and fought with one another, they weren't all one people, nor were they attached to lands. In Flanagan's retcon, they were mobile modern subjects. Not only were Indigenous peoples the first immigrants and the first genocidal exterminators, they were the first colonizers.

Flanagan concludes that only by asserting and affirming the market-ecological naturalism that unites the ideology of liberal-democracy—that universal inclusivity that makes bedfellows of the Calgary Conservatives, Ignatieff and the Liberals, as well as all official projects of state multiculturalism and recognition—can history be given its due recognition. Western-Canadian historiography has so far tried to assimilate the position of Indigeneity to the white settler. But

now it's *Universal History* that must be liberated from the grip of the particular; the settler must be recognized as the ecological competitor, in terms of the real, originary tribal form:

> The recent practice of calling the right of aboriginal self-government "inherent' is a way of claiming that history doesn't matter, that aboriginal communities had, have, and always will have the right to govern themselves, no matter what happens. But history does matter. Government depends on power. New and more powerful tribes – the European tribes – entered Canada and established a new political order, as must have repeatedly happened before the arrival of the Europeans.

With the Europeans retconned as a tribe, and with the Indigenous retconned as the modern immigrant, history comes to matter; that is, it comes to have a value, a use, and an exchangeability. History has been fully recolonized.

Having shown that the proper, original direction of history is that of retroactive continuity, Flanagan asks,

> Why not consider the coming of the Europeans as a fourth immigration, a new set of tribes pushing others in front of them? Should we hesitate to do so because the European colonists had lighter-coloured skin, hair, and eyes than the older inhabitants? At bottom, the assertion of an inherent right of aboriginal self-government is a kind of racism.

Let's agree that from the multicultural perspective of the end of history, any special claims based on identity must be "at bottom" racist. But Flanagan has once again helpfully shown how assertions of rights and the structures of government are imbricated in "a kind of racism," in that they are inextricable from the discourse of race that the nation is founded upon.

And this imbrication is how Flanagan retcons legitimacy and rights onto those he denies civilization and state status. He says the assertion that aboriginal self-government is an inherent

right “contends that the only legitimate inhabitants of the Americas have been the Indians and the Inuit. According to this view” (which of course is his own and not attributable to anyone else who says anything about “the only legitimate inhabitants”), “they had the right to drive each other from different territories as much as they liked, even to the point of destroying whole peoples and taking over their land, but Europeans had no similar right to push their way in.” *It’s just not fair that Europeans don’t have the right to push their way in!* But, hang on: haven’t Europeans already have driven others out and taken over their lands? Not enough. So far Flanagan has only provided the “philosophical” and rhetorical work of recolonization. As I’ll show in the next chapter, there’s still a great deal of taking over to do.

Chapter 4

Tom Flanagan as Technocrat: Taking Alienation Literally

> Le problème du Bourgeois semble donc insoluble: il doit travailler pour un *autre* et ne peut travailler que pour *soi-même*. Or en fait, l'Homme réussit à résoudre son problème, et ille résout encore une fois par le principe bourgeois de la *Propriété* privée. Le Bourgeois ne travaille pas pour un autre. Mais il ne travaille pas non plus pour lui-même, pris en tant qu'entité biologique. Il travaille pour lui-même pris en tant que « *personne* juridique ," en tant que Propriétaire privé: il travaille pour la Propriété prise en tant que telle, c'est-à-dire devenue *argent*; il travaille pour le Capital.
>
> Autrement dit, le Travailleur bourgeois présuppose – et conditionne – une Entsagung, une *Abnégation* de l'existence humaine;
>
> Kojève *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (190-191)

4.1 The Calgary School and Intellectual Production

In 2007, Flanagan released *Harper's Team: Behind the Scenes in the Conservative Rise to Power*. In it, he detailed the complexities of the Conservative leader's messaging apparatus during the several campaigns Flanagan worked on as Harper's "main strategist." The famously-secretive Harper felt angered and betrayed by the disclosure, and the book's publication ended their relationship. Yet the back cover of *Harper's Team* reveals that—from a marketing perspective, at least—the selling point is not the promise of any salacious insider details, but that the book is explicitly about the use of modern communications technology and the greater technologies of achieving political power:

> Harper's team fought four campaigns in five years: two leadership races and two national elections. Through trial and error - and determination - they learned to combine the Reform Party's strength in grassroots politics with the Progressive Conservative expertise in advertising and media relations, while simultaneously adopting the latest advances in information and communications technology.

To be sure, it's ironic that a skilled political technocrat has written a book about his expertise with *literal* "technology" only to claim in 2014's *Persona Non Grata* that his fall from grace was engineered by young internet trolls who took advantage of an innocent Hayekian philosopher

who didn't realize how important it was to check his emails. But *Harper's Team*'s focus on technology also contextualizes the tight control Harper exercised over his operatives and his government, making the case for the strategic priority of formal organization, and casting the particular *contents* of politics—whether those contents belong to the Reform or Conservative parties, or to Harper—as unimportant. I've shown how Flanagan fashions narratives based on his assumed neutral, disinterested, outsider's perspective, which by virtue of being financially motivated guarantees the work produced comes as close as possible to a Weberian ideal of *wertfrei* objectivity.[124] Now in this chapter I will analyze Flanagan's work as a technocrat, showing how, as a technician of formalist neutrality, his work does the work of ongoing colonization, what I describe as literal recolonization.

For example, in *Harper's Team* Flanagan explains that attack ads are meaningless as *communicating* events; they form their own event. Whether or not one could read the text and apply it to Harper or his government's actual policies, attitudes, etc. is itself beside the point.[125] Just as Cooper used the occasion of discussing historiography and myths to demonstrate and perform the writing of history as myth, Flanagan is narrating the technical means and the knowledge production that is the business of public intellectuals to produce under the assumptions shared by the Calgary School, the Conservative government, and neoliberal thought in general. My aim is to trace the formalist framework implied in the work of the Calgary School and Canadian neoliberal knowledge production, and coded within contemporary political

[124] Strauss famously locates his epistemological critique of the fact/value distinction in response to Weber's idea of value-freedom. But Strauss's insistence that values permeate all objects of knowledge leads him to sequester "interest" within the human nature of the city/man analogy. Flanagan consistently provides the financial motive to formalize interest, to contain it within a natural rationalism.
[125] In an appearance on CBC's *Power and Politics* following the release of *Persona Non Grata*, Flanagan explained "I'm not a pioneer of attack ads; I'm just a Hayekian political philosopher."

discourse from left to right. I argue that Cooper's work provides a map to the structuralist method by which claims are made in this discourse; Flanagan's work exemplifies this structure.

Flanagan repeatedly claims that he is simply a Hayekian political philosopher. As such, he is a neutral conduit for others' ideas. His role as an intellectual producer is that he "holds the pen," translating others' thoughts into marketable form.[126] For example, recounting his time as chief of staff for the then-opposition leader, Flanagan says,

> My role working for Harper was different than what one might expect from a career academic. I had almost nothing to do with policy, strategy, and communications; Stephen effectively functioned as his own chief of staff in those areas. My remit was organization and management. I raised money, recruited people, and negotiated contracts with suppliers. ("Legends of the Calgary School" 35)

To be sure, these are all neutral tasks, having nothing to do with any ideological contents; but Flanagan then cleverly quips, "I made sure all our trains ran on time," re-politicizing his formal work, demonstrating how today's politics work in the formal realm. Of course Flanagan has nothing in common with the *content* of a fascist-train-scheduler like Mussolini; he sees himself as a technician, like Karl Rove, or, perhaps, Steve Bannon. But these comparisons are natural at the end of history. The ends are agreed upon—the trains must run on time; somebody's got to make them run; if we don't, someone else will. The cargo, passengers, and destinations are irrelevant. He explains that Harper would decide on the platform, and Flanagan would "make sure it got printed on time and in an attractive format and in understandable English" ("Legends" 35). Again, as in *Harper's Team*, the content of an event is of secondary importance. The event—and its distribution and consumption—is its own content. Flanagan's work is technical, to provide substance with a form.

[126] Where Cooper is a structuralist, Flanagan is a post-structuralist conduit for a natural market-ecology of ideas.

Flanagan emphasizes how this technical function extends across all his work. Describing the 2001 "Firewall Manifesto," the letter Harper, Flanagan, Ted Morton, Rainer Knopf, and others sent to Alberta Premier Ralph Klein demanding that firewalls be built around the province to defend against encroachment from the hostile federal government, Flanagan explains he was a neutral conduit, like Socrates on Derrida's postcard: "The whole thing was Harper's idea […] He asked me to coordinate the writing, so I held the pen while I asked the others for ideas" (35).[127] Flanagan is a technocrat; surely he holds political views, but throughout his work he defies critics to connect those views to the greater processes in which he works. These processes are, as formal, given reality, simply *natural*. As a Hayekian political philosopher, he presents his role as that of a neutral instrument for coordinating formal elements and distributing them for wide consumption. In other words, he assumes the role of sophist, that of making the weaker argument into the stronger one. And this isn't my *ad hominem*; it's his greatest brag:

> My legacy to the Conservative Party has nothing to do with policy. Rather, I take great pride in having helped build what Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff has called "the toughest and most ruthless machine in Canadian politics." You won't implement many policies unless you can form the government, and in a democracy that means defeating your opponents at election time. (29)

In the world of practical politics, content takes a backseat to instrumentality. Such claims are uncontroversial enough from a political strategist, but as Flanagan is also a "political

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[127] (I'm referring to Derrida's discussion in *The Post Card* of the medieval image of Socrates transcribing Plato's dictation.) One might wonder whether the Firewall Letter could literally and figuratively signify a garrison mentality. For his part, Cooper says,

> On the "Firewall Letter:" I did not sign it because I was not asked. I was not asked because, as I understand it, I had opposed the National Citizens' Coalition, of which Stephen Harper was at the time president, in a lawsuit over what in Canadian political finance laws is called "third-party funding." […]
> For the record: I agree with everything in the "Firewall Letter." I wonder if all the signatories still do (Voegelinview.com).

philosopher," it's worth noting the epistemic claims he's making. Politics is basically a debate. As players in the political game, both Liberals and Conservatives are of the same formal quality. All players have the formal equality that characterizes liberal freedom. The object of politics is, then, like that of intellectual production, indeed like all market-ecological competition, to win in the realm of quantity.[128]

> the Conservatives, like the Liberals, are sometimes tough and even nasty in their attacks on opponents; but the secret of Conservative success is effective grassroots fundraising based on massive Voter ID and GOTV efforts. That's what raises the money to pay for negative ads, when they are needed. ("Legends" 30)

To understand the true meaning underlying Conservative politics, one must see that, far from pushing dogmatic content, conservatives are primarily just more realistic about how the world works. Moreover, this realistic approach is not itself primarily instrumental, but its success stems from being a better *representation* of the market-ecological Nature than those offered by political rivals. As I've shown in regard to Flanagan's appropriation of Louis Riel, and his racist attacks on Indigenous communities, activists, and, frankly, Indigenous people as a sociological category, what others see as nastiness or the poisoning of political discourse, is, actually, just hard work. And the fruit of the work, of the appealing and realistic representation offered by the successful competitor—"what raises the money"—is *ipso facto* legitimate and correct, as it's been given the ultimate public sanction of financial recognition.

In what follows, I look at some of the practical aspects of Flanagan's work and his influence in regard to neoliberal attempts to bring private property arrangements to reserve lands.

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[128] Hence the leaky-kettle approach that unites *FNST*, the strategy of Ethical Oil discourse, as well as the Calgary School of Public Policy's Energy Corridor proposal. See Chapter 8.

I highlight how his arguments take the concept of alienation literally, as the literal essence and means of human freedom.

One objective of my project is to paint in broad strokes a picture of how the production of Canadian neoliberal settler-colonial policy and opinion is rooted in fundamental assumptions about the literal alienability of property, and how this property regime is inseparable from resource extraction in Canada, the latter of which is the subject of Part Two of this dissertation. Neoliberal knowledge and oil politics, that is, represent two parts of the same project. As Cooper's Western identity shows, the interest that employs rhetoric to claim possession of resources aims at abstracting property into an alien force unrelated to individuals, groups, communities, or nations, but which still operates as the *sine qua non* (if not the material basis) of any such determination.

Neoliberalism assumes a separation of corruptible, always-incipiently-totalitarian politics from neutral, naturally-free economics; it likewise assumes an opposite dispersion of economic logic throughout the other spheres of experience. The Hayekian/Friedmanian origins of neoliberalism aimed at revising liberalism by emphasizing the more-individualistic idea of "freedom" over the too-collectivist idea of democracy. Free markets were, like Morton and Cooper's Selkirk settlers, and like the choices Flanagan's Riel made, logically prior to the political freedoms granted by any government. To "prove" or "make true" this premise, Hayek conceived and engineered the research institute/think tank mode of knowledge production (see Mirowski, Mitchell, Gutstein). The ultimate goal of such production was to establish a quasi-private/quasi-public system of mutually reinforcing claims and strategies, organized as a "marketplace of ideas." Those employed in this process work along a supply chain that includes modern media as well as the producers themselves, who (as Flanagan was before his public

disgrace) are the sources media turn to for expert input; this circuit or "echo chamber" of ideas constitutes an alternative to traditional intellectual production, as well as a market in which "second-hand dealers in ideas" trade knowledges. But just as Cooper's Western co-ops engaged in collectivist forms of production to assert their prior individuality, the Calgary School and other Canadian neoliberals disavow any collective effort and insist on presenting themselves as individuals first. They collaborate and reproduce Hayekian and Friedmanian ideas simply because the latter are the best representations of market-ecological reality, and, of course, because they are well-paid for it. Thus Flanagan explains regarding the work of the Calgary School:

> we are a group of more or less like-minded academics, but not in any sense conspiratorial or even organized. We may have a common outlook, but not a common agenda. Two or more of us sometimes collaborate on particular projects, but basically we pursue our own careers, both academic and political, as individuals. As researchers and writers, we have contributed to the growth of a conservative movement in Canada, but we did not create and do not direct that movement. ("Legends" 36)

As an organic milieu, Calgary—the University, the city, the environment—represents the pre-political and the post-historical market-ecological reality that those of other political persuasions miss: "The rationalism of the modern left leads leftist observers to overstate the significance of abstract ideas." But really, Flanagan says, Calgary is where like-minded people congregate because of the "financial and human" resources they can draw on. Calgary is the "spiritual centre of the conservative movement in Canada." Therefore, he argues (frequently) that, "Karl Marx would have understood better than modern leftists that the Calgary School is an intellectual reflex of the conservative movement." Yes, none would dispute that the Calgary School is indeed

a reflex and a reaction. But it's likely that Marx (and Gramsci) would say they're the reflex of the mode of production, an argument Flanagan has already *literally* made by saying content (conservative ideas in the movement) is utterly secondary to the raising of money ("grassroots fundraising"), and by explaining that Calgary is the generator of political movements, since in this city,

> the political creativity has come mainly from the political and business leaders who have organized and funded all these movements […] the members of the Calgary School have supported these movements, written about them, and helped to explain them to the public. But as thinkers we were not the prime movers. (36)

In a characteristic move, Flanagan immediately contains this materialist, political-economic statement of fact within an idealist figure that disclaims the content of words in favour of process, relations, and movement: "As Goethe wrote, '*Am Anfang war die Tat*' ('In the beginning was the act'), thus correcting the Gospel of John ('In the beginning was the Word')" (37). Action precedes logos, and actors precede both. For example, Louis Riel was an actor; he did not take the appropriate action; he failed to actualize his logos. In other words, Calgary is Flanagan's Red River, a place of literal, organic, *homo economicus* individuality. As though he were refuting the idea that individuals could advance the same political and rhetorical objectives without some literally-cabalistic coordination, Flanagan asserts the members of the Calgary School are not the same people with the same thoughts pursuing the same coordinated agenda; they're only similar. Flanagan emphasizes his colleagues' literal individuality to suggest they are nothing more than an organic manifestation of the market ecology. And, of course, this ecology is centred on the distantly-secondary material relation—money. As Kojève says, the bourgeois liberal subject works in regard to the form of property, the form of money, and such work

constitutes, as I will now show, what Flanagan's colleague Hernando de Soto calls the "mystery of capital."

4.2 From Home Economics to *Homo Economicus*

Discussing the contemporary mode of knowledge production in Canadian neoliberalism, Donald Gutstein remarks,

> Rarely does a book about a public-policy issue become government policy overnight. Such an occurrence is extraordinary, because ideas take years to percolate through political elites and public-opinion filters before they end up on a government's agenda. But it has happened twice under Harper, illustrating yet again the success of a Canadian right-wing echo chamber, comprising corporate media, think tanks, the Prime Minister's Office, and policy entrepreneurs. They work together to amplify messages and establish issues as legitimate candidates for public and political consideration. There's nothing conspiratorial about this process, because the actors are doing what they were set up to do.[129] (106)

Gutstein situates the work of the Calgary School within this apparatus and at the centre of Harper's agenda. The first such "overnight" transformation took place in 2010 when Flanagan, Christopher Alcantara, and Andre Le Dressay published *Beyond the Indian Act: Restoring Aboriginal Property Rights*, which "argues that bringing private-property rights onto First Nations reserves is the best hope for lifting indigenous peoples out of poverty" (Gutstein 107).

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[129] Gutstein's book *Harperism: How Stephen Harper and his Think Tank Colleagues Have Transformed Canada* was released in 2014, partly as an intervention in the upcoming election. As such it's arranged around the conceit of "Harperism," or those particular changes Harper has brought to Canadian political discourse, theory, and practice, what sets him apart from traditional Canadian conservatism and connects him to Reagan-Thatcherism, to Hayek and Milton Friedman, the Mont Pelerin Society, the Mike Harris and Ralph Klein regimes, and to the Canadian political and media elite. In other words, it's actually a much-needed comprehensive exposé of Canadian neoliberalism that still deserves to be read despite its now-unfortunately-passé title.

Gutstein notes, "Within a few months of its publication, the Harper government was considering the legislation laid out in the book.[130]" *Beyond the Indian Act* (*BIA*) represents a partnership between neoliberals and various First Nations groups, each of whom seek to advance the work of Hernando de Soto and "his doctrine of liberating dead capital." Gutstein draws attention to de Soto's back-cover praise for *BIA*, which reads,

> you don't need to travel to Zambia or Peru to see dead capital. All you need to do is visit a reserve in Canada. First Nation people own assets, but not with the same instruments as other Canadians. They're frozen into an *Indian Act* of the 1870s, so they can't easily trade their valuable resources. (qtd. 108)

From this premise, Flanagan and his co-authors conclude that poverty on reserves is due to, and—more consequentially—easily-curable in regard to, the literal inability to alienate land. If individuals were to own the titles to the land they live on, they could sell the land, mortgage it, or otherwise set it motion, turning it into capital. This process is the "mystery" in de Soto's *The Mystery of Capital*, the text upon which *BIA* is based. The theoretical premise, at bottom, is not about selling-off reserve land, but rather about the capacity to alienate it; thus, even if the land were retained, it would have already transformed into capital representing a potential value, which could be realized through alienation. The advantage of the motion-mystery-process is that Flanagan and his colleagues can claim that capitalizing reserve land is not privatizing or dispossessing land; it's simply about liberating (more literally, one could say "extracting") the value trapped inside it. As is the case with Alberta's bitumen, which would manifest in unending

[130] The second book "followed six months later":

> *Ethical Oil: the Case for Canada's Oil Sands* by Ezra Levant, a former student of Flanagan's at the University of Calgary. This book […] argues that Alberta bitumen is preferable to oil from the Middle East and Venezuela, because it is produced under an ethical system. Four months after that book's publication, ethical oil was a Harper government talking point, if not official government policy. (107)

prosperity *if only it were able to be put into motion* and reach markets, such alienability promises to "create more Indian millionaires" (*BIA* 6).

While de Soto's dubious method of confirming dogma through highly-selective empirical data has been convincingly exposed and refuted in the academic context, the clear falsity of his claims hasn't stopped these claims or their subsequent conclusions from amassing great currency as technocratic common sense.[131] My argument is that such obviously "interested" and flimsily-constructed work like that of de Soto and Flanagan, understood within the neoliberal mode of knowledge production Gutstein presents, is able to claim its epistemic status by way of its fundamental assumption that property is alienable.

The substitutional logic Flanagan employs, by which the vocation of prophet is simply a career choice, by which a parking spot and Indigeneity are formally equivalent, and by which current political borders extend to the origin of the world, belongs to a mode of production in which all ideas and roles are exchangeable, and therefore, alienable. But as Flanagan explained regarding the implementation of the ideas in *BIA*, ideas might be alienable, but some identities are too literal to exchange:

> 'This has to be a First Nations led initiative,' Flanagan informed the senators and MPs at the launch [of *BIA*]. 'It won't work if it is imposed from the outside. If it's Flanagan telling Indians what to do, it won't go anywhere. It's really Manny's idea, and it has to be presented that way.' (qtd. in Gutstein 109)

As Gutstein puts it, "Jules would be the public face of the government-funded feasibility study and policy conference. Jules's idea, perhaps, but wrapped in de Soto's neo-liberal doctrine"

[131] Timothy Mitchell exposes de Soto's scandalous sophistry in "How Neoliberalism Makes Its World: The Urban Property Rights Project in Peru." Gutstein's *Harperism* chapter, "Liberate Dead Capital on First Nation Reserves," draws on Mitchell and focuses on the Canadian context, especially regarding Flanagan, de Soto, and the Fraser Institute (106-136).

(109). The point is, though, whether Flanagan was only holding the pen or in fact "writing," the matter of whose idea it is presumes a literal but completely exchangeable subject. "It has to be presented" as a "First Nations initiative" because it must recognize the relation that's concretized in the legal person, who deserves the respect of being consulted. Like it is for Cooper, recognition is not so much about content, or what affects real interests, as it is about the symbolic formality of (as Kojève would say, post-historical) consultation.[132]

Gutstein traces Flanagan's involvement implementing de Soto's ideas to the Canadian context for a decade prior to *BIA*'s publication, including work for the Fraser Institute. He likewise describes Jules's prior work with de Soto, quoting Jules as saying that, with de Soto, "We're working together to achieve what no other peoples have achieved in the Americas, which is recognizing the underlying fundamental title that First Nations have to the lands they occupy" (qtd. 110). De Soto and Jules's formulation illustrates the ongoing colonization of property discourse. The Lockean labour theory that justified settler-colonialism's dispossession of Indigenous lands —that one needs to work the land in order to own it—has little relevance to a developed economy.[133] Therefore, a new approach is required, one which figures the status of *occupying* land. *BIA*, which would lead in 2006 to the proposed First Nations Property Ownership Act (FNPOA), asserts that occupation is what legitimates title. And the entitlement such title embodies is, like in the vexed history of the West's ownership of its resources, the right to the land's status as alienable.

[132] Such liberal-neoliberal ideas of consultation are simply actions of recognition, formal patterns or rituals that affirm the abstract respect due to abstract subjects of abstract equality. As such, such formal procedures are best done quickly, like in conservative governments' preferences for quick, omnibus-type passage of legislation through parliamentary consultations or debate. And it is far better still if such consultation can be done in advance and permanently. This motive, to perpetually fix recognition through "pre-approved" group, individual, and property rights, is what's behind the concepts of the Energy Corridor that I'll discuss in Part Two.
[133] Just as the industrial mode of production that the Gulag emerged to administer is (conceptually) irrelevant to multinational enterprises.

Understood in terms of the relation it concretizes, one can argue that Cooper's answer to Frye's "where is here?," that in the West "it is here and us," "we're here" is only a claim to title. For Cooper, the self-evidence of "here and us" is the basis for any number of social forms put to work in order to arrive at the proper legal status of being able to alienate, and thereby accumulate, capital. This self-evidence can be seen in the Lockean principle of the inalienable right to property. The effective meaning of such a right shows that what's being claimed as *inalienable* is the right *to alienate*.[134] Title to an object is only a legitimate claim if the object can be alienated, if it can be put into motion, which is of course, another way of defining capital.

The claim "We're here; it's ours" is only legally possible via the mediation of the legal being who is identifiable—like the subject in Kojève's epigraph to this chapter—as being alienated from the phenomenologically-prior organic being. That is, the abstract subject who does not need his house to live in, but is instead free to be in motion as capital; literally, this is the freedom to move.[135] Cooper's "It's here and us" *as a claim to ownership* is another way of saying "We don't have to be here; what's 'here' is ours to sell to others." The subject's freedom is only realizable if freedom is concretized in an object.[136] For Cooper, the American republic had to create a new source of legitimacy for its power, which it founded "from the bottom up."

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[134] And this dynamic expresses the history of capitalism's overtaking of earlier forms. The very ideas of perfectibility and progress—and the social forms such as investment, development, class mobility, expansion, growth—all depend on the epistemic rupture by which the fixed, hierarchical economy of the middle ages was replaced by one understood in terms of movement. And, as Macpherson's *Possessive Individualism* and Robert Heilbroner's classic *The Worldly Philosophers* show, economic organization has always been understood in terms of conforming to naturalist aesthetic premises.

[135] As Friedman so literally puts it, the concept of freedom as radical alienability consists in the inalienable freedom to starve to death (*Capitalism and Freedom*). (A longer project could correlate Friedman's figure with Kojève's unique modification of Buddhism, in which he calls for the ultimate transcendence of the individual through literal-and/or-figural suicide. See Love.)

[136] In the de Soto/Flanagan example, this object is the commodity that the individual is free to alienate. But Kojève shows how this object is the individual's *relation within the object world*, that is, as object, or, the possessive individual. I want to be clear that I'm not arguing that phenomenology, materialism, or Hegel, Marx, or Kojève is right or wrong. I'm showing that the logic of the arguments derived from or compatible with the simplified Kojève of the Straussians posit freedom as radical alienability, while simultaneously asserting the inalienable stability of the individual as property and the inalienable authority of the individual as owner of its life-property.

The literal facts that Cooper describes as mythography were that the *ancien regime*'s form of government could not provide the subject with its concrete freedom. Thus legitimacy was concretized in the property relations of possessive individualism, those "inalienable rights" of the US Declaration of Independence ("Western Political Consciousness" 232-234). The figure of the Western settler experience can be understood as such a bottom-up creation of legitimacy. The experience of occupation, which in Cooper is the unproblematic formal link between Red River's residents and those of modern prairie towns, is the logically-prior foundation for claims to ownership.

The concrete expression of an identity as figured in relation to land is only possible if the land is assimilable to the individual as a social/legal relation, if it's possible, as de Soto says, to "legally *fix*" the assets' potential. Fixing means being fixed within a relation of alienability. Thus based in possessive individualist identity, Flanagan and Cooper's premises, like liberal premises in general, assume the ownership of property is the basis for rights, that everything from the individual to the things in the environment should be understood in regard to property, and that the right to be and possess property is logically based on the inalienable right to alienate. Like the Square-heads showed, though, there's great disagreement over the means by which to bring such agreed-upon ends into being. Answering the question of how to enact the twin tenets—that land and resources are fully commoditized and that the consequent capital can be owned, accumulated, and exchanged—de Soto presents *The Mystery of Capital*:

> The poor have accumulated trillions of dollars of real estate during the past forty years. What the poor lack is easy access to the property mechanisms that could legally fix the economic potential of their assets so that they could be used to produce, secure, or guarantee greater value in the expanded market. (49)

The only problem is one of recognition and representation:

> But they hold these resources in defective forms: houses built on land whose ownership rights are not adequately recorded, unincorporated businesses with undefined liability, industries located where financiers and investors cannot see them. Because the rights to these possessions are not adequately documented, these assets cannot readily be turned into capital, cannot be traded outside of narrow local circles where people know and trust each other, cannot be used as collateral for a loan, and cannot be used as a share against an investment. (19)

In this end-of-history vision of market ecology, the concrete objects of "rights" as "rights to possessions" precede the abstract documentation of the primordial phenomenological reality of "it is here and us."[137] Like in Flanagan's equation of public acclaim with success, *representation* is what actualizes the link to underlying, pre-existing, Nature.

This Nature explains that capitalism's apparent failure "everywhere else," does not signify that capitalism is one competing form of administration among other competitors. Because those other competitors have failed also by not developing the pre-existing market-ecological nature up to the West's level of prosperity. In other words, the market ecology is the given reality; prosperity is the agreed-upon end; and all that's unresolved is how to implement the form of representation that best corresponds to the reality. This is where the West's superiority is clear. Capitalism, thus, is the best representation—*the best identity*—because it accurately represents the natural world. So, the argument does not claim the superiority of capitalism as much as it claims that the questions of what the world is "like" have already been

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[137] The title of de Soto's book provides the retcon it relies on and performs: "*The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*" explains that everywhere else *isn't the West*, whose identity is equivalent to free capital. But everywhere else can be the West if it liberates its dead capital.

answered.[138] De Soto continues: "In the West, by contrast, every parcel of land, every building, every piece of equipment, or store of inventories is represented in a property document that is the visible sign of a vast hidden process that connects all these assets to the rest of the economy." By means of this "representational process, assets can lead an invisible, parallel life alongside their material existence," as collateral, capital, investment, and so on. This invisibility is an important part of the fantasy of the post-historical market ecology. It posits the bourgeois investment as the natural entelechy of objects—objects should be assets that generate wealth in the background. Not only does such an assumption rely on a dubious understanding of how value is produced, its emphasis on the investment value of real estate obscures the most crucial value in the Canadian context of Indigenous lands, that is, *extractive value*.

This "invisibility," then, is a figure for immaterial production, in which labour and extraction are subsumed into the idealist image where value is produced as an invisible epiphenomenon to proper administration.[139] Where for Strauss, Bloom, and Cooper the city/man analogy contains the entire division of labour, for de Soto, property's literal-visual existence and its invisible value circumscribes all of biopolitical life and structures the relation by which values are equivalent to value:

> The single most important source of funds for new businesses in the United States is a mortgage on the entrepreneur's house. These assets can also provide a link to the owner's credit history, an accountable address for the collection of debts and taxes, the basis for the creation of reliable and universal public utilities, and a foundation for the creation of

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[138] It's in this way that Flanagan's "Riel to Reform" works politically, and *FNST* works racially—Socialists and Conservatives, First Nations and settlers are really all the same and have decided on the nature of reality.

[139] As I'll show in Part Two, such is the governmental premise that unites the various plans for a Canadian Energy Corridor.

> securities (like mortgage-backed bonds) that can then be rediscounted and sold in secondary markets. (19)

Literally, everything starts at home! A home houses not only an individual's property, nor even just the individual as a legal relation and subject of governmentality, but all of moral life. The house, that literal container for the bourgeois, heteronormative, nuclear-family-man, also plays the maternal function of incubator for capital.

And if the social reproduction of this subject weren't biopolitical enough, de Soto further claims that "By this process the West injects life into assets and makes them generate capital." That the assets are currently lying "dead" (though "fallow," or "asleep in the Rock of Ages" seem like better metaphors, no?) awaiting the masculine "injection" of life, leading to the pro-life-like "quickening," and flourishing as capital, signifies that the naturalism of the market, the incipient essence and potentiality of life in things and human activity is trans-historical. Thus, spreading proper administrative mechanisms amounts to completing the work of history by "restoring" the proper order, overcoming human alienation from its species being, the neutral, recolonized work of civilizing the world.

Passed through the bioform, markets and assets are natural and indigenous. Governments and their interventions that do not recognize this Nature, like the foreign Ottawa's Square Survey, are artificial. Instead, governments should work in accordance with Nature, with *teloi* and entelechy, to effect the proper rationalization process, the proper representation. Happily, though, governments or other organizations can achieve this, as Kojève so firmly believed, with the helpful administration of proper bureaucracy.[140] The new civilizing mission becomes clear:

[140] The fetishized focus on the proper administration of the economy speaks to the crucial importance of Kojève's theory in understanding how neoliberal economists see the world. Human activity has completed history by transforming Nature-as-given into the human environment. Thus, Nature is perfected use-value. But the key to the post-historical is the negation of the negation, that is, the completion of the environment as exchange. So Nature (the

"Third World and former communist nations do not have this representational process. [In those places] enterprises of the poor are very much like corporations that cannot issue shares or bonds to obtain new investment and finance. Without representations, their assets are dead capital" (19).

De Soto is calling for the completion of the transition of government to governmentality. His fetishized idea of documentation as some infallible objectivity—the visible sign that transparently express the subject's authority—is merely the representation of the fundamental ability to trade or exploit the literal object. Flanagan holds the pen while translating this fantasy of governmentality over government into the Canadian context. Property must be freed from the defective political forms of government in the Canadian reserve system: such liberation would reconfigure land ownership in accordance with the naturalist aesthetic, freeing natural governmentality from artificial government.

Understood in this way, the significance of the arguments Flanagan makes in *First Nations? Second Thoughts* becomes clear. The First Peoples cannot be "first" because the subject

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new, properly-human given) must be ordered as Nature, or—as I argue—according to a naturalist aesthetic ideology that sees itself as Nature. Put another way, the material is complete, and now the ideal—the telos or entelechy, the rationality that has been guiding history all along—must be actualized as the transcendence of material. So homes as containers for living beings must realized into homes as incubators to generate life-as-capital. De Soto couldn't be clearer in his post-historical, post-material Idealism:

> Walk down most roads in the Middle East, the former Soviet Union, or Latin America, and you will see many things: houses used for shelter, parcels of land being tilled, sowed, and harvested, merchandise being bought and sold. Assets in developing and former communist countries primarily serve these immediate physical purposes. In the West, however, the same assets also lead a parallel life as capital outside the physical world. They can be used to put in motion more production by securing the interests of other parties as "collateral" for a mortgage, for example, or by assuring the supply of other forms of credit and public utilities.
>
> Why can't buildings and land elsewhere in the world also lead this parallel life? Why can't the enormous resources we discussed in Chapter 2—$9.3 trillion of dead capital—produce value beyond their "natural" state? My reply is, Dead capital exists because we have forgotten (or perhaps never realized) that converting a physical asset to generate capital—using your house to borrow money to finance an enterprise, for example—requires a very complex process. […] The result is that 80 percent of the world is undercapitalized; people cannot draw economic life from their buildings (or any other asset) to generate capital. Worse, the advanced nations seem unable to teach them. Why assets can be made to produce abundant capital in the West but very little in the rest of the world is a mystery. (43-44)

that is first belongs to the immanent market ecology, that subjectivity which will be brought back to life after the occupants—who only use the land to live on, and do not endow it with life through transformation into capital—have been rationalized off of the land. “Formalizing ownership” is the only thing needed to solve world poverty; in Canada, poverty in Indigenous communities requires no more or less than this formalization. In market-ecological Nature, the multicultural politics of recognition provides the fantasy of mediating all difference, transforming particularity into the Universal. But of course, the substitutions that I have been tracing in the work of the Calgary School, by which rhetoric provides the model for politics and social relations, are forms of elimination as well.

4.3 Rhetoric, Substitution, and Recognition: “Fixing” Rights and Legal Personhood

To anyone who’s ever been tempted to write off Marx’s more poetic descriptions of the powers of capital or his imagery of vampires, spectres, rattling chains, and blood-soaked commodities as fanciful literary embellishment rather than rigorous, political-economic analysis, a quick leafing through the work of celebrated economist Hernando de Soto should clear that right up. De Soto proves there’s nothing that the “mystery of capital” cannot bring to life, join together, literally or figuratively “fix.” He explains,

> Dead capital exists because we have forgotten (or perhaps never realized) that converting a physical asset to generate capital—using your house to borrow money to finance an enterprise, for example—requires a very complex process. It is not unlike the process that Einstein taught us whereby a single brick can be made to release a huge amount of energy in the form of an atomic explosion. By analogy, capital is the result of discovering and

> unleashing potential energy from the trillions of bricks that the poor have accumulated in their buildings. (44)

One might see in this powerful analogy something like what Marx says of money's power, that is, to effect "the transformation of all human and natural properties into their contraries, the universal confounding and distorting of things: impossibilities are soldered together by it." But de Soto, sensibly sensing that a reader might be sceptical about equating the most basic relation between matter and energy with the relation between an asset and cash flow, provides a prudent proviso:

> There is, however, *one crucial difference between unleashing energy from a brick and unleashing capital from brick buildings*: Although humanity (or at least a large group of scientists) has mastered the process of obtaining energy from matter, we seem to have forgotten the process that allows us to obtain capital from assets. The result is that 80 percent of the world is undercapitalized; people cannot draw economic life from their buildings (or any other asset) to generate capital. (44-45 my emphasis)

The "one crucial difference" aside, not only is the energy of capital as much a force of nature as the energy congealed in the bond of the atom, it's even more basic, in that fewer people understand it than understand nuclear physics! There is no doubt truth to this difference, in that the conversion of matter to energy actually makes sense within the discourse of science, while the generation of wealth from assets, the apparent process of getting something from nothing, remains perennially mysterious.[141] But of course this is not de Soto's point. Rather, he's showing that the substitution of one image for another allows for the market-ecology to be *physis*, and that all things—the brick of the home, the brick of uranium, and the bricks that live an invisible life

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[141] Again, this difference and the apparent mystery it generates can be understood as issuing from the assumption that the industrial-productive form of governmentality—the total rationalization of experience—can be taken as separate from industrial production.

as assets generating revenue—are naturally organized by way of the form of private property, the liberal possessive individual subject. But this fundamental exchangeability—of images and of objects—has been "forgotten." Thus the incomplete process of rationalizing the world, like the work of ongoing colonization, is a restoration project. The original, basic knowledge of Nature has been lost in the modern world of science and technology. We've lost sight of the natural way things work, and lost our connection to the natural environment of market man.

In the acknowledgements page of *The Mystery of Capital*, de Soto thanks a colleague for "leading him through the subtleties of the French post-structuralists, particularly Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault" (187). But Marx might deserve some gratitude as well. After all, de Soto's mystery of capital clearly does what Marx says, as it "serves to exchange every quality for every other, even contradictory, quality and object: it is the fraternisation of impossibilities. It makes contradictions embrace" (Marx). Then again, for Marx it's contradictions that embrace within the power of money to objectify all things equally. In the neoliberal imaginary, this power is not exclusive to money but belongs as well to its handmaid, that other great means of exchange, rhetoric.[142]

Thus capital fixes the literal and figural as one, within the container of the liberal subject. But it can only do so if given a chance:

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[142] Milton Friedman's praise for the book points out another felicitous equivalency—between the general good and the politician's self-interest:

> De Soto has demonstrated in practice that titling hitherto untitled assets is an extremely effective way to promote economic development of society as a whole. He offers politicians a project which can contribute to the welfare of their country and at the same time enhance their own political standing, a wonderful combination.

Gutstein has shown how Canadian neoliberals figured de Soto as a third-world economist in order to make his homogenizing program over into an exercise in recognizing multicultural difference (115-117). Francis Fukuyama's praise on de Soto's book jacket furthers this third-worlding, rendering the author as a freedom fighter: "De Soto has single-handedly been fomenting a revolution in the Third World. … *The Mystery of Capital* constitutes one of the few new and genuinely promising approaches to overcoming poverty to come along in a very long time." (Of course, this latter-day Ché has substituted poverty and exclusion from the market for imperialism and capitalism.)

> Like electrical energy, capital will not be generated if the single key facility that produces and fixes it is not in place. Just as a lake needs a hydroelectric plant to produce usable energy, assets need a formal property system to produce significant surplus value. Without formal property to extract their economic potential and convert it into a form that can be easily transported and controlled, the assets of developing and former communist countries are like water in a lake high in the Andes—an untapped stock of potential energy. (50)

In the neoliberal figural method, the legal relation that constitutes subjectivity and property (and that constitutes subjectivity-as-property and vice-versa) is objectified *ad absurdum*. The lake "needs" a hydro plant to generate energy, like a person needs seed money to grow a business, and this, of course, like a seed needs water, soil, and sunshine to fulfil its nature. In other words, despite the absolute reversal of cause and effect by which the lake is figured as a thing that has needs and wants, the most vulgar teleology retains the basic naturalist entelechy; the direction of progress is identical to the object's realization in its ideal form as subject, which is its abstract relation as capital.

In both the structuralism that characterizes Cooper's historiography and in the infinite exchangeability of Flanagan's work, there are only relations. De Soto, too, reveals that differences in kind are only differences among the same kind of things. A subject is only a subject via the legal relation that figures it as an object. The objective basis for subjectivity then requires that an object is as much a subject as it is an object. Everything is an object, but some objects have the legal relation that figures them as subjects. That is, not all objects have been granted *the recognition* that would endow them with subjectivity. If lakes could have access to the formal mechanisms to put their potential into motion, they would be subjects. So, they have

needs just like anyone. Everything is the same kind of thing, and qualitative difference is supplemental; difference is in the recognition claimed and accorded.

Shedding light on how the property-fetish behind de Soto and Flanagan's projects requires that differences be figured in terms of recognition, Gutstein recounts de Soto's role as a "Third World economist" put to use by various think tanks. For example when he was invited to speak at a Fraser Institute event,

> Institute executive director Michael Walker asked de Soto if he had 'any comments about how we should deal with the native land claims issue here in Canada?' De Soto replied that he couldn't tell Walker what to do in Canada, but made the curious point that 'human beings have established two basic concepts: sovereignty (which is very political) and property.' Property is much more stable than sovereignty, he said. 'If people have recognized rights to their property, the overarching political system doesn't seem to be as important.'[143]

In other words, from a multicultural identitarian standpoint, de Soto would not presume to speak for other constituencies; except maybe to point out that the actually-existing circumstances in which such identities are *literally constituted into constituents* is relatively unimportant compared to the universal form of property. To be sure de Soto's point seems to ignore that the property form is the *liberal-democratic-late-capitalist* form of private property. But he's actually

[143] This leads Gutstein to conclude that de Soto simply repeats "the old neo-liberal dictum first announced by Milton Friedman […]: economic freedom is more important than political freedom. No wonder Friedman endorsed de Soto's book." But this priority of property to sovereignty is also remarkably similar to what Steve Coll describes as the "foreign policy" of the Exxon corporation. Coll explains Exxon's policy—toward both non-US nations, as well as within the US, in which "it functions as corporate state within the American state"—has operated according to the slogan that "We see governments come and go": "Its business model—drilling holes in the ground all over the world and maintaining oil and gas wells profitably for up to forty years at a stretch—means that the political and economic time horizons for its corporate strategies extend much farther than those of almost any government" (Coll "Gusher"; see also *Private Empire*). As property, the land stays the same as does fixed capital and agreements integrated into land through extractivism. The political, what comes and goes, is simply the flux of particularity. Again, the economic relations—literally and figuratively grounded in land—have the apparent stability of Nature itself.

managing particularity, which is crucial for asserting the universality of the neoliberal simplification of liberal democracy—that is, the reason why capitalism seems to fail "everywhere else." De Soto explains how particularity is instrumental to universalism:

> From Derrida I learned that you could use categories from one culture to describe another in a way that everyone can understand—without violating the culture's unique character. And thus I was better able to understand how we were successfully integrating extralegal property arrangements into formal property law. From Foucault I learned the basics of the "secret architecture" that links the invisible to the visible, also inferring from his writings how a good system of representations increases *la condition de possibilité* of all mankind. My sense of the economic power and significance of representations was increased even further by my reading in semiotics, principally Umberto Eco and Ferdinand de Saussure, and in philosophy of mind, particularly the work of John Searle and Daniel Dennett. (187)

This summary of an intellectual formation narrates how (*pace* those cited!), within the mode of academic-intellectual production, particularity can be packaged and translated into other discourses; how particulars—like the formal property law that only partially administers some aspects of social life—can be universalizable and made to extend into the realm of the "extralegal"; how basic formal connections of power unite linguistics and social relations; and, finally, how rhetoric is the means of containing all these things—like (but of course, not "exactly the same as") Flanagan's "easy to understand English."

De Soto's work, like all neoliberal and neoconservative thought-products, claims to be portable. Like Flanagan and Levant's form of the debate, which remains the same regardless of the terms, de Soto's formula is applicable in any location wishing to open up to the market. And

this substitutionality of application represents the infinite substitution of Nature. But, clearly, the fantasy of substitution that is equated with prior nature—the pre-existing economy whether identified in Selkirk, in failed Socialist states or in slums, in the entrepreneur waiting to be born, to escape the material shell of particularity and ascend into post-material fluidity—is nothing more than the navel-gazing interest of the rhetorician entranced by the entrancing qualities of his rhetoric. Such abstract equivalence is fine for rhetoric, but it generates the most obvious logical problems when translated into an "argument." Which of course is the lesson of neoliberal economics and of the rhetoricians of the Calgary School: no one is arguing anything, merely sagely stating, restating, and circulating what has already been agreed upon.[144]

In other words, the portability of neoliberal thought-products consists in exactly the abstraction from particularities like the environment that (rightly!) so offended Morton and Cooper about the Square heads: such universalist rationalism is incapable of even apprehending how land works *as capital*, let alone registering actual experience. As Moffat pointed out, the geometric approach imposed on the Western farmer made it impossible to *use* the land. By repeating this absurdly abstracted approach to land use, de Soto's studies in Peru found that people who had been granted title to their land subsequently happened to work more and work harder than they had before they became owners. Therefore, it seemed, the imposition or granting of the abstract form of property ownership not only generated wealth, but biopolitical benefits of a better, more natural work ethic! However, Timothy Mitchell highlights the

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[144] As David J. Climenhaga explains,

> The Calgary School project, naturally, has also benefitted from generous corporate support […] and from the naiveté of taxpayers who assumed all academic work coming out of a university was trustworthy and rigorous.
>
> It is not. The department is steeped in the quasi-theological ideology of the "Austrian economists," Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises, and their cultish followers, which, as New York Times economics columnist Paul Krugman describes their theorizing, "explicitly denies that empirical data need to be taken into account."

"If we'd been paying attention, perhaps we wouldn't be so shocked by U of C's corporate-influence scandal" November 13, 2015, Rabble.ca.

selectivity of de Soto's findings, explaining that those who had been granted title also happened to be living in cities, and the untitled—those who the study found "worked less"—were located in rural areas.[145] Mitchell's work leads Gutstein to a conclusion similar to Morton's: "Success is related to location, not ownership, a phenomenon relevant to the situation facing Canadian First Nations, where reserves near urban centres and resort destinations are generally more prosperous than those in isolated locations with few resources" (113).

The sophistic acts performed in de Soto and distributed via Flanagan allow for difference to be managed as object of recognition in a market-ecology of fundamental sameness. In de Soto and in *BIA*, the natural relation to land is ahistorical and universal. All land is formally equal: it's something that can be put into motion as capital. This formal equality is the equality of liberal democracy. That some land is better situated than other plots, that some parcels of land are more valuable or more useful than others has no bearing on the fundamental equality. Taking the legal relation as natural enables the fantasy that qualitative difference is nothing more than quantitative difference. Just as the fact that some people have *more* ability than others or that some have *more* particular advantages and that some work harder and better than others does nothing to disturb the formal equality all citizens enjoy.

By rhetorically eliminating difference as something other than sameness, by extending the form of recognition that sees subjects as owners of their selves as objects, by anthropomorphizing land and by objectifying human beings, politics and morality are formalized into relations among objects. And the goal of progress is to ensure all are equally invited into the game or the debate of competition. The substitutional logic behind assumptions that neoliberal formulas can be applied in any place likewise suggests that places are fundamentally portable or moveable, too, in that land is an asset like anything else and can be held or exchanged. If some

[145] Mitchell "How Neoliberalism Makes Its World."

land is more valuable because it has access to urban amenities, there's other, more remote, land that is valuable for the resources it contains. If a particular area has neither of these attributes, then the subject occupying such land should not be bound to it but should be free to alienate the bad asset and move on to more productive pastures! As I will discuss in a moment, Coulthard explains that Flanagan's outlook changed between *First Nations?* and *BIA*, moving from assimilation to recognition. But what remains consistent is the neoliberal biopolitical imperative, the fantastic governmental premise that natural or unnatural economic behaviour respectively generates good or bad moral behaviour; that, as Flanagan so explicitly puts it, "Aboriginal peoples have to adopt Canadian norms of behaviour if they hope to share the Canadian standard of living" (*PNG* 5).

In the neoliberal fantasy of formal equivalence, movement, location, and habitation are all as portable as the scheme to formalize land ownership. In this light, Louis Riel's uses—as the original Westerner, as the face of Indigenous struggle contra Canada, of Francophone and Catholic resistance to Anglo-Saxon Protestant dominance, indeed, as the symbol of many things—indicates his fundamental portability. As a historical figure, Riel represents particularity. But by rendering Riel or Red River within the structure of liberal-democratic subjectivity, Cooper and Flanagan (and any number of others) remove particularity from its historical context and make Riel universal, an agent of market behaviourism. As Flanagan says, Riel's actions "were produced by the way he was treated. His friends, in treating Riel as a lunatic and taking away his liberty, forced him to resist" ("Riel" 22). In the negative liberty presumed by neoliberal thought, liberty is uniquely spatial, and any barrier to formal freedom is literally equivalent to confinement, or, as Berlin calls it "coercion." De Soto has explained that sovereignty is less secure than property. And this is the lesson of Flanagan's Riel, who could have been sovereign

over his destiny and posterity had he properly managed his finances. Thus the de Soto/Flanagan method asserts that sovereignty is best secured by fixing property relations into an easily exchangeable form. As long as the poor, the Indigenous, or the post-communists are shut out from the universal form of portable property, they are tied to the land, unable to alienate their incipient assets or themselves. Like the case of Riel proved, liberty equals space, and without liberty, people act irrationally. As Flanagan literally argues, had Riel owned his own home, he would have had a chance to make something of himself!

Indeed, at bottom the most fundamental freedom is the freedom to alienate oneself into the role one chooses; and this makes sense of Flanagan's somewhat-puzzling insistence that Riel didn't choose the role of madman, but others imposed in on him. To not be able to free oneself of burdens, to not be able to pick up and leave, to not be able to choose one's role and become an entrepreneur rather than remain a squatter, to be excluded from the market—and all because of irrational government regulations—is formally identical to being suffocated by the nanny state, Maoist re-education camps, or the Stalinist Gulag.[146] To sum up, not being self-sufficient is a universal formula for producing irrationality. And self-sufficiency is the universal form of free choice, of being recognized as rational or even sane, indeed of the effective sanity of being a free agent; and this idea of freedom can only be enabled by alienation, which means being able to

[146] It's worth pointing out that this nanny state regime of defective representation of legal rights is still not, like the Stalinist Gulag, post-historical. Everyone might agree that the end of history has been achieved and that administration must extend reason into all aspects of Being. But this completely-idealist agreement only naturalizes the market, not the mode of production. That is, *capitalism* isn't an absolute, universal form; the market is. That's why there are apparently so many tweaks or tactical changes that can be made to capitalism in order to better administer the market, like green capitalism, micro-loans, or fee-simple titles. These are no different than the socialistic forms Cooper's prairie capitalists took up to assert their individual interests. This is how neoliberalism is able to remain so completely dependent on the state form. The market doesn't care if it's administered by state capitalism or private capitalism. The totalitarian-communist Gulag and the totalitarian-capitalist MNE are the same thing in different local colours. Capital*ism* is a particularity. Capital, the essence of human reason and the true subject of the market ecology, is what's total.

mortgage or sell one's home. In the radical literality of this abstractly-portable scheme, property is prior to sovereignty, but it's the representation of Nature's fundamental exchangeability.

4.4 From the Power of Money to the Power of Rhetoric: Thomas King's Literality

As Flanagan and de Soto repeatedly show with their absurd proliferation of omnivalent metaphors, absolute exchangeability renders the discourses they take up meaninglessness. But, metaphors *can* be strikingly meaningful, particularly in regard to another aspect of substitution and portability that must be considered. In *The Inconvenient Indian* (2012), Thomas King substitutes the rhetorical history of the de Soto/Flanagan method with a historical context. In contrast to de Soto's semiotic exchangeability of structural linguistics or the technocratic formalism of Flanagan's marketing work, King presents the a material, literal referent for the "dead" in the figure of dead capital:

> In 1953, the Termination Act and the Relocation Act were concurrently passed by the United States Congress. Termination allowed Congress to terminate all federal relations with tribes unilaterally, while Relocation "encouraged" Native people to leave their reservations and head for the cities. One might say that Termination provided for the death of the Legal Indian, while Relocation provided the mass grave. (72)

In addition to literalizing the figures that make up the terms of dead capital and the liberation of the legal subject, King likewise rhetorically highlights the biopolitical premises behind de Soto's entelechy:

> In 1969, the Canadian government tried to pull a homegrown Termination Act—the 1969 White Paper—out of its Parliamentary canal. In that year, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau blithely intimated that there was no such thing as Indian entitlement to land or Native

rights and suggested that it was in the best interests of First Nations people to give up their reserves and assimilate into Canadian society. (72-72)

With precise concision, King illustrates the connections between literal and figural dimensions that Flanagan and his cohorts so freely exchange. De Soto and Flanagan ground subjectivity and value in the metaphor of land, and in idealist images of life, death, and freedom springing from a market-ecological Nature. This idealism that understands value as exchange and substitution renders politics, or, how power and resources are organized among people, into biopolitics, which seeks to organize life itself as power and resources. The neoliberal method consigns material production to the past, to the era before the important questions were agreed upon as having been answered. Countering liberal-democratic formalism, King brings materiality back into the debate, and does so by showing how death and life thus form the literal basis of value. Wealth cannot spring from land without removing everything that is not objectified as value. The legal relation enshrined in the form of alienable property cannot be extended into the "extralegal" realm of life without first eliminating the prior, existing form of life that resides there.

When the White Paper was issued, King explains,

Almost every Indian organization came out against the plan. Whatever the problems were with the Indian Act and with the Department of Indian Affairs, Native people were sure that giving up their land and their treaty rights was not the answer.

Dead Indians, Live Indians, Legal Indians.

But all North America can see is the Dead Indian. All North America dreams about is the Dead Indian. There's a good reason, of course. The Dead Indian is what North America wants to be. Which probably explains the creation and proliferation of Indian hobbyist clubs, social organizations that have sprung up in North America and

> around the world as well, where non-Indians can spend their leisure time and weekends pretending to be Dead Indians. (73)

King's immediate examples of North Americans wishing to be Dead Indians refer to cultural production, what King calls "the Indian Business."[147] But the statement also expresses the literal truth that I am tracing in the work of the Calgary School. Cooper's historiography assumed the Red River identity as the source and continuing origin of his Western political consciousness, asserting that the Western was the true Indigenous culture. In order to retcon the narrative premises of settler-history, it is necessary to complete the assimilation of the historically-indigenous, to make this identity exchangeable, to make it alienable. Thus in order to play the role of *homo economicus* in Flanagan's morality tale, Louis Riel had to be recolonized. In order to arrive at the recognition politics of *Beyond the Indian Act*, Flanagan first had to eliminate the "Aboriginal" as a sociological and legal category, as well as a meaningful word. In making this argument, I follow Michael Fabris in reading Flanagan's de Soto-derived method of literal alienation as partaking of what Patrick Wolfe calls the "logic of elimination." Wolfe proposes seeing this logic as what unites the violence endemic to settler-colonial projects, ranging from "frontier homicide" to genocide, and covering everything in between. Wolfe explains how both genocide and settler-colonialism "have typically employed the organizing grammar of race" (387) in order to claim sovereignty over land and "access to territory," arguing that "Territoriality is settler colonialism's specific, irreducible element" (388).

In addition to being necessary for taking the land, the elimination of the kind of subject who challenges such access is also required for the stability of legal relations among settlers themselves. Thus Flanagan created the subject of the Aboriginal Orthodoxy, not simply as a

[147] On the figure of the "Dead Indian" in Canadian literary history, especially in regard to Frye and Atwood, see Watson 94-97.

straw man on whom to project idiotic claims, but to create the public image—the ideal to be accepted or rejected by popular opinion—of the subject to whom recognition must be granted. To take this rhetorical subject seriously is to—*literally*—assume the elimination or "death" of the pre-existing, historical subject, whom the rhetorical figure is meant to replace. *First Nations? Second Thoughts*, then, was the process of eliminating the historical Indigenous subject from discourse and imposing the fictive one of the "Aboriginal Orthodoxy." In the next section, I will discuss Michael Fabris's work to show how this subject-creating project is furthered in *Beyond the Indian Act*.

That Flanagan so proudly mentions his awards, and that *FNST* was so lauded by the society that Cooper tells us was founded to promote Western settler historiography, and that the book continues to be widely-read today, even after Flanagan's apparent shift towards according First Nations official recognition shows that, while the White Paper is no longer representative of the form elimination takes, elimination indeed has significant public sanction. (Of course, the fact that Flanagan's reputation and livelihood was damaged by some of those he has devoted his life to eliminating—*figuratively* of course!—likewise shows that some things have changed.[148])

King's rhetoric and substitutions highlight material similarities to show that the historical role of Flanagan's proposal is to further the goal of the Termination and Relocation Acts; King calls the current manifestation "neo-termination":

> One of neo-termination's strongest supporters is Thomas Flanagan, […] [who] has little patience with treaties and Native Status, and has argued vigorously […] for the

[148] Cooper's essay "Hunting and Political Philosophy," regarding Xenophon, the "slayer of foreigners," begins with an epigraph from Faulkner: "Perhaps only a country-bred man could comprehend loving the life he spills." That love, bloodshed, and sport should be so eloquently held together within "political philosophy." The kind of love that Faulkner is describing is formal. Flanagan himself prefers fishing to hunting, but either way he makes sport with figurative lives…and he clearly loves it.

> dissolution of Indian reserves and federal Status. “Call it assimilation, call it integration, call it adaptation,” says Flanagan, “call it whatever you want: it has to happen.”

The de Soto approach, by formalizing the neoliberal premise of property’s natural priority over politics, substitutes the abstraction of recognition for self-determination. Therefore, “Adherents to Flanagan’s particular vision for Indians in the twenty-first century are adamant that Aboriginals should not be entitled to self-determination to any degree, in any form.” In contrast to de Soto and Flanagan’s superlatively-abstract rhetoric, King is concrete:

> most of all, these latter-day terminators want tribal lands taken out from under the protections of treaties, turned into fee-simple parcels, and turned loose on the prairies. Where the properties can be picked off by real estate agents or shot at from moving trains. (199)

The image of “picking off” is not an abstraction of the literal, like de Soto’s unleashing capital is abstractly “like” nuclear energy (less still, Flanagan’s “like a lynching”). In the portable neoliberal method, structured as it is according to the naturalism of capital’s power to turn “individualities” “into their opposites,” literal modes become figurative and vice-versa. The formal naturalism by which photos of child sexual abuse can be objects of taste is the same as that by which de Soto can assert that a thing like an asset and a thing like a child both have potential and entelechy. This exchangeability is the fundamental truth beneath the stylistic choices of literal or figurative language. Dead capital can come to life if it’s given the things it needs.

By contrast King’s image doesn’t rely on such literal likenesses that make “niggardly” seem both similar and different to the n-word; nor does it rely on an idealist naturalist premise of a market-ecology. It works instead to concretely correlate the previous historical form of colonial

violence to the present historical form. What Flanagan and his colleagues were to retroactive continuity, King is necessary anachronism. King's figures reveal both the direction of history—turning time's arrow around to point the right way—and the way in which the past's contents are nullified *and* preserved as formal relations in the present. As such, King is able to counter simplistic substitutions with simplicity itself: "All else considered, the main attraction of this line of reasoning is that it is simplistic and requires no negotiation or compromise. Let's get rid of Indians as a legal entity, and let's do it now" (199).

In light of King's masterful irony, which uses the play between figural and literal modes not to close down but to open up meaning, it appears that Conrad's Kurtz would provide Flanagan a more fitting literary alter-ego than Roth's Coleman Silk. Unlike the non-European racial origins of Silk, who biologically signifies the ambiguity of racialist concepts like "civilization," one could literally argue that, in Marlow's famous words, "All Europe contributed to the making of" Flanagan's project. The civilization that Flanagan affirms requires, like the call for literal extermination Kurtz scrawls across his encomium to the European civilizing mission, the dispossession that is the material dimension of the idealist work of civilizing.[149] That

[149] Remembering Flanagan's role as land claims expert for the Crown, and following his method of substitution, one cannot but notice his project to defend and resuscitate civilization in *FNST* is "just like" Kurtz's work, of which Marlow says, "by and by I learned that, most appropriately, the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs had intrusted him with the making of a report, for its future guidance. And he had written it, too. I've seen it. I've read it. It was eloquent, vibrating with eloquence, but too high-strung, I think." …I hope it's obvious I'm not claiming such simple and pat comparisons between one text and another hold any *meaning*. My point is that Conrad and Flanagan's texts, as thematically and structurally-identical, illustrate that abstract exchangeability is precisely meaningless beyond its self-referentiality. Still, Flanagan's work—and this distinguishes him from colleagues like Cooper—is good writing. Putting offensive content aside, one notices, like Marlow does, the eloquence of total formalism:

> …But it was a beautiful piece of writing. The opening paragraph, however, in the light of later information, strikes me now as ominous. He began with the argument that we whites, from the point of development we had arrived at, 'must necessarily appear to them [savages] in the nature of supernatural beings—we approach them with the might of a deity,' and so on, and so on. 'By the simple exercise of our will we can exert a power for good practically unbounded,' etc., etc. From that point he soared and took me with him. The peroration was magnificent, though difficult to remember, you know. It gave me the notion of an exotic Immensity ruled by an august Benevolence. It made me tingle with enthusiasm. This was the unbounded power of eloquence—of words—of burning noble words. There were no practical hints to

Flanagan's work should fit so well into the memorable patterns of *Heart of Darkness* reveals the function of Flanagan's anachronism and retconning. It might appear genuinely strange that an established academic in the year 2000, in a work published by a prestigious academic press, would spend so many pages on cringe-inducing racialist science (offensiveness aside, does it not just seem so uncouth?). But this discursive return was needed to complete the epistemological transition from the age of racialist imperialism into the post-racial age. By "post-racial" I mean the liberal-democratic multicultural present in which, to be sure, racism absolutely continues to exist, but in which effectively everyone knows that it's wrong to be racist, and so the most egregious racists spend most of their energy (as Flanagan does in *FNST*) explaining how *they* aren't racists, but those they racialize are. Again, King clarifies this process by explaining that "the need for race precedes race" (29). To complete what Wolfe calls elimination or what King calls termination, the old project must be translated into the terms of the new form. In King's frank imagery, the reader can discern the Kurtz-esque postscriptum forgotten or hidden behind the eloquence of pure exchange.

In King, "termination" and the Dead Indian are both literal and figurative, and both in several ways. Perhaps most importantly, King uses the images to show how the literalization is the completion of the figural. The Indigenous *as a relation to land* is not the same as the legal

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> interrupt the magic current of phrases, unless a kind of note at the foot of the last page, scrawled evidently much later, in an unsteady hand, may be regarded as the exposition of a method.

It is, of course, this method—seemingly beyond the author's authoritative control—which punctures formal eloquence allowing true, human meaning to come through:

> It was very simple, and at the end of that moving appeal to every altruistic sentiment it blazed at you, luminous and terrifying, like a flash of lightning in a serene sky: 'Exterminate all the brutes!' The curious part was that he had apparently forgotten all about that valuable postscriptum, because, later on, when he in a sense came to himself, he repeatedly entreated me to take good care of 'my pamphlet' (he called it), as it was sure to have in the future a good influence upon his career. (87)

In Part Two, I will discuss how texts' self-referential meaning is what's reproduced in energy infrastructure, and how the human contents, those things exterminated or liberated are excluded in the extractivist form of citizenship. However for the moment it's suggestive that Kurtz must have forgotten—like de Soto claims we've "forgotten" how to generate biopolitical capital—the material basis for producing wealth!

relation to property, precisely because it's not alienable. As Erica Violet Lee puts it, "no man can consent to the devastation of fish and streams and trees and women" (Lee). Recognizing the relation to land as the legal relation to alienate property is to terminate the relation to land as difference. Thus to terminate the existing legal entity is to terminate the kind of legal entity that is different from the homogeneous one. It's formally genocidal—and not because of a hysterical radical political correctness, although when making such a claim it's all too easy to hear those like Flanagan loudly complaining. King's figuring of Flanagan as a neo-terminator shows that bringing fee-simple arrangements to reserve lands is not only the new version of racial extermination, but that the earlier extermination efforts were also prototypes for carrying out the function that the fee-simple model is aimed at. The motive for elimination is not only aimed at people categorized in certain racialized groups, that is, it's not simply racism—*though of course it is absolutely the paradigm of racism*—but it has a necessary function to eliminate alterity as a structural relation and thereby to universalize subjectivity into property relations.

The project of eliminating the unhomogenized legal entity provides the formalist connection to what Morton called the "fundamental resemblance": Canada's West is the source of both the co-ops and the neoliberal obsession of eliminating Supply Management, of both the location of Indigenous struggle and of settler-colonial disaffection, of early-twentieth-century racism against white immigrants and ongoing racism against non-European immigrants and Indigenous peoples. The West is a space in which many ideological and material contradictions fixed into Confederation are visible as unresolved and ongoing. That is—and here the legal entity that supports identity does show a "fundamental resemblance" between Indigenous communities and rural agricultural, ranching communities as well as with those employed in resource extraction—the West is a local or particular manifestation of the conflict between the

universal presumptions of the centre and the essential particularity of the periphery. For all their local flavour, the neoliberal policies pursued by the Calgary School are aimed at eliminating particularity, to homogenize the material, real world in line with the agreed-upon rationalization of the end of history.

What must be homogenized is particularity as such. That identity which contains the kind of particularity that challenges abstract exchangeability—that is, the kind of identity that isn't simply one among others in a multicultural formal equality—does not fit neatly into the bioform of possessive individualism. And it must be excluded from the market ecology.[150] De Soto's mystery of capital shows how capitalism is merely the best representation scheme in regard to the fundamental, Natural, non-ideological, agreed-upon figure of the market ecology. Like in the camp—that form of representation and recognition that originally manifested as the form of administering industrial production—the mode of representation of administration is separate from the mode of production. Separating production in order to make everything into the *oikos* produces pastness and history and materiality as *xenos*. The perfection of alienability produces

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[150] Wolfe illustrates how the Indigenous North American's alterity is a challenge to the concept of race—or the system that served to organize settler-colonial societies, as well as how this organization was itself a means of representing prior economic relations. Indigenous peoples as occupants of land, represented a place outside of the mode of production:

> different racial regimes encode and reproduce the unequal relationships into which Europeans coerced the populations concerned. For instance, Indians and Black people in the US have been racialized in opposing ways that reflect their antithetical roles in the formation of US society. Black people's enslavement produced an inclusive taxonomy that automatically enslaved the offspring of a slave and any other parent. In the wake of slavery, this taxonomy became fully racialized in the "one-drop rule," whereby any amount of African ancestry, no matter how remote, and regardless of phenotypical appearance, makes a person Black. For Indians, in stark contrast, non-Indian ancestry compromised their indigeneity, producing "half-breeds," a regime that persists in the form of blood quantum regulations. As opposed to enslaved people, whose reproduction augmented their owners' wealth, Indigenous people obstructed settlers' access to land, so their increase was counterproductive. In this way, the restrictive racial classification of Indians straightforwardly furthered the logic of elimination. . Thus we cannot simply say that settler colonialism or genocide have been targeted at particular races, since a race cannot be taken as given. It is made in the targeting.

Still, race was employed to figure this structural relation and manage the oeconomizing of the territory, illustrating King's point regarding the priority of the need for race: "Black people were racialized as slaves; slavery constituted their blackness. Correspondingly, Indigenous North Americans were not killed, driven away, romanticized, assimilated, fenced in, bred White, and otherwise eliminated as the original owners of the land but as Indians" (387-388).

the alien as the threatening other, that which is not alienable and is thus infinitely and intolerably alien. The mystery of capital—obvious in de Soto's writing—is that it unites everything, makes everything permissible, eliminates all difference. But still it somehow—"mysteriously"—produces an alien outside, which it must continually eliminate.

King's provocative and playful figures show that this figurative elimination and creation of the outside other is literally true. As I've suggested, de Soto's figure of dead capital is a weak metaphor, more in line with Marx's macabre imagery than with the process of setting something free to bring it to life.[151] But as something other than a metaphor, it's quite apt. The real figural nature of capital is, de Soto would agree, motion. And in order to put objects and subjects into motion and free them from immobility requires the death of the subject who presently occupies the land, that presence that Flanagan has eliminated by bestowing with immigrant status. King shows that termination is literally inherent in the figure of Lockean possessive individualism, and the freedom it promises is the literal equality to which Anatole France famously refers when he says "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the *rich* as well as the *poor* to *sleep* under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread." But where France was ironic—preserving and highlighting meaning, as King is—the meaning produced by Cooper, by de Soto, and by Flanagan is resolutely unironic, despite the latter's frequent "joking." Taking literal meaning as the ultimate truth translates France's ironic freedom into Milton Friedman's freedom to starve to death. And even so literalized, this freedom remains inexorably figural; to be free in such literal terms is to be, rhetorically free, like Marx says, *vogelfrei*, free *as* a bird.

[151] Even worse, Marx uses the figure as the opposite of living capital; what's dead is, of course, what's "fixed," the congealed labour power in fixed capital, or, *infrastructure*.

4.5 The End of History is Never Finished: Retroactive Continuity and Resubjection

Looking at *First Nations? Second Thoughts* I've showed how the liberal-democratic property relation has been retconned into a market-ecological origin myth. This market ecology provides the naturalist aesthetic for the transhistorical multicultural recognition required at the end of history. I've next suggested that the de Soto-influenced work of *Beyond the Indian Act* deploys the figure of property as biopolitical to fix recognition within a rational representation scheme. Such representation promises to be the little administrative adjustment that sets everything aright, and frees the present from the irrational and "defective" holdovers of historical particularity that continue to irritate the post-historical individual, preventing him from returning to his market-ecological human nature. In "Decolonizing Neoliberalism," Michael Fabris looks at how Flanagan's proposal in *Beyond the Indian Act* for the First Nations Property Ownership Act (FNPOA) likewise claims to fix history, as it "represents a rearticulation of past proposals, albeit as a 'restoration' of precolonial property rights regimes."

Contextualizing the First Nations Property Ownership Act (FNPOA) Fabris explains that Flanagan's work is part of a greater, already-existing privatization movement:

> In 2006, for example, the First Nations Tax Commission launched a new project to expressly advocate for federal legislation, the proposed First Nations Property Ownership Act, to establish fee simple property rights on reserves (the form of tenure that allows for the sale or transfer of property under British-derived common law). This project, known as the First Nations Property Ownership Initiative (FNPOI), is headed by Manny Jules, former chief of the Kamloops Indian Band, and receives direct financial support from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (also known as the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, or DIAND).

Fabris draws attention to the temporal claims of the FNPOA, stressing the importance of understanding its supporters' attempts "to differentiate this proposal from past, more overtly assimilationist attempts at privatizing Canadian reserves or US reservations, such as the Dawes Act in the US and the 1969 White Paper." Engaging with the work of Glen Coulthard and Jim Glassman, Fabris reads the discourse surrounding the FNPOA in terms of primitive accumulation, concluding that "both settler colonial subjection and continued assertions of Indigenous identity are inseparable from relationships with land." In political-economic terms, the "FNPOA points to the dynamic of dispossession as a permanent feature of Canadian settler colonialism" (193). Fabris articulates Flanagan's work as a project of governmentality that demonstrates "how the FNPOA provides an important avenue from which to explore questions of property, dispossession, and subject formation that are specific to settler colonial contexts" (186). Also like Coulthard, Fabris links the primitive accumulation that Flanagan's project partakes of to "the continued ascendency of 'recognition' politics in Canada." Like King's image of termination that makes the literal a version of the figural and vice-versa, the history of the Canadian settler-state's primitive accumulation has assumed the figural-literal conceptual apparatus of recognition. Thus,

> despite its similarity with past attempts to privatize First Nations reserve lands, the FNPOA represents a re-articulation of these older proposals as a type of recognition, where the implementation of fee simple property regimes is cast as 'restoring' precolonial property rights regimes. (187)

Fabris argues that the politics of recognition, the unfinished project of primitive accumulation, and Wolfe's logic of elimination "are inherent to the proposed FNPOA," which "provides a key example of the Canadian state's need to continuously redefine its settler colonial strategies

against Indigenous peoples, which in turn demonstrates the role Indigenous struggles play in forcing these redefinitions."

Despite and due to their avowal of multiculturalist liberal equality, *Beyond the Indian Act* and the FNPOA are only the latest manoeuvres in a lengthy history by which "Canadian and US governments have both proposed and enacted past legislative attempts to impose private property regimes on reserve/reservation lands." Fabris highlights the self-conscious attempts to differentiate the proposal from what Flanagan, Le Dressay, and Alcantara call "failed projects" like the Dawes Act, including the authors' repeating "several times throughout the book that the FNPOA is directly opposite to the Dawes Act 'because it recognizes and protects the inalienable reversionary right to First Nations title'" (188). Drawing on Coulthard, Fabris argues that in *BIA*,

> the recognition of underlying title is the most important way the FNPOA is a modification of previous proposals, even distinguishing it from the proposal Flanagan advanced in his notorious book *First Nations? Second Thoughts*. Apparently, since the writing of this book, Flanagan 'has come to realize that making property rights functional for First Nations requires *recognition* of their underlying title to their lands' (Coulthard qtd. 187; Fabris's added emphasis).

Thus, *BIA* presents the fee-simple model as the formal means of reconciliation via recognition. Surely, such recognition is akin to the Western flavour Cooper and Morton wished to see the Square Survey respect! Cooper's assertion that the specific content of Eastern or Laurentian policies mattered less than the fact that Westerners were never consulted shows that recognition is a formal matter. *Homo economicus* deserves recognition, and, like in de Soto's idealist fantasy, this recognition requires returning to the formal equality of the originary market ecology. The recolonizations of history performed by the myth of Red River and Flanagan's

retconned market ecology of first immigrants having paved the way, now universal liberal-democratic recognition as property can materially complete of the colonizing process: "According to *Beyond the Indian Act* […] the FNPOA isn't just about *recognizing* underlying title, but – as [Flanagan, et al.] imply in the book's subtitle, *Restoring Aboriginal Property Rights* – would entail the 'restoration' of First Nations property rights" (189). This temporal shift also allows the projects of primitive accumulation and elimination to take a new shape: leaving the past in which "property rights were framed as a part of the civilizing, assimilationist project," towards making the bad things in history right with the "'restoration' of Indigenous property rights."

The project of civilization, part of the past to which *BIA* wishes to oppose itself, aimed at eliminating Indigenous peoples and presences. *BIA* shows that the project of civilization is more generally that of rationalization of the world. The premise is that elimination is formally and neutrally the elimination of irrational particularity.[152] Of course, this more universalist articulation of how particularity is intolerable and irrational is coded in obviously racist terms, boldly bearing its material connection to the previous forms of elimination. Moreover, the earlier elimination effort aimed at physical bodies is not, like the official history's narration of Japanese-Canadian internment, sequestered in the insurmountable distances of "history." One of the most remarkable feats of *First Nations? Second Thoughts* is that it functions as the bridge between the two projects! The earlier book's dogged work of exhuming and restoring racialist science—its appeals to melanin, dentition, and "civilization"—illustrates how structural racism, white supremacy, settler-colonial common sense, and elimination-logic are products of the present, reproduced in the present by way of retconned historiography . And again, as the

[152] Though in technological terms a propos of Cooper, Kojève, and, certainly, Heidegger (to whom Kojève's end of history owes a great debt), this "neutrality" is better stated as the most ruthless and thanatotic ambivalence.

comparison to Ignatieff shows, these structurally-racist premises of historiography are necessary to the entire liberal project, not simply to some right wing fringe.[153]

FNST functioned to bridge the literal elimination of Indigenous populations with the equally-literal discursive elimination of instruments like The FNPOA. And the market ecology uniting the older project with the newer form allows recognition to be posited as restoration. Fabris explains that, to effect this temporal shift of "restoration," Flanagan, et al. "must first manufacture a very particular historical narrative of British and Canadian colonialism"; they must, frankly, reverse the order of history:

> First, they anachronistically project capitalist market forms back through time as essential components of precolonial societies. In the foreword to the book, Manny Jules writes that, as Indigenous peoples, '[m]arket economies were not foreign to us,' arguing Indigenous trade relations are proof of the existence of finance systems, and, prior to contact, Indigenous societies 'had individual property rights'.

They do this by disputing arguments "that portray 'Indians as natural collectivists, indeed proto-communists'." They insist that "'aboriginal people everywhere in North America practiced personal ownership of possessions' and combined a 'collective sense of territory [. . .] with specific use rights of families and individuals'. As in *FNST*, Flanagan and company aren't only revising or reversing history. They are re-colonizing the past by figuring the pre-capitalist, pre-contact forms of social organization as the product of the European conceptual apparatus.

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[153] Perhaps Flanagan's best evidence for the hypocrisy or cowardice he imputes to his conservative friends who abandoned him following his scandal is that prominent figures like Redford only accused him of taking ideology too far after the red line of child pornography had been crossed. That Flanagan could make his comments in *FNST* unchastised is, to my mind at least, a fascinatingly-explicit illustration of the racism of mainstream liberal-democratic politics.

Equally interesting is the difference in this regard between Flanagan and his protégé Ezra Levant. While in 2011, Flanagan called Levant "a marketing genius," who "is putting the fear of God, Jehovah, and Allah into human rights commissions—even as he finds time to defend the tar sands." (Flanagan "Advice to progressives from the Calgary School"), Levant has since pushed much further into what we'd call the "fringe" than even Flanagan has seemed willing to go without the cover of academic legitimacy (such as it is).

By disputing the earlier settler narrative that Indigenous peoples were not indigenously market-beings, the already-colonized history of Turtle Island is further Europeanized, as the pre-contact forms are nothing but faulty perceptions of European eyes. Jules and Flanagan first argue that the Europeans were wrong and then develop this premise into a patronizing form that amounts to correcting a misreading on the part of Indigenous peoples. Fabris explains that *BIA*'s authors

> consider it 'both ironic and tragic that this originally European conception of Indians as natural communists has now been accepted by many aboriginal leaders and thinkers,' as it is now 'a barrier to native participation in the modern economy'. According to this narrative, private property rights are not necessarily a colonial imposition on First Nations communities but formed a significant part of precolonial Indigenous economic relations.

Fabris pays attention to the "Canadian state's need to continuously redefine its settler colonial strategies against Indigenous peoples, which in turn demonstrates the role Indigenous struggles play in forcing these redefinitions." Thus he illustrates the continuing negotiations of Indigeneity in history, from elimination to recognition, in a process he calls "resubjection," which I discuss further below.

And, indeed, tracing Flanagan's work, it's apparent that the historicity of Indigenous peoples is the field upon which the arguments take place. He figures Indigenous peoples first, in *FNST*, as historically identical to settlers, then, in *BIA*, as historically illiterate, or unaware that their history is a product of modern European concepts. Thereby, *FNST*'s arch-modern-Eurocentric idea of the market as Nature is absolved of its retconned anachronism. Despite the shift Coulthard notes from *FNST*'s assimilationist model to *BIA*'s recognition-based model, Flanagan's project is consistent in its attempts to make the Indigenous presence in the New

World an extension of a distinctively-European *origo*. Where in *FNST*, anthropology and racial theory suggested that First Nations are qualitatively no different than “Siberian Canadians,” in *BIA*, the epistemic violence of European colonialism is nominally acknowledged and then redeployed to show that the terms of the struggle were actually misreadings all along. Therefore the original, pre-contact social forms were not forms of non-European communism (or simply not-capitalist), they were actually proto-European market-ecology of private property.

Such a revision is necessary to answer that most important question, crucial to the claims behind *BIA* and the FNPOA, and which Fabris’s investigation undertakes: “How, then, were these Indigenous private property rights lost?” The answer reveals the Calgary School’s greatest contribution to the critique of liberal democracy: the formally-necessary reversal as the “exclusion,” or the temporary reorganizations of social relations that connects the Gulag to the transnational market. Once again the shadow of the government as fate, as the agent of the governmentality that makes the market and the camp expressions of fundamental ecological nature. Fabris shows how *BIA* repeats this by-now-familiar historical revision by which the past sins of government were due to not understanding how all people are economic beings worthy of recognition as economic beings, by claiming that “Indigenous private property rights were lost due to colonial policy, which was mainly about the exclusion of First Nations people and their reserve lands from the ability to participate in the capitalist free market.” Just as *The War Between Us* shows how the injustice Japanese Canadians faced at the hands of the absentee government is reducible to the tragic hamartia of not recognizing subjects’ essential natures, in *BIA*, Fabris explains, “This ‘exclusion’ model of colonialism, *and apparently only this*, is what explains contemporary poverty on First Nations reserves. (187)

He cites Jules's argument that the pre-political governmentality of the market-ecology was disrupted by government: "We (First Nations) became the poorest of the poor because after contact the governments of Canada and the United States passed legislation that removed us from the economy" (qtd. 188). This claim of exclusion conforms to—indeed *assimilates the history of settler-colonialism into*—de Soto's conceptual claims regarding the power of representation, visibility, as well as to the politics of recognition. The purely formal matter of defective representation explains "how, due to not understanding or recognizing existing property systems, 'the British and Canadian governments intended the introduction of property rights to lead to the integration and assimilation of aboriginal peoples into mainstream society'" (190). This argument posits that the mistake, the exceptional situation which led to exclusion, occurred in the past due to the faultiness of past forms of representation, which failed to extend recognition as legal relations into all spheres of life. The resolution, then, as in *The War Between Us*, requires what de Soto prescribes—extending the property relation into what's previously been misunderstood as "extralegal."

Here—as I will show in Part Two in terms of infrastructural reproduction and extractivist development—the temporality of exception functions to legitimate the naturalist aesthetic of permanence. Temporary or inefficient social and legal arrangements must be literally and metaphorically "fixed," by resolving anachronistic residues belonging to the past in order to extend the end of history. Just as the historical particularity of the pre-contact occupants of Turtle Island must be eliminated, so must the particularity of the "temporary." Fabris explains *BIA*'s argument that exclusion was never meant to be permanent: "Originally intended as temporary measures," *BIA* argues,

> these governments created the reserve system and its associated forms of limited property rights, such as Certificates of Possession, which has led to the present-day situation in which 'the basic reality of Indian reserves in Canada is government ownership of land'. For the authors of *Beyond the Indian Act*, current property regimes are a matter of unfinished business, and in the current political climate there is now 'an opportunity to make fee-simple ownership, both collective and individual, available to First Nations'. (188)

Since the "understanding of precolonial Indigenous societies as 'proto-communist' constituted a form of misrecognition on the part of early European observers," "the proposed FNPOA is an attempt to correct this colonial mistake of excluding First Nations from active involvement in the Canadian capitalist economy."

In other words, the inalienability of land is the original sin, the cause of alienation from the market, and from, consequently—by being denied recognition, and by suspended in permanent temporariness—from history itself. Moreover, this is alienation is the consequence of a simply-artificial disruption of the prior, natural market ecology. Occupants of inalienable land are thus doubly disadvantaged, as natural biopolitical governmentality has been disrupted by governments who are in turn unable to play their role in restoring the natural order. Fabris describes the claim of the First Nations Property Ownership Initiative regarding "why the inalienable nature of reserve land creates a 'barrier' to economic development":

> Since reserve land is governed by federal law and is inalienable except from the band to the government, it is outside provincial property rights law, creating what the FNPOI website describes as 'an extensive "regulatory gap"'.

> According to advocates of the FNPOA, then, the inability to alienate reserve lands is a barrier to the full functioning of capitalist markets on First Nations reserves, and private property rights on reserves will serve to 'unlock' their economic potential. (190)

Within the terms of my thesis, Flanagan's neoliberal effort aims to structurally manage and configure subjects as the legal relation to land and to property. Such configuration will supplement the weakness of governments by governmentalizing the exceptional space of overlap (subject of the last two chapters) between jurisdictions and governments. The mismatch or alterity between the property-form and the provincial and federal property regimes is an intolerable overlapping of jurisdictions. To reconfigure or recolonize Indigenous peoples and places will literally and figuratively fix the exceptional situation and remove the temporary measures of federally-held lands once and for all.

Once such lands and their occupants have been re-naturalized as economic actors in relation to the normalization of the newly alienable community,

> The FNPOA also aims to provide specific mechanisms for First Nations governments in enforcing property rights and attracting investment that would directly facilitate the dispossession of First Nations individuals from reserve land when applied. Despite the aforementioned claims by the authors of *Beyond the Indian Act* that the FNPOA would recognize and protect 'the inalienable reversionary right to First Nations title,' this only appears to hold true based on the very narrow definition of 'First Nations' implicit throughout the book. For example, under the FNPOA, First Nations governments would acquire increased powers to evict members who default on their housing mortgages or do not pay their housing charges. (190)

Thus, the alienability the FNPOA enables is dispossession, what Fabris calls the “right to evict,” “an essential mechanism for the removal of First Nations members from reserves.” This right, enabled under the guise of rationalizing administrative measures, of making the temporary permanent, is another step towards making alterity into homogeneity, and revising Canada’s Indigenous peoples into liberal-democratic possessive-individualist subjects. Indeed, Fabris explains, the governmental objective is to reconfigure subjects by retroactively endowing reserve administration with the powers of government.

But this retroactive process is, as de Soto’s formula expresses, a sovereignty stabilized by the more fundamental stability of property. This kind of sovereignty is absolutely not the Flanagan’s previous intolerable “special status” of Aboriginal “self-government,” but is the sovereignty of property, sovereignty literalized *in* property.

In *BIA*, golf courses, supermarkets, and housing complexes provide examples of “the numerous forms of economic development that are currently taking place on First Nations reserve lands, which implicitly could flourish more broadly under the FNPOA.” But Fabris points out there’s no discussion of “the implications for First Nations if much of what is already scarce reserve land is unavailable for occupation and use by its members.” Fabris cites Shiri Pasternak to claim that the FNPOA “is discursively framed to acknowledge Indigenous land rights while the bill simultaneously introduces contentious measures to individualize and municipalize the quasi-communal land holding of reserves” (192). And he explains,

> One of the implications of this ‘municipalizing’ is that the FNPOA only guarantees the collective jurisdiction of the First Nation *as a government entity* over its reserve lands. As for guarantees of physical occupancy of those lands by First Nations people and communities, under the proposed FNPOA it appears

> these would be subordinated to the forces of the newly established on-reserve private property markets. (192)

That is, to put it in the terms of this dissertation, the FNPOA proposes to vertiginously complete Flanagan's retcon by which First Nations are Canada's first immigrants via the "restoration" of Indigenous sovereignty concretized in the subordinate power of weak government!

From the conceptual perspective of the end of history, the form of government is already anachronistic; its role is to organize the market ecology according to naturalist aesthetic, and then wither away. In Part Two I explain this process in terms of government being a "vanishing mediator." As I will argue in regard to the proposed Northern Energy Corridor, alienability is the natural state of property. Securing such alienability is the role of governmentality—configuring subjects as relations. As in the camp or the transnational market, the market ecology needs some help to come about, but the helper (de Soto's sovereignty) must be subordinate to what's helped (de Soto's property), so Flanagan's project proposes this help be undertaken in the weak political form of government. Thus municipalized, such administration will determine who is included and formally excluded, i.e., evicted or not; and all the while *actual* power remains in natural market ecology regulated by supply, demand, and other natural, neutral laws.[154]

The historiographic practice of the Calgary intellectuals uses retroactive continuity to not only reproduce colonial social relations, but to recolonize those discourses which have resisted complete assimilation into the colonial project. This practice produces a mode of reading that assimilates difference and opposition into formal homogeneity. By way of this historiographic method, the past is revealed to be a reproduction of the present. And so the formal, literal meaning of prairie socialism was to advance the homogeneous interests of *homo economicus*,

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[154] C.f. Calgary School of Public Policy's Jennifer Winters's comment about Indigenous peoples' greater "control," discussed in Chapter 8.

and the pre-capitalistic forms of Indigenous social relations were in fact the most naturalized form of capitalism. Formally and *literally*—that is, from a dehistoricized perspective—there *is* much in common between Western settler struggle and Indigenous opposition to federal policies.

However, just as Cooper says that the history of the West is not the history of the West's relations with Canada, shape and similarity are not same as history. Simply because Indigenous and settler opposition to central-metropolitan dominance are formally similar does not at all mean that they are not manifestations of irreconcilable interests. As Cooper so adroitly discerned, Selkirk's opposition to the HBC wasn't an expression of love for Canada. After all, even Ho Chi Minh and Osama Bin Laden gladly accepted US material support in their struggles against more pressing imperialist incursions, and no one would equate that acceptance with love for the US. But where Cooper's Western struggle began in Red River and continued to pursue self- and class-interest through liberal-democratic forms of political power and access to markets, Fabris, Coulthard, and King explain that Indigenous struggle has always been a struggle against enclosure, not against exclusion from private property or markets.[155] Fabris cites Jim Glassman arguing that "historical struggles against enclosures are key to understanding the continued operation of primitive accumulation" as well as the context of the FNPOA:

> At least as early as the Bagot Commission of 1844, representatives of the British Crown preferred to encourage individual property ownership of reserve lands. This was opposed by Indigenous communities at the time, who, along with an overall opposition to the

[155] King provides the settler reader with a similar example to historicize how history can be used as a medium of resistance to capitalist enclosure:

> Speaking specifically of the Indian Act, Harold Cardinal, in his 1969 best-seller *The Unjust Society*, said, "We do not want the Indian Act retained because it is a good piece of legislation. It isn't. It is discriminatory from start to finish. But it is a lever in our hands and an embarrassment to the government, as it should be. No just society and no society with even pretensions to being just can long tolerate such a piece of legislation, but we would rather continue to live in bondage under the inequitable Indian Act than surrender our sacred rights. Any time the government wants to honour its obligations to us we are more than ready to help devise new Indian legislation. (200)

> Commission's assimilationist approach, exhibited 'strong resistance to the notion of individual allotment of reserve lands, as many feared rightly – that this would lead to the loss of these lands and to the gradual destruction of the reserve land base'. (196)

Not completely dissimilar to the Red River settlers confronted by the Square Survey, Indigenous leaders at the 1846 Conference of Orillia "wanted no part of provisions that would allow the conversion of lands that bands held in common to individual plots held in freehold tenure'" (Miller qtd. in Fabris 196). Clearly, even a quick glance past formal similarities catches many meaningful differences in historical instances of opposition to alienating property. And such historicizing perspectives "are significant in understanding the complexities in how First Nations reserves and collective property rights are still defended by communities despite their colonial nature."

Far from restoring the inalienable rights to alienate property and to alienate people from property, the FNPOA is part of an effort to remove the "barriers" to economic development represented by inalienable land. While doing so would dismantle a significant colonial structure of land tenure, the FNPOA, like all of Flanagan's work, only takes aim at colonial constructs in order to update them, to re-colonize what previous assimilation efforts have left incomplete. Flanagan's proposal would thus "restore" or, better, complete the historical project of termination, relocation, and elimination, of which the Termination and Relocations Acts are only the most literally-explicit examples.

It is in this light that the ongoing struggles of Indigenous communities to keep property inalienable and to instead claim sovereignty must be understood. Fabris explains that

> Indian Act and the reserve system are blatant colonial impositions, the current form of property tenure means that reserve land is both collectively held and inalienable,

> therefore providing a beneficial protection, however limited, for First Nations reserve communities. (196)

Nevertheless, it's clear that the formal and literal similarities between Western-settler and Indigenous struggles with Canada as a settler-colonial assimilation project allow Cooper and Flanagan to make arguments that many find compelling enough to adopt as expert knowledge, to bestow awards upon, and to give other markers of public sanction. Such accounts provide both the specific materials for policy makers through the think tank networks, the media, and the Calgary School of Public Policy, which Gutstein traces, as well as the settler-colonial common sense that Fabris discerns. But, taken critically, the *historical* significance of these similarities is that both socialistic and capitalistic form of struggle are—like Cooper's explorers *and* expeditions, like his Earl Selkirk *and* the White surveyors, like Flanagan's offensive exclusion and Ignatieff's polite inclusion—part of the same project. Socialistic forms were themselves forms of rationalizing value production and furthering accumulation. Pre-communist, socialistic, and market-model forms then, when attributed to pre-colonial Indigenous forms of life, are colonizing tools and means of accumulation. Like the indigenizing of Westerners, they are means of assimilation. And the similarity in Western and Indigenous resistance simultaneously signals difference, the alterity of the Western and the Indigenous, namely, the struggle within the discourse of history, the struggle against colonization of historical experience and historical knowledge, the struggle against the retcon that there was an originary, literal market ecology to which all things, all beings, and Being itself should be reconciled.

Indeed, Fabris's analysis of the "restoration" proposed in *BIA* and the FNPOA, highlights the role historical and temporal claims play in social reproduction. Positing market-ecology as Nature requires the continuing production of subjectivity as a relation between land and alienable

resources. Fabris concludes that "struggles against dispossession inherently foreground struggles over subject formation." He cites Ngai-Ling Sum and Bob Jessop to argue that class struggle "is first of all a struggle about the constitution of class subjects before it is a struggle between class subjects." Like King's assertion that the need for race precedes race, the material basis of the property form is the ultimate priority. Thus, Fabris, explains, "the question of property forms on reserves doesn't point to strictly a struggle over control of particular parcels of land but the kind of relationships that are at stake in the further entrenchment of private property regimes within First Nations communities." Fabris uses the term "resubjection" "to describe the ways the proposed FNPOA involves a reconfiguration of the kinds of colonial subjects that have already been produced through the Indian Act." The differences in Flanagan's own work between *FNST* and *BIA*, demonstrate that

> Shifts towards politics of reconciliation and recognition [...] mean that not only do the structures of domination change over time but along with them the colonizer's preferences for the reconstitution of Indian subjects. Thus, the ideal Indian subject is no longer one that is presumed to assimilate and disappear but joins and prospers within Canadian society guided by an 'Indigenous entrepreneurialism,' or what Dempsey et al. refer to as 'property-owning entrepreneurial subject-citizens.' (197)

Nevertheless, the overall project of settler-colonialism remains consistent, and the resubjection envisioned by the FNPOA "presumes a very narrow subjectivity for Indigenous people, one that excludes the possibility for Indigenous ways of relating to land." Therefore, "If taken to its logical conclusion, this vision still embodies an assimilating, disappearing subject."

Moreover, this process of subjectification is not an interpretation read into neoliberal property schemes, it's literally and structurally the conclusion of the premise that morality and economics are inseparable, like in de Soto's biopolitical figure of the home:

> The authors of *Beyond the Indian Act*, along with other supporters of the FNPOA, assume an inherent relationship between subject formation and property relations. This is especially the case when the authors discuss the virtues of private home ownership on reserves, in which 'there must be owners who take pride in their own homes and see them as a savings vehicle.' (197)

Such assumptions "concerning subjects and the proper relations one should have with land" are the inevitable product of "viewing property as a spatialized thing, rather than a bundle of relationships." Fabris cites Nicholas Blomley to explain that such a view of property "locates its central relationship as that between the owner and the thing owned. The effect is to suppress our understanding of the undeniable and often differential relations between the owner and other people" (197). This collapsing of the property relation into the form of the subject, which began in the naturalist premises of subjects in a market-ecology, and ends in the rendering of all subjects as possessive individualist objects—the bourgeois objective slavery that Kojève describes in the epigraph to this chapter—is how the Indigenous structural position is maintained while the subject itself is eliminated. The universal portable formalism of the neoliberal end of history aims at and claims that particularity, or content, has been eliminated in the ideal and must be eliminated in the empirical world.

Of course, there is a contradiction between the material and the ideal here, between completeness and incompletion that in the following chapters I will examine as the animating premise behind the Canadian ideology Maurice Charland calls technological nationalism, based

in government, which current extractivist and infrastructural discourse claims to have overcome in the governmental figure of what Mitchell calls carbon democracy. Universal rationalization, whether in the racialist figure of civilization or in the more technocratic figure of formalized property ownership, relies on the equally-necessary but antithetical claims that history is finished—that rationalization is complete and all questions have been answered—as well the imperative that the process be completed. And despite Cooper and Fukuyama's arguments that the first claim pertains to the ideal realm and the second to the sublunary, empirical, or material world does not resolve the contradiction. Kojèveianism shows how neoliberals see the Hegelian "rational"—what Fukuyama calls the triumphant ideal of liberal-democratic freedom, what Cooper calls the technique of total administration, as well as the proper representation that de Soto and Flanagan appeal to—as higher, more real than, or prior to the material world. Thus the subjects I treat in the following chapters—immaterial production, finance, and circulation—are closer to market-ecological nature than production. But Canada's peculiar character as a staples economy, as a site of extraction that has never been fully industrialized but has always been dominated by transnational finance illustrates how productive value is secondary to value from circulation: what's produced must be continually reproduced. Like Fabris's concept of resubjection, and like the process of recolonization that I've argued explains Flanagan's career, post-historical, post-industrial, and post-material ideology must be created again and again.

I've argued that the figure of the market allows for capitalism to be understood as a particular that can be tweaked or adapted from time to time without questioning the self-evident perfection of the form of capital and private property. But change and adaptation, not to mention the movement that gives capital life, requires an infrastructure for both social reproduction and for the circulation of value. It is with this infrastructural emphasis that I suggest we consider

Fabris's conclusion, "that settler-colonialism, as Wolfe argues, 'should be understood as a structure and not an event'" (qtd. 198). Wolfe shows how "elimination is an organizing principal of settler-colonial society rather than a one-off (and superseded) occurrence" (Wolfe 388).

To conclude this investigation of the Calgary School, what Cooper took to be literal was really phenomenological. He took structural relations to represent the literality of identity as a relation to place: "it is here, it is us." Flanagan removed the particularity of place, and extended the power of structural representation to eliminate differences. He retconned this power throughout the discourses that constitute the Canadian branch plant of the neoliberal marketplace of ideas in which the Calgary School is so securely fixed. But even, and perhaps especially, in the sophistic feat by which difference is totally assimilated as structural sameness, even when conceptually complete, the project of elimination must continue to reproduce itself. Its completeness relies on its perpetual completing, just as a house-as-shelter relies on being transformed into alienable capital, to constantly liquidate, to move, and eliminate itself. The contradiction between completion and incompletion is expressed as the difference between the legal relation concretized in the object, the container for subjectivity, and the subjectivity that's differently-related. Fabris concludes,

> As Aileen Moreton-Robinson argues, these ways of relating to land are essential to Indigeneity, where the 'ontological relationship to land, the ways that country is constitutive of us, and therefore the inalienable nature of our relation to land, mark a radical, indeed incommensurable, difference between us and the non-Indigenous'. This is crucial because the threats to Indigenous land relationships posed by the proposed FNPOA point to the inherent limits of the liberal politics of recognition, whereby for Canada the agenda is still ultimately an assimilationist one. Whereas Coulthard argues

> the era of recognition has been characterized by 'a significant decoupling of Indigenous "cultural" claims from the transformative visions of social, political, and economic change that once constituted them', I would add that this decoupling is only possible by eliminating aspects of our 'cultural claims' that are incompatible with capital accumulation. (199)

The object of Part One of this dissertation has been to trace the concurrent, imbricated decoupling of history from the mode of knowledge production. In Part Two, I will examine how this formalism manifests in Canada's staples mode of production, tracing the market ecology's demand for absolute alienability. The Calgary thinkers wrestle with the contradictions stemming from their idealist interpretation of material dispossession. I will argue that the continuing proposals to build a Northern Energy Corridor offers a resolution. The Corridor is the ultimate figure for the aesthetic ideology of alienation, dispossession, and the exceptional. It is the literalization of what de Soto calls the "extra-legal" and what Glassman describes as "extra-economic." It promises to fix all of history's problems by completing the work of building the nation.

Part Two

> Conservatives have a vision of energy independence for Canada. Often we say that the world needs more Canadian energy; I believe that's true, but I believe *Canada* needs more Canadian energy, and we will work to make sure that is a reality. No concept better illustrates […] how provinces can and should work together than a national energy corridor. A coast to coast route dedicated to infrastructure that will move Quebec electricity west as much as it will move Alberta oil and gas east, and west. […] This will entail a great deal of dialogue with provincial governments and Indigenous populations. And I know it will take a lot of hard work. I know it's a big idea. But so was Canada, at one point in time. I think it's time for Canada to draw on its history, to summon the vision and the courage that at one time we had in spades, and deploy our collective will on a project that will unite our country.
>
> Andrew Scheer – Edmonton, June 4, 2019[156]

> So our report to you, Prime Minister, is that we believe there is sufficient accommodation available to house at least two million immigrants…" …the Minister of Urban Affairs, a strong individual from the key Great Lakes port of Thunder Bay, intervened: "I want to make a suggestion here, Prime Minister. We've been talking about putting these people into existing urban communities. That's fine, but I think we should also be looking at building some new towns, using this new work force to do it. We've heard a lot about a plan called the Mid-Canada Development Corridor, which is a scheme for the future planning and development of the entire boreal forest…which stretches from coast to coast…between Canada South and the untreed bare Arctic area. …If the government decides to take all these people, I think we should do a crash program on the Mid-Canada concept."
> The Prime Minister agreed. "Excellent idea. That plan was put forth by some lawyer from Toronto wasn't it? I've forgotten his name."
>
> Richard Rohmer – *Exodus UK*, 1975

Introduction

In Part One, I looked at how Western-Canadian organic intellectuals have employed the rhetoric of Canadian literary structuralism in order to naturalize typical neoliberal claims that we have reached a universalist end of history. These intellectuals use rhetorical figures of *oikos* and *xenos*, inside and outside, in regard to extractive resources and alienable property, as spatializations of time to naturalize how the white settler class has been able, through structuralism and its imaginary spatializations, to pass back and forth between historical and transhistorical epistemic registers, to naturalize extractivism and to appropriate and exclude Indigenous identity.

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[156] https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/watch-canadian-energy-independence-a-key-goal-says-andrew-scheer

Now, in Part Two, I look at the dialectical inversion of this inside-outside temporalization, that is, the spatial mediation in the form of the "corridor." Here, we're moving from conflict posed as inside versus outside to fantasies of harmonious passages within and between nations and regions. Where Calgary School ideologue Barry Cooper's work can be characterized as a sustained polemic against several Canadian ideologemes—Frye's Garrison Mentality, Innis's Staples theory, and Creighton's Empire of the St. Lawrence or Laurentian hypothesis (to mention just a few), I will argue that the current dominant neoliberal doxa is traceable back to the material realities articulated by the St. Lawrence/Laurentian and staples hypotheses.

Like we saw in Part One, the spatialization of the nation as a highway of the St Lawrence is rebuttable ideologically—one can say, no, that doesn't represent my experience; but, I will argue here that it cannot be argued against in terms of Canada's material history from the fur trade to current pipeline projects. I turn to Harold Innis's communications theory and R.T. Naylor's political economy to explain that Cooper's real argument, shared by Canadian neoliberal dogma, is that North-South connections are more natural and rational than the perennial Canadian project of uniting the East-West federation. The aestheticization of North-South can be understood as favouring the space-bias of the dominant form of US capital over the time-biased character of British capital that has tended to flow East-West.

Both of these orientations need to be understood in terms of Canadian political-economic history, which is the subject of this chapter; in the next chapter, I examine Richard Rohmer's proposal for the Mid Canada Development Corridor. This plan, to build a chain of short-, medium-, and long-term resource- and research-based settlements and transportation routes along the Boreal treeline, imagines building "a nation on top of the nation," carving out a

corridor through red tape, inter-regional squabbling, and entrenched federal neglect. The plan was the focus of several private and public reports, as well as an international multidisciplinary conference, whose conclusions Rohmer published in *The Green North: Mid-Canada* in 1970, and re-presented fictionally in 1975's paperback thriller *Exodus UK*. In the past several years the corridor plan has been dusted off and re-presented yet again in still other genres: by CIRANO, a think tank associated with the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy; it's been studied and enthusiastically endorsed by the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce; picked up as a cause by industry associations like the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies; and, most notably, Andrew Scheer has been citing a version of the corridor as a grand national energy infrastructure project, making up a (so far we might say *the*) significant part of the Conservatives' 2019 election platform.

The history I trace leads from the structuralist premises of *oikos* and *xenos* and of east-west vs. north-south, to technological nationalism and then ends up in carbon democracy.

Chapter 5

Corridors and Path Dependency

5.1 Literary Analysis and Communications Theory

> Now let us make the fantastic supposition that Rome were not a human dwelling-place, but a mental entity with just as long and varied a past history: that is, in which nothing once constructed had perished, and all the earlier stages of development had survived alongside the latest. […] indeed, the same ground would support the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva and the old temple over which it was built. And the observer would need merely to shift the focus of his eyes, perhaps, or change his position, in order to call up a view of either the one or the other.
>
> There is clearly no object in spinning this fantasy further; it leads to the inconceivable, or even to absurdities. If we try to represent historical sequence in spatial terms, it can only be done by juxtaposition in space; the same space will not hold two contents. Our attempt seems like an idle game; it has only one justification; it shows us how far away from mastering the idiosyncrasies of mental life we are by treating them in terms of visual representation.
>
> […] Demolitions and the erection of new buildings in the place of old occur in cities which have had the most peaceful existence; therefore a town is from the outset unsuited for the comparison I have made of it with a mental organism.
>
> Freud – *Civilization and its Discontents*

I have argued that Leo Strauss and Allan Bloom's metaphor of the city and man form the rhetoric from which the Calgary School can emerge as organic intellectuals of the Canadian neoliberal period; that is, their strategic reading of Plato's *Republic* allows the historiographic collapse of history into myth, the rhetorical collapse of literal into figural meaning, the economic collapse of the division of labour into a simplistic figure of *homo economicus*, and the political collapse of the social into individualism. The resulting political claims Cooper, Flanagan, and like-minded neoliberals are able to make are based on literary structuralist aesthetics that posit Frye and Freud's garrisons to be literal and remove history from spatial representations to account for difference and change within Strauss's concept of the "regime cycle," making difference mere fashion enacted against the normative background of the end of history. In other words: to contain temporality and history within the infrastructural figure of the well-ordered city. In this section I look at how space is contained within infrastructural figures of the city and the nation. I argue that, as Freud says, the same space cannot hold different contents, but the

same space can circumscribe different temporalities, especially if the idea of content is replaced with that of *media*.

Of course, to anyone who takes Gramsci's distinction between traditional and organic intellectuals seriously it is obvious that historical and material conditions in Alberta (or—depending on which spatializing regionalism one employs to configure the mode of production in terms of national and regional spaces—in the "Western" provinces or prairies) would produce agents or subjects to understand these conditions and relations as *given*. Nor is it surprising that Eastern or Central Canada would produce its own intellectual boosters. In this section, I will be looking at an Eastern organic intellectual, Richard Rohmer. I'm interested in how these Eastern- and Western-Canadian intellectuals and their texts work to produce or challenge ways of imagining Canada as a place. These organic intellectuals are all struggling with the implicit question of why is it necessary or advantageous to continue thinking in terms of "the nation," especially since the practical significance of their work is that they articulate Canada as a place that's always been transnational. One way to read these texts is that they *are* imagining beyond the nation, but like the discourses of neoliberalism, they're coded into national vocabularies in order to maintain access to the resources of state power to produce arrangements that overcome national boundaries. Asking questions this way across these texts allows us to see that the contradictions and myths in discourses of Canadian nationalism have always been about overcoming the nation, or as we'll see in this chapter, more precisely, the discourses of Canadian nationalism are always about mediating the mediatory nature of the nation.

In addition to his similarities with the Western thinkers I've looked at, Rohmer is a businessman who presents the virtues of the private sector working with a strong state apparatus to solve problems figured as national projects. Thus he's a counterexample to the Calgary

School's Hayekian internationalism, the inter- and anti-nationalism of the think tank, and the mainstream of neoliberal thought. For example, when Pierre Trudeau initiated a project similar to Mid-Canada, the Great Plains Project, Rohmer was asked to chair the committee responsible for investigating it. This and other committee projects Rohmer has been involved in are alternative versions of public-private-partnership initiatives. They're like think tank projects, but they've always either had or been presumed to have explicit "national" support (indeed, the very national support that the West currently believes it's being denied!). This explicit and mostly aesthetic connection with the state is the big difference between the Royal Commission model and the "Second Hand Dealers in Ideas" (Mitchell, Gutstein) model that the Calgary School, the Fraser Institute, etc. follow. And this aesthetic relation is what makes the persistence or recurrence of the corridor plan a rich site to apprehend the reorganization of space by a nation as explicitly about the state, public, and private property.

Another name for this aesthetic connection might be what Maurice Charland calls technological nationalism. I examine technological nationalism as a concept with shifting referents, tracing it from 1970s liberal nationalism to the form of nationalism it supports in contemporary Canadian neoliberalism. R.T. Naylor and Harold Innis show how throughout Canadian history, technological nationalism has been a rhetorical construction based on the character of the dominant form of capital, the relation of this form of capital to the state and to labour, and how this form has posited the state as a vanishing mediator (which we'll see is the startlingly obvious conclusion to Rohmer's Mid-Canada plan). As doxa and attitudes have shifted, for example the shift from anti- to pro-foreign direct investment (FDI), technological nationalism has remained a dominant ideology organizing thought in relation to material history.

Technological nationalism has persisted as an essential component of the social formation and project that is Canada.

***

Marshall McLuhan shows how, in his adaptation of Innis's universal history, the organic model of the city is an out-dated figure, arguing that the more appropriate spatial metaphor for the relation of subject to environment in the age of electronic media is that of the *composite*. My approach reads the rhetorical spatializations common to the Chicago-Calgary model as relying on naturalistic analogies which find felicitous compatibility with Canadian idioms of natural space and (geographic *cum* political) regions. As media of the technical apparatus of the Canadian state, these spatializations are composites which see themselves as organic. Marco Adria explains that McLuhan employs the metaphor of "figure and ground" to claim that where previously the city was seen as a figure on the ground of nature, new media reverse this relation; for example, the event of Sputnik made the globe a figure against the universe and reconfigured people as actors instead of spectators (Adria 45). The organic-city-model is, like Rome in Freud's comment above, inseparable from the material history its very articulation serves to obscure. Moreover, this obscuring of history extends the present into the future, and this present-extension, this end of history, is what I will be calling path-dependency.

For Strauss and Cooper the city is the organic analogue to the mind; and the naturalist metaphor of organicity renders the (obviously historical and social) space of the city into the ahistorical space of the modern bourgeois individual. However, McLuhan shows how the city's character reveals much more about the workings of infrastructure than any of the mind. The figure of the city-as-organic retains the obsolete historical logic of linearity: "For McLuhan, the city is a technological composite that was created as a social organism, a mechanism of mutual

feedback between human beings and the social machine." The term "feedback" is "linked to the second cybernetic revolution," that of automation, which McLuhan opposes to first revolution, that of mechanization:

> An analysis of the patterns of automation shows that perfecting the individual machine by making it automatic involves different forms of "feedback." That means introducing an information loop or circuit where, before, there had merely been a one-way flow or a mechanical sequence. Feedback is the end of linearity that came into the Western world with the alphabet and the continuous forms of Euclidean space. Feedback or dialogue between the mechanism and its environment leads to a further weaving of individual machines into whole galaxies of such machines. (Araujo qtd. in Adria 45)

Adria here is narrating the movement in communications theory from Harold Innis's focus on social aggregates as mechanical-organic (the city "was created as a social organism") into McLuhan's history of mechanization into automation. In this chapter I synthesize McLuhan and Innis to argue that the spatial representation of organic vs. composite is analogous to the economic functions of industrial production vs. circulation.

Innis traced how time and space biases within media are determinate in the rise and fall of empires in *The Bias of Communication* and *Empire and Communications*, and how such biases are expressed in the media-character of staples in *The Fur Trade in Canada*. R.T. Naylor modifies Innis's materialist communications theory, arguing that the character of the specific form of capital dominant in a world system has spatial and temporal consequences that Innis's theory misses. In this chapter I employ Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope with McLuhan's theory to re-visit the political economy of Harold Innis, Naylor, and Gary Teeple. I

then trace Canada's historical movement from what Charland calls technological nationalism into what Timothy Mitchell calls carbon democracy.

Part One started with the city, a figure for the division of labour, contained within the figure of the sovereign man; now I am looking at a fantasy of Canada as a corridor of cities: on one hand, an explicitly intersubjective figure that acknowledges the social, and which in other ways disavows Canada's place within the transnational world system by way of its recourse to the out-dated idiom of transmission and mechanization. McLuhan offers a more historically-sophisticated schema. Adria cites Araujo, explaining that "This feedback and dialogue between the man-machine mechanism and its environment are necessary so that we can achieve the dimension that Flusser attributes to the city: a device of intersubjectivities" (5). Another way to describe the "Flusserian attributes" of the city is in Bakhtinian terms as a chronotope, a place where intersubjectivity is intertextuality. Where the simple metaphor of city/man condenses the division of labour into one text, one subject outside of time—one topos, no chronos—the composite model arrived at through Innis and McLuhan articulates several chronoses within any particular topos. Looked at with due attention to such complex temporalities, the concept of the city-man gives way to the subject-forming characteristics of media. Adria explains that McLuhan's "comments about urban spaces are the most expansive in their implications for understanding media." As McLuhan

> gives special and sustained attention to the changes in our social world that accompanied the introduction of a new medium. His *City as Classroom* (1977), coauthored with his son Eric McLuhan, and Kathryn Hutchon, […] reveals the ways that learning and discovery were much more useful in the university and school classroom than older methods of teaching, which relied on "transmission" of information and ideas from

> teacher to learner. Engaging learners is now accepted wisdom in Canadian universities and schools, but McLuhan was a pioneer in arguing for how and why we should involve students deeply in their learning. (44-45)

In Adria's McLuhanesque terms, I argue that *extractive infrastructures transmit*. They conform to the older engagement understood by the organic metaphor; they are linear—moving resources and wealth from one site to others; they follow a grammar, beginning at one point and ending at a terminal period. This is their role in the most basic sense. But infrastructures like pipelines are also media, and we see this in the fact that in addition to transmitting, they are supposed to employ us and unite us—they are supposed to engage us! In fact the disjunction between the engagement promised by infrastructure projects and the governmentality generated by national infrastructure is obvious when we think of how "debates" concerning oil and energy are frequently seen to produce the wrong kind of democratic citizen. Because energy projects *do* engage us: we protest, preach; groups resist; environmentalists warn, but in each case this is seen as the *wrong kind* of engagement; moreover, it's seen as the wrong kind of relation of politics to infrastructure, contrasted with those who buy ads in Tim Hortons restaurants and borrow populist rhetorics boosting the national-unity that will be transmitted along with any oil. I argue that this mismatch of kinds of engagement corresponds to the conflicting spatio-temporal dynamics of the nation within the contradictory figure of technological nationalism.

5.2 Transmission and/as Neoliberal Governmentality

Reading the literary-structuralist premises embodied in infrastructure through McLuhan and Innis lets us see how Canadian cultural politics is mediated. For McLuhan media introduce changes in the scale and speed of human affairs, and this change famously constitutes the

"message" that is transmitted by the particular medium. The content of technological form—as content is typically understood—is irrelevant to the message of the medium. Like McLuhan says of electric light:

> [Whether] the light is being used for brain surgery or night baseball is a matter of indifference. It could be argued that these activities are in some way the "content" of the electric light, since they could not exist without the electric light. This fact merely underlines the point that "the medium is the message" because it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action. The content or uses of such media are as diverse as they are ineffectual in shaping the form of human association. Indeed, it is only too typical that the "content" of any medium blinds us to the character of the medium. (9)

Seeing the message or meaning as separate from the sphere of utility is precisely the key to understanding the premises of neoliberalism, in which needs are believed to be met by choices rather than concrete historical factors (e.g., a poor person has made bad choices; or as Flanagan puts it, Louis Riel's friends produced his irrationality).[157] McLuhan emphasizes that the separation of use from meaning is not something that can be then re-centred in a subject's choice (choosing to do the work to be rich or choosing to relax and be poor) since media constitute a significant degree of human agency, and whatever uses media are put to are irrelevant to the aims or motivations of shaping human association. The media shape human association, and uses

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[157] On neoliberalism as governmentality see Mitchell; Charland and Michael Dorland *Law, Rhetoric, and Irony in the Formation of Canadian Civil Culture* (2002); see especially Adam Kotsko, *Neoliberalism's Demons: on the Political Theology of Late Capital* (2017), whose book

> represents an effort to provide a more detailed warrant for my account of the devil's legacy through a concentrated study of one particular paradigm of modern secular governance, namely neoliberalism, which I put forward as the paradigm in which the strategy of moral entrapment that I call demonization has been pushed to its uttermost limits. Neoliberalism makes demons of us all, confronting us with forced choices that serve to redirect the blame for social problems onto the ostensible poor decision making of individuals. This strategy attempts to delegitimate protest— and ultimately even political debate as such— in advance by claiming that the current state of things is what we have all collectively chosen. (2-3)

are successful or unsuccessful epiphenomena to the media. In the ecological model of neoliberal economics, this material substrate *upon which* uses operate is nature, common sense, or "the economy, stupid!" Other ways to figure such a bedrock include the Deleuzian plane of immanence of the market, the end of history, or the Straussian regime cycle. Uses are choices and can be felicitous or unfortunate. But the bedrock is unchanging nature, the mediated socius, the globe, etc. Choice is where morality plays out, but the structure is unchanging nature. So one can as compellingly argue that a pipeline project will unite Canada as the opposite, that it will rend the country in pieces; Canada has always been, is, and will continue to be the name of a place where mediation and communication takes place.

This meaning-as-content is especially consequential in the case of energy, which as Arthur Kroker and Carl Berger have pointed out, neither Innis nor McLuhan integrated into their universal histories. Nevertheless, energy humanities scholars have examined the mediatory characteristics of energy resources. As Imre Szeman argues,

> Despite being a concrete thing, oil animates and enables all manner of abstract categories, including freedom, mobility, growth, entrepreneurship and the future in an essential way—an insight that recent cultural criticism is beginning to use to interrogate the energy-demanding structures and categories of modernity. ("How to Know About Oil" 146)

Canadian staples like cod, beaver pelts, or oil are certainly "contents" in the sense of commodities to be transmitted from one place to another along "formal" routes, and in this sense they are abstractly equivalent and one staple can be replaced by another. But Innis's staples theory shows how, seen dialectically, staples are not only contents, but themselves work with

transportation technology to change “the scale and form of human association”—that is, staples infrastructures are media. As Szeman says of the oil staple,

> It is thus that we imagine that life as we know it can continue along in its absence or disappearance, simply through the introduction of new, alternative sources of energy. With enough political will and technological innovation, we have a strong tendency to believe that wind, solar, geothermal and nuclear energy could generate the kilojoules we have come to expect from fossil fuels, and do so in a way that would change our energy inputs while retaining the quality and form of life that many (though far from all) now enjoy. (146)

Szeman is describing a pervasive idealism that sees material, structural problems as secondary to the saving power of right ideas (literally, of “ortho”-good, “doxa”-opinion!). I believe Innis is a crucial thinker for understanding how the idealist inversion of cause and effect is maintained as cultural orthodoxy or common sense.

Neoliberalism is an idealism. If it’s a version or expression of liberalism, it inverts the material basis of contestation or conciliation and posits the abstract-universal-ideal at the base. One of the important lessons of Barry Cooper’s *The End of History* is that Kojève’s master-slave dialectic derives not so much from Hegel as from Hobbes, whose state of nature offers neoliberals and neoconservatives an idealist containment for the primordial agon that can be extended as a figure or origin myth of all of human experience. In other words, what for liberals was the means to develop human excellence through mediations like the social contract and to approach enlightenment has become a universal form, and competition is an end in itself.[158] We also saw that, once the market is assumed as common-sense Nature, literary genre becomes a

[158] Again, see Kotsko.

means of containing or mediating social relations (Cooper on Frye and Atwood; Flanagan on Roth, etc.). A materialist method analyzes how ideas and social relations are structured and reproduced, and my argument in this chapter is that the Bakhtinian figure of the chronotope lets us see that Canadian social relations are reproduced by the way space and time is ordered within infrastructure. The narratives of infrastructure are generated by what Bart Keunen calls genre-memory and by the social relations of the dominant form of capital and mediating effects of the infrastructures, and these spatio-temporal claims of these narratives explain the reversal of cause and effect in neoliberal dogma:

> Causality not only manifests itself in connections among the events of the story but also is a key aspect of the storyworld represented via narrative texts. Every fictional universe has distinctive ontological features and each operates under a set of causal laws. The system of causation that governs a narrative is as central an element of its setting as are the related components of space and time. (Keunen 34)

Szeman similarly explains,

> Oil (and indeed, energy more generally) has almost always been seen as an external input into our socio-cultural systems and histories—a material resource squeezed into a social form that pre-exists it, rather than the other way around: as giving shape to the social life that it fuels.

As media partially constitute the agency of subjects, this prioritizing of the ideal over the material constructs and reproduces kinds of subjects and politics directly related to the material spaces of the nation. Timothy Mitchell argues that

> Political possibilities were opened up or narrowed down by different ways of organising the flow and concentration of energy, and these possibilities were enhanced or limited by

> arrangements of people, finance, expertise and violence that were assembled in relationship to the distribution and control of energy. (*Carbon Democracy* 8)

With their focus on the mediating functions of resources and communication technologies, Innis and McLuhan can be read as precursors to the Mitchellian petrocultural, energy humanities approach that sees a historical period's dominant fuel source as significantly determinate for social formations, identities, and politics. Innis's formula of "staple + transportation technology = media" is a way to understand Mitchell's claim his *Carbon Democracy* is "not about democracy and oil, but about "democracy *as* oil," and indeed to understanding its main intervention:

> Most of those who write about the question of the 'oil curse,' as the problem is sometimes called, have little to say about the nature of oil and how it is produced, distributed and used. They discuss not the oil but the oil money – the income that accrues after the petroleum is converted into government revenue and private wealth. (1)

Oil money embodies the abstract exchangeability of resources, and thus partakes of the idealist figures of *transmission and content*: oil is the content of extraction; oil money is the content of the despot's whims, and the greater social forms of the worldwide division of labour are natural and transparent. This focus on content requires the idea that *certain* content—like certain regimes for Cooper and certain forms of property for Flanagan and de Soto—is generative of morality or of *values* rather than simply abstract *value*. My thesis is that the mistake of idealist approaches to infrastructure (like technological nationalism in this chapter) is that they see moral values—or content—as stuff that can be transmitted through infrastructures, rather than seeing that it is media itself that's transmitted and engaged. As infrastructure is intransitive, the human

content of energy infrastructure or the changes it introduces into human affairs is carbon democracy.

Mitchell says that analysis of the political regimes that tend to accompany oil in non-democratic nations offers reasons "for the anti-democratic properties of petroleum" by focusing on "surplus revenue: it gives governments the resources to repress dissent, buy political support, or relieve pressures for a more equal sharing of prosperity, with public handouts and price subsidies" (1-2). Mitchell's project is incredibly rich and generative, but I'd like to give just one reading. Like the typical narratives of Canadian history—for example the Macdonald CPR scandals, which Janigan makes much of—such approaches are idealist in that they implicitly rely on an essential human nature that is simplistically corruptible by money. Like the neoliberal simplification of the Enlightenment complex of human nature as both corruptible (Hobbes, Bentham) *and* perfectible (Locke, Rousseau, Kant), the easy equation of oil revenue with local despotism is also an end of history argument in that it imposes the liberal-democratic morality of capitalist modernity and its rational *homo economicus*, prisoner's dilemma-style assumptions as the baseline for human nature. The carbon-democratic process is even further justified and legitimated because of the idea that non-Western civilizations don't have the liberal-democratic structures to check natural greediness. Mitchell says, "Ignoring the apparatus of oil production reflects an underlying conception of democracy." In this example, the oil staple is exemplary in fuelling the idealism that propels neoliberalism's claims to universality, as Mitchell recounts:

> This is the conception shared by an American expert on democracy sent to southern Iraq, nine months after the US invasion of 2003, to discuss 'capacity building' with the members of a provincial council: 'Welcome to your new democracy', he said, as he began displaying PowerPoint slides of the administrative structure the Americans had

> designed. 'I have met you before. I have met you in Cambodia. I have met you in Russia. I have met you in Nigeria.' At which point, we are told, two members of the council walked out. For an expert on democracy, democratic politics is fundamentally the same everywhere. It consists of a set of procedures and political forms that are to be reproduced in every successful instance of democratisation, in one variant or another, as though democracy occurs only as a carbon copy of itself. Democracy is based on a model, an original idea, that can be copied from one place to the next. If it fails, as it seems to in many oil states, the reason must be that some part of the model is missing or malfunctioning. An idea is something that is somehow the same in different places – that can be repeated from one context to another, freeing itself from local histories, circumstances, and material arrangements, becoming abstract, a concept. An expert in democracy has to make democracy into an abstraction, something that moves easily from place to place, so that he can carry it in his suitcase, or his PowerPoint presentation, from Russia to Cambodia, from Nigeria to Iraq, showing people how it works. (2)

Such simplistic and patronizing views of the universal portability of politics based in universalist market models are prevalent because until recently discussions of energy politics have ignored the materiality of staples and extractive practices.[159] Instead, such discussions have had

> nothing to do with the ways in which oil is extracted, processed, shipped and consumed, the powers of oil as a concentrated source of energy, or the apparatus that turns this fuel into forms of affluence and power. They treat the oil curse as an affliction only of the governments that depend on its income, not of the processes by which a wider world obtains the energy that drives its material and technical life. (2)

[159] Of course, this has changed in the past several years!

Treating the problematic relation between energy and politics as "affliction" is itself a symptom of the aforementioned content-focus that fetishizes utility. If the governments of oil producing nations rely on, that is, *use* or have an instrumental, *motivated* relation to oil revenue, then they are of an earlier, more immature and unenlightened stage of historical development (in Kantian terms they are in the corruptible realm of the hypothetical rather than in the morally-certain categorical register). They will naturally use the money wrongly. So in a way, there's a centre-periphery hierarchical judgment being made in the equation of use to corruption. Profits from oil generated within or redounding to liberal-democratic metropolitan centres are only abstractly "used," according to the late-capitalist assumptions that fetishize immaterial production. These profits are fluid capital and will likely be invested in ways that have no idealist-connection to the character of the staple from which they came nor from the place of their extraction (this is the lesson that Peter Gowan draws by posing the OPEC crisis as a crisis of capital build-up leading to IMF/World Bank schemes to develop the Global South).[160] Meanwhile, capital amassed in peripheral resource economies will be invested in the country—used by the regime and therefore open to "mismanagement" and similar claims; or it will be invested out of the country to the benefit of the ruling elite.[161]

Another way to approach the political assumptions built into how resource politics have been discussed is in terms of McLuhan's example of electric light. The "use" or the content of

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[160] Gowan's example shows how governments aren't to be trusted to hold capital by any means:

> The history of neoliberalism on the international scene begins in 1973. Responding to the OPEC oil embargo that year, the US threatened military action against the Arab states unless they agreed to circulate their excess petrodollars through Wall Street investment banks, which they did. The banks then had to figure out what to do with all of this cash and, since the domestic economy was stagnating, they decided to spend it abroad in the form of high-interest loans to developing countries that needed funds to ease the trauma of rising oil prices, particularly given the high inflation rates of the time. The banks thought this was a safe investment because they assumed that governments would be very unlikely to default. They were wrong. (*The Global Gamble* 20)

[161] Anecdotally, regarding "mismanagement" as a term apposite to petrostates: I had never heard the term, despite living in Montreal, that hotbed of corruption and graft, until I moved to Alberta, where it's super-common.

the medium—whether surgery or baseball—cannot itself shape human association. The change the medium makes to human affairs is in the ways it changes what's already there.[162] So, yes, there may be an argument to make that human beings are corruptible, and to be sure this is the most fundamental premise of political theory from Hobbesian conservatism to liberal checks and balances, culminating in neoliberal market fundamentalism and governmentality. But, crucially, Mitchell is rebutting and complicating the argument that the revenue of *carbon resources* is what corrupts—the absolute abstract idealism of money—and cannot coherently be connected to the particularity of material resources.

Examining staples economies in terms of carbon democracy and articulating such technological bases for social and political forms is what lets us see from the perspective of a universal history and lets us see how the *universalizing* histories taken as common sense in neoliberalism—in Cooper, Fukuyama, and other end of history narratives—are merely idealist aestheticizations. To paraphrase Heraclitus, the content of media is other and still other media; so

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[162] The object of my thesis—the mistake allowing infrastructure to considered as transitive of moral content—is based in aesthetics and rhetoric that see metaphorical likeness among different things (abstract exchange *value*) as the criterion for good or bad (*values*). McLuhan gives an excellent example:

> In accepting an honorary degree from the University of Notre Dame a few years ago, General David Sarnoff made this statement: "We are too prone to make technological instruments the scapegoats for the sins of those who wield them. The products of modern science are not in themselves good or bad; it is the way they are used that determines their value." That is the voice of the current somnambulism. Suppose we were to say, "Apple pie is in itself neither good nor bad; it is the way it is used that determines its value." Or, "The smallpox virus is in itself neither good nor bad; it is the way it is used that determines its value."
>
> Again, "Firearms are in themselves neither good nor bad; it is the way they are used that determines their value." That is, if the slugs reach the right people firearms are good. If the TV tube fires the right ammunition at the right people it is good. I am not being perverse. There is simply nothing in the Sarnoff statement that will bear scrutiny, for it ignores the nature of the medium, of any and all media, in the true Narcissus style of one hypnotized by the amputation and extension of his own being in a new technical form. General Sarnor went on to explain his attitude to the technology of print, saying that it was true that print caused much trash to circulate, but it had also disseminated the Bible and the thoughts of seers and philosophers. It has never occurred to General Sarnoff that any technology could do anything but add itself on to what we already are. (11)

Nation-building infrastructural projects can only amplify what already is. They're not going to create new citizens of a certain sort, even if they rearrange the relations of the people who would be such citizens. A pipeline is the perfect example: it won't create a new united nation, nor will it change the form of value that it exists to transmit (so it won't create jobs!); it will amplify already existing connections, and amplify existing divisions. New connections and divisions, new ways of being and relating are certainly possible, but cannot be generated ideally from the image of the nation as a builder of infrastructure.

the content of Canadian energy infrastructures are the energy citizens, the resisters, the subjects of carbon democracy—not, of course, deterministic zombies, but agents situated in particular, knowable, material limits of possibility. My thesis explores infrastructure from the point of view that the use to which a medium is put cannot be expected to generate morality and that infrastructure cannot transmit content. The history of political economy in Canada shows that technological-extractive projects can transmit and amass value; but even then, they can only skim off the value of circulation and mediation. Infrastructures cannot unite a nation in a shared set of idealist values, nor can they produce such a nation, because mediation and transportation have nothing to do with production.

5.3 Nationalism and Dependency

Mel Watkins and John Watson present the thesis that in Canadian economics Innis's work has been "laundered" or forgotten, despite his usefulness and the assimilability of his theses into the neo-classical, US-centric economic orthodoxy dominant in Canada. While Innis's theses have been integrated as growth theories, it would be impossible to attend to the historical specificity of Canadian political economy without acknowledging the realities of dependency and neo-colonialism, which "would risk legitimating nationalism." A theoretical basis for nationalism would threaten the assumptions of universal portability of neoclassical economic banalities (like those of Mitchell's democracy expert), as the qualitative differences between centre and periphery would have to be articulated. Therefore, Watkins concludes, economic history as a discipline has been erased from university departments (Watkins "The Innis Tradition"). In other words, excising Innis's materialism avoids problematic things like how resources are "extracted, processed, shipped and consumed," as well as of "apparatuses" that turn resources "into forms of

affluence and power" (Mitchell *Carbon* 2). The laundering of Innis is bound up in historiographic aesthetics that favour a smooth, *universalist* history over the universal history of staples relations. The importance of Innis's work for undertaking an analysis of carbon democracy is substantial: in contrast to those Mitchell criticizes for focusing on oil revenue, Watkins explains that for Innis, the physical character of commodities became the central theme around which to write a universal history, which in addition to staples or resources necessarily focuses on transportation technology (staples + transport technology = media). But in Canadian economics, Innis's media-focus foregrounds the dependency premise. By disregarding Innis's work exposing the conditions that would legitimate a more-nationalist perspective, the particularity of national economies has been smoothed over by the figure of the market as nature, or in other words, the end of history image of neoliberal market ecology as neoliberalism, which Mitchell's greater oeuvre traces.[163] I argue that this necessary shift from a rhetoric of nation to one of nature is illustrative of the move from acknowledging "dependency" as something bad, signifying subordination or weakness to the concept of "dependability," like the energy independence Scheer appeals to as part of Canada's originary character and its long-awaited arrival in world history. These appeals are made in the name of the infrastructure that literally posits the nation as dependent on metropoles—that is, in the name of path dependency.

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Just as Cooper and the Calgary intellectuals could not make their claims without appeal to literary structuralist conceits, the removal of the dependency thesis from understandings of Canadian political economy requires a rhetorical shift into the literary.[164] In universal history,

[163] Mitchell in *The Road from Mt Pelerin*, etc. See also Donald Gutstein's discussion of Mitchell in *Harperism*.
[164] It's part of my greater thesis that such shifts between literal and figural language characterize the neoliberal project of knowledge production. Cooper's sustained argument against Frye's east-west movement of the literary imagination is in this sense clearly an attack on Innis's staples thesis and Creighton's Laurentian thesis. Really,

media is the staple: a medium is something that changes “scale, pace or pattern in human affairs.” McLuhan extends the media focus to bring the fragmentation and commoditization that Innis diagnosed into a whole on the level of meaning:

> In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium—that is, of any extension of ourselves—result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology. (7)

Where for Innis mechanization was reification of a whole into “the enclosure of a zone in the world economy clustered with what Innis called ‘monopolies of knowledge’ constituted by technological innovation” (Mookerjea 340), for McLuhan automation follows this process. From the standpoint of McLuhan’s universal history, this move changes the relations in which humanity finds itself—as Sputnik changed humans action into roles and spectators:

> Thus, with automation, for example, the new patterns of human association tend to eliminate jobs, it is true. That is the negative result.
>
> Positively, automation creates roles for people, which is to say depth of involvement in their work and human association that our preceding mechanical technology had destroyed. Many people would be disposed to say that it was not the

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Creighton and Innis are the theorists of the garrison, but, like Watkins says, to argue against them would risk admitting the structural necessity of uneven development into neoliberal dogma. However, disputing the figural images and metaphors they use, appealing to *thymos* and rhetoric instead of to history or economics (this is my focus in Part One), allows the argument to be made safely:

> It is, after all, in the nature of colonialism that at least some of the colonials are complicit; the essence of this comprador intellectual role […] consisted of rejecting the dependency-model of the early Innis and the anti-American imperialism of the later Innis. (Watkins 217)

> machine, but what one did with the machine, that was its meaning or message. ("Understanding" 7)

However, again such use is inconsequential compared to the meaning, which constitutes the new possibilities that such technology and the roles people take within it open for extending human power. In other words, we can't impose our will on a machine without acknowledging the machine's mediation of what it means to be human. This attention to mediation and the decentring of human agency leads us to carbon democracy:

> The reified human agency characteristic of mechanization is reordered in automation: In terms of the ways in which the machine altered our relations to one another and to ourselves, it mattered not in the least whether it turned out cornflakes or Cadillacs. The restructuring of human work and association was shaped by the technique of fragmentation that is the essence of machine technology. The essence of automation technology is the opposite. It is integral and decentralist in depth, just as the machine was fragmentary, centralist, and superficial in its patterning of human relationships.

The utopianism with which McLuhan tends to be associated, especially via the cliché of the "global village" that accompanied discussions of globalization in the 1990s, is particularly ironic. Like McLuhan's apple pie, it's not as if globalization or what one does with it is good or bad. But, like the narratives of techno-utopianism as Szeman explains them,[165] like in Cooper's "technique," and as in other techno-utopian fantasies, it is a fantasy, an ideological-imaginary relation to real material circumstances that allows the ruthlessly ambivalent actuality of technological mediation, of technology's inseparable presence in human affairs (as though humans could be juxtaposed to technology), to be seen as a value subordinate to human desires. The question of "what we want to do with technology" comes from the mechanistic view that

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[165] See Szeman, "System Failure."

people and roles and environments have been alienated from a whole and therefore can unite under a higher ideal, like that of the nation, of progress, of perfectibility. Really, we're in an automated world where the all-too-real reifications of capitalist modernity and its ideologies of instrumentality and rationalization are now given data to be reconfigured materially, not under a new or old ideology of nation. Still, the utopianism of Rohmer's corridor project, of Jim Prentice/CAPP's "nation-building Energy-East pipeline"[166]—all these are utopian not (only) because of the blindness to reality in Rohmer's fantastic proposals or to the horrors of climate destruction, but also because they are 1) premised on infrastructure as transitive of moral-content and generative of productive value, and 2) they exactly miss the imbrication of technology with humanity that McLuhan explains again and again.

I argue that such techno-utopianism is characteristic of technological nationalism, a containment strategy to manage Canada's dependent and mediatory position through the figure of the agent-citizen-nation. Only such a fantastic agency can, as Scheer and Rohmer would have it, *finally* put the tools and the technology to work for us, "for Canadians." I read such utopianism or uncritical optimism in technological nationalism as a symptom of the gap between a cultural ideal of the end of history, and the material reality of the lack of a national history that would place it among the post-industrial nations who make up the homogeneous world empire. Canada has always been understood as being between two empires—politically and culturally between the French and English; dependently between the English and the Americans; for Innis, between the time-biased fixed and space-biased fluid capital; or, as Naylor explains, between portfolio capital and foreign direct investment.

[166] See, for example, "Jim Prentice says 'nation-building' pipelines crucial to Canada's future." CBC News, Dec 01, 2014. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/jim-prentice-says-nation-building-pipelines-crucial-to-canada-s-future-1.2856911

Innis's work shows how Canada has always been a mediating nation, a periphery in which finance capital is invested and commodities and capital are extracted. McLuhan shows how in a mediating nation, as opposed to in industrial productive nations, the dominant form of technology is centralizing, but not bound to the fragmentary, reified, rationalized forces of production. In fact, where Innis sees the spatialized empire of the US as incapable of supporting a time-biased, traditional culture,[167] technology in Canada takes the form of fragmented-but-stable quasi-national spaces. By being so transparently the political expression of the social relations of their staple and their dependence on the national centre, each province is in effect a nation whose class-modern-mobility within empire may not have what William Carlos Williams would call "peasant traditions to give them character"[168], but nevertheless avoid his fate of "pure products" which "go crazy".[169] McLuhan shows how what Mitchell traces in the oil age plays out in Canada, where the historical circumstances of Canada's place between two empires, its character as a staples/extractive economy dominated by finance capital rather than productive capital, along with what Gary Teeple and Naylor explain is the impossibility of both labour consciousness and properly industrial bourgeois consciousness, has led to what Maurice Charland calls "technological nationalism" compared to forms nationalism takes in other countries. Technological nationalism names the phenomenon by which it's possible and necessary to make claims like Canada is a privileged site to look at technology and nationalism and mediation, energy, extraction, etc. For McLuhan, mediation is inseparable from the national consciousness:

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[167] See *Bias of Communication* 156-189.

[168] Williams "To Elsie"; I discuss this further in "American Petro-Imaginaries," *Petrocultures: Oil, Politics, Culture*.

[169] Regarding expressionism and national character as "vernacular": "With printing, paper facilitated an effective development of the vernaculars and gave expression to their vitality in the growth of nationalism" (Innis *Empire* 216).

> What we are considering here, however, are the psychic and social consequences of the designs or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes. […] The railway did not introduce movement or transportation or wheel or road into human society, but it accelerated and enlarged the scale of previous human functions, creating totally new kinds of cities and new kinds of work and leisure. This happened whether the railway functioned in a tropical or a northern environment and is quite independent of the freight or content of the railway medium. The airplane, on the other hand, by accelerating the rate of transportation, tends to dissolve the railway form of city, politics, and association, quite independently of what the airplane is used for. (8)

That is, the existing processes of transportation, communication, finance and commodity flows, etc., are amplified by the technological projects of the nation as a mediatory nation. It's true that the content of a railway is universalist with regard to the particulars of the geography that it finds itself in (northern or tropical, a railway makes new kinds of cities). But, in Canada, there's no state-or-high-level competition for interpreting that content, the created nation. Where in the US, the mayor of Rochester, New York's spat with the Governor resulted in his city's being cut off from the interstate highway system, McLuhan lets us see that the settler-colonial narrative of Canada isn't only or even primarily about linking or excluding certain places in a new chain (as the Macdonald CPR controversy appeared from idealist point of view of Janigan) but about creating the chain and filling it with more content—that is, building infrastructure and reproducing carbon-democratic subjectivity—as mediation itself: "This fact, characteristic of all media, means that the "content" of any medium is always another medium. The content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print, and print is the content of the telegraph." So, the *meaning* of the new media is the rearrangement of the social—in the

Canadian case, the amplification of existing political-economic relations in the creation of social arrangements on a national scale. This meaning makes up the content of Canadian history. The content of the new media of the CPR are the media of citizens, of labour, settlers, and consumers. And in the next chapter, I'll look at the source of Scheer's plan, *The Green North*, to show how Rohmer arranges the content of his proposed new media—the Mid-Canada Development Corridor. From the materialist point of view of staples and communications theory, we will see that this content which amplifies the existing political-economic mediation of the nation is human capital, and this will let us see the new form of citizenship as carbon-democratic.

5.4 Technological Nationalism

Canadian cultural politics are dominated by discussions of identity, difference, regionalism, and periods; I argue that energy and infrastructure offer a through-line, and that technological nationalism is the mediator or constant in these sometimes-overlapping, sometimes-antagonistic assemblages. Technological nationalism is way to see resource use and the nation as a social relation, a relation of production and of reproduction, and as an intermediating structure between material resources and the idealist claims that manage those resources.

So far my work has looked at Western polemics against Laurentians, at refusals to describe Canada as the highway of the St Lawrence, the land united by the CPR, or as an "east-west feeling"; these are competing ways to spatialize the relations of technological nationalism. As David Harvey says, "'[R]esources' can be defined only in relationship to the mode of production which seeks to make use of them and which simultaneously 'produces' them through both the physical and mental activity of the users" (265). Technological nationalism names the deep assumptions that subtend and transcend the spatializations of the state as a technological-

legal-capital apparatus. Darin Barney applies the concept to energy infrastructure in terms of pipelines:

> as Maurice Charland has put it in his definitive account of technological nationalism in Canada: "the popular mind, like the land, must be occupied." Infrastructure accomplishes both. Materially, space-binding infrastructure spans far-flung territories and creates a common economic and political space supportive of commercial exchange and capital accumulation. Discursively, infrastructure provides a medium for a rhetoric of national purpose and identification that summons collective investment in large-scale technological projects presented as coinciding with the nation's interests. (79)

Scheer's proposal is following a familiar formula:

> This is the recipe for technological nationalism in Canada: the nation needs infrastructure to bind it physically, and massive infrastructure projects that serve the interests of capital need the imperative of national purpose in order to be considered legitimate. (Barney 79)

Like the meaning of media for McLuhan, independent of any purported content,

> Infrastructure is materially and discursively performative: it constitutes in words and things the nation whose authorization it requires to proceed smoothly. In both respects, technology – as means and end, material and ideology – constitutes the nation from and as "communication itself," with communication understood in its richest sense, encompassing both the transportation of bodies and things and the attempted (but imperfectly accomplished) circulation of shared meaning. (Barney 80)

Just as Canadian history can be read as the history of political, economic, and cultural mediation between metropoles, Arthur Kroker explains that aesthetically, "There exists in the Canadian artistic imagination generally, […] a remarkably original and emancipatory vision of the limits

and possibilities of technological experience." Politically, technological nationalism is dominant because "the language of technology is the idiolect of the liberal state." Like in Innis's media-formula, the form of rhetoric and the actual communications technology created the conditions of possibility and justification for the formation of the state of Canada. Moreover, this idiolect makes up the expressive vocabulary for the subjects of this technological state:

> the Canadian mind can negotiate the postmodern condition so well […] because as the Montreal curator, Bruce Ferguson, has said : In Canada, the technological media of communication are actually viewed as "high works of art." For Canadians, technology can be first nature because it is both a necessary means of survival in the northern tier of the New World, and even an integral aspect of the perceptual field itself.[170] (63)

This "first nature" is the subject of the texts we'll look at in the next two chapters, as the actual authors are technocrats and artists, who even if not creating "high art," are part of the discourse in the same ways that Bruce Ferguson is, i.e., as curators and managers of techno-possibility and as the genre-fiction-equivalent of high art's taste making. That is, these authors have set the topics, ideas, and conversations for the paperback consumer rather than the aesthetically-elite (which as we will see, or already know, is merely a style choice within the technological nationalism that subtends the publishing industry, the grants, and the other Innisian monopolies of knowledge that make up the scope of technological nationalism in Canadian cultural life).

I will argue that Charland and Kroker allow us to see how the ways technology is figured resemble chronotopes, spatio-temporal containers wherein struggles or negotiations take place. Kroker quotes Nietzsche, saying "Technique is us." This is particularly apropos of Canada with its historical position between worlds. For Canadians technology is *all threat; all freedom; all*

[170] For just one example, look at the high art of both Toronto's water infrastructure and its fictionalized post-modern historical portrayal in Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion*.

ambivalence.[171] In the rest of this chapter I will argue that Canada is a structuralist nation; by skipping industrialization (i.e., the production of the kind of nation that produces products) Canada has been created as a corridor, as a form. Canada has—as Gary Teeple argues—no nationalist labour consciousness to compete with the content of "Made in USA" or the heavy-class-coding of British labour and its material origins in the industrial revolution. Echoing McLuhan's reversal of figure and ground, Kroker sees Canada as place of semiotic and other reversals: we go outside into the fridge; we find comfort inside, dwelling within those Romantic values (inseparable from nationalism) that Romanticism has typically associated with the outdoors. As McLuhan said that media formed our new senses outside our bodies, the national nervous system is not inside anymore. So, the question of technology finds a privileged expression in Canada, especially contra America's apprehension of technology's character. Charland agrees, explaining,

> Canadian broadcasting policy has been characterized by "defensive expansionism." It has been sensitive to American expansion, and has called for a concerted state effort to use technology both as a form of defense and as a means of establishing Canadian hegemony over its territory. Canada had secured its western territory through space-binding technology; it had not, however, secured its cultural territory. Thus the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, and its successor, the CBC, were instituted to occupy and defend Canada's ether and consciousness.[172]

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[171] Kroker argues that, ontologically, there are three root metaphors in the Canadian discourse contesting what's meaningful: Innis represents techno-realism; George Grant, techno-degeneration (and later dependency); McLuhan represents techno-humanism. These metaphors "structure the Canadian discourse on technology: technology as freedom; technology as degeneration; and technology as containing fully ambivalent tendencies towards domination and Emancipation" (63).

[172] Regarding defensive expansionism, compare Watkins' rebuttal of those who claim Innis needn't be considered in nationalistic terms, for example William Christian, who:

> fails to distinguish between the nationalism of the centre and the nationalism of the periphery ; that is, between aggressive nationalism and defensive nationalism, the first being imperialist and the second anti-

Kroker and Charland show how "space-binding technology" is the agent in what Kroker calls "the Canadian discourse." The CPR is the originary archetype, the product of "political will," first dreamt then created by the nation.[173] In light of technological nationalism, "We see a Canada which imagined itself into existence." And when we recall Fukuyama's almost-hysterical assertions of the triumph of the liberal idea, we see the idealism that connects all end of history arguments: in Hegelian terms, the *Idea* is what's "actual and rational;" the material is hardly worth considering.

> This rhetoric of a technological nation, basing itself on a romantic interpretation of history, equates the construction of the CPR with the constitution of Canada and praises each with reference to the other. Canada is valorized as a nation because it is the product of a technological achievement, and the railroad is the great product of heroic individuals who dreamt a nation.[174]

Charland explains the premises of the discourse; first, it "ascribes to technology the capacity to create a nation by enhancing communication." Second, it is a "power-laden discourse" through which the state is legitimated by creating the nation in its image. Third, this discourse undergirds policy, for example when the CBC is legitimated by CPR. Fourth, "the rhetoric of technological

> imperialist . Secondly, [Christian] shows no grasp at all of the two-dimensional character of the centre-margin dialectic and of the need, in the Canadian context, to distinguish between nationalism as "national independence" and nationalism as "national unity" (or what Drache has called, respectively, the nationalism of dependency or self-determination and the nationalism of domination). With a populist-like distrust of the Ottawa establishment, Innis did not relate well to the latter. This is not to deny the subtlety of Innis' position, particularly in his later works, nor the important point made by Watson (hinted at by Berger but which escapes Christian) that "Innis was not an anti-imperialist in the sense of having a prejudice against large-scale empires. On the contrary, he felt the balanced empire represented that which was best in human achievement." […] [To] Watson, Innis "was an anti-imperialist in the modern sense of being committed to opposing the imbalance (in the form of military expansionism) of contemporary empires." (Watkins 24)

[173] See also Kevin Pask, "Late Nationalism."

[174] In terms of the *oikos*/*xenos*, literal/figural structure of idealism discussed in Part One, technological nationalism's self-referentiality—the state project of a railroad "heroically spanning the wilderness to fashion a state"—is just another idealist rhetorical double play.

nationalism is insidious, for it ties a Canadian identity, not to its people, but to their mediation through technology" (197). Charland shows how technology is constitutive of Canada, manifesting the Canadian ethos. In terms of the priority of idealism I argue the Calgary School, Leo Strauss, Kojève, and the Canadian Hegelian discourse share, Charland explains that technological nationalism is a concept by which the Canadian political imaginary is structured to assert that the Dream is prior to Actuality; of course, materially, the dream is posterior to both the technology and the needs that that technology serves, or generates. But as a rhetorical construction, technological nationalism is able (like Cooper, Fukuyama, and Kojève do) to hold the prior and posterior in a form that resolves temporal disjunction, and also maintains the successive hierarchy—the Idea is first. Only after it's been thought is it followed and realized materially. But of course there was a prior actualization/rationality to the idea—namely history and the spatial and temporal conditions that allowed the idea to be thought. So, technological nationalism seems to create or refer to space, but it's actually not a spatial location—rather it's a relation, and this relation that insists on being understood as a place is what's being sought in the iconic question of Canadian culture, Frye's "where is here?"

Charland concludes that Canada is a formal entity without content: "This [technological-nationalist] vision of a nation is bankrupt, however, because it provides no substance or commonality for the polis except communication itself" (198). Canada is a mediatory entity:

> Canada is a technological state. This is just to say that Canada's existence as an economic unit is predicated upon transportation and communication technology. In addition, the idea of Canada depends upon a rhetoric about technology. Furthermore, we can understand the development of a Canadian nation-state in terms of the interplay between this technology and its rhetoric. (198)

Technological nationalism holds space together in an idealization, which is to say: the economic is subject to certain geographical and temporal barriers, but the *quality* that links the CPR and the CBC—that is, that makes the two appear compatible in the Canadian imagination—is commodity reification. The logic of capital dictates each infrastructural project's limits and possibilities. But at a certain point technology is indifferent to the motivations it yokes together. As the concrete means of this yoking, technology is capable of bridging these gaps in certain ways, but it constitutes another gap, binding spaces and times in a literalization of abstract ideas, alienating the material from the ideal, but of course creating new ideas and new matter in the process.

5.5 Technological Nationalism Refers to a Chronotope, Not a Space

Technological nationalism does not refer so much to a space or a content with which national space could be filled. Rather, a propos of the *oikos*/*xenos*-structuralist relations examined in Part One, technological nationalism should be seen as a structuring strategy, an imaginary idealist pattern that contains and structures thought. Bart Keunen explains that tracing Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of chronotopes reveals the materiality of structuralism, or the way conceptual structures structure thought.

In Bakhtin's oft-discussed concept of adventure-time, narrative possibility expresses a worldview, not on the level of content, but on the material level of how thought is historically structured. A hero can't develop as a character in adventure time, because in such a structure time isn't a dynamic medium. Such stasis and recurrence reflects the lack of class and other forms of mobility in the pre-modern mode of production. In contrast, in the bildungsroman of the eighteenth century, "the hero becomes a dynamic character by being situated in a social world

charged with historical dynamics" (qtd. Keunen 33). Like McLuhan's subordination of content to message, and like Szeman's materialist subordination of oil to social form, "These examples show that for Bakhtin a worldview does not represent a content view of the world but an abstract pattern, a cognitive tool" (Keunen 34). Seen in light of the chronotope, we see why oil and energy infrastructure can be contradictorily both essentially tied to a particular location—the nation to be built by the pipeline, and universal—the normative common sense that renders all commodities and values equivalent: "Worldviews, for their part, are practically stripped of concrete spatial indications" (34). Where literary critics and humanists might ask, "where is here?," in common sense terms, technological nationalism is the means of managing the spatial crisis, imaginatively resolving such contradictions.

To further analyze the persistence of the structuralist imagination in Canada in regard to resources, now the concept of the chronotope introduces time. My methodological point is that Cooper, et al.'s structuralist schemes for spatializing the nation only work for their neoliberal ends by denying the temporal dimension. Just as Innis has been purged of his dependency premise, time has been removed from space. I argue that Canada-as-technological nationalism is a chronotope, a particular configuration by which space can serve "as basis for events": "Sometimes we are dealing with visualizable spaces in which changes take place; sometimes it involves a conglomerate of these spaces synthesized in an abstract image" (Keunen 35). For Bakhtin, chronotopes organize narratives; there are always numerous chronotopes in a text, and this diversity constitutes a text's intertextuality. As Keunen reminds us, some chronotopes are more important than others, and narrators pick and choose the most effective ones to refer to their readers (27). My point is that the simple structuralist rhetorical strategies I examined in Part One and their aesthetic/rhetorical carry-over into technological nationalism (e.g. Rohmer and

Scheer) are simplistic narrative containers or end-of-history chronotopes, which lead to spatializations of "energy citizenship," to the aesthetic sophistry of Flanagan, or to "ethical oil."

I argue that the political-economy of Innis and Naylor is essential for articulating more complex, more realistic, better and smarter narratives, understanding containments and figures of time and space in ways that can appeal to more than a structuralist poetics and get toward real material conditions. Bakhtin says, "time transforms the narrative space into a relative space." Technological nationalism and its contradictory time/space—the nation is to be created in the future and a present creation to be expressed—configures space into markers of time. Like a chronotope for Bakhtin, technological nationalism structures

> the representability of events. And this is so thanks precisely to the special increase in density and concreteness of time markers […] that occurs within well-delineated spatial areas. It is this that makes it possible to structure a representation of events in the chronotope (around the chronotope). (qtd. Keunen 24)

Regarding technological nationalism and national space, such spatial and temporal narratives include Frye's east-west feeling, Cooper's hated Laurentians, "last chance Leduc," etc.

> Indeed, it is possible to explain an action-space chronotope by defining it as an image that is summoned on the basis of narrative episodes. The latter are defined by David Herman as a whole of "states, events and actions that involve an identifiable participant or set of participants equipped with certain beliefs about the world and seeking to accomplish goal- directed plans" (2005, 83; 2002, 84). These episodes generate a four-dimensional mental image in the imagination, which combines the three spatial dimensions with the fourth, the structure of the temporal action. (36)

In terms of narrating the Canadian nation, and in terms of Cooper's fighting these narratives, these episodes are of course the CPR, the CBC, Confederation, etc. The methodological point I draw from Keunen is that Canadian history and literary theory is where phenomenology and cognitivist psychology come together to understand "action spaces," and to understand the relation of narratology to the formal/structural dimension of meaning-making-experience—in other words, what McLuhan calls media. Media are, as Barney explains, time- and space-binding (79); they are thus, in that spatio-temporal function, material configurations or bases for events.

5.6 Time/Space Bias and Infrastructure: A Passage to China

Watkins has explained that Innis's analysis has been laundered from economics departments because Innis's materialism articulates inter- and infra-national dependencies, thereby legitimizing nationalism; and nationalism is then a scandal for the basic neoclassical/neoliberal premise of global evenness. Dependency isn't a problem for the national elite, but for the transnational premises upon which their worldview relies. The neoliberal or late-capitalist world view is structurally incapable of accommodating the uneven, qualitative differences of national dependency. In other words, the *concept of dependency* is the problem. Economically-speaking material dependency is normal and good. The neoclassical/neoliberal self-regulating-ecological model takes interrelations, connections, networks, chains, supply and demand, and inputs and outputs to be the natural state of the world. Now I'll show how technological nationalism mediates the material-temporal-uneven fact of dependency into a figure of structural dependability.

Canada is space-bound, not by its own media, but by its position as a mediator/extractive economy. It is bound in complex spatial relations and concrete history to the British and US

empires. The current fantasy of delivering Alberta bitumen to China is simply an imaginary repetition of the same concrete historical pattern by which the surplus generated from commercial mediation can be recouped with more trade. In other words, growth in an extractive economy is dependent on dependency. This space-bias is built into the staples themselves—they are worthless without dependable access to the greater network. Still, such spatial dependence is experienced as temporal phenomena. The promise of (spatial) connection to China (or to an energy-hungry US, had the epochal event of fracking not taken place) is imagined as stable, lasting jobs, development, growth, and revenues. The dynamic between time and space biases leads to infrastructure seeming to be time-biased and extending into the future, when the dynamic really concerns the interaction between space-binding paths, and time-binding path-dependencies.

My argument is that in modern capitalism, national infrastructure looks, feels, and seems to be time-biased, but it's not public, as architecture might be for instance, however tied up it is in architectural discourses. Innis's mechanization is—like the "multi-versity" was for George Grant—the reification and atomization of expertise and technique (and as we'll see in the next chapter, this atomization is part of the anti-national aesthetic that Rohmer's Corridor seeks to combat yet which persists in the Calgary-Scheer plan). The CPR or a pipeline could never perform the public work of materializing traditions that ancient Greek or Roman projects did, at least not on the cultural-civilizational scale that Innis traces in *The Bias of Communication*. That is, the fragmentation of design into beauty or a human "living-with" and use or "living-for" that Innis diagnoses as mechanization still retains a chronotopic "genre-memory," a cultural script that makes infrastructure seem time-biased—something that will unite a people, reinforce a locality and participate within national-racial traditions. In Canada technological nationalism is

such a script. Just as the ancient national epic persists in the desire to create and maintain national literary traditions (Pratt's epic poems; Lightfoot's "Canadian Railroad Trilogy"), in an important way, we still understand our relationship to things as the ancients did. As Robert C. Scharff and Val Dusek put it by way of introducing the philosophy of technology,

> Scientific understanding and practical techniques were both judged as analogous to the dynamic processes of the cosmos. The Roman aqueducts, for example, may seem "overbuilt" by modern standards, but that is because they are designed not just to carry water but to do so in perpetuity, to "be" as if things of the cosmos, like rivers and streams. Hence, where we might distinguish between "merely" aesthetic considerations and utility or efficiency in our crafts and practical productions, the ancients would consider both together as inseparable and as receiving their sanction from *physis* and our understanding of it. (5)

Ancient infrastructures were designed to be time-binding. Attention to narrative structure and chronotopes lets us see how the mechanical understanding of difference is mediated by the complementary repetition of chronotopes. That is, the different public roles infrastructure plays in our time still refer chronotopically to the national, racial, time-binding features of classical infrastructures.[175] Keunen says these "Fixed formulas as well as fixed schemas of action situations and processes are stored in the memory of narrators and their public" (35). Like the figure of the city/man in Strauss and Bloom, these formulas perform the historical sedimentation or structuring of historical relations:

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[175] Perhaps the best, if offhand, illustration of ancient and modern chronotopes working together is the persistent aura of time-binding in the cliché that the Great Wall of China is visible from space. In the cliché, the wall extends temporally all the way back to orientalist antiquity, yet it extends forward beyond human time into the next dimension, namely space as such. Thus the McLuhanesque reversal of the figure-ground is both amplified and managed by the idea that human work is (still) the measure of all things.

> Bakhtin can thus prove that a text will sometimes contain references to old worldviews that are unwittingly adopted by the author. … By way of the worldviews that shine through in the action-space, they call forth the recollection of that literary tradition.

Keunen cites Morson and Emerson's concept of "genre memory":

> A particular sort of event, or a particular sort of place that usually serves as the locale for such an event, acquires a certain chronotopic aura, which is in fact the "echo of the generic whole" in which the event typically appears. A particular action-space chronotope originating from an ancient culture is still able to play a role in a narrative.

Like McLuhan's cultural history of narrative as a movement from "clichés to archetypes,"[176] like Fredric Jameson's Frye-influenced theory of literary form as "sedimented content," which are all finally assimilable to Lukácsian "necessary anachronism," genre memory refers to the potentially-conflicting cognitive maps by which the dimensions of human experience can be mediated and understood. In this light, the distinctions Scharff and Dusek mention are not just distinctions but are contradictory logics. Dependencies are the various ways these contradictions are expressed; the market-ecological model of dependable energy is a residue of an old mythology. The difference between the perceived time and space aspects of infrastructure in Canada is articulable as path dependency.

To understand the intricacies of dependency and path dependency, it is well to return to Innis's most perennially consequential contribution to political economy, the staples trap. A staples trap is an effect of the uneven distribution of costs and risks across spatial and temporal registers in the world system. An economy dominated by resource extraction has spatial and temporal requirements that can't adapt to market or other forces as quickly as an economy supported by fluid capital can. Also, as a staples economy rarely overcomes its dependency by

[176] McLuhan and Wilfred Watson, *From Cliché to Archetype* (1970).

developing into an industrial power, secondary and tertiary sectors tend to be far away; exporting staples across a wide division of labour, the staples economy is trapped into buying back the processed goods. So value as surplus is extracted from the national space via unevenesses of time. Moreover, profits made within the staples economy don't "go to the people," but accumulate faster in the national centres, in Canada, traditionally Montreal and Toronto.

The staples trap isn't simply a problem of industrial versus finance capital which characterizes US concerns over "offshoring." Because staples economies are based in extraction, the capital problem is between different forms of finance capital. Still, the nation exists to mediate between materials and industry. So, when materials or industry changes—and these can change due to the finance or commercial demands of the centres—there's immense difficulty changing the objects of financial investment. For example, the CPR can ship, as McLuhan might say, Cadillacs or cornflakes, but it can't move from one place to another, say, north to get oil. Canada's economy is dominated by finance and circulation, but it's tied to the material character-place-time of its resources. This is why technological nationalism is an idealism and an aesthetic ideology. It's the unification of the nation in a way that ignores or subsumes the reason for unifying. Moreover, technological nationalism is not just some false consciousness or liberal delusion: national technology is always going to communicate contents that are themselves media, connecting things according to the essence of media, nothing more.

So, what's the point of uniting a nation if it's not an actual economic unit? Gary Teeple's analysis suggests that the desire to unite is an imaginary resolution to the lack of a ruling class consciousness by which the image of the nation does the nation-building role of an ersatz ruling class.[177] As Innisian history foregrounds, Canada has historically found itself in the position of

[177] Teeple's focus on production and the US-biased internationalism of trade unionism offers a suggestive connection to why the Kojèveian master-slave dialectic—so famously developed by Fanon—has such a complex

being dependent on an *industrial* metropole, and this dependence of the Canadian state and its capitalists, along with the *in*dependence of the form of capital, which flows from centre to periphery and back, inhibits the development of a nationalist consciousness and instead generates the ideology of technological nationalism:

> This dependency on foreign industry prevented the dominant group of Canadian capitalists having a strong consciousness of themselves as rulers of a nation-state. On the other hand, the ruling classes of industrial nations developed an awareness of themselves—a nationalist ideology—because they owned the means *to create* the wealth of their nations. On the basis of this power, they fashioned the state in their own image for their own ends and were able to maintain themselves at the centre of imperial systems in which other lands were controlled for markets and resource bases. (Teeple xi)

In other words, technological nationalism is a characteristic of a non-industrial economy organized around staples extraction, as it simultaneously structures the material reality of the nation as an ongoing capital project of circulation and transportation, and fills the ideological gap left by dependency:

> Always economically subordinate, the Canadian bourgeoisie could hardly move beyond a colonial mentality. Because the main ideas of a ruling class are those that prevail, the effects of this mentality are reflected in the rest of society. Canadians of other classes, therefore, have been marked by a poorly developed awareness of being members of a nation. (xii)

Naylor helps explain how the ideology of technological nationalism, whose political form is the mediatory state, is based in the economic form of mercantilism:

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history in Canada, from Quebec separatism to Charles Taylor's "Politics of Recognition": the colonial elites were masters but without any actual power to produce.

> The system known as mercantilism in Europe consisted of a series of policies aimed at internal economic consolidation and/or expansion. It was the economic counterpart of the political process by which states were integrated or strengthened. (13)

Naylor argues that without an attention to how metropole/hinterland relations work in terms of capital, we can't properly understand the dynamics of the staples economy. Specifically, the tendency to see mercantilism leading to industry, and industrial capital leading to finance capital misses how Canada's belatedness is the result of its mercantilist-staples-character. Naylor explains that Canadian political economy involves: 1) the subordination to changing metropoles, and thus to the character of the form of capital dominant in each metropole. British investment in Canada has been primarily portfolio capital; American investment is characterized by internally-financed firms who employ direct investment through branch plants; 2) the dynamics between free trade with British capital and reciprocity with US capital, and 3) the struggle between strata of the bourgeoisie, whereby mercantile-financial entrepreneurs tied to the Conservative party and Macdonald used the state structure and position between the British and American empires to lock-in tariffs and protectionist policies (which in industrial nations would favour industrialists, but in Canada's peculiar colonial position protected the mercantile strata—transport, banking, speculation), preventing the emergence of industrial entrepreneurs, who are typically connected to Liberal party. When Liberals came to power, Canada had missed its opportunity to industrialize and had to maintain its position as mediator by encouraging the US FDI/branch-plant model over that favoured by the mercantile elite, centred in Montreal and Toronto, who preached annexation.

Naylor explains that the political problems the energy corridor idea emerged to solve are consequences of the state form built upon a staples economy. Staples economies are centred on

circulation; state and economic mechanisms have unique functions within staples economies. The threat of annexation and FDI are rooted in Macdonald's tariff, which was imposed to structurally generate solely financial, not industrial, gains. When Britain repealed the Navigation Laws, newly-insecure Canadian merchant capitalists sought to replace their now-undependable trade by seeking annexation with the US.[178] Thus,

> Canadian Confederation resulted not from a drive for independence led by a dynamic capitalist class but from the inability of the Canadian bourgeoisie to find a new dependency. The national policy was one of mercantilism, of consolidation and expansion within a strong state structure. Like American mercantilism, it had to fail, though for very different reasons. Canadian mercantilism was a belated reaction to structural changes in the metropoles. […]
>
> During the course of consolidation of Canadian mercantilism, the metropoles again underwent major structural change, with the dawning of the age of corporation capitalism in America and the rise of formal imperialism in Britain.

In the next chapter we'll look at how Scheer's plan for an energy corridor has been criticized for being anachronistic, seemingly out of the 19th century. But in Naylor's narrative of the history of the capital-form in Canada, we see that like Minerva's Owl (whom Innis invokes in *The Bias of Communications*), state projects in Canada will always arrive too late; they are fated to be belated attempts to spatially manage temporal crises. My claim is that technological nationalism is itself a spatial expression of belated industrialization. McLuhan's automation is the immaterial spirit of never-realized industrial nation. This belatedness is also no doubt germane to the unique

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[178] I think this annexationist imperative has continued in different forms in both the Canadian East and West. Long before Justin Trudeau and Rachel Notley, Mulroney's "sell outs" stoked tacitly-annexationist Western sentiments, which saw continental integration as an economic resolution to the continued dominance of the belated mercantile interests of the Eastern bourgeoisie.

developments of Hegelianism in this country. In the realm of idealism, Canada is fully post-Hegelian: the holy ghost of the nation-as-divine-providence is fully freed from the material, literally-corporeal nation, just as the message overcomes the medium when the speed of the message overtakes that of the messenger (McLuhan "Understanding" 89).

As Naylor continues, after the Arrighian shift from industry to finance capital in Britain, "finance and trade both came to rely on the underdeveloped world as the major recipient of finance capital and as the only market which Britain's inefficient industrial system could capture" (12). For Naylor, this is a repetition of the Canadian case, the consequence of merchant capital's use of the state form (contra industrial capital's domination of state functions in the US) which characterizes the whole of Canadian history from colonialism to present. I argue that the development of the north in the 70s (tied to US militarism, transnational exploitation of resources, Canadian-state-administration of populations, state-racist-ideological nordicity,[179] etc.) is, like Scheer's and all quasi-nationalistic efforts to develop the Oil Sands and pipelines, simply reproduction of the same structural pattern. It might take a lot more to argue that the Mid-Canada Development Corridor or Scheer's Calgary plan are literally-mercantilist in motivation, that is, it's hard to believe that any developed northern market or chain of new cities and resource communities would generate money for a nominally-Canadian transport industry (as the Churchill Railway and the recent cancellation of Greyhound routes suggest). But such proposals aren't materialist—they're ideological! Technological nationalism's origins in mercantilism, the communication and transportation bases of Canada, are built into the state and the nation as historical-material entities. The idea of salvation by China or by pipelines is the same idea that built the CPR, and which wasn't shaken by its inability to produce a united nation. There's no

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[179] On northern development as governmental administration see Coulthard, as well as Jim Lotz. On nordicity, see Shields, Banita, Lotz, Coleman, Grace.

need for an empirical merchant interest in Scheer's plan to prove that such a plan would reproduce circulatory capital. The technological imagination as it mediates political economy in Canada is on autopilot—automated, as McLuhan would say—and, as history has shown, finance capital is able to make use of the structure. The ideology of technological nationalism and the nation-state based on non-productive if not backward forms of capital requires that Scheer's vision—as much as Trudeau's purchase of the TransMountain pipeline—is a belated attempt to imagine a way out of having missed industrialization.

Technological and resource development in Canada is about seeing the emptiness of the north ("the mind like the land has to be occupied") as the solution to the inability to grow through industrialization. Building a nation on top of the nation or corridors through red tape and popular and environmental challenges are all ideas that we can somehow build our way out of the contradiction of a nation based on the image of an anachronistic form of capital. Most importantly, this tradition of seeing spatial problems as aesthetically and technically resolvable leads to carbon democracy. The production and reproduction of the nation is no longer in the service of an indigenous (and always-already or incipiently-transnational) merchant class, but of their cosmopolitan progeny. The nation building that started in the decades of the Grand Trunk was aimed at citizen-subjects who were commerce-citizens. Now nation building is explicitly aimed at "Energy Citizens."

Chapter 6

On the Anachronisms of Energy Corridors

6.1 Introduction

When Andrew Scheer announced this spring that should he form a government it would pursue a national energy corridor, commentators almost uniformly characterized the plan in terms of anachronism. Andy Blatchford's headline read: "Andrew Scheer wants an energy corridor across Canada. Here's how the decades-old idea could work." The first two sentences further emphasized the idea's age:

> The notion of a pan-Canadian corridor dedicated to rail, power lines and pipelines has been around for at least half a century but it looks like it's about to get a big publicity boost.
>
> Last week, Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer used a major pre-election policy speech to dust off a similar idea. Scheer promised, if he wins October's election, that he would to work towards establishing a cross-country "energy corridor."[180]

Blatchford explains that "Scheer's pitch appears to have drawn inspiration from a 2016 University of Calgary paper," co-authored by G. Kent Fellows and Andrei Sulzenko, which proposed a 7,000 kilometre northern corridor be determined as a "right-of-way [which] could be used for roads, rail, pipelines, electricity transmission lines and telecommunications." In addition to furthering resource extraction, the Calgary proposal promises national unity and regional equality arguing that whichever projects took up within the corridor "would also serve communities well north of the existing east-west routes that run closer to the U.S. border." "This study," Blatchford recounts,

[180] https://globalnews.ca/news/5310774/pan-canadian-energy-corridor-andrew-scheer/

> caught the attention of a Senate committee, which took a closer look at the concept in 2016 and 2017. In a 2017 report of its own, the committee called the corridor idea a "visionary, future-oriented infrastructure initiative" that would create significant economic opportunities for Canada and help develop northern regions.

The Senate then "recommended the government dedicate up to $5 million to the University of Calgary to support further research into the corridor."

Blatchford identifies the source of the University of Calgary report as Richard Rohmer's plan for a Mid-Canada Development Corridor (MCDC), spelled out in his *The Green North: Mid-Canada*, and later appearing in Rohmer's fiction. As Blatchford puts it:

> The committee report noted how a 1971 report by Richard Rohmer—an air-force veteran of D-Day who became a prominent land-use lawyer with the ear of governor general Roland Michener—proposed the development of a "mid-Canada" corridor, recommending federal, provincial and territorial governments make it an urgent priority.
>
> Rohmer imagined a massive transportation network for goods and people could turn communities such as Flin Flon, Whitehorse and High Level into major new urban centres. The report was presented then-prime minister Pierre Trudeau but the committee said his government never moved forward on the idea.

As I'll explain in the following chapters, the Calgary plan diverges from Rohmer's in ways that highlight its temporal character, making the question of whether or not it is indeed anachronistic an important site to intervene in the ways technological nationalism continues to operate in regard to Canada as a staples-extractive economy. Rohmer's idea calls for settlement planned in conjunction with the development of primary, secondary, and tertiary extractive and productive sites—in other words, it's based on formal assumptions of industrial production. While there is

no such complexity in his plan, Scheer is nevertheless leaning on several 1970s-era economic-nationalist assumptions reflective of the original idea's time that, in addition to being unusual for a modern pro-business conservative, stand out as anachronistic references to an earlier version of technological nationalism, itself based on an earlier idea of the state's function.

In this chapter I will analyze the temporal problems gestured at in the charges that Scheer's plan is anachronistic. Doing so will contextualize the idea of the corridor in terms of historical backwardness; then, addressing planner and architect John Van Nostrand's calls for a return to Rohmer's idea, I will examine the forward-looking, future-oriented nature of the proposed massive infrastructure project. In the next chapter, I will look in depth at Rohmer's original text to discern the technological nationalist premises that persist today as figures for neoliberal governmentality and the vanishing of the state at the end of history; and in the third chapter of this section, I will look at two texts created by the University of Calgary's School for Public Policy arguing for the National Infrastructure and Market Access Program, or the "Canadian Northern Corridor."

Each of the texts I look at pose spatial resolutions to temporal problems, and this impulse is confirmed by the way plans for infrastructural corridors are seen as to be temporal objects, whether they're seen as belonging to an anachronistic past, as enacting the needs of present-day "development," or as extending resource production into a prosperous future. I argue that the technological nationalism obvious in Rohmer's 1970s continues to work today in ways that are better understood in terms of what Timothy Mitchell calls carbon democracy.

6.2 The Corridor as Anachronism

In a piece carried by *Pipeline News*, Blatchford details that in Scheer's plan,

> Planning and consulting for the right-of-way would be done up front, sparing industry of the complicated process of submitting proposals for new projects, [Scheer] said. The corridor, he added, would be designed in full consultation with provinces and Indigenous communities.[181]

Rohmer proposed the MCDC to counter the threat of foreign control of Canadian resources and exploding population growth[182]; now the threat is seen as the lack of Canadian control over alienating its resources. Scheer's Calgary plan signals a biopolitical shift from technological nationalism to carbon democracy, in which the freedom of movement for resources will manifest in free subjects: "Scheer promised to help ensure Canada no longer needs foreign oil — and be 'fuelled exclusively by Canadians by 2030.'" For Scheer, the state's role is to ease the identification of Canadian *oil* with its carbon-democratic subjects, so the nation will be "fuelled" by *Canadians*. Scheer's identification of a nation's subjects with its resources continued as he oiled up the recently-disinterred saws of Ethical Oil, "Oil imports from countries like Iran, Venezuela and Saudi Arabia have supported regimes that 'abuse human rights and take virtually no steps to protect the environment.'"

Repeating Ethical Oil premises, Scheer's speech provides a key to decode the confusing Conservative/Neoliberal-jumble characterizing the current moment in which populist/racist isolationism appears to be as credible as global, free-trade dogma. Stephen Harper's University of Calgary connection to intellectuals and mouthpieces of Alberta-based extractive interests was

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[181] www.pipelinenews.ca/scheer-promises-coast-to-coast-energy-corridor-as-he-outlines-economic-vows-1.23824568

[182] The most urgent of the problems Rohmer sought to technocratically manage with the MCDC was that of projected population explosion. At the origin of Scheer's plan is the thesis that Canadian resources and technology could save the modern world from a Malthusian nightmare.

obvious—in his Hayekian cadre, in Flanagan's involvement on "Harper's Team," and in the rhetoric shared among Calgary alumni like Ezra Levant. But what was notably absent from Harper's pro-extractive position was *technological* nationalism. Harper was not afraid to use the state (see Van Nostrand's remark below about Harper's "keenness" regarding sovereignty), nor did he shy away from nationalism, strength, militarism, and so on. But for Harper, the nation wasn't imagined as the same kind of *project*. While he aimed to brand Canada as a northern nation and an energy superpower, his government did little in terms of mobilizing nation-wide technological missions. Scheer, by contrast, in his first tentative steps toward a party platform, has yoked the Ethical Oil idiolect to that of the political-economic function of the nation, that is, of mediation through technology.

Yet, holding these contradictory discourses together is not easy. As Barney has shown, technological nationalism is necessarily incoherent, as the moment of affirming the technological and mediatory nation requires the positing of a *xenos* against the national *oikos*. Blatchford quotes Scheer's efforts in this regard: "'The fact is Canada has more than enough oil — not only to displace imports from the aforementioned rogue states — but to put an end to all foreign oil imports once and for all,' [Scheer] said of a goal that could boost the economy in Western Canada." Surely it's confused and confusing that Scheer is conflating the argument that Canada can close off imports of a certain commodity "once and for all" with the antithetical argument that Canada is so strong because of its trade—that is, that Canada could continue to rely on the investment capital it "trades" for its oil. But this is only incoherent if we don't apply the lessons of Innis, Watkins, and Naylor, namely, that technological nationalism is based in a mercantilist model of zero-sum circulation.

6.3 The Corridor as Circulation: Is There Anything a Corridor *Can't* Do?

Even though, as I examined in Part One, the *oikos*/*xenos* division pertains far more to groups and people inside the nation than to those outside of Canada's political borders, posing the corridor within the rhetoric of technological nationalism enables the argument that such projects by their very essence unite the nation. Boosters of the present corridor plan claim it will unify Canadians across class and party lines. The creator of the most recent Corridor idea, University of Calgary's G. Kent Fellows, claims that even the (rarely-acknowledged) fact that pipelines don't lead to permanent jobs will be mitigated by a diversification built into the infrastructural project: "'Pipelines are very good at generating economic benefits at both ends of the line, and not so much in the middle — but roads, rail, electricity and telecom can help people all along the route," Fellows said."[183] This is a pristine example of a spatial resolution to a temporal problem. Fellows is acknowledging the unevenness between what Watkins and Innisian economics calls "dependency," that is, the subordination of the staples producer to metropolitan centres. Fellows poses a view of mediation in which different commodities (electricity), transportation technology (rail), and information (contents of telecommunication) are completely equivalent, and which as a bundle will supplement each other's shortcomings. In this view—what Charland calls the image of the nation *as* communication—the movement of value is consistent, so while one may no longer be able to convincingly claim that pipelines create permanent jobs, one can at

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[183] Cf. Barney:

> Additionally, economic benefits derived from pipelines and the commodities they transport are unevenly distributed amongst their operators and the local stakeholders who are disproportionately exposed to their risks. In North America, new pipelines require approval by government agencies mandated to consider the public interest – including environmental protection – in their development, which provides a high-profile and consequential venue for activists and stakeholders to contest their construction. In considering applications for proposed pipelines, Canada's National Energy Board (NEB) is mandated to consider, along with various technical and economic factors, "any public interest that in the Board's opinion may be affected by the issuance of the certificate or the dismissal of the application." (86)

The NEB's mandate has recently changed; see Bill 69 discussion below.

least claim that there are permanent economic benefits to be had. In the jobs discourse (see Barney), it's imagined that a flow or route of value can be properly spatialized to syphon off or contain temporally-stable benefits for those well-positioned in regard to that space. In other words, dependency becomes mediated by fantasy of "dependable" jobs, incomes, and profits. But as pipeline boosters have suffered a string of losses lately—the Keystone XL and Energy East cancelled; TransMountain in limbo—Fellows prudently admits that jobs are not the goal of the "multi-modal" corridor. While they might legitimately worry that pipelines will not provide them with stable jobs, Canadians should rest assured that diversification of transmission will provide the equivalent: "help" "along the route!"

Fellows is describing the Innisian formula: staple + transportation technology = medium. The corridor then is not a site of producing or increasing value; rather it's a medium for the image of value in an extractive-staples economy, the change in scale and pace in human affairs that it will effect is the configuration of carbon-democratic citizens. Fellow's view of infrastructure is, typically of technological nationalism, about circulation of value and not production. The historical materialist would call such a corridor a superstructure, and it is a medium for the transmission of value rather than any producer of value.

More than a medium, the purely *rhetorical* nature of Fellows' claims make it apparent that infrastructure in this view is also a text or a site of semantic investment with the function of reproducing carbon-democratic subjectivity. As Fredric Jameson has recently said in terms redolent of Paul de Man's analysis of aesthetic ideology, "Works do not have meanings, they soak up meanings: a work is a machine for libidinal investments (including the political kind). It is a process that sorts incommensurabilities and registers contradictions (which is not the same as solving them!)" (*Allegory and Ideology* promo copy). As a site or form of investment for capital

and libidinal investment of nationalist affect, the "multi-modal" nature of the corridor "sorts," manages, and seems able to "soak up" and hold nearly anything together. And this forms a pattern by which I argue proponents of technological nationalist projects in Canada habitually "register" the textual function of infrastructure projects to seemingly manage contradictions (for example, by spatially containing temporal unevenness) and mistakenly proclaim the contradictions to be solved. As Jameson puts it,

> The inevitable and welcome conflict of interpretations – a discursive, ideological struggle – therefore needs to be supplemented by an account of this simultaneous processing of multiple meanings, rather than an abandonment to liberal pluralisms and tolerant (or intolerant) relativisms. (*Allegory and Ideology* promo copy)

In a perfect illustration of taking structured conflict as evidence for a pat, liberal consensus, Blatchford cites Christopher Ragan, "head of the Ecofiscal Commission, a group of academics focused on economic and environmental solutions," whom he also affiliates with the Liberal party (Ragan "served on federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau's economic advisory panel"). Not only could the corridor unite Liberals and Conservatives (who are always in agreement about the ends proclaimed by neoliberal dogma, but from time to time still bicker over means), but a pre-approved corridor is crucial for addressing climate change. Essentially arguing that environmental approval processes hold up clean energy processes, Ragan claims,

> the country will want to find ways to get through tough approval processes to run more east-west energy grids. For example, [Ragan] said clean electricity could move from British Columbia, Quebec and Manitoba into Alberta, Saskatchewan and parts of Ontario to help displace fossil-fuel generation.

I've argued that the idea of the corridor—as a pre-approved space for diverse *potential* infrastructure projects—is a spatial containment for time. It's also a form which can pose political problems as spatial, and to rhetorically relegate (as in *The War Between Us*) political or class conflict to the past and unite subjects in the present, a process which reveals the corridor's function in terms of carbon democracy. Ragan is clear. The Liberal-Conservative consensus is capable of overcoming any so-called anachronism: "'I don't frankly care whether it's an old idea or a new idea — but it is a new idea in terms of a real-world, policy practical discussion […] It's good that you actually have politicians starting to talk about this.'"

But the question of "old vs. new" won't go away so easily. The day after Scheer's announcement of the corridor and the conjoined promise of energy independence by 2030, the very forward-looking proposal was again cast as anachronistic. Carolyn Kury de Castillo said Scheer is

> pitching the notion of a cross-Canada corridor, dedicated to rail, power lines, pipelines and telecommunications, that has been around since the 1960s. The corridor would be a huge multi-jurisdictional undertaking and could take decades to establish but Scheer said a right-of-way would make it easier to lower environmental assessment costs, improve certainty for investors and increase the chances that more projects will be built.

The idea might have worked a long time ago, but it's too late now:

> Had a corridor been established 50 years ago, pipelines would have been easier to get through, according to U of C economist Trevor Tombe.
>
> "It's a simple idea that instead of doing project-specific evaluations around environmental or community-based impacts, you would pre-designate an area where you

do a lot of that analysis beforehand so that if you are building within the corridor, then you have a much more expedited review process," Tombe said.

"I think there is more uncertainty around the payoff from such an initiative than doing the analysis when it is connected to a concrete project proposal. But as we have seen in the past few years, a lot of the challenges that we are dealing with now potentially wouldn't have been as severe if we had such a corridor."[184]

In an editorial, the *Winnipeg Free Press* mockingly located the anachronism of the corridor idea even further back, in Macdonald's 19th century:

> Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer, once he becomes prime minister, will establish a coast-to-coast corridor for oil pipelines and power transmission lines. Provinces and Indigenous communities will agree in advance to pipelines and power lines within the corridor. Energy will flow freely through the country and everyone will be happy. Wow! Why did no one else think of that?
>
> It's a very suitable Big Idea for a Conservative leader. John A. Macdonald, the party's first leader and prime minister, conceived and achieved the national dream of a coast-to-coast rail line in the 1870s and 1880s, with momentous effects on both the national economy and Indigenous Peoples. Mr. Scheer's energy corridor is a correspondingly bold 19th-century idea.

But, sarcasm aside, the editorial stresses that Scheer's idea isn't only too old, it also misses the contemporary "mood," which of course expresses that the citizens of Canada are property owners first, and no national unity will run through their backyards without a fight:

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[184] "Andrew Scheer pushes plan for national energy corridor at stop in Calgary" Carolyn Kury de Castillo Global News, May 25, 2019. https://globalnews.ca/news/5316044/andrew-scheer-national-energy-corridor-calgary/

> The corridor idea seems like a shortcut or an end run around environmental assessment and negotiation with landowners. But Canada's experience has shown that shortcuts and end runs finish up in court. Law, policy and the prevailing public mood have changed since John A. Macdonald's day. There may be a substitute for the slow, patient work of designing and locating a pipeline to do the least possible damage and harm the fewest neighbours, but Mr. Scheer has not found it.

This critique of spatializing a quick fix in order to substitute for slow work made strange bedfellows of the *WFP* and the staff of the Canadian Association of Energy and Pipeline Landowner Associations (CAEPLA), who agreed that Scheer's new plan represents the latest example of the impulse by which governments try to appropriate land, a tradition stretching back over a century:

> Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer is pitching a new government infrastructure mega project as a solution to the pipeline industry paralysis Canada faces.
>
> An energy corridor sounds like a great idea, of course.
>
> But is it?

The editorial further asks, "An obvious question […] is where would the government get the land? And more importantly, how?" The answer: "the very real risk is they would do so by expropriation as we have seen in countless cases where government wants land – from British Columbia's Site C Dam to Manitoba Hydro's BiPole III boondoggle." CAEPLA therefore concludes,

> the first casualty of Andrew Scheer's energy corridor scheme is likely to be property rights – something conservatives are conventionally thought to believe in […] But the biggest risk arising from Mr. Scheer's energy corridor Crown is capture.

> Capture is an innate hazard of regulation – the regulated inevitably become the regulators when they take over the agency involved.
>
> We have seen this historically in Canada with the National Energy Board (NEB).
>
> The Board was captured by industry very early on. This resulted in the legislated and at times rampant theft of land from farmers and ranchers by government – a transfer of wealth from owners of agricultural land to owners of shares in energy transport companies.

CAEPLA presents a critique of the corridor's fully-spatial, structuralist premises. Like the corridor, like the *oikos*/*xenos* structure, the formal pattern can be occupied with any content—from the Conservatives, the Liberals, or whomever—and so the very structure by which governance intersects with commerce and industry is now the enemy of those who would begin from the libertarian point of view.[185] Another way of articulating CAEPLA's critique is that the corridor is a textual machine that will contain the contradictions inherent in alienating resources without alienating the citizen's right to property (in a way, this is the object of my analysis in Part One), but will not resolve them, and that's why we always come back to land and land ownership and alienation: "The NEB now suspends the property rights of both farmer and pipeline company."[186] Still, as we're discussing a structure or a medium rather than any political content, CAEPLA ominously warns,

> But Karma can be a b!tch. The same power to bulldoze the rights of landowners soon came to bite industry on the rear when the extreme green movement succeeded in

[185] http://www.caepla.org/will_andrew_scheer_s_new_energy_corridor_crown_corporation_respect_your_property_rights. Like a panopticon, which can be controlled by good people surveilling evil-doers or vice versa, the structure itself enables possibilities beyond any agent's control.

[186] The editorial is aimed against the overhaul of the NEB, Bill C69, which passed shortly after the piece was published. CAEPLA warns

> And [the NEB's land-enclosure] is only getting worse. Bill C69 will not only stop any new pipelines from being built in Canada, but will throw open existing easements to new trespassers who can sandbag and suspend farm and pipeline operations alike.

capturing the regulator, after years of the sector's attempts to co-opt and appease environmentalists.

Here CAEPLA descends the typical libertarian slippery slope. What began as an argument against a political structure that can be used to enclose freedoms now concludes that all regulation is vulnerable to cooptation, and therefore the government should *laissez tout faire*. But far more interestingly, this rhetoric shows how arguments for and against the corridor imply the function of the state is to structurally organize the perfect mediation of capital and resource extraction, and in doing so effect its own vanishing. For example, Ragan complained that the "tough approval process" hinders the westward movement of hydro that could "help displace fossil-fuel generation." CAEPLA likewise prefers the regulatory process to be minimized to avoid overreach by conservatives and radical environmentalists alike. And, as I will show in the examination of the Calgary plan, Fellows relies heavily on the conceit that what's holding up environmental progress is a lack of de-regulation.

6.4 From Anachronism to the Future: the Corridor as Text/Media/Genre

Of course, the idea of the national corridor mega-project is not only backward-looking. It clearly expresses an imperative to accommodate the perceived needs of Canadian capitalism and the staples-extractive sectors *in the present*, and to stabilize their uncertainties for the future. Writing in *The Walrus*, Brian Busby and John Van Nostrand (separately) address the present/future-orientation of the corridor concept. Busby jokingly proposes the plan be considered in light of Brexit, and Van Nostrand very seriously proposes a corridor as a means of strengthening Canada's position in the world economy.

Quipping "Typically, Rohmer's bold ideas are solutions in search of problems," Busby reads Rohmer's fictional version of the MCDC scenario—1975's *Exodus/UK*—as an early version of the Brexit crisis. As Busby summarizes, in *Exodus/UK* the United Kingdom angers Saudi Arabia by selling weapons to Israel. The Saudis halt all oil sales to UK and pull all their money out of the British banking system. The resulting crisis prompts the British prime minister to see the problem as one of unsupportable population. He proposes "rationalizing the population," encouraging the migration of ten percent of the UK's inhabitants—mostly to Canada—to alleviate pressure on the Kingdom.

> This provides no end of challenges for [Canadian] Prime Minister Joseph Roussel […] Seeing its influence diluted by impure dyed-in-the-wool Englishmen, Quebec is adamantly opposed and threatens a referendum [on] succession. Meanwhile, Alberta and British Columbia court the UK immigrants in an effort to redress imbalance in the House of Commons. Unless Roussel's government agrees to the 2 million [immigrants], our westernmost provinces will hold a referendum of their own. (Busby)

Busby explains that the novel's resolution follows what Rohmer prescribes in *The Green North*:

> Canada's minister of urban affairs reminds the prime minister of Canada of something called the 'Mid-Canada Development Corridor,' a scheme for developing the boreal forest from coast to coast, between Canada's South and the Arctic area. 'If the government decides to take all these people,' argues the minster, 'I think we should do a crash-program on the Mid-Canada concept.'
>
> 'Excellent idea,' Roussel responds. 'That plan was put forward by some lawyer from Toronto wasn't it? I've forgotten his name.'

Busby translates the fiction into its literal, real-life referents:

> His name? Why, none other than Richard Rohmer, of course. The ninety-two-year-old has spent the better part of his life promoting the Mid-Canada Development Corridor. He even once got to present this boldest, most excellent of his bold ideas in a meeting with Pierre Trudeau. Had it been implemented, Chibougamau would be a metropolis today and freeways would link Flin Flon and Fort McMurray.

But this literal translation only coordinates between Rohmer's texts; Busby's reading doesn't see that Rohmer isn't simply offering a fictional as well as a non-fictional version of the same "solution" which is in search of a problem. Rather, both the fiction and the nonfiction are *imaginary* resolutions to an actual material-historical problem that Busby misses, namely that the nation is a medium, a vehicle or a corridor for channelling flows of materials and capital. Again, Busby comes back to the literal reading:

> It's easy to see why Trudeau didn't bite. Rohmer never did provide much of a reason for the massive undertaking beyond poor predictions of population growth. In his book *The Green North: Mid-Canada* (1970), he anticipates a 2016 Canada of 50 million living north of 400 million Americans.

Busby uses the outlandishness of politics as he was writing the piece in the autumn of 2016 to joke,

> Whether or not the corridor will be of any use to David Cameron and Justin Trudeau I cannot say, yet I can't help but think of it as a bold idea whose time has come at last. Forty-six years ago, Rohmer wrote in *The Green North: Mid-Canada*: "The United States is undergoing tremendous upheavals within its own society and we should be prepared for a sharp increase in the number of moderate Americans who decide to move to Canada."

If not now, when? November, I'm guessing.

Again, Busby's mocking solution-problem conceit obscures its shrewdness. This essay is an (always well-deserved) excuse to discuss Rohmer's weird ideas and their strange connections to today's increasingly weird political scene. But even Busby's joke about the MCDC as a solution to Brexit is immediately rephrased as a formal solution to problems of Canada's mediatory role and place between two empires! Even if the plan is not going to be taken up by the UK, it will remain relevant—because Trump is coming. In other words, like CAEPLA's critique of Scheer intuited, the formal solution can take any content. CAEPLA is upset that a conservative government would propose a tool for the kind of enclosure they associate with the Liberals of Pierre Trudeau. The structure itself, this capacity to hold content, to transmit, is, as McLuhan would say, the textual meaning of the infrastructure.

Busby is a participant in a blog where several friends read and comment on each of Rohmer's many works. In their reading of *The Green North*, they explain, "Typically, Rohmer's bold ideas are solutions in search of problems," and this is a reasonable interpretation of Rohmer's authorial oeuvre. But it misses an authoritative aspect. As an organic intellectual, a technocratic participant in government commissions and boards, Rohmer presents techno-nationalist allegories of the state form. His texts are forms themselves looking for content; or, rather, they are aesthetic representations that see themselves as political ideas. They're media, and their message consists in their articulation of the relations by which the state, capital, and human and natural resources are organized. Rohmer's work, particularly on the persistently-relevant MCDC, shows how the state is generating solutions as a mediation device between its 19th nation-form and its form in 20th-21st-century globalization.

By reading the MCDC in relation to technological nationalism, I see Rohmer's ideas as structural mediations of capital and resource flows that, improperly managed, lead to problems. In other words, the national projects undertaken in the ideology of technological nationalism constitute "the nation from and as 'communication itself,' with communication understood in its richest sense, encompassing both the transportation of bodies and things and the attempted (but imperfectly accomplished) circulation of shared meaning" (Charland in Barney 80). The solutions Rohmer offers are aestheticizations of the spatial and temporal character of the nation as a resource/staples economy mediating between two empires. Looking back at the MCDC (or at Rohmer's earlier book *The Arctic Imperative*, dealing with Northern development—the first statement of what he fictionally problematizes in *Ultimatum*) it may seem there's no clear "problem," but to read this way is to retcon the cause as the effect.[187] The lesson of reading the nation in terms of chronotopes and narrative theory is that the world views expressed in genres and literary forms are not matters of content; rather they provide indexes to the material possibilities for thought in a particular time/place. The idea of organizing a state-private structure to solve whichever problems is one way to understand the meaning of a text. Moreover, Busby makes this function of textuality clear himself as he uses the corridor concept to, however-sarcastically, suggest a solution to the timely problem of Brexit.[188]

Reading the corridor as a medium and as a text explains its formal appeal across the political spectrum. It explains, for example, why the conservative businessman Rohmer could

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[187] To be clear, this lack of a clearly-stated problem is a real cause for complaint in reading historically-topical texts. As Busby and the bloggers read Rohmer, or for that matter any sensationalized presentation of current affairs, the affective logic is clear—there's a problem; but the referent has been lost. This will ring frustratingly true to anyone who has spent time trying to decipher the specific context in works of Marxist political economy—from works by Marx and Engels themselves to Arrighi and beyond—in which the phrase "the current crisis" may as well be "in today's modern world." Like the referent for Rohmer's urgency, all "crisis theory" is in part dealing with the crisis of vague pronouns.

[188] Brian Busby "The Brexit Fix-it: How an obscure forty-year-old Canadian thriller might help alleviate a global crisis," *The Walrus* Jan 2016

use the drastic scaling up of the state to build an economic-nationalist utopia, and why this concept can in turn be adopted by the current Conservative Party candidate. That the same structure can accommodate different content shows that 1) the corridor is a text, capable of soaking up meanings; but also, 2) that the corridor is a medium. The text, as Jameson puts it, can register contradictions, in this case, Rohmer's economic-nationalist and Scheer's neoliberal state-capitalist contents. But it doesn't resolve them. The corridor will change the scale and pace of human affairs whether it's built by Liberals or Conservatives; and the Bakhtinian world-view that the corridor-text expresses will likewise be the same: the nation-space will mediate the flows of raw materials and transnational capital, and it will reproduce subjectivity commensurate with the extractivist mode of production.

6.5 Taking the Future More Seriously

For John Van Nostrand, the corridor is a spatial solution to the explicitly temporal problems of an extractive economy. In his essay, "If We Build It They Will Stay" (the very title is a future-oriented conditional syllogism), the architect and urban planner gets right to the heart of carbon democracy in a staples-finance economy;[189] the essay's lead reads: "Instead of extracting resources and leaving, we could populate the mid-Canada corridor—and create a bigger, better country." In the aesthetic ideology of technological nationalism, extraction—or, the evacuation of resources—and settlement—or, the permanence of habitation—are perfectly commensurable. That is, the concept of the corridor is foremost concerned with subjective forms of life—mobility, security, dependency, development—and only secondarily with any particular commodity. This will become far more obvious in the Calgary plan. But for now, Van Nostrand is taking up Rohmer's idea, arguing it's still relevant. But I argue that Van Nostrand's argument

[189] John van Nostrand is "an architect, an urban planner, and the founding principal of planningAlliance in Toronto."

is based on the assumption that what's relevant is the solution-problem relationship that Busby mocks. The idea that's beneath technological nationalism in Canada, is that development—smart settling, smart colonialism or exploration, mapping, nation building—will solve *national* problems. Surely, planning is capable of doing great things. And Van Nostrand's essay has been picked up by planning associations like *Plan Canada*, the journal of the Canadian Institute of Planners. But the seeming difficulty that planners have of separating plans from nationalism is what seems so anachronistic. The nation or state should surely make decisions, but why do we think these decisions need to be linked to a "national purpose"? Aren't the real facts of economic insecurity, overly-lax or overly-rigid regulatory processes, regional wealth disparities, not to mention environmental catastrophe, enough to rally us?

I argue the nation-state is a chronotope, and it's a place, like a counter-environment, where the problems of capitalism and finance are imaginarily played out and resolved. Therefore, one way to understand Busby's observation is that Rohmer's plan is an articulation of the state-corporate apparatus whose function it is to solve all problems; that is, the corridor is the imaginary spatial form of the state's temporal mediation of capital.

Van Nostrand begins by figuring the problem in spatial terms:

> Eighty percent of the Canadian population lives within 160 kilometres of our southern border. The Far North, though largely unpopulated, has always been part of our national identity, and under Stephen Harper, who is keenly aware of threats to our northern sovereignty, it has become a strategic asset and an increasingly important site of natural-resource interests. But the millions of square kilometres in between these two areas have represented something of a *forgotten zone*, even though mid-Canada is quickly becoming *the most productive part of the* economy, defines our country internationally as a vast

> reservoir of natural resources, and is home to the majority of First Peoples in Canada. (Van Nostrand; my emphasis)

In this spatialization, what's forgotten is not a geographic periphery, like a sparsely-populated fringe, but is squarely in the economic centre of the nation. This spatialization further aestheticizes the mediatory, Pearsonian aspect of Canada's *amour propre*. But it also has an economic reference, reflecting the current clichés in which the middle class is being forgotten. Such articulations as the forgotten middle—or of de Soto's claim we've forgotten how to put capital into motion—are aesthetic representations of the material de-politicization of labour and the disavowal of production's place in the accumulation of value. So, again, the corridor allows for Van Nostrand—in typical idealist fashion—to make economic claims for a futurity based in archaic forms of extractive capital. Van Nostrand is formally correct, stressing that the middle is the most productive part of economy. The problem however is that the referent for the "middle" is an imaginary figure based on circulation rather than production. Buried within or carried along with this forgotten middle-noumenon is the material basis of resources and the actual presence of First Peoples. So, just in these three sentences, Van Nostrand narrates the time-space condensation by which the ideology of technological nationalism overwrites political economy in Canada: the majority of Canadians live along the southern border; the remainder—which is both the economically-prior source of value and the quickly-growing site of the nation's future—has been forgotten; and we must wake up to the reality that this space of resources and people form the engine of our economy; the moral is therefore that the nation has really been built on this middle area (like in the current US-post-industrial idealism that the nation was built not by industrial labour, but by the middle class). A vast spatialization of resources is what "defines our country." Finally, these resources are human capital, and just as in *The War Between Us* and in

Flanagan and de Soto, any matters of inequality are rooted in the failure to recognize the source of our economic strength. Van Nostrand follows the formula common to all supporters of the corridor: this recognition consists of Indigenous equation with Nature, Canada's equation with natural resources, and Canadians' equation with human resources. This series of rhetorical substitutions constitutes the argument of development discourse in Canada.

Therefore Busby's joke misses the problem/solution relation in the corridor from Rohmer to the present moment. The problem as Van Nostrand states it shows the framework, the chronotope, in which he's locating both the problem and solution. It's clear that multinational extractive companies invest in and exploit developing nations, leaving environmental devastation behind them when the money leaves. Thus, in order to

> address the inequity between emerging economies and foreign investment giants, the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private-sector lending arm, established performance standards for companies operating in the developing world. It provides broad guidance to "avoid, minimize, and, where residual impacts remain, to compensate/offset for risks and impacts to workers, Affected Communities, and the environment." The standards include detailed protocols to encourage transparency, inclusion, and the creation of grievance mechanisms. There are also rules for pollution prevention and abatement. Most international resource companies now abide by the IFC guidelines—doing so makes getting financing easier.

There are world standards which try to counter the deterministic behaviour of extractivism across the uneven global system. But since Canada is a developed country, it can't appeal to these standards:[190]

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[190] This has been understood by Kenneth Coates, etc., who describe Canada as site of exception and internal colonialism, i.e., Canada is structured to be a corridor between developed centres and undeveloped peripheries.

> while Canada faces many of the same issues as developing countries—exploitation of Indigenous peoples, internal migration to jobs that leads to significant population shifts, and environmental degradation—there's an assumption that existing regulations will force resource companies to behave responsibly.

Since 2012, though, the Conservative government has passed, amended, and repealed environmental legislation, leading to the seeming absurdity that "As developing countries introduce more stringent environmental guidelines, we are relaxing ours."

It should be clear that the problems Canada faces as an extractive economy consist in the spatio-temporal contradictions between the national-fixity of the extractive site and the transnational-fluid character of the capital that exploits and valuates its staples. Canada is a developed country, but the historical trajectory of its mode of production from pre- to post-industrial has left it few of the characteristics enjoyed by developed *industrialized* nations. Van Nostrand thus states his thesis in terms that register the spatio-temporal character of capital, but without recognizing the historical-particularity of Canada as a staples economy between transnational empires:

> Resource companies go where it is most profitable to operate, and Canada, as federal and provincial politicians are fond of saying, is open for business. The challenge is to secure the maximum benefit for both Indigenous peoples and the country as a whole while inflicting minimal damage on the environment.

The problem is both temporal and spatial. As the nation is immobile and capital is mobile, the solution requires a container for mobile capital that will encourage it to stay. This representation suffers from the same confusion as Scheer's claim that Canada both doesn't need trade, and is so strong because of trade. By missing the essentially-mediatory character of capital in Canada, Van

Nostrand again sees a corridor as a form that can contain mobile resources rather than channel them; in other words, he proposes a spatial resolution to a temporal problem. But it's a spatial proposition that doesn't acknowledge the complex temporality of the problem, that is, the differences in national and international capital mediated by a staples/extractive economy. By missing this dimension, Van Nostrand's plan remains in the aesthetic realm of technological nationalism, the realm of "big ideas" and "national purpose." As Barney writes of the Harper-Prentice-era "nation-building" pipeline projects:

> If this is the new National Dream, it is an uneasy one. As Charland has observed, the strictly instrumental character of technological nationalism, devoid of "substance or commonality" beyond collective investment in technological development itself, leaves it particularly vulnerable to contradiction and incoherence. (82)

Naylor, too, explains that the "incoherence" or haphazardness of resource extraction is not something that could ever be solved by technological nationalist projects, but is an effect of the kind of capital coveted and sought by exactly such idealist national purposes as Van Nostrand is endorsing:

> The rise of branch plant industrialism has led to the secular stagnation of rural areas, a tendency greatly enhanced by rapid resource depletion policies fostered by tax give-aways and by the rise of American corporate farming leading to bankruptcy of the family farm. Concentrations of direct investment tend to fragment national markets and balkanize the state structure. Pressure groups and lobbies increasingly cluster around the provincial levels of government, and federal-provincial relations degenerate into an interminable squabble over the distribution of the spoils as each province requires an

> increasing share of total government revenue to bribe branch plant industry or resource-extracting firms into locating in its sphere of authority. (Naylor 32)

As I will show in the next chapter, Van Nostrand himself argues against the effects of such bribing in his case study of Fort McMurray, but in a way that figures the pressure exerted by extractive interests as natural.

Van Nostrand is registering the relation between idealist aesthetics and the material mode of production, the contradiction that technological nationalist infrastructure-texts proclaim to resolve. From Rohmer to the Calgary plan, pipelines have been touted as resolutions to aesthetic problems of incoherence. The aesthetic shared by industrial, mechanized rationalization and circulating, automated mediation results in and leads to—or, reproduces—the problems of disunity or incoherence technological nationalism sets out to solve. As Naylor puts it,

> The advance of industrialism is normally an integrating social force producing nationalism; it is clear that second-hand industrialism is a disintegrating social force producing Pearsonian 'internationalism.' (32)

Van Nostrand sees the Oil Sands as a paradigm of irrational planning, describing Fort McMurray as a boom town: the exploding population vastly outpaces infrastructure; there's little investment or planning in housing or urban development; and the transient population spends most of its money outside the community. Those dollars which are spent in the town typically support "drugs, alcohol, strip clubs, and prostitution." Van Nostrand makes the crucial point that time is the index of the problem, in that the space of Fort Mac is related to capital in a way that's structured to prevent long-term thinking, let alone planning. Nevertheless, he relies on the vaguest aesthetic judgments—"haphazard, short-term"—to assert his conclusions:

> The oil sands contain proven reserves of 170 billion barrels, roughly 13 percent of the global total. At current rates of production, the timeline for its full exploitation is estimated at more than 200 years, and yet existing First Nations, Metis, and non-Aboriginal communities are being built up on a haphazard, short-term basis.

As it is for Rohmer and the earlier generation of experts arguing for the necessity of smarter, more responsible development of the north and of Canada's resource economy, for Van Nostrand there is clear work to be done. But the vagueness of the critique leads into an equally vague, abstract grammatical subject. "The alternative" to the haphazardness,

> given that 200-year timeline, is to build permanent settlements. By 2045, oil production is forecast to increase to six million barrels a day, up from 2.1 million barrels a day in 2013, and the population of the area will reach 240,000. To accommodate this growth, Fort McMurray will need infrastructure and housing, which it won't get without a fundamental rethinking of how we approach resource extraction.

It's only too true that useable infrastructure cannot be developed given the prevalence of short-term thinking, but the rethinking needs to extend further than "our approaches to resource extraction" (which is actually not what the examples he gives are about); rethinking has to extend to political structures, that is, the actual processes by which—and places in which—"approaches" and "planning" happen.

Van Nostrand is describing the serious problem by which short-term concerns get more attention than glaring long-term issues; he's describing the time-aspect of what Innis elaborates in his theory of the staples trap. Van Nostrand has identified that the problems associated with boom towns are due to a contradiction between a staples spatialization (as places with things to be extracted in a short time frame for quick profit) and the more human or humanistic scale upon

which spaces and times are usually reckoned (as places to stay, live, and work). But having registered this material contradiction, the argument again returns to an idealist aesthetic: "the alternative" to the short-term temporality built into extractive industry "is to build permanent settlements." The crystalline tautology of this argument (the alternative to the temporary is the permanent) reflects the circulatory premises of an economy based in extraction and dominated by merchant instead of industrial capital. Van Nostrand imagines the political unit as a container to stabilize merchant capital, which is by essence transitory. As Naylor explains,

> Industrial capital needs cheap raw materials, easy credit conditions, and low transportation costs; merchant capital relies on regional scarcities of raw materials and goods to obtain high prices extracted through credit costs, transportation rates, and merchandise mark-up. Merchant capital, typified by a low ratio of fixed to circulatory capital, also needs rapid turnover, and cannot undertake long-term risky investment. It is, therefore, oriented towards abetting the quick extraction of staple output, rather than industrial processing. (21)

Still, it's important to note that Van Nostrand has *registered* the contradiction: extractive spaces typically will not attract the investments of fixed capital that would develop and sustain them over time as satisfying places to live (I will discuss this further in the next chapter). But Van Nostrand does not recognize that it is the abstract equivalence of capital (Fort McMurray's value = its proximity to bitumen) that allows the ideal aesthetic commensurability between the location of bitumen and the location of a town worthy of settlement (not to mention development, fixed capital investment, and planning). As such, he can't rebut the crude-staples-valuation of merchant capital with an argument for a more humanistic measure of value and the time in which it could be realized (perhaps along the lines of Innis's "Plea for Time"). Thus his important

critique of the temporal problems within a staples trap remains in a simple, structuralist binary, an aesthetic fixing of a complex spatio-temporal relation.

Van Nostrand's argument is structurally-bound to reproduce the worldview of his time. The corridor, which is capable of holding any content, for him embodies the promise of rational planning. And this is where the true anachronism of the present corridor plan becomes visible. The technological nationalism it partakes of corresponds to the immaterial, purely circulatory image of capital in the 21st century. The corridor maintains the perennial fantasy that Canada can become a post-industrial nation without ever having to industrialize, but the current manifestation of technological nationalism has no need to conform to the 1970s' economic-nationalist-aesthetics that appeal to what Naylor calls the "integrating social forces of industrialization." The current corridor plan is anachronistic because it is imagined as an instrument of synchronic "planning," but it is based on diachronic premises of "development." As I'll show in the next chapter, the MCDC was explicitly imagined as a form that could contain and manage the development and diversification of Canada over time, from extraction to processing to industrial production and transport. Rohmer's utopian fantasy of containing and channelling the division of labour's historical development from mercantilism through industrialization into the post-industrial knowledge economy has, in the recent corridor, been papered over with the figure of "multi-modality," an ahistorical premise that incommensurables can be held together in abstract equivalence.

The history of the corridor concept shows how aesthetic ideology reflective of staples-extraction has functioned to imagine ways fixed capital might come to the rescue of a fluid nation. Regarding anachronism and the promise of a strong future for Canadian energy, the corridor is a text, a spatial figure that can register spatio-temporal contradictions and thereby be

imagined as resolving spatio-temporal problems. But while a corridor indeed consistently registers material contradictions, it can only hope to solve them in the aesthetic realm. Van Nostrand's aesthetic judgments are, indeed, hard to refute, but by relying on idealist premises of formal shapes to stop material flux, he misses the fact that dismal housing conditions for Indigenous populations and for oil workers are not "caused" by a lack of planning. The lack of planning is itself the expression of the primary syndrome of the staples trap, of what was previously registered as the lack of development and which reflects *the mediatory nature of Canadian space-time*, that is, the political-economic fact that Canada is a corridor already.

And, finally, the stubborn fact that the temporality of the oil staple is antithetical to the fixed capital required for any meaningful planning is clear in Van Nostrand's understanding of time as represented by oil reserves. There are "more than 200 years" represented in Fort McMurray's s/oil. But this is precisely the time of the resources, the time of extractivism, of the carbon economy; it's petro-time, determined, measured, and defined by fluid, merchant capital, which is, as his own examples of resource exploitation in developing nations show, not at all compatible with human time. That Van Nostrand misses this distinction is doubly-ironic. His solution boils down to the claim that the nation can structurally fix fluid capital and retain investment within the space of the nation. Making things more profitable for capital stay is one thing. But the nature of extractivism is not to "stay," it's to extract and transmit, to alienate, which is where the deeper irony becomes apparent: Rohmer's plan was to build a nation (Mid-Canada) on top of the already-existing (Southern-Canadian) nation; Van Nostrand misses that the corridor-nation which would facilitate favourable conditions for extractive capital has existed since Confederation.[191] The problems he registers aren't symptoms of an unfavourable climate

[191] See Eric Kierans' 1983 Massey Lectures *Globalism and the Nation State*, especially Lecture One, "The Meaning of Williamsburg."

for extractive investment—they are consequences of two centuries (and counting) worth of extractive activities.

Chapter 7

The Mid-Canada Development Corridor

> Energy had to replace matter as what is permanent. But energy, unlike matter, is not a refinement of the common-sense notion of a "thing"; it is merely a characteristic of physical processes. It might be fancifully identified with the Heraclitean Fire, but it is the burning, not what burns. "What burns" has disappeared from modern physics.
>
> Bertrand Russell, *History of Philosophy*

> The fact is Canada has more than enough oil — not only to displace imports from […] rogue states, but to put an end to all foreign oil imports once and for all. That is part of my vision: a Canada fuelled exclusively by Canadians by 2030. An energy-independent Canada would be a Canada firing on all cylinders, across all sectors and regions. If the United States can do it, so can we.
>
> Andrew Scheer, May 2019[192]

> My plan for Canadians? Lower the cost of living, and leave more money in your pockets. I believe that Canadians across this country are so frustrated because they're working so hard and they're following all the rules, but they feel like they're falling further and further behind or that they're barely getting by.
> I have a plan to lower the cost of living, to make life more affordable, to leave more money in the pockets of Canadians, for their kids, for themselves, or for their aging parents. Because it's time for you to get ahead.
>
> Andrew Scheer, Conservative campaign commercial, August 2019[193]

7.1 Introduction: On the Canadian Spirit

Introducing Richard Rohmer to the Empire Club on November 27th, 1969, the club's President, H. Ian Macdonald asked,

> Where will the concept of Mid-Canada go? That depends on Richard Rohmer, but it also depends on us. The real power which made it possible to put men on the moon was the firm conviction that this feat could be achieved, rather than the technology by which it was achieved. (143)

[192] "Reality check: Scheer wants Canada to be 'energy independent.' Is this possible?" Jim Bronskill. The Canadian Press. https://globalnews.ca/news/5333371/andrew-scheer-energy-independent-plan/

[193] Reporting on the launch this ad and the new slogan "It's time for you to get ahead," CTV described the latter as "the affordability-focused message that the party says will be the campaign's central 'positive' slogan. " https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/conservatives-unveil-campaign-slogan-new-tv-ad-as-election-call-nears-1.4562193

Macdonald's remarks immediately make apparent the idealist prioritizing of spirit over matter at the base of technological nationalism. The technology by which men reached the moon would have been nothing without the "power" and "conviction" that such a feat were possible, which thereby *made* the feat "possible." But the referent of "technology" here is particular, practical, use-specific technology, that is, technology manifested in products, not the technology of productive processes nor that of governmental apparatuses. This view is the technological counterpart to the Kantian distinction between "hypothetical/motivated" and "categorical/formal" structures which I discussed last chapter in regard to Mitchell's categorization by which states are divided into those who *use* oil money and those apparently neutral, natural, and non-motivated states whose resource wealth can be financialized. Such idealism regards tools or media as objects to be used by transcendent subjects, who in turn imbue objects with their own value, as good guys countering bad guys with otherwise neutral guns (or as McLuhan puts it, with apple pie). It's this pragmatic, neutral technology that is secondary to the technological subject, the subject who can will tools into being and can will men to the moon. Thus, for Macdonald and supporters of the MCDC,

> By the same token, the firm conviction that all of Canada, and not just an elongated band in the south, can be fully developed may be a first step towards its realization. To tell us why he hopes and believes that it will, I am happy to present a Canadian with a vision, a vision based on what this country set out to be, what it continues to seek, and what it must be determined to become. Gentlemen, I present Richard Rohmer, proud father of an exciting idea, that may even result in the twenty-first century belonging to Canada. (143)

I will now look closely at Rohmer's proto-neoliberal idea to transcendentally use state-private technology, to keep government bureaucracy small and technocratic expertise high, to

organize political representation, university and corporate connections, to maximize disciplinary knowledge and to cut out inefficiencies, and more; in other words, to perfect the technological apparatus that would encourage the proper subjective "determination" to make the technological products of the material world bend to its will. Like Van Nostrand, Rohmer starts from the premise that the nation is urbanizing, so it's imperative to urbanize well. His plan calls for a utopian totalization of the state in economics and administration. It is a call for a planned capitalist economy, marshalling the power of the state to organize and to ethically direct production and distribution, in short, to mediate capitalism—as all good liberals (including Scheer) still wish to do—through the liberal-democratic state.

Thus Rohmer's pre-constitutional plan tackles many of the problems that the next decade's patriation of the constitution would be aimed at solving. But where constitutions figuratively structure legal relations, Rohmer's plan is to literally build a structure of concrete relations, a "nation on top of the nation." The extraordinarily ambitious Corridor project would effectively circumvent Confederation as a structure of competing powers and technically mediate the Dominion's built-in municipal, provincial, and federal conflicts, resolving them into a space of pure efficacy. From our historical vantage, we recognize that these aims are identical to those which a fully developed pipeline or a robust economy would supposedly do. And so it's no surprise that the Corridor plan has been revisited, albeit with far less emphasis on the role of the state as agent. In fact, as I will show, the utter absence of the state in the most recent Corridor pitches signifies the true role of the state presumed by the shared liberal-democratic *cum* neoliberal ideology reaching from Rohmer to Scheer. And I conclude that this ideology reflects Canada's political-economic character as a staples economy.

Here, and in the following chapters, I will argue that from our present historical standpoint, it is clear that Rohmer's plan to solidify Confederation amounts to an abolition of the state as the principal governance structure, making the state a vanishing mediator on the way to the perfect governmentality of the neoliberal end of history. To understand the way such premises and assumptions are still at work today and to properly contextualize the technological nationalist elements connected to the MCDC that are now reified as extractivist, petrocultural common sense, we need to return to the event of the plan itself, which Rohmer first conceived in 1967 "as a national developmental strategy that would encompass the entire Boreal Region, from Newfoundland to the Yukon" ("The Forgotten North"). The plan was then studied by the Acres consulting firm who produced a report later that year. In August 1969, Lakehead University held the Mid-Canada Corridor Conference, "as a means of public consultation and scholarly discussion of the Acres report."[194] The conference was then summarized in Rohmer's 1970 book, *The Green North: Mid Canada*.[195]

Like much in Rohmer's work, the MCDC plan is a historical curiosity. When it is mentioned today, it's presented as a Cold War factoid, among similar schemes, like the 1950s' Project Cauldron/Project Oilsand.[196] The MCDC, however, succeeded where the US-led latter plan—to explode subterranean nuclear warheads in Athabasca to liquefy, unearth, and allow for the cheap flow of Canadian bitumen—failed. Project Cauldron had been given the go-ahead until

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[194] https://www.climate-policy-watcher.org/canadian-arctic/the-forgotten-north.html

[195] The MCDC was more than a mere idea for Rohmer. The back of *The Green North* (Rohmer is such a renaissance man that the author-biography in each one of his books presents much different credentials) explains that,

> [Rohmer] is an author, an inventor, churchman, and involved in many community projects. He is Chairman of the Mid-Canada Development Conference and President of both the Mid-Canada Development Foundation, Inc., and the Mid-Canada Community Service and Broadcasting Foundation, Inc., non-profit corporations which he serves at his own expense.

[196] Many such projects, schemes, and events are detailed in *It's All Happening So Fast - A Counter-History of the Modern Canadian Environment* (Lev Bratishenko and Mirko Zardini, eds. Canadian Centre for Architecture, Jap Sam Books, 2017).

Diefenbaker finally objected to the optics of US nuclear weapons being used on Canadian soil. In other words, the project didn't meet a standard of nationalism. That is, those behind the project, which would have literally brought foreign power to bear on the material soil, weren't able to manage the idealist problem of perceived encroachment on the more figurative "Canadian soil" which is the idealist basis of sovereignty. Unable to effect the nationalist-ideological massaging of transnational-material exploitation, the project could not take part in Canada's long technological-nationalist tradition;[197] the project could not convincingly claim it would unite and build the nation. Perhaps describing the logical limit or conceptual antinomy of the extractivist contradiction of building a space by destroying it, Project Oilsand was too literal in its destructive/constructive aims. By contrast, the MCDC meets all nationalist standards despite being itself aesthetically and structurally related to the techno-utopian, suicidal-state madness of the age of Mutually Assured Destruction: the Mid-Canada region is the name of one stratum into which Canada was strategically divided by NORAD. The "Mid"-Canada Line eventually gave way to the "Distant" Canada of the DEW Line, just as the former had superseded the naturalistically-named Pine Tree Line, which in its turn provides the aesthetic element "green"

[197] Even still, the idea—originally thought up by Richfield Oil's Manley L. Natland—persisted well into the 1970s:

> The death knell for Project Oilsand was given in April 1962 when [secretary of state for external affairs, Howard] Green announced in a speech to Parliament, "Canada is opposed to nuclear tests. Period." With that, Project Oilsand was abandoned. Nevertheless, Natland presented the proposal at the Second Athabasca Oil Sands Conference in 1963, and his paper was included in the accompanying publication, Athabasca Oil Sands—The Karl Clark Volume. He was even granted a US patent on the proposed process in 1970. In 1976, the idea was resurrected by Phoenix Canada Oil as "Project Athabaska." That, too, went nowhere. Operation Plowshare [under whose auspices Cauldron was initiated] was eventually cancelled in 1977 due to public opposition and lack of Congressional support.

http://history.alberta.ca/energyheritage/sands/mega-projects/setting-the-stage/the-second-athabasca-oil-sands-conference/project-oil-sand.aspx.

One way to read Rohmer's later works is as negotiations of the alterity of foreign technological encroachment on Canada—i.e., what fits into Canadian technological nationalism and what doesn't. For example in 1973's *Ultimatum*, the threat of US invasion is the occasion for Canada to further its technological and economic nationalism by integrating into the super-national world system. But in 2007's *Ultimatum II*—in which the US declares the Canadian North a toxic waste dump—the crisis is not resolvable with better integration into the world system.

which allows Rohmer to present the "Green North" as a liveable region that ought to be developed.[198]

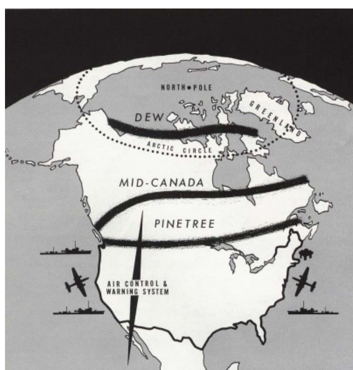

Fig. 6: Canada's Regions per NORAD

To be sure, much has been made lately of dredging up, denouncing, or exploiting Cold War anxieties;[199] one function of such rehashing has no doubt been the reflexive association of the state form—as tied up as it is with the Post-War mode of production—with an embarrassingly-recent but distant past. Indeed, as last chapter's discussion shows, virtually any idea which seeks to draw on the power of the state leaves itself vulnerable to accusations of hopeless anachronism. However, I argue the MCDC's recent resuscitation is *not at all* anachronistic in the sense of being a statist fantasy of military/industrial production seeking to reproduce an outmoded politics. Commentators who see the corridor as anachronistic or an idea whose time has come are missing the fact that the aesthetic claims which suggested its necessity and which justified its economic and nationalist premises are still hard at work today. They miss

[198] A subtext in this dissertation is the aesthetic naturalism behind the ways Canada has been, and has been proposed to be, regionalized. For more, see the Acres report, which amounts to a series of maps with different regionalizations in regard to resources and land uses (http://www.plancanada.com/midcanada_corridor_report.pdf). In the end, treelines, like the settlement areas Rohmer taxonomizes below, become apparent as abstractions with which Nature refuses to work: for example, birds famously set off the DEW Line alarms. Essentially, both the natural and the artificial refuse to be distinguished by the idealist categorizations behind the technology. See http://lswilson.dewlineadventures.com/ and http://pubs.aina.ucalgary.ca/aina/DEWLineBib.pdf.

[199] Examples include Mitt Romney's 2012 debate with Obama regarding Russia as the US's biggest geopolitical threat; the Michael Steele dossier, published by Buzzfeed, detailing the Russian FSB's alleged *kompromat* material on Donald Trump; nostalgia for the end of the world, like in Netflix's *Stranger Things 3*; or blaming the inability to avert climate-disaster on state structures, on display in the heavy-handed liberal-democratic allegory of HBO's mini-series *Chernobyl*.

as well the consistency of the criteria of rational development. These premises are apparent in the ubiquitous shared vocabulary of "random," "haphazard," "rational" and "irrational." Throughout the persistent discourse of technological nationalism, the nation is seen as a project that must mediate material value and ideological values, to make the former conform to and reproduce the latter's aesthetic criteria. For example, in *The Green North*, Rohmer quotes Jon Hopkins, an attendee of the conference:

> "What this conference has done," Hopkins said, "is make people aware of the fact that we must stop random development in the Corridor [or, more correctly, the area in which the hypothetical corridor would be constructed] and arrive at some acceptable policy before very long for Mid-Canada." (26-7)

Rohmer likewise poses contemporaneous political problems in terms of an Un-Canadian messiness:

> Since the provincial and federal governments often seem to find it difficult to work together amicably, could they shelve their differences and work in harmony to develop Mid-Canada in an orderly way? (28)

Echoing Ian Macdonald, Rohmer asserts his technological-nationalist claims for the unifying potential of the corridor by way of the recent achievement of the moon landing. Here, the moon offers the ultimate aesthetic argument for "rationalizing" the nation in accordance with the idealist spirit of technocratic management:

> It may sound hard to believe that Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin had little more personal discomfort in reaching the lunar surface than some Canadians have when they try to travel to a large city for some seasonal shopping. Canadian ingenuity can solve the

problem so long as the decision is made and implemented properly and sensibly—to develop Mid-Canada for people in Canada's own way. (29)

Technology's unruly relation to that kind of reason and coherence appropriate to the subject who ought to control technology underwrites discussions of technological nationalist projects from Rohmer's time to today. Rohmer's work offers a particularly unselfconscious reference for how resources, energy, and infrastructure are imagined to relate to the technology of subjectivity—which I'm arguing here is a carbon-democratic form of governmentality premised on the state's economic mediation of commercial capital and its political mediation, or self-overcoming and vanishing at the end of history. Rohmer's enthusiastic fictional and non-fiction speculations about the potential of the Mid-Canada Development Corridor, of the Petro-Canada and Trans-Arctic corporations, and of National and Continental Energy Programs (particularly in *Ultimatum* and *Exxoneration* but also throughout his oeuvre) make up projects to map social relations as they relate to infrastructure in Canada. *The Green North: Mid Canada* places Southern problems in an imaginary infrastructural line with the coeval problems of Northern development and resource transportation. The progress made by Richard Nixon with Alaska's Indigenous population regarding development offered a strategy that Rohmer sees as both a bastion against irresponsibly profit-obsessed capitalism, and as a boon for rational capitalist development. As he argues in *The Arctic Imperative* (1973), the Canadian North is being destroyed carelessly due to a mismatch between ideas of the North and legal and property arrangements based on that archaic image. These works also combine technological nationalism with economic nationalism to articulate threats to Canada's interest and sovereignty in terms of foreign direct investment (FDI). No isolationist, Rohmer nevertheless saw the contemporaneous

form of FDI as incompatible with both Canada's needs and its possibilities, and he set out to reimagine the national project along these lines.[200]

In addition to providing remarkably earnest examples of technological nationalism, Rohmer's plans also demonstrate technologies *of* nationalism, imaginary ways to bring Canada into modernity, into the international community, to strengthen and distil Canadian identity by overcoming archaic social forms and to interpellate exactly the transcendent subject which Macdonald warns us we must become. In Rohmer's work the state is a powerful instrument and a proven agent in answering these challenges, and the MCDC is, among many other things, a fascinating blueprint for building the ideological apparatus appropriate to the carbon-democratic governance of a staples economy at the end of history.

7.2 Corridor Aesthetics vs. City Aesthetics

Tracing the idealist aesthetics shared between current versions of the corridor idea (last chapter) and Rohmer's plan shows how the aesthetics of Canadian independence overwrite the material realities of Canadian dependency (Innis; Watkins; Naylor; Teeple). There's no way to overcome dependency without recognizing the temporal relations spatialized by way of margins and centres. Rohmer's plan is basically a call for a new version of what Donald Creighton called the St Lawrence empire (the route, discussed last chapter, along which the fur trade, the CPR, etc., transmit staples from the peripheries to the concentric financial centres like Montreal on to London, etc.). But what Rohmer and his collaborators miss—as do today's Scheer-Calgary proponents—is that the focus on aesthetics repeats the disavowal of Innis's economic history approach in favour of an end of history hypothesis. This is why discussion of the corridor

[200] Of course, as is apparent in my discussion of Naylor and Watkins, FDI was a very popular subject for economists and nationalists.

remains concerned with anachronism and catching up instead of registering the clashes of uneven temporalities.

It's clear that the corridor idea is "old" and has a long history. But my argument for looking at the MCDC, and at the work of the authors I define as carbon democrats, is to show how this understanding of infrastructural history is an aesthetic idealism. The MCDC is not interesting because it's a ridiculous throwback, and even less so because it's an idea whose "time has come": the MCDC participates in the way that the uneven and unjust political-economic history of the nation has been contained within a dehistoricized aesthetics that allows the formal equivalence of value and values. For example, as I've shown, Van Nostrand's argument is not concerned with making empirically-provable, scientific, or technocratic claims. Rather, it's based on aesthetic judgments like "haphazard," which is exactly how Rohmer states the case—as a rhetorical question that could never actually penetrate to the level of values he imagines the Corridor bringing about: "Should Mid-Canada be developed? The truth is, Mid-Canada has been under development for years, but mostly it is being developed in a random fashion by individuals, groups and companies who take their opportunities when they find them"[201] (15). The conference is an example of the impulse for planned, large scale projects which can develop the nation over *human* time; utopian by today's standards, the conference proceedings show this impulse is not at all understood as necessarily connected to state form. The fact that such projects sound utopian now makes apparent how connected they are to the state's now-delegitimized role in planning. Yet the problems that Rohmer, Van Nostrand, and Scheer are responding to reflect

[201] Writing in the October, 1969 issue of *Executive*, Rohmer's supporter Ian Reid puts it more bluntly, but in the exact same aesthetically-loaded terms:

> And what is the Mid-Canada Development Corridor? It's a concept, created by Toronto corporation lawyer Richard Rohmer, for development of an area lying roughly between the 50th parallel and the northern tree line, from Newfoundland to the Yukon. But—and it's a big "but"—development would be on a planned, national basis, rather than in the haphazard manner which has characterized the growth of both north and south in the past, *and* it would be implemented by Canadians. (Reprinted as "Preface" to *Green North*)

the persistent spatio-temporal contradiction between the nation as a site for short-term investments and the nation as a place to live—as Van Nostrand puts it, to "stay." By appealing to an aesthetic of rationality in regard to settlement, development, and planning, staples materiality is disavowed in favour of an aesthetic which reflects the mediatory, circulatory mode of production. Such an aesthetic will only ever represent the way staples and capital are *moving*—the process, not any fixed location. This is not to say that the aesthetic of rational development doesn't pertain to spaces and places; clearly, the desire and need to intervene in irrational time-space configurations, to change relations *politically*, is of the highest importance. But in the attempts at intervention I'm examining here, the political—i.e., the form of reason pertaining to matters of liveable, populated spaces—is contained within an aesthetic of movement that depoliticizes the historically-specific spatio-temporal character of the nation as a staples economy.

I'm not saying that appeals to rationality or even to purely aesthetic criteria like "green space" and other figures struggling within and against neoliberalism's spatial discourses are useless or wrong-headed. Rather, I'm saying two things. First, a historical materialist methodology allows us to see that such appeals are not infrastructural, but "superstructural." The only pre-existing referent to which the "reason" could apply is the "infrastructure" of the mode of production. There isn't a prior, transcendent, national subject for whom the present, irrational development is an abomination. At best, this subject remains to be realized. Nevertheless this unrealized subject-to-come acts as the idealist premise behind technological nationalism (as the messianic figure of Socrates did for Strauss and Bloom, and like Kojève did for Bloom and Cooper); this subject, like Scheer's "Canadians" who are both substance and the process that will fuel Canada, functions as a container for idealist teleology, acting as both original cause and final

cause of the national project of mediating the material-is and the ideal-ought. And this is the lesson of Charland's critique, which shows the contradictory conflation of the nation as what is already-existing and as what still ought to be built. There is no content to the nation that technological nationalist projects could transmit infrastructurally; there is only mediation itself. This is of course another way of phrasing McLuhan's lesson that the medium is the message; that is, the medium is intransitive of an ideal content. An infrastructure will transmit meaning across spaces and times, but this meaning will refer to the value form it produces and reproduces; whatever content one wishes to see transmitted—whatever national values—will be superstructural and therefore intransitive, belonging to the realm of my second point.

Nevertheless (and secondly), the aesthetic is not divorced from the infrastructure of the mode of production. The function of the aesthetics of rationality is to mediate the productive processes that reproduce subjects in-and-as relations to capital—in Canada's case, in relation to resources valuated as fundamentally alienable, materials that can only participate in the division of labour and in commodity chains by being sold abroad. Thus, technological nationalism—the imaginary relation to a mode of production premised on super-national circulation—is inseparable from the structuralist rhetoric of *oikos* and *xenos* I discussed in Part One.

Technological nationalism imaginarily resolves a spatial contradiction in exactly the same way that the city-man figure seeks to resolve a temporal one—each only makes sense from the transcendent position of a post-spatialized, post-historical register without a division of labour, without any meaningful distinction of primary, secondary, or tertiary industries, or even of commodity chains divided into multiple links in which products are partially processed to end in consumer goods. The Straussian lesson, developed by Bloom, is that materiality and politics are fundamentally antinomial to a universalizable reason (as embodied in the consciousness of

freedom enjoyed by the middle class liberal-democratic subject, which Strauss and Bloom retcon back to Socrates's position in *The Republic* as the brain in his class-body—i.e., in Cephalus's home). Thus any struggle in the real world must remain purely aesthetic. This strategic abandonment of the Kantian realm of pure reason in favour of a Machiavellian instrumental reason is a common thread in 20th-century political theory, seen for example, from Hayek's barricading of "the road to serfdom" threatened by collective politics to Isaiah Berlin's "retreat to the inner citadel," from positive to negative concepts of liberty, in which freedom can exist only in space and not in time. This rhetorical spatialization of politics has been developed in any number of aesthetic ideologies from the cynically-calculated absurdities Sartre exposes as the link between European race-hate and the pseudo-know-nothingism of American conservative movements, which through Fukuyama and numerous Canadian examples, form a mode of knowledge production which culminates in the Calgary School, most notably in Flanagan.

Still, such spatializations bring up an interesting point, namely that, in this aesthetic, the form of Canada is technologically imagined spatially as a corridor and not as a city or polis. The Corridor's imaginary infrastructural space is conceptually not "political"; nor does it represent the diversity within natural law that would characterize a city for a Straussian; instead it is a space of movement and mediation—of change, not stability.[202] Mark Simpson offers a way of thinking through this contradiction between the politics of space-as-movement and those of space-as-stability. He explains how the Canadian infrastructural imagination symbolically resolves material unevenness through the idealism of "lubricity," or, "the texture and mood requisite to the operations of neoliberal petroculture," which, by "idealizing smooth flow, mystifies so as to maximize the violent asymmetries of movement and circulation globally"

[202] Ironically, the Corridor plan is in direct challenge to the Straussian translation of Plato's *politeia* as "regime" (opposed to "republic"), referring as it does a timeless, structural table of regimes, i.e., the basis for so many of the other premises of Canadian neoliberalism.

(289). Lubricity installs “smoothness as cultural common sense, promoting the fantasy of a frictionless world contingent on the continued, intensifying use of petrocarbons from underexploited reserves in North America” (289). As an example, Simpson cites Ethical Oil, the PR strategy embraced by many corporations and policy consultants who rely on lubricity to make their claims that “only smooth societies, ones supposedly without conflict or crisis, can ensure oil’s ethically clean production and consumption.” Simpson shows how boosters of the Canadian oil industry construct lubricity by way of an obsessive projection of roughness—barbarism and terrorism—onto the racialized other. As such, lubricity is the petrocultural counterpart of the *oikos*/*xenos* relation, what mediates the movement between such structural positions, allowing Cooper’s cowboys to be the true indigenous Canadians, while (as Cooper, Janigan, Flanagan, and Jules all do) figuring Canada’s Indigenous peoples as *xenos*.

Lubricity is the fantasy of smooth biopolitical flows of people, resources, and capital; the fantasy of smoothness *and* the containment of roughness within a nationalist imaginary. In the present context we can extend Simpson’s concept to see that lubricity provides a means of holding the mercantilist fantasy of the smooth nation of movement, of flowing value together with the settler-colonial historiographic containment of value and exclusion of roughness, difference, and unevenness. Lubricity mediates the structural inside and outside as well as the flow between them, what can allow the values to change places. It’s a name for the structuralist rhetoric that enables a corridor to be a city and vice versa.

Simpson’s concept provides a petrocultural or energy-resource-oriented supplement to Canadian political theory. David V.J. Bell’s analysis of the Loyalist imagination in Canada explains the slipperiness of national inclusion and exclusion in terms substantive and process-based nationalisms. Bell’s premise is that the American Revolution founded a nation, and the

Loyalist tradition in Canada is the narrative mediation of the formal creation of a "non-nation," made of the same substance, but which was the opposite side of same process.

Bell explains that all revolutions emerge from a crisis of legitimacy. When British policies were no longer viewed as legitimate, the American colonists had to ask "By what standards were these policies judged?" Bell distinguishes "two main ways of establishing legitimacy." Since Plato, the doctrine of "substantive legitimacy accords acceptance to a ruler not on the basis of how he is chosen, nor on the basis of how he arrives at or implements his decisions, but rather on the basis of the quality of the acts and decisions themselves." Such substantive views have taken deep root in Canada via George Grant's admiring reflections on the so-called Strauss-Kojève debate. As Strauss explains in his interpretation of Xenophon's *Hiero*, tyranny is illegitimate from the standpoint of human satisfaction.[203] The ruler who must both constantly be on guard against usurpers and inordinately appeal for consent from the ruled can never be happy. Thus the praise- or blameworthiness of the ruler's actions is secondary to the fundamental offence to *eudaimonia* embodied in tyranny. The good ruler will make good decisions only if he has a good life. As in the anti-historicist arguments from human nature typical of Straussianism, here the procedural is subordinated to a prior substantivism, which results in procedure—legitimate dynastic descent or democracy, or whatever particular—being contained by the universalist substantive measured by individual satisfaction. And the individual, atomistic, transcendent subject's good life is the final criterion of any political regime.

This interpretation of the Socratic imperative to know oneself, which Strauss and those like Cooper who follow the regime model retcon into the remarkably-bourgeois originary message of ancient philosophy, is perfectly consonant with the view Bell describes: "The idea of

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[203] Of course, "tyranny" simply means "illegitimate rule," and specifically, the failure to follow proper channels of inheritance by which political power is legitimated as transmissible private property. In *Hiero*, the illegitimacy then is improper procedure.

‘public good’, moreover, is fixed static, and (given proper education) discernable, like the other ‘pure forms’” (Bell 26). But Bell explains how, with Rousseau, models of “procedural legitimacy” came into the popular imagination. In procedural models,

> acts of the sovereign derive their legitimacy from the way in which the decision to perform the act was reached. In other words, ‘the people’ do not delegate power to representatives who are then sovereign within certain predetermined substantive limits; rather, the people retain sovereignty and agree to legitimize only those actions arrived at through the *procedure* of the general will. (26)

The fledgling US system, needing a new theory of legitimacy to replace the procedural British model, combined Rousseau’s proceduralism with Lockean substantivism, leading to important spatio-temporal consequences:

> They doubted the efficacy of purely procedural (i.e., ‘democratic’) constraints on rulers, and insisted on prescribing significant substantive limits to the exercise of power. In at least this one sense, therefore, the Founding Fathers demonstrated a profound distrust of democracy. Furthermore, they transmitted to later generations a legacy of substantive limitations on power that in the twentieth century have seriously impaired the ability of the American political systems to adapt to rapid change. (27)

Bell’s argument is as much about infrastructure as it is about political history. He’s describing the transformation of idealism—the best regime—into material structures of social reproduction and of “transmission” from the US’s founding to today. In other words, the US system’s rigidity (which we will return to in the next chapter) is akin to a crumbling or faulty infrastructure, one that lacks the flexibility of procedure.

However, without such a rigid infrastructure, it was just this procedural flexibility that prevented Canada from developing its own unified nationalism:

> In effect, the Loyalist could not erect his ideology (liberalism) into nationalism for the precise reason that the American *had* done so. The memory of being 'un-American' confused the ideological identity of the Loyalist to the point that he became launched into a permanent identity crisis, a never-ending quest for the 'elusive' Canadian identity. (30)

Both the liberal-democratic Rohmer and the Calgary-Chicago conservative/neoliberals are trying to resolve the problems of procedural legitimacy. What separates and unites the Calgary approach from Rohmer's is the superstructure, or, the state. Where, in the liberal-democratic approach, individual interests are the evils to be structurally mediated (what Bell calls "cratophilia"), for the conservative, the structures themselves are expressions or appendages of individual interest. Therefore the conservative is cratophobic, believing not only that power is essentially corruptible, but that political structures themselves concretize corruption.[204]

But Bell's point, which is just as literary as Cooper's (he categorizes national identity in terms like "emotional," "ironic," "pathetic," and "pathological") and just as naturalistic-structural (the US is a nation because it's the product of human action, Canada is thus a non-nation) as Cooper's, is that the very lack of action, the lack of *thymos*-related activity, the lack of identity, led to the Canadian (non-) nation as a process with no particular, place-bound or unique

[204] Structural differences aside, for both the liberal and the conservative the superstructure needs to function as a rational agent, above the irrationality of the market. For the conservative, the state needs to be run according to the best regime—which can be rationally known, "given proper education" (hence the fetishization among Strauss's acolytes of "teaching" to the chosen few—or, as Bloom explains it, those represented by the thymotic and teachable Glaucon in the *Republic*); for the liberal, the superstructure needs to be above the irrational self-interest of the market. The latter position is of course the continuation of the Enlightenment view of the state as the embodiment of human reason. As such it's closer to proceduralism than substantivism (as Bell explains in his discussion of Rousseau 26-27); but in practice (as Rousseau and Marx believed, and as Rohmer and today's neoliberals take as given) the state has become alienated from human reason, and now simply constitutes the circuits of self-interested squabbling. But as we will see below, in the case of Rohmer's colleague Peter Goering, the form of competition remains as a strange idealist totem, or, as a message of the medium of liberal democracy.

ideological substance. That is, Canada is a medium, not a form (like a proper nation-state); and Canadian identity is a message, not a content (like a proper ethnic or racial genius). In other words, the creation of one nation and one non-nation does not reflect a simple structuralist binary in which one is real, one fake; one good, one bad; one strong, one weak. But more importantly, the two nations created with the American Revolution were different *kinds of nations.* The claim to such difference relies on an idealist premise resembling the Hegelian/Kojèveian premise that, in world history, certain nations embody the actualization of the Hegelian Idea; those which do not are not nations, are not historical; they are what are called, in the equally idealistic and Hegelian (e.g., Fukuyama) contemporary parlance, "failed states." But Bell's distinction is also understandable in materialist terms as existing between different kinds of structures ordered into the category of "nation." This is, then, all to say that despite a homonymic identity, infrastructural differences in the mode of production ensure that superstructural governmentality looks different in a nation based in extractive and commercial capital than it does in an industrialized nation. Substantive values of flexibility and tolerance reflect the interests of circulatory capital, while the more procedural values of rigidity and centralization (which the next chapter will address) suit those of productive capital.[205]

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[205] Hence, Bell's conclusion, which explains Canadian tolerance as a material consequence of an idealist contraction:

> The American Revolution, in short, produced not one country but two: a successful '*nation*' (ideologically, symbolically, and structurally) – that later encountered all the difficulties that stem from having made an ideology into nationalism; and, through [Loyalist] migration, a '*non-nation*', that confused colonial and national symbols and identity, and today faces possible disintegration as a result. The United States developed what might be termed an 'assimilative' political culture, in which new members became socialized to a set of values remarkably ideological in nature. Canada, on the other hand, evolved what might be called an 'accommodative' political culture. New groups were not expected to assimilate in large part because there was nothing to which they could pledge allegiance, except possibly the vague and abstract notion of 'loyalty to the crown.'

In other words, in Canada identity is not presumed to be a content or something separate from message/media, and the features that characterize Canada as a nation are, like for Naylor and Charland, the very absence of the nation as a cohesive site. Canada's character is one of movement and diversity; thus:

To return to Rohmer's text, in the sentence immediately following that quoted above, he presents an ecological narrative, arguing that containing and channelling development in the national form will resolve the problems of the priority of value over values; thus he proposes a technocratically-managed market ecology. As things stand currently, Rohmer explains,

> If copper is found, a copper mine is developed. When a rich fishing site is found, the word soon leaks out and fishermen flock to the spot. A pulp and paper company leases a concession in Mid-Canada and builds a road to the source of its raw materials—wood. Then the area develops as service industries move in to provide clothing, gas, haircuts, shoe repairs, dry cleaning and so on. (23)

For Rohmer, the problem is that a discovery has to happen first in order to plan and develop the means of exploiting and living with what is discovered. Process—in terms of planning or administration—has no power in relation to the substance of the bottom line that determines *a priori* the value of the discovered resource. His simplistic narrative makes such discoveries seem themselves "haphazard" or unconnected to systematic, highly-specialized surveying, speculation, or investment. Thus his typical form of resource-exploitation follows the problematic development that surrounds a Gold Rush or a Boomtown. Like Van Nostrand, Rohmer is appalled at the haphazard way that development takes place when there is no general plan decided prior to and applicable to a particular discovery. If a site is going to become a major settlement area due to rich copper deposits, then the infrastructure to, say, house and serve workers ought to be built in a rational, responsible way *from the start*.

> Canadianism remained an unidentifiable entity, and the possibility of "un-Canadianism" was therefore precluded. […] This cultural tolerance—and the mosaic it has permitted to exist—is at once Canada's most attractive feature and tragically her fatal weakness. (30)

Such a view is understandable, but it misses the point that resource discoveries in an extractive, staples economy will not produce settlements with the temporal character enjoyed by an industrial centre. A resource town like Sudbury is never going to be an industrial and processing hub like Hamilton; nor is a periphery ever going to rationalize or aestheticize itself into a centre. In other words, an extractive zone is never going to be a *city*; it's going to resemble a *corridor*. Nor can any aestheticization overcome Canada's dependency relation. Even the industrial centre Hamilton is ultimately dependent on its simultaneous function as a corridor to the St Lawrence Seaway. Rohmer and Van Nostrand's shared view also misses that the character of development is reflective of the character of the capital it attracts. The haphazardness they see is the result of a combination of merchant capital and foreign direct investment, which manifests within Canada as a leeching or skimming off of extracted value passing through the space of the nation. In their proposals Rohmer and Van Nostrand assume this fundamentally-fluid value can be harnessed and channelled; that is, they are again seeing the incompatibility of process-movement with the fixity of sites and places as an aesthetic problem. Finally, not only are Rohmer and Van Nostrand thus reacting against the way capital and extraction do not conform to the city-aesthetics of industrial development, but they are reacting to the scandal that materialism poses to their idealist premises. Like all concerned observers of the horrifying human and environmental consequences of resource extraction, they are being confronted with the mode of production and its embarrassing materiality in which vulgar value has absolute priority over any civilized values: hence, the disavowal of materiality in favour of idealism. In technological nationalism at the end of history, the national idea should come first, either decided before anything is discovered or referred back to as a pre-existing moral-ideal-framework. So again, the

nation offers the formal container in which temporal problems are imagined to be spatially-resolvable.

7.3 The Aesthetics of the Centre

From the time of Rohmer's plan up to now, the technological-nationalist aesthetics governing Canadian discussions of "development" have been those of industrial centres. A centre is where materials and labour accumulate into capital and where value is produced; this kind of production is not at all the same as that which produces value from mercantile activities like extracting, transporting, storing, and removing materials or produced goods—even though, obviously, merchant activity is right at home in an industrial centre. A clear way to analogize this difference between aesthetic forms attendant to specific forms of capital is to say that productive industry produces spatializations (like class hierarchies) that aesthetically conform to the image of the city. Corridors, on the other hand, are much more akin to peripheries.

Below, I will explain how the Calgary plan Scheer draws from relies strategically on a spatial confusion of centre and periphery, never claiming to urbanize or make settlement more permanent, but only to give local residents greater quality of life from lower shipping costs.[206] And even though Van Nostrand's argument also lacks the sophistication to accommodate such differentiations, the spatial mismatch between city and corridor is not lost on Rohmer; indeed, the most ambitious aspect of his plan calls for a chain of temporally-specific settlements ranging from short-term camps, medium-term towns, and long-term cities. Nevertheless, the conflict

[206] Scheer's campaign promises "to lower cost of living" come from a wholly-mediatory, and wholly-non-productive, point of view in which economic prosperity comes completely from easing movement. Ignoring the source of value in this way is clearly contradictory to the price-problem that calls for the energy corridor, that is, to make the prices of Canadian oil *higher*. In all neoliberal end of history premises, stability from jobs or from low costs are perfectly equivalent, and scarcity in one can be offset by gains in the other. This abstract equivalence, the shared source of both the Liberal and Conservative environmental plans, adds an extra layer of absurdity to Conservative opposition to the market-mechanism of the carbon tax.

between the spatio-temporal specificities of industry versus extraction forms the problematic for his MCDC plan (that is, exactly the problem Busby misses). Rohmer seeks to mediate the formal contradictions between centre-as-place and periphery-as-movement. Doing so requires a pivot from the space-centred focus of technological nationalism (focused on the nation and its government) toward carbon democracy (focused on the subject and its governmentality). In the shift of emphasis from the formal structures of centre versus corridor to the subjects, material natural resources are contained within the figure of immaterial human resources.

Effecting such a combination (still operating in Scheer's equation of Canadians with Canadian energy), the MCDC, as an infrastructural site, should be able to draw investment and talent to it as a human-natural-resource hub—like a city; but it should contain the centre-periphery relations within the shape of the entire nation; as Van Nostrand says, if we build it they will "stay." To illustrate the aesthetic shift required to contain the concept of the city/centre within the figure of the Corridor as a space of movement, Rohmer introduces readers to "[Y]oung architect, Peter Goering of Toronto," who wrote his thesis on residential construction in the North:

> "I went to Lakehead University with a consuming idea: here was our great opportunity to build a kind of Helsinki or Stockholm in mid-northern Canada. […] After three days I had completely abandoned my idea […] and adopted a new approach to the question of the Corridor. To me, after listening to such people as Ed Pinay, the Plains Cree Indian from Saskatchewan; and Jon Hopkins, the national government representative around James Bay and an expert on wildlife and the north; we were missing the point in our discussions and panels.

> "Instead of talking about the different resources of the Corridor, we should have isolated and underlined the fact that the very existence of Mid-Canada is a resource in itself: that its being as it is today represents the greatest single resource Canada has." (24)

Apropos of the most Platonist or Augustinian idealism, here vulgar materiality is apparent as plurality, as the "different resources," or the cave images which obscure the truth that the unified "single greatest resource" is already there waiting to be realized. Goering is taking a Hegelian end of history stance as well, implying that once wisdom is achieved through proper understanding, it will become clear that everything has been rational all along; thus the idea of the nation—as the ultimate actualization of reason in history—is logically prior to any manifestation. And Goering very literally presents the idea as such, concluding the "very existence" of the region (whose non-existence as a region or space is the occasion of his remarks) is what we Minervan Owls should have realized all along.

As though Kojève himself were whispering in his ear, Goering next presents the (Kojèveian-Straussian/Bloomian) case that, since philosophy and history are complete, knowledge is finished; the next step of human development is to administer the completed perfect state by way of technocracy.[207] This end of history argument encapsulates the essence of

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[207] For Kojève, the end of history is the end of philosophy as *something other than technique*. For him the figure of the Sage persists as the technocratic ghost of the philosopher, embodying the ultimate triumph of metaphysics, *pace* Heidegger, who's explicit that the world of technology makes philosophy obsolete. (Kojève himself, having discovered the end of history had arrived, left philosophy to work on super-national administration projects like GATT, and, repeating his earlier life's position as teacher, gave up his own ghost while giving a policy speech to an audience of fellow technocrats.) Of course, the completion of philosophy as something other than utility-technique is at issue in Plato, too: in *The Republic*'s plans to maintain the best regime, arrived at through truth, via the practical reason of "the noble lie" and the expulsion of the poets. The end of history is also presumed in the much later *Laws*, with its encyclopaedic synthesis of discourses and modes of expression—science, poetry, epic, tragedy, lyric, religion, etc. At the end of history, the technocratic goal is to render the things of life and nature immutable or to render mutability within a super-natural, rational, idealist permanence. Thus "sophistry" (which I argue names the Platonic "political philosophy" espoused by the Chicago and Calgary Schools) is the technique of our era, the formal continuation of the synthetic impulse to totalize. Reading Cooper's work is the key to the secret message contained within this sophistry: that is, philosophy is nothing more than service to a thymotic interest—the only struggle left, the only way to *arete* or human excellence, is to contain it and protect it within the idealist image of the bourgeois subject (the city/man).

Rohmer's technological nationalist fetishization of technocratic expertise, rational utility, and conformance to liberal-democratic aesthetics of freedom and mobility. And it logically leads to the carbon-democratic equation of resources and people that the MCDC attempts to contain and manage. Here, as in Part One's discussion of alienability and in Scheer's equation of people and fuel, the rights of resources and value to flow are inseparable from the values of rights and freedom and mobility.

Speaking with all the technical and practical authority of an expert, Goering narrates the shift from an architecture of what McLuhan would call transmission to one of engagement, a shift that literalizes the conceptual shift from city (Helsinki) to corridor: asked if he thinks "the Corridor should be left alone?," Goering responds,

> No. As an architect, it is hard for me to say that any particular place should be 'left alone' until I have had a chance to examine and study it. [...] each part of the Corridor which becomes the subject of study for development should be thrown into an imaginary contest with other sensible uses, so that the proposed development has *to compete with other possibilities before a decision is made*. (my emphasis 24)

Of course, it's hard to imagine some version of such "competition" *not* taking place, but Goering's contest would not be located in the free market; nor could it be in the state, as these are where such decisions are currently made. Rather, the contest must take place in the "nation." My point is that the statist or nationalist slant is an aestheticization of how decisions and valuations are made, while the development and the materiality of the way the space is figured is incapable of transmitting this aesthetic. Goering's narrative of abandoning Helsinki for the Corridor is a remarkably literal presentation of the material conditions to which the Corridor is a response: that is, the character of the staples as well as the capital such extraction requires

necessitates the discarding of the place of politics, literally, a polis, in favour of the extra-political space of transit, a priority of movement over site, of process and value over substantive, fixed values. Here we see how the aesthetic of rational planning and decision is understood as an argument against competition over mere dollars and cents—but how is one different than the other except that one mentions the form of competition, and the other, the content? Asking the question this way, the civil-society role the state must play as vanishing mediator starts to come into view, as it manages the medium, in this case the form of competition:

> *Q:* Are you referring to different bids from different groups or companies, or to an imaginary contest in which argument would replace dollar bills and earth-moving equipment?
>
> *A:* The latter. For example, supposing a rich deposit of copper were found within the Corridor. Before any development of the copper supply was started, the question of whether or not this would be the best use of the area would be debated and decided. The economic value of the copper would have to be weighed against other assets, some of them perhaps unmeasurable. (25)

Where for Busby, the MCDC was a solution in search of problems, Goering here shows that the Corridor is actually articulating problems. The trouble is that it's articulating problems it could never solve. But even though it's articulating material problems, Goering's discourse is purely idealist, relying, like the claim of "single greatest resource" does, on the self-evidence of "best." Mistaking the message of technological nationalist projects for content, he ends up making purely analytic, tautological claims. The "best" use of an area—*qua* useful area—is always already going to be determined by the value presupposed by the measure of use. Goering and Rohmer's discussion seems to be about procedures for determining the best use, but it does

nothing more than claim that the substantive best would be what's considered best in the procedural measure. More than just rhetorical confusion is at stake here. The Corridor itself is the form by which substantive claims are contained in process. The Calgary-Scheer version of the Corridor is not an infrastructure project, but a space which would be pre-approved for future infrastructure projects. The ultimate aim of the Corridor is to ensure the temporal extension and spatial location of the processes of mediation and circulation. Like the negative view of liberty, which argues that freedom is a function of the relation between an agent and spatial impediments (i.e., other agents), there's nothing that can count towards deciding on the value by which uses are judged. Goering shows how the Corridor, like the figure of the city/regime for Cooper, is a way of transforming procedural claims into substantive ones. He outlines the procedure that any development ethically requires:

> "The cold-blooded planning of another Helsinki or Stockholm has no place in the development of Mid-Canada. The copper might be found in a place where the moose normally roam […] maybe the area happens to be a natural beauty spot, a perfect place for a tourist resort. What I am trying to say is that all the possibilities should be weighed and studied before the green light is given to any single proposition." (26)

And his very next statement is a non-sequitur by which the procedural claim is substituted for a substantive one, in which the highest value is in the outcome; and this is performed rhetorically by the temporal shift in tense from the conditional to the future anterior:

> "Then, each decision would be made on the basis of the highest and best use, bearing in mind the fact that although the mid-north is a part of Canada, it is continental as a resource—the last great area of the world truly untouched by man and capable of civilized development." (26)

Just as the tense has shifted, so have the spatial and ethical scales. Again, the argument amounts to saying that if we had the best way, it would be the best, while it says nothing in regard to what is best or how to measure this. Instead, it posits that with the right *procedure* to take the place of the right substance, the nation would be greater and would thereby naturally transcend itself toward super-national continental and human-scales. Foreshadowing contemporary Ethical Oil and "The World Needs More Canada" arguments, Goering explains that it's our responsibility to develop the nation in order to actualize what's best for humanity: "If we tackle the Corridor in the conventional way and by so doing destroy a particular kind of bird life, for example, we shall perform a disservice to ourselves and for mankind" (26). Goering is performing the process by which space-as-value (resources) is rhetorically turned into value as money (the process of exchange), and how the value then presumes to represent substantive values. Goering is illustrating the idealist political economy characteristic of technological nationalism, in which the wealth of a nation is identical to the space itself. However, like all of Rohmer's work in the 1970s, the MCDC discussion is part of the process of articulating what will come to be neoliberal doxa, what will enable Scheer's equation of people and fuel. At this stage in the prehistory of neoliberalism, however, the identity of wealth with the space of the nation is configured with a third coordinate—the referent of Adam Smith's "wealth of nations." The labour at the source of productive nations' wealth has to be figured in a way germane to the form of wealth in a staples economy, that is, as human capital.

Thus Goering and Rohmer, for all their dismissal of the logic of dollars and cents, never consider a non-economic measure of value for this process and the substantive human values it will bring about. In Rohmer's pleas for "development for people"[208], human values—like the

[208] In the Introduction to *The Green North*, "Development for People," Rohmer explains:

great disservice to humanity of developing improperly—are already presumed to be identical to an economic value, *if only the right value were able to be procedurally-technocratically attained*.

In the MCDC plan, settlement takes the place of non-economic value. Past or present, each Corridor argument boils down to claims about what substantive values "would be" if the right procedure for settling the area were enacted. This play between process and substance is the key to the political dimension of technological nationalism. Any completed techno-nationalist project will be the actualization of processes. The process of communication would be what unites the nation, and the final message would be identical to the completion of the medium. In terms of human values, then, these make up the substance that is subordinate to the process. Settlement is the process. But since there's no assumption that the settlements will be involved in production, those to be settled will not take on the substantive identity of labour characteristic of John A. Macdonald's National Policy's mercantilism; rather the process of settlement determines them as human capital. Thus, technological nationalism becomes visible as the machinery of producing carbon-democratic subjects: those citizens for whom democratic freedoms boil down to access to cheap consumer goods, which is, after all, the only wealth that a resource-extractive economy—one based in transportation and alienation—could ever offer.

Such is the mode of belonging characteristic of capitalist resource economies. In Alberta, for example, public wealth accrues in the form of Heritage Funds or proposed rebates from oil royalties, but most paradigmatically in the lack of sales tax—that is, in the removal of external impositions to wealth rather than any (positive) right to the resources or their benefits in the form of jobs, cheap oil, etc. The historical unfolding of the role of government in Canada transforms

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In reading this book, please bear in mind that: 1. *When the word "development"* is used, it means the making of the land ready for people and for the industries and services which support them. "Development" does not mean simply opening of the land for industry and for extracting resources. (3)

from the techno-nationalist mandate to unite the nation in terms of communication and transportation of resources; having mediated the mobility of capital, the role shifts to figuring subjects as petro-subjects, entitled to the mobility and consumption proper to a modern nation; with this mediation complete, government has shifted to governmentality, the state form has been perfected and can disappear, the art of government having given way to optimal management, and we reach the end of history.

The conceptual subsumption of substance into procedure required by carbon-democratic governmentality sets the stage for Rohmer's next chapter, "One Million Square Miles of Wealth," in which he presents the main summary of the 1967 Acres corridor report:

> *Canada is* expected to become a giant among the productive nations of the world.
>
> *Canada's future* is linked inseparably with the development of Mid-Canada.
>
> […]
>
> *Mid-Canada is* primarily undeveloped territory.
>
> […] *Preliminary study* supports the concept of a coast-to-coast Mid-Canada Development Corridor. (31)

As an exemplar of technocratic management (the form of carbon democracy which comes out of technological nationalism) Rohmer is absolutely upfront about the fact that the mid and far North are not *terra nullius*. For Rohmer the idea that the land is empty and undeveloped is part of the pernicious "Igloo Syndrome."[209] Rohmer is arguing that the area is inhabited and has been

[209] Rohmer cites the Acres report:

> "Much of this area," […] "is considered to be a frigid, barren wasteland, beset with fantastic problems of climate and lengthy periods of darkness, which permit only semi-permanent life. This description is most inaccurate."
>
> So much for the myths and images of igloos, the miles upon miles of ice and the deathly fingers of a frigid environment hostile to man and his creature comforts. (32)

"Semi-permanent" is a strange temporality, but it suggests a position of mediation or of in-betweeness at the heart of the Canadian identity. And so Rohmer does not completely deny that such emptiness exists in Canada; that is, he leaves a space for the vast untamed wastes that lend the settler project its imaginary civilizing legitimacy:

settled to some degree, but has not been *settled enough*, that is, has not been realistically integrated into the imaginative nation; for Rohmer, the North is not considered "normal" in the greater Canadian consciousness.[210] He defines the Corridor as an area in which the climate and terrain are suitable for comfortable habitation, "Resources are abundant and well-distributed," and in which "settlements already exist." Nevertheless, it still operates as the potentiality of *terra nullius* by being "the only pure, virtually untouched habitable region left on this continent" (8). To develop it, then, means over-writing the existing infrastructural orientations with new ones: "North-south transportation routes already reach into the area. New east-west transportation routes can be provided in a reasonable manner." People, capital, and resources are required. But development should be "a Canadian undertaking, financed by public and private funds," and the "development of Mid-Canada should be part of a national planning policy" (32).

Now, let's be clear: the call for a national project of shifting the North-South direction of transportation and extractive infrastructures to an East-West orientation *is anachronistic*. The Empire of the St Lawrence is Creighton's historiographic figure for the East-West movement of settlers, capital, and materials. From a historical materialist perspective it's clear the Empire is a historiographic and sociological figure, and not any empirical, metaphysical essence of the Canadian nation. As I showed in Part One, Cooper and the work of the various institutes in which he's been involved (Fraser, Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, etc.) is anachronistically fighting an aesthetic windmill of Canadian history written from the perspective

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> Obviously, that kind of land [the barren hostile land of igloos] must lie well to the north of the region now under examination in this book. […] "With improved communications, transportation and economic opportunities, more people will settle in Mid-Canada and will find life quite acceptable. (33)

[210] Simultaneously arguing that the area is "primarily undeveloped," "already settled," and "already being developed" is materially accurate, but Rohmer posits the complex unevenness these arguments refer to as a contradiction in the idealist register: again, "It may sound hard to believe that Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin had little more personal discomfort in reaching the lunar surface than some Canadians have when they try to travel to a large city for some seasonal shopping…" (29)

of a staples economy; this Quixotism is the consequence of taking literary figures literally (like that of Frye's phenomenology, which retells the Canadian experience as the settler experience coming from the Old World to the New), but also of taking idealism too far (Frye's narrative is not a knowledge claim to some Platonic truth). As Naylor shows, the fall of the St Lawrence Empire resulted from a clash between fluid portfolio investment—flowing East to West from Great Britain and governed by policies favouring free trade—and direct investment establishing North-South flows, favouring trade reciprocity.[211] Antagonism between the forms of capital through which Canada's dependency relation to Britain (East/West) and the US (North/South) constituted a spatial contradiction that led to the East/West orientation losing its dominance, along with any chance of Canada's becoming a mercantilist inland empire of its own. But nor did the North/South orientation become totally dominant, due to changes in the way the post-historical imperium works.

Rather, the multi-directional pull of Canada's dependency relations led to its modern position as mediator between empires. From this materialist perspective, the MCDC—*as a resolution* to the problems and contradictions of a nation that's not industrialized but is instead a mediator between empires, between eras, and between the different spatio-temporal characters of the forms of capital that it mediates—is the utopian, backward idea of re-tracing the form of the East-West Loyalist connection to Britain, without the colonial content. The MCDC is the desire to build a new nation on top of the old one to resolve the historical problem of a nation with no identity and no content except as space. The imperative is to perfect mediation—to have decided in advance, prior to discoveries like those of copper. By its location in an idealist future anterior, the achievement of the national project must be the original cause, the basis of and justification for the nation's materiality. It's only from the idealist perspective that corridors and pipelines as

[211] Naylor distinguishes three falls of this empire. See his essay.

containers for nation-unifying or nation-building values can be considered infrastructure—things that order and *produce* a nation. If they actually did transmit ideal values, such things would have to be superstructure, as these values reflect the form of value reproduced in the mode of production. Thus, technological nationalism is the supplementary idealist source for this identity which has no material basis.

7.4 Fingers: Anti-Americanist Americanism, Decentralized Production, and Circulation

Northrop Frye's perennial question—"where is here?"—is the perfect articulation of the Canadian identity in search of its material source. The nationalist desire to reconfigure routes of communication to favour a more naturalistic national aesthetic lead only to question-begging tautologies stating that if the national space were well organized, then it would be good. For example, Scheer defines the goal of his Corridor plan by deploying a tautology, "An energy-independent Canada would be a Canada firing on all cylinders, across all sectors and regions," from which he concludes, Canada can enjoy the same benefits of a centre: "If the United States can do it, so can we." It must be admitted (because it's impossible to rebut) that an energy-independent Canada would fire on all cylinders; and so it follows that if these cylinders were located in all sectors in regions, then the entire nation would enjoy whatever benefits such firing promises. But it's not clear how the energy independence the United States enjoys (if it actually does) would be in the national interest of a country whose strongest desire is to alienate its energy products. The general, idealist interest of "cylinder-firing" "independence" is one thing; particular, *material* national interest is another, and they are mutually intransitive. Rohmer has identified the troubling fact that American interest has been equated with general interest. But his uncritical reliance on idealist figures—like that of the abstract-equivalent value that makes

Canada so literally valuable and exchangeable—leaves him unable to do mobilize this observation towards an argument. Without the means to make careful distinctions, economic interest, in general, will be closer to American interest than to another nation's not just because of American hegemony or that nation's imbrications with the organs of the multinational empire at the end of history. It's also a matter of simple economics. The staples nation will always depend on the nation further along the division of labour (which, as Scheer and the last few years of fracking have shown, has its own staples—and at much lower EROI, too!). In sum, the interests that are so easily (and so often *mis*-) identified with American-national interests are exactly those interests which give value—which provide the implicit background from which "good" and "best" derive their self-evidence—to the resources of Mid-Canada. Here Rohmer and Cooper become bedfellows against Frye, whose East-West figure was after all, only trying to soothe the knee-jerk anti-Americanism in which Canadians have so often uncritically tended to indulge. As Bell puts it,

> An additional attribute of Canadian culture is its doctrinaire (but decidedly emotional as opposed to ideological) anti-Americanism. The English Canadian turned to anti-Americanism as if by instinct, unconsciously and intuitively, despite the profound lack of real difference between the two societies in terms of basic values. One could almost argue that the only element uniting Canadians is a strong sense of dislike for the United States. (30)

In this context, I suggest Rohmer is trying to locate Canadian particularity in a particularly Canadian place, to solve the project Bell explains as the search for "elusive Canadian identity." But as a resource economy, that is, as a place that produces itself by destroying its environment and selling it off to other nation-places, the very particularity of Canadian interest is essentially

located in the universality of exchange; the Canadian polis is the corridor—which is another way of saying alienation is the space of the nation,[212] and the Canadian citizen is the carbon-democratic subject entitled to smooth mobility and consumption.

In Part One I examined alienation as the form by which Canadian identity is understood to be realized (in Cooper's hunters, in Janigan's "productive" settlers, in Flanagan's racist arguments for privatizing reserve land). Now, I will look at how the Canadian nationalist imagination has been structured according to the spatial alienation of mediation, communication, and transportation, the rhetorical coordinates for the location of Canadian identity. Bell traces this placelessness to Canada's originary emergence as a periphery tied to two conflicting alienated identities. "The consequences of the powerful 'otherworldly' (i.e., New to Old) orientation included a failure to articulate a truly national identity that placed the focus of loyalty within Canada" (24); and, even worse,

> the Loyalist could not erect his ideology (liberalism) into nationalism for the precise reason that the American *had* done so. The memory of being 'un-American' confused the ideological identity of the Loyalist to the point that he became launched into a permanent identity crisis, a never-ending quest for the "elusive" Canadian identity. (30)

I've argued that both technological nationalism and the end of history rhetorical techniques[213] shared by the Calgary School and Canadian settler-colonial historiography stem from an idealist abstract equivalence which allows the literal and figural to be confused, all the while disallowing any distinction of values as separate from value. One manifestation is in the subsumption of substance into process that Bertrand Russell says exemplifies the modern scientific episteme in

[212] Or, the process is the substance, the medium is the message, the polis is the transit…

[213] (Again, the end of history is heralded by the end of philosophy as anything more than mere sophistic technique.)

the epigraph to this chapter. Scheer saying *Canadians* will *fuel* the world shows that in terms of energy and of Canada as an energy economy, there is no place for particularity, for "what burns."

Performing an incredible reversal or projection, Rohmer in this chapter uses the locus of the alienated identity as an example of a pitfall Canada should avoid. His narrative is an interpretation of the East/West orientation's fall from dominance; and his call for uniting the nation by rebuilding the East/West route is a nostalgic rendering of the material fact that Canada is a corridor and not a city. He warns that the Loyalists' mother country has declined because of its lack of resources. His argument relies on the following process-mediatory premises: 1) Canada "has" nothing but abundance; 2) Canada has a lack of identity except *as that abundance*, and, specifically, 3) Canada has this abundance in relation to the former and present metropoles:

> Canada's wealth and high standard of living are based on […] the abundance of natural resources. The lack of such resources is a basic reason for the decline of Britain's power and prestige. The more that battered and bruised nation has to buy abroad, the harder her people must work to produce goods for export, to generate foreign currency to pay for her imports.
>
> Canadians are fortunate. Mid-Canada is a treasure house of natural resources. From it comes most of the nickel needed by the world and much of the iron, asbestos, newsprint, zinc, oil, gas, uranium and hydro-electric power. It is significant that Americans and other foreigners are swarming across our north in a purposeful hunt for new energy sources and minerals.
>
> The astonishing thing about Mid-Canada is that until recently, very little focus has been placed by Canadians on its true development potential. Other countries, other developers, other investors, it seems, have a sharper picture of the potential of Mid-

> Canada than we do. It's as if we had our eyes immovably fixed on the south, with our backs turned to the north. (20)

Rohmer's urgent plea follows the standard Canadian historiographic spatialization of tension between the East-West orientation of the St Lawrence Empire and the North-South slippery slope to US annexation; Canada is between the UK—the declining power that can only wish it had our resources, and the US—the source of opportunistic robber barons and carpet baggers "swarming" to get Canadian wealth. Like Charland's figure of the Canadian nation-as-communication, Rohmer defines Canada by its in-betweeness, as a place where emptiness and fullness are mediated: *Canada is the middle*. From a political-economic perspective attending to production and circulation, what Rohmer calls the "astonishing thing" is that for "Canadians"-as-capitalists, there's little to focus on in terms of development for industry. It's as a "treasure house" that Canada has an articulable value, but he lacks an insight akin to the oft-cited Heideggerian standing reserve problem, in which once everything is ordered as a resource, the possibility for different or higher values to exist is foreclosed.[214] The celebration of "vast treasures" is really just another way of saying Canada's geology favours merchant capital as much as its historical geography does. In other words, the naturalist assumptions at work in geographical claims (e.g., that the East-West orientation is "more rational" than North-South) are carried over into geology. So Rohmer's next paragraph can, again, *seem* to refer to the development of a national structure for production, but it's simply making descriptive claims about the existence of more resources to be extracted, with no need to even imagine any industrial-production aspect:

[214] See Andrew Pendakis, Darrin Barney, Amanda Boetzkes, and Joshua Schuster's contributions to *Petrocultures: Oil, Politics, Culture*. Michael Malouf's contribution to the same volume takes up the Heideggerian perspectives of Alan Stoekl's influential *Bataille's Peak*.

> An examination of Canada's known mineral resources shows that in the eastern and western parts of the Canadian shield, much of which lies within Mid-Canada, mine development is characterized by north-reaching 'fingers' of railways or roads, linking the mines with southern areas and seaports. (25)

Rohmer, like those who follow him now, is doing little more than asserting an aesthetic preference, taking appearances as they relate metaphorically to other unlike things to be the criterion for good or bad. In this aesthetic spatialization, inside and outside, *oikos* and *xenos* are metaphorical relations, tied far more closely to images of coherence than to any actual space or political geography.[215] Rohmer's Mid-Canada text and the others that follow it are thus important documents in the history of aestheticizations of politics. For example, as Christopher Jones argues about current talk of "green capitalism," social and political premises are presumed to pertain within aesthetic objects. The small, renewable aesthetic (like the patriotic appeals to East/West national-unity) is more amenable to likeness with other things:

> Asking critical questions about energy transport systems can also help us avoid some common fallacies about renewable energy systems. On the one hand, many renewable energy advocates, echoing the rhetoric of "small is beautiful," assume that wind, solar, and geothermal are more egalitarian than fossil fuels because no one owns these resources. However, this argument fails to account for the fact that most energy has to be distributed to consumers and that control over the means of distribution can be as important as control over production. If large utilities manage the transport and sale of

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[215] As anyone who's ever searched Google Maps to travel anywhere in the Great Lakes region knows, there's no reason why east-west is even an orientation that would more effectively unite Canadian settlements. While the program (or the web-based version at least) offers options to avoid tolls, there is no option to avoid crossing borders, thus Google's preferred route from Sudbury to Thunder Bay will often cross into the US (ironically, taking an *even-more literally east-west* route by crossing and re-crossing national borders); the program presumes a total lubricity of the white, middle-class mobile subject, a logic which transcends compass points.

> wind and solar power through their ownership of transmission lines, it is not clear that these sources will be any more democratic than fossil fuel systems. (160)

Jones shows how aesthetic ideologies of infrastructure allow incommensurable qualities—aesthetic matters and matters of justice—to be held together; he likewise highlights how the incommensurable modes of *distribution and production* are contained and structured as equivalent within the ideology. Only by way of such aesthetic equivalences is it possible to claim, as Scheer does, that a corridor to carry energy to international markets—literally a mechanism for alienation—could herald domestic energy independence.

Jones's example can thus help correct Rohmer's xenophobic reaction to perceived foreign control over the means of resource extraction and distribution by explaining why the "Canada" behind extractive infrastructure could never be a completely sovereign owner or controller. Technological nationalism is contradictory in terms of its formal equivalence of what is and what ought to be. Like McLuhan says, a medium only amplifies what already is. A new medium or transportation system is not going to create qualitatively new citizens, even if it quantitatively rearranges the relations the people who would be such citizens. The substitution of material changes in scale for changes in quality is the logical conclusion of the discourse of Canadian "development."[216] This discourse argues for development in terms of a change to another quality, while measuring such change in terms of extending the status quo. Amounting to proposing a quantitatively *better* quality of life from lower costs, the carbon-democratic quality of mobility is taken as given and ideally-prior. This containment of difference, by which quality is simply the index of quantity, is what's at stake now in the Scheer/Calgary corridor plan as well

[216] Canada's 1970s was the heyday for texts arguing for "development." Like those of Rohmer and Lotz—and in a slightly different way, the Berger Inquiry—these texts argue for development from the perspective of bringing capitalist petromodernity to Canada's less-populated regions, showing a remarkable agreement in terms of the baseline quality of life that ought to be quantitatively increased.

as in arguments for energy projects. A pipeline is the perfect example: it won't create a new, united nation; it will amplify already existing connections and amplify existing divisions. In the fantasy of nation-building, "more" Canadians will get to be what Canadians already ideally are—that is, the nation ought to be more of what it is.

New connections and divisions, new ways of being and relating are certainly possible to build, but not from out of the image of the nation as a builder of infrastructure. Infrastructure is essential for developing and changing quality of life, but the quality, like the measure of value that Goering's confusion highlights, is a reproduction of the already-existing centre/periphery relation of dependency. And this is because technological nationalism is the ideology of infrastructure that in Canada is always communication or transportation infrastructure—it's always medium, not content. This is all to say, along with Innis and staples theory, that nothing new can be produced in the space of the mediatory nation because industrial production never enters the equation. No jobs can be produced in the sense of jobs that come from a productive paradigm or a form of industrial production.

But just as no value can be "produced" by uniting the nation through communication or transportation—that is, no productive/industrial capital can come from circulation—such infrastructures are doubly not going to produce the value of national unity. Again, the inability to discern between value and values, procedure and substance, and between merchant and productive capital is symptomatic of the disciplinary disavowal of materialist, Innisian insights and the accompanying inordinate fetishization of idealism in the Canadian infrastructural imaginary. In regard to the subsumption of quality within quantity, it is well to consider Innis's protégé McLuhan on the mode of production pertaining to mechanization versus automation. Rohmer and the MCDC partake of the discourse of development, which, I have argued, contains

temporal/qualitative difference (historical progression and human values) by spatially extending quantitative sameness. Railing against federal and provincial governments' policies to pursue FDI "at any costs," Rohmer's supporter Ian Reid argues that quantity-value and quality-values are distinguishable along nationalist lines: "Unfettered free enterprise, US-style, has proved a dismal failure. Canadians young and old want a life of quality not quantity; true Canadian values, not tarnished second-hand imports" (*Green North* 7-8). While Canadian political philosophers often distinguishes between a US-style capitalism, which privileges *value* as such, and whatever "better," more *values*-centred social form which they identify with Canada,[217] it's proven difficult to posit a basis for values without recourse to the value-form which makes Canada "valuable" to either foreign or domestic interests. The abstract-equivalence by which value is determined abroad is the same which accords value to the resources within Canada's borders. Although circulatory capital and productive capital are different kinds of capital—and these can indeed be distinguished according to national borders—the value form each partakes of is the same. It is this dialectical simultaneity of difference and identity that fuels the confusion by which arguments for more of what is can be framed as claims for quantitative difference.

McLuhan's distinction between mechanization and automation clarifies how the simplistic nature of economic doxa cannot understand change or difference, and how it therefore attempts to manage quality by way of quantity:

> Such economists as Robert Theobald, W W. Rostow, and John Kenneth Galbraith have been explaining for years how it is that "classical economics" cannot explain change or growth. And the paradox of mechanization is that although it is itself the cause of maximal growth and change, the principle of mechanization excludes the very possibility of growth or the understanding of change. For mechanization is achieved by

[217] The most obvious example is George Grant.

> fragmentation of any process and by putting the fragmented parts in a series. Yet, as David Hume showed in the eighteenth century, there is no principle of causality in a mere sequence. (11-12)

McLuhan is showing how, by conceiving liberty in purely negative, spatial terms the simplistic economistic discourse dominant in late capitalism is incapable of containing productive and circulatory value within a space. The economists' "paradox" results from trying to manage a process by referring to a prior, transcendent substance. The paradox expresses the incommensurability of the sequential or syntax and the essentially-non-sequential, substitutable character of the grammatical structure that governs the pure sequence. Nothing *figural* or *transcendent* follows from *literal* or *immanent* following. As Clover shows (in Part One) no content follows from simple syntax without a totalizing grammar. Understanding change's relation to an unchanging essence is impossible because the latter can't refer back to the process's movement. Thus classical, neoclassical, and neoliberal economic thought once again assumes the position of the Sage's wisdom at the end of history. The economist's faith in idealism (with its accompanying pseudo-theological taboo against materialism) is simply the modern, technocratic manifestation of Plato's idealist project of containing Heraclitus's change within Parmenides' eternal changelessness. The philosopher has become the expert.

Of course, this conceptual impasse—idealism's inability to apprehend the contradiction between the productive and circulatory forms of capital—is exactly what Innis's work took on; and the challenge the latter presents to neoclassical dogma accounts for why Innis's premises have been expunged from mainstream Canadian political-economic theory. What's both obvious and obscured is that no value is produced by valuating. McLuhan and Heidegger agree that, although everything can be ordered according to its value, neither metaphysical nor dollar value

comes from the ordering itself. Mechanization, such as it names a discrete thing (like Russell's example of "energy"), is the ideology that oversees the productive process, the abstracted logic of the production of things. Without an explanation of qualitative change, like the change of raw matter into supersensuous value, surplus and accumulation cannot be theorized. However, in the Canadian technological imaginary, Innis's materialist history—focused as it was on an analysis of mechanization, is not required. The technological fetishization of technology has reversed the relation of cause and effect. In a nation built as a space of communication and mediation, the image of the national essence as communication technology (like Kroker's works of high art) contains the contradiction of is and ought that motivates it, appearing to collapse the ideally-prior final cause into the historically-prior telos. The ideal thus appears to cause the material, just as conviction wills men to the moon. McLuhan narrates the idealist consequences of this collapse:

> So the greatest of all reversals occurred with electricity, that ended sequence by making things instant. With instant speed the causes of things began to emerge to awareness again, as they had not done with things in sequence and in concatenation accordingly. Instead of asking which came first, the chicken or the egg, it suddenly seemed that a chicken was an egg's idea for getting more eggs. (12)

According to the logic of the egg as separate or reified out from the chicken/egg dialectic, the chicken takes the form of Nature, or the productive space and labour-producer to be used by the transcendent subject, that embodiment of idealist potentiality, the egg.[218]

Rohmer's judgments are likewise claims about likenesses, series, and links that he presumes to be causal, but which are really reified instrumental quantities and structural characteristics. Like the naturalist-geographic regional imaginary I discuss in Part One,

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[218] The dialectical absurdity of this last example is Richard Lewontin's point in his Massey Lectures, *Biology as Ideology*—a brilliant critique of the Human Genome Project, the project's vulgarly-idealist aesthetic ideology, and its desire to sequence what's always-already post serial (broadcasted serially on the techno-nationalist CBC's *Ideas*).

Rohmer's aesthetic preference for East-West connections are part of an argument for the "validity" of Canada as a space—as a shape, really—but with the difference that the East-West is the natural, geographical, geological logic to which the political-economic unit should conform. The region of Mid-Canada is the answer to both the regional separations that appeal to US integration and to the sense of Canada as weather strip on US border:

> In central Ontario, where mining is most developed, an east-west route passes through the mining belt, linking many of the mines and, eventually, the processing and shipping areas in the south. This strongly supports the proposition that the east-west transportation orientation of the Mid-Canada region has validity.
>
> Many mineral deposits in Ontario have been discovered only in recent years, following the construction of an east-west railroad.

The tautological passage is both thematically and logically circulatory: in the most developed area, an East-West route links the sites. Therefore, an East-West orientation to the region has validity. Rohmer here figures the region of Mid-Canada as a description: development looks like *x*, so to develop more, it should look like *x*. But this is a claim *about* development, not *for* development.

The next passage shows further how this confusion works, as Rohmer claims that rationalization of extractive infrastructure would "spur on mineral resource development." But like the Calgary plan's "help" and Scheer's promises of a world "fuelled by Canadians," there's actually no claim to be made about how the development would be spurred, except for, again, descriptively. The development would be spurred "more coherently" than it is now:

> Mines which have their minerals carried south only, do not bestow the same advantages on Canada as do mines which are linked east and west as well as north and south.

> Transportation within Mid-Canada, developed along a lateral line, and interconnecting with the existing north-south roads and railways, clearly would spur mineral resource development more coherently than the spotty, finger-type rail development which now exists in all provinces which form parts of Mid-Canada. (30)

Obviously, this is an aesthetic argument based in metaphorical "coherence," having nothing to do with "development." Is there actually an imperative to develop resources "more," that is, to more fully exploit the region's mineral wealth and produce extractive value? Or is there only an impetus to develop resources more coherently, which we must assume means "to facilitate circulation"? To my mind, Rohmer is clearly interested in both questions, but like Van Nostrand's argument that fixed capital will attract and hold circulatory capital, the idealist nationalist perspective from which he begins and the aestheticism such a perspective relies on makes such distinctions impossible to recognize, even as it registers them. The spottiness of the finger-type development is not a sign of underdevelopment; it's evidence that the nation has skipped over full, industrial, mechanization and gone into automation. Rohmer is trying to fit an automated mode of production into the serial aesthetic of mechanization. This represents the Corridor idea's true anachronism.

Moreover, as a nakedly technological-nationalist argument, the passage quoted above finds itself wrestling with the character of technological nationalism as Charland describes it. It both *is*, and is *about being*, incoherent! This incoherence is apparent in the weak, xenophobic examples of "foreigners swarming" with "northward-reaching fingers," and "finger-like development"; but it's also clear in the use of the nation as a referent for coherence. For whom is incoherence a problem? Is transportation a problem for mines, for their owners, workers, or shareholders? It's hard to understand how the "spottiness" of the networks is spotty, let alone

problematic, except from the totally aesthetic point of view of the imagined nation, not only independent of, but transcendent in relation to, any already-existing development. Put existentially, the subject for whom incoherence is an issue is the idealist, carbon-democratic subject whose rights amount to proper access to the benefits of alienated national resources. But this imagined point of view is the aesthetic ideology of the nation as something that pre-exists the political-economic unit. The prior spirit is of course not empirically-historically prior; it's the ideal whose actualization is the subject of human history. And it's this idealist, Romantic, volkish Spirit that technological nationalism is tasked with bringing about. Like "human satisfaction" for Cooper and Kojève, like Fukuyama's "liberal-democratic idea," and like the moon landing for Rohmer and Ian Macdonald, the "coherent" East-West unity is the aesthetic precursor and ideal origin of the material that needs to be ordered by the Idea in order for the ideal to be realized. So, the MCDC—like the nation that it simultaneously imagines, posits as something that is, and argues for as something that ought to be—is the spatial resolution of the temporal contradiction of a nation that, having skipped over industrialization and missed its chance at material actualization, is trapped—as it were, *egg-like*—in its idealist potentiality. The MCDC is an imaginary resolution to the problem of a nation that has not mechanized according to a particular-national industrial mode of production, but which as a staples producer is nonetheless being mechanized or ordered in terms of super-national interests—sometimes those of the UK, sometimes in the form of the US's fingers, and sometimes, as in the current alienation-fantasies, by the seductive call of China's efflorescent petroculture. While the nation and its resources have been and will continue to be ordered as value, the subject presumed by this value is not the transcendent subject imagined by technological nationalism, it's the idealist subject of the post-national world empire at the end of history.

The MCDC, then, imaginarily contains the social and material and productive forces of the historical moment of industrialism within the idealism of post-industrial, media discourse (the conclusion of Kojèveian thought as Cooper summarizes it). Like any critique of Marxism will stress, the adherence to a theory of historical necessity can't very easily accommodate the skipping of a crucial stage,[219] and this explains the erasure of Innis's dependency thesis from Canadian economics. The containment of materiality within idealism is likewise aesthetic—i.e., *historiographic*. By retconning the realized telos-race-nation as the cause for the material development that will prove to be the process and the product of self-making, the desired-coherence (the essentially Canadian substance of "peace, order, and good government") is imagined as identical to the process. Technological nationalist projects contain matter within idealism, thus following a similar pattern to the containment of materialism in Strauss, Bloom, and Kojève.

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Rohmer's aesthetic expresses the desire for a rational sociological, geographical, technological whole that must be industrialized.[220] But despite its temporal mismatch with the age of the industrial nation state (that is, the temporal problem that will lead Rohmer to conclude by proposing that the state ought to institute the changes that will lead to its vanishing), the nation-

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[219] Kojève, like Steve Bannon, defined himself as a right-wing Marxist-Leninist.

[220] In another example of Rohmer's aesthetic ideology we hear, "Railways are by no means old fashioned or impractical […] an efficient railway system makes more economic sense than a good highway. […] However, the present pattern of rail links across Canada is hardly an aid to an integrated and interconnected development" (35). His "economic sense" is purely aesthetic, and he's really making a case for the aesthetics of nationalization. Thus his judgment, "hardly an aid," refers to the indifference of the market to national content. As a conservative businessman, Rohmer cannot see that he's got the relation between aesthetics and economics backward. In *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair describes that in the case of Chicago's streetcar system—an integrated and interconnected railway system if there ever was one—companies had to be legislatively forced to provide transfers for customers *to use between different routes on their own lines!* So, why would anyone expect privately-held corridors, built for one purpose and one private interest to conform even to the "economic sense" of streetcar transfers? Rohmer is facing the fact that infrastructures are intransitive of transcendent, "national" values—which can be resolved by nationalization of infrastructure. But he remains stuck making an ethical-aesthetic argument that the proper subject of techno-agency ought to be the idealist "national interest."

state remains for the moment the only imaginable form that can effect this rationalization, which for Rohmer is nothing other than the chance for the subjects of "Canada" to belatedly achieve full industrialization.

7.5 Settler Colonialism is Normal

Rohmer, Van Nostrand, and Scheer share a commitment to idealism by which material and historical differences are managed through rhetorical and structural figures, that is, by which differences are contained by samenesses. As I argued in Part One, in Canadian settler colonial historiography the Indigenous is figured as both excluded-*xenos*, *and* appropriated to the *oikos* of white experience. Janigan and Flanagan exemplify how Indigenous struggle has become a narrative form to articulate white Western settler mythology; in these texts, white, Anglophone, settler society takes on the subalternity of Indigenous peoples and populations, and Indigenous alterity is normalized. Sherene Razack, Rob Shields, and others have traced the related processes by which nationalism has been cultivated through an ideological northernization of Canada, an ongoing project to locate the Canadian identity in an imaginary northern space that allows time-biased claims—ties to Old World, ethnic-racial traditions—on concepts like "Nordicity." Rohmer's project is an extraordinary example of just this kind of construction. Mid-Canada—the theoretical region he proposes—is, as a resource trove and as a national political unit, the same kind of imaginary community as the rest of Canada, but it is effected by a more explicitly technological discourse, self-aware of its constitutive-constituted nature.

Like the racial-nationalist art discourses Scott Watson analyzes, and very much like the appropriation of Indigenous infrastructure by settlers in the work of Janigan and members of the Calgary School, Indigenous alterity is appropriated by acknowledging the existence of the

material precursor to what must be ideally realized.[221] That is, the building of what already exists. In a section titled "Existing Settlements," Rohmer acknowledges that Indigenous communities and some settlers are already in Mid-Canada, manifesting the idealist essence of the Canadian identity (the "is"); and the MCDC will allow the normalness of the Canadian biopolitical character (the "ought") to materialize. As Carl Berger and Rob Shields have shown, this white settler character is hard-working, rugged, masculine, and works the land, readying and normalizing it as the base upon which the ideological region can be built. Rohmer similarly explains: "Already, well-settled communities exist in Mid-Canada, and there are substantial acreages of arable land. Although the degree of isolation of existing settlements is still high, living conditions closely resemble those of towns in southern Canada" (33). Like many authors during this time of rapid surveying, new administration of Northern populations, and increasing resource exploitation, Rohmer sees his task as making Northern experience visible as a normal human lifeway, to rectify the lamentable fact (quoted above) that southwardly-fixated Canadians have turned their backs on the North:[222]

> Normalcy is the key to the sensible development of the Mid-Canada area. Living there is just as normal as the purposeful minds and competent hands of Canadians can make it. Our mid-north is waiting for planned, co-ordinated orderly action. A *nation-wide* purpose, if you like, in the same way as the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the unsettled parts of this country was a *national* purpose. (33)

The unusual distinction between "nation-wide" and "national" is telling. The former is an explicit spatialization of the latter, but its spatiality is figural compared to the literal binding of

[221] See Watson's account of how Tom Thomson functioned as such a figure, embodying stereotypes projected onto Indigenous populations and assimilating them to white, masculine, heteronormative Canadian identity (98-99).

[222] Authors and texts include Rohmer's *Arctic Imperative* (1973), Jim Lotz's fiction, travel-writing, technocratic work, and his *Northern Realities: Canada-U.S. Exploitation of the Canadian North* (1971), and official projects of technological nationalism, such as Glenn Gould's CBC *Idea of North* (in which Lotz participated).

space in the CPR. The claim being made is that, once again, like the technology behind the moon landing, the technology to make life in Mid-Canada normal is—*like the environment itself*—just waiting to be cultivated by the transcendental subjectivity of Canadian ingenuity. And this stubborn idealism—which is repeatedly asserted as the real source of value even when the subject of discussion is explicitly technology and resources—leads to the naively-nationalist non-sequitur of the next paragraph: "It must by now be clear to most Canadians that we shall remain subject to the economic influence of the U.S. unless we seize the opportunity within our own land, within our own grasp, and within our own time to develop a truly Canadian culture and economy" (33).

The existing settlements only offer an opportunity. What's needed for any "truly Canadian" culture is to imaginatively replace the Romantic, image of the empty North (*terra nullius* or the Igloo Syndrome) with the reality of extractive value by way of a "nation-wide" project of seeing all of Canada as normal *in regard to the mode of production*. In short, "the mind like the land must be occupied," as Charland says; or, to put it another way, the imaginary relation to the extractive and mercantile character of the nation's dominant form of value must be continually reproduced in the mind that makes up the subjectivity of the nation.

The rhetorical premises that animate settler-colonial historiography draw on and support a structuralist figuration of spaces and populations. Rohmer's section "Existing Settlements" draws on the Acres report, providing a taxonomy to categorize settlements into uses and opportunities. It begins with a list of "the most important settlement areas in Mid-Canada." These are areas around the Mackenzie River and Great Slave Lake as well as "the triangle of mineral resource towns bounded by Noranda in the east, Kapuskasing in the west and Sudbury in the south." This is followed by a list of "Small settlements." Already it's apparent that the

formless "area" along rivers and lakes is contrasted with the purposive settlements of the extraction industry; that is, these are two very different kinds of settlements. This difference in kind is not explicitly acknowledged, but it's apparent in the rhetoric by which it's managed. The different quality of traditional, Indigenous, pre-Confederation, or mercantilist, settlements and networks—of the fur trade for example—which predate the mechanization and seriality that characterizes industrial production—are managed by analogy to geography. These are the areas defined by natural features. By subtle contrast, the more clearly single-use, primary industries—those settlements based in industrial extraction—are assimilated into the narrative as the analogy progresses to a geometrical, two-dimensional shape, in which politics and spatializations are held together in the abstraction of the triangle. The narrative has moved from naturalism to abstract space; and now, distinctions in kind—historical differences—are contained spatially and structured taxonomically within a political-economic-technocratic idiom, not unlike the contemporaneous structuralism asserted by Atwood's *Survival*.[223]

The simple taxonomy that follows does politically what the first narrative (that of "most important *areas*") does economically: here the area is spatialized according to industry; and the settlement and assimilation of the resource-area—which was settled for administrative, military, and extractive purposes—is spatialized in a table.[224] There are six distinct kinds of communities currently in existence in Mid-Canada:

> *Administrative* – depending mainly on government services, and home of civil servants.
>
> *Defence* – clearly created for strategic purposes and having a relatively low [likelihood] of permanence.

[223] Cf. *Survival*'s taxonomies.

[224] The content, or the epistemic claims presented in this table-taxonomy, which I'm arguing partakes of the literary and sociological structuralism that structured thought in the 60s-70s, will be expressed by the Calgary plan in the structuralist-realist synthesis of the PowerPoint presentation, which I'll discuss next chapter.

> *Renewable resource* – based mainly on such continuing resources as hunting, fishing and forestry.
>
> *Non-renewable resource* – embracing most of the mineral resource development towns which may last only as long as the minerals last.
>
> *Port centres* – transportation outlets to the sea, such as Prince Rupert, Tuktoyaktuk, Churchill, Goose Bay, Seven Islands and Baie Comeau.
>
> *Diversified* – including those centres with a broader economic base than simply one industry or one mine. Economic benefits are spread over such activities as tourism, secondary manufacturing, mining, transportation and administration. (43)

Rohmer says the "orderly development" of the region would "give Canadians control over the expansion of their country" as well as "bring tremendous benefits to the citizens of Mid-Canada who already live with the problems of impermanence, undeveloped cultural pursuits, inadequate housing and sometimes degrading poverty." Few would argue the significance of the challenges Northerners face, but Rohmer separates the Indigenous population into its own sentence, so these peoples are at once located within—or *indigenous to* these problems—and rhetorically *set outside* these problems: "A requirement in any policy prepared for Mid-Canada is the full participation of Indians, Metis, and Eskimos in policy-making, and planning and the creation of opportunities whereby they can gain prosperity and preserve their languages and cultures" (43). This simultaneous separation and inclusion is a remarkably similar rhetorical manoeuvre to those Janigan uses to acknowledge the colonial encroachment and enclosure of the East on settlers in the West. Rohmer here demonstrates how colonial processes can be acknowledged and simultaneously appropriated as a grievance, while the settler's complicity in colonialism is

disavowed.[225] Indigenous peoples—presumably present in some relation to the initial "settlement areas"—must be included, but they are explicitly excluded both from the grievances, and from the taxonomy. Indigenous communities are not categorized among the "six distinct kinds of communities." Obviously, Indigenous people live in these communities, predating the "communities" in some instances and likely coming after them in others. But this inclusion is disavowed in the containment of the rhetoric. Where are the Indigenous communities? Of course, they're on the ground upon which the ideal of technological nationalism is being built. The taxonomy shows that settler-colonialism is already in the North, *on top of* the existing material and historical space and population, and therefore is the structurally-identical material basis for the MCDC project of building a nation on top of the nation, or, rather, on top of several nations.

7.6 Human Capital and/as Carbon Democracy

The peculiar idea of building a nation on top of a nation can be understood as the technological nationalist project of building a nation out of communication and mediation on top of a nation based in extraction and transportation of resources. Such an understanding follows from the staples-communication dynamic traced by the careers of Innis and McLuhan. But the productive forces capable of producing a strong state structure—capable, as it were, of "building" a *Nation* on top of another or otherwise—are foreign to a staples economy premised in extraction and circulation. In other words, Canada will never be a strong productive power or a strong military power. Unlike industrialized Western nations, Canada's mode of production demands a specific form of governmentality to reproduce the social relations of extractivism and commerce. Rohmer

[225] In Flanagan/Janigan's appropriation of Riel as the original petro-crusader (Part One), colonial violence is acknowledged in order to provide the original injustice that allows the White Settler to—through her righteous indignation—appropriate the Indigenous subaltern position in the structure of Confederation. Rohmer here provides a purely formal, rhetorical appropriation—a powerful example of the epistemic violence structured into Canada's structuralist and technological discourses.

and his cohorts sense this problem, and take steps towards figuring this governmentality, which from our historical vantage is apparent as carbon democracy. They figure the paradigmatic national subject as "the Human Resource," doing so in explicit contrast to the subjectivity belonging to older state-models of sovereignty based in imperial expansion and military force. The new, post-industrial form of governmentality is one of technocratic administration; the new subjectivity to emerge from this mode of production is the administrator-manager; and the new form of human activity that will replace the productive forces belonging to the period of national industrialization, i.e., labour and military power, is the self-governing figure of human capital. Rohmer thus presents a winsome specimen of the post-industrial, idealist wealth of nations in the form of David Morgan, a young Harvard MBA with an elite big business family background who's chosen to live in Thunder Bay. Rohmer (who counts among his military honours the rank of "General" and is no dove), reports Morgan's assessment in regard to the MCDC and national defence:

> "Let me be blunt. To develop the mid-north may take something like 2 billion a year for maybe ten years—I am guessing, but I'd rather guess high. That represents the kind of figure that Canada talks today for its defence budget. Well, I know where the priorities lie and I would divert the lot, every dollar, into developing Canada's needy areas.
>
> "No, it wouldn't put thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen out of work. It would give them a chance of lending a hand with the job of building Canada and helping fellow Canadians to find a decent future here.

> "Putting it another way, instead of paying men and women a lot of money to 'stand on guard for thee' against some indeterminate enemy, why not pay these same people the same money or more to help other Canadians develop our mid-north?" (55)

Morgan's claim about the proper function of a liberal-democratic state project shows how the army and the state have peculiar roles in Canada's mediation economy. In Canada the army doesn't protect private property or borders ("against some indeterminate enemy"). Naylor's characterization of the North West Mounted Police as the "military arm of the CPR" (16) describes how the Canadian military should not be understood as a standalone force defending the *oikos* from *xenos*; rather, the military—which has followed the exact same dependency-relation as Canadian capital has, following the British Empire to the US in NATO—is a function of the state project of managing an environment in which merchant capital can flow into, through, and out of the nation. Thus, Morgan's expertise regarding where "the priorities lie" is a claim that the objective of defence in Canada ought to be as the infrastructural arm of merchant capital; it should contribute to the protection and development of capital's particular Canadian form by helping to develop resource extraction.

Completing the move from the antagonistic dynamic between sovereign governments to the internal dynamic of domestic governmentality, Morgan goes on to present an interestingly-belated vision that blends the 18th-century idealist view of the state as a divine agent of progress with an equally Romantic idea that satisfaction and fulfilment—here in the figure of class equality—can be achieved by a Romantic proximity to Nature. While Morgan "has lived the good life" of a jet-setter, he says that in Mid-Canada "you have the material needs you expect to find in the big cities. [But you also have] openness, clean air, trees and lakes." These latter benefits—in explicit contrast to "*material* needs"—mediate, indeed resolve, economic

disparities: "The woman who drops in to help us with the cleaning, for example, has a cottage she and her husband enjoy during the summer. It's just down the road from ours." As the woman "drops in" "to help," the fantasy of contemporary informal, flexible, and mobile work reveals its genealogical connection to Romantic aesthetics of satisfaction and equality in regard to work and leisure activity in Nature. Thus Morgan's example is remarkably similar to Kojève's famous end of history footnote exploring the consequences of "the disappearance of Man," who nevertheless "remains alive" *as animal*, due to the perfect fit between his nature (as work), and Nature.[226] Within minutes of fishing and swimming open to all, "The mid-north, as far as I am concerned, offers you a chance to be *you*" (51-52). This simultaneous conflation and displacement of the self-fulfilment proper to human nature into a Nature spatially configured for human satisfaction manages of the contradiction between the post-industrial wholeness of what McLuhan would call the network and that seriality, paradigmatic of industrial production, upon whose image the Corridor ultimately relies. In political terms, the substitution/supplementation of human nature and Nature synthesizes the biopolitical *oikos* of inner happiness and governmentality with the *xenos* of the external, the political space of states and governments.

As I've shown, the idealist premises of technological nationalism conceptually require the disavowal of production in the process of value creation. Here, Morgan and Rohmer remove labour from the circuit of capital; thereby value can seem to inhere not in the action of the worker on Nature, but in the subject's human capital as a function of human nature in a process of self-actualization. And this human nature is made to appear possible by the anachronistically-

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[226] As Kojève (to be sure, semi-ironically, but nevertheless) puts it,

> If Man becomes an animal again, his arts, his loves, and his play must also become purely "natural" again. Hence it would have to be admitted that after the end of History, men would construct their edifices and works of art as birds build their nests and spiders spin their webs, would perform musical concerts after the fashion of frogs and cicadas, would play like young animal, and would indulge in love like adult beasts. (159)

Romantic—but quintessentially-Canadian—literality of being in Nature. I've argued that the Corridor as a figure for value cannot without contradiction conceptualize a fixed space in which capital can accumulate, despite being its being repeatedly articulated in the aesthetic terms of a city/centre. Now, in Rohmer and Morgan's example we see that the Corridor is also not a space where value accumulates via labour or activity as understood in the factory-image that characterizes industrial production. As Marx puts it in the discussion of socially-necessary labour time, labour is cosmopolitan, and its value is determined by the super-national factors of the world market. But for labour to take place and produce value, it also conceptually needs a centre, a spatial stability that is typically represented as a factory.[227] In contrast, Morgan and Rohmer present an idealist vision for overcoming the irrationality that is structured—or fixed—into the state form, whose function it is to mediate economic interests that necessarily lie outside of or above any nation. If the nation is developed as a Corridor, as mobility, then the space of the Corridor will be one of mobility at the same time as an organic or nativist race-space relation. Even, or especially, in the remoteness of Northern or Mid-Canada—those places that exist for most citizens primarily in and as the imagination—the human resource is a mobile subject whose national belonging is expressed in the good life of accessible goods, in other words, the carbon-democratic citizen. The Corridor is not a location or a space but a proximity; labour isn't action upon an object, but a process of mediating a subject.

The space of mobility that Morgan and Rohmer pose as Romantic nature lets us see how problems of media and space, especially as they increase bias and change pace to reduce time and increase space, are posed as spatial solutions. As George Altmeyer argues in "Three Ideas of

[227] I'm not suggesting there's a metaphysical thing called "labour" that "requires" this or that, nor am I saying Marx's explanation must be taken as any gospel truth; my point is simply that without accounting for the logical and conceptual connections Marx discerns, there's little logical sense in speaking of things like human resources or developing a nation or an economy; that is, a factory without a fixed space or a national framework or an international market, like a national space in the form of a passage, is conceptually nonsense.

Nature in Canada, 1893-1914," when the rapid social changes of urbanism became a cause of worry in the first half of the twentieth century, figures like tourism and mobility, rest cures and "back to nature" movements emerged as solutions (23). As Innis shows, each new technology brings with it new spatial configurations that shift temporal patterns, thereby creating its conflicting/binary/opposite space; the idyll of nature is thus in no way pre-modern or anachronistic, but a thoroughly contemporary mobility-space of transportation.[228] This whole complex of time/space problems is the object of the Corridor. Rohmer and Morgan are remarkably lucid in their understanding that the Canada popularly understood as a place close to nature is not a salutary coincidence, it's a constructed, manageable, and scalable feature.[229]

Still, as Kant, Herder, and Hegel recognized in post-Westphalian Europe, a population of "existing settlements" and a natural environment are only material ingredients; the nation and the "people" must be wilfully created in relation to a Universal Idea or purpose and take concrete, exterior form in a state. From the dialectical viewpoint of the end of history, satisfaction is understood to be logically and existentially prior, and the material world simply exists to express this satisfaction. Morgan and Rohmer retain not only the formally-necessary Providential aspect of German idealist state theory, but residues of its divine content, too, explaining that the modern, technological-nationalist take on this Romantic project requires that human capital be attracted from "Canada south" by way of a Northern gospel:

> "I can do exactly what I want to do and I want to live here, in this part of mid-northern Canada, and teach. Yes, I have a bit of the missionary in me, I suppose, in the sense that I

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[228] Canadian cultural history is of course full of such examples, for instance the Algoma of the Group of Seven is a paradigmatic pre-modern idyll, a site made accessible by newly popular train lines, scenes painted in the most modern and transnational styles, and prints quickly mass-distributed from coast to coast.

[229] These are the terms by which the idyll of such perfect resource communities as Deep River, Ontario are to be understood on the scale of technological nationalism (See *It's All Happening So Fast*); likewise for urban greenspace and architects' drawings (those structured natural spaces that are rendered Kafka-esque in suburb design), but in Morgan and Rohmer, these urban aesthetics are scaled up to a national level.

> am acutely aware of the injustices and inequities, the disparities between the haves of Canada and the have-nots." (51)

Attracting such luminous zeal as Morgan effuses is essential, and the aesthetic sociology of Rohmer's discussion of "normalcy" is repeated here in terms of entrepreneurship as human capital, as *pouvoir/savoir* that must be courted and nurtured, echoing a Goetheian-botanical mix of Romantic organicism and Enlightenment cultivation. Prefiguring Tom Flanagan's racist narrative of "civilization" as that which can only bloom once land is capitalized, for Rohmer and Morgan, the ideal-seed must be planted in the material-soil to develop the nation. And this sowing must be effected by the world-historical role of the businessman-technocrat extraordinaire. Rohmer will develop this character much more explicitly in his fiction,[230] but the figure pervades his oeuvre, for example in his business biographies, and it is presented here as an executive profile:

> David Morgan is a special kind of human animal. Mid-Canada might be combed for years without revealing a trace of any person with a similar combination of youthfulness, education, family background, assets (personal as well as financial) and energy.
> Yet in one way, at least, he stands comparison with estimated 750,000 Canadians who live in Mid-Canada today. They are the greatest resource of all—the human resource. (50)

First, Goering recounted his epiphanic realization the space of Mid-Canada was itself a resource (the "greatest single resource Canada has"[231]); next, he and Rohmer showed how this ultimate resource will be expressed in the human capital that can materialize from the space with

[230] See especially the oilman-civil-servant-warrior Pierre De Gaspe, hero of Rohmer's *Exxoneration*.
[231] (Quoted above) "Instead of talking about the different resources of the Corridor, we should have isolated and underlined the fact that the very existence of Mid-Canada is a resource in itself: that its being as it is today represents the greatest single resource Canada has."

the perfection of technocratic administration. Now, Morgan emerges as the template for Rohmer's neo-Romantic tender of the garden.[232] This figure, who in Hegel's time was the world-historical individual epitomized by the warrior-statesman Napoleon, is in Canada's 1970s the world-historical technocrat.[233] The leader of the modern *volk* is the manager, but one whose historical specificity renders him a carbon democrat. That carbon democracy is the political form of the resource-mode of production upon which the MCDC is based is apparent in the fact that the freedoms all enjoy in mid-Canada are Natural, but are only possible as the idealist equivalence of material treasures, and then only with proper management that can organize these equivalences as expressions of human value. In terms of national subjectivity, these freedoms are articulated via spatial relations—of mobility (the cleaning woman "drops by") and of the proximity to Nature/human nature concretized in the Corridor. Like Kojève's creatures, Mandeville's or Marx's bees (or Kant's proto-Canadianist beaver!),[234] Morgan—that

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[232] Like in Scheer's equation and in the logical conclusion of the labour theory shared by Cooper, Janigan, and Flanagan.

[233] More precisely, as Kojève takes Hegel, the empirical Napoleon, like the empirical Morgan of the profile, literally incarnates the material-statesman and the idealist-philosopher into the figure "Robespierre-Napoleon."

[234] (I.e., Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*) In "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," Kant explains that "Men neither pursue their aims purely by instinct, as the animals do, nor act in accordance with any integral, prearranged plan like rational cosmopolitans," and thus it seems impossible that we could trace a human universal history, like we could "with bees or beavers." I am arguing that Rohmer, like Kant, is trying to articulate the conditions of possibility by which human social arrangements can conform with the Providential reason of human nature and capacity—as Kant puts it, "how world events must develop if they are to conform to certain rational ends." Apropos of Kant's universal history, Kojève's literalization of man's animal origin/telos shows that in his system the dialectical equation of man-nature is already taken for granted. Kant defines history as the account of human action in world. The will might be free or determined in a metaphysical sense, but the will manifests in the phenomenal world according to natural laws, and history is the account of these manifestations, whatever their causes. So, if we study history as the "free exercise of the human will *on a large scale*," we hope to see "regular progression among freely willed actions" ("Universal History" 41). This "regularity," like Rohmer's "normality" is (as everything is for Kant) an expression of natural law. And Kant's privileging of the law-form provides the basis for Hegel's concept of Right and the latter's view that human freedom is identical to following rational laws, whose concrete rationality renders any further negation irrational. And, of course, Cooper's equation of the transnational corporation and the Stalinist Gulag, as well as Agamben's figure of the camp as *nomos* of the modern, each derive from the same un-negatable state of pure givenness that Kojève described in his equation of the USSR with the USA (which I argued in Part One logically follows from Kojève's sophistic equation of Marx with Hegel). From Kojève's animalistic perspective, the point of Hegel's History is to resolve the contradiction between man as something other than animal, to undo the fundamental ontological contradiction of labour. See Agamben on Kojève in *The Open*, as well as the note below on animals. In terms of the state's ultimate perfection at the end of history, seeing the Corridor as a concretization of the Canadian state's essence as a mediator of fluid capital is a way to understand the

extraordinary "human animal"—unites Nature's material bounty within the technocratic paradigm of resource extraction, whose ultimate Hegelian rational-actualization is the cultivation, nurturing, and extraction of *human* resources.

Just as Napoleon materially realized the prior ideals of the French Revolution through his action at Jena, Morgan-as-world-historical-technocrat actively combines resource specificity and Universal political form. Echoing Kojève's epiphanic realization that all the events of history since Hegel's Jena were "but an extension in space of the universal revolutionary force actualized in France by Robespierre-Napoleon" (*Introduction* 160),[235] Rohmer's technocratic model relies on a spatialization of history: the Corridor idea is an ideological container through which material and historical content are governed by an idealist ahistorical structuralism. The division of labour is here, as it was incipiently in Hegel and explicitly in the Strauss/Bloom city-man metaphor, a matter of integrating the division of knowledge—what Marx would call the general intellect—anachronistically back into what Rousseau calls the general will.[236] This is

space as one of exception and as the fulfillment of Absolute Freedom, or the resolution of the contradictions of a particular national interest's dialectical identity/antagonism with the universality of the global. In other words, the Corridor actualizes equations like Scheer's by spatializing the process of extracting value from people as the wealth of the nation in a post-industrial economy. The Corridor prefigures the vanishing of the state and the resolution of difference into the ecological sameness of an animal in its natural environment, or as Morgan puts it, in a life in which "you get to be you."

[235] Kojève explains further:

> At the period when I wrote the [first part of the famous] note (1946), Man's return to animality did not appear unthinkable to me as a prospect for the future (more or less near). But shortly afterwards (1948) I understood that the Hegelian-Marxist end of History was not yet to come, but was already a present, here and now. Observing what was taking place around me and reflecting on what had taken place in the world since the Battle of Jena, I understood that Hegel was right to see in this battle the end of History properly so-called. In and by this battle the vanguard of humanity virtually attained the limit and the aim, that is, the *end*, of Man's historical evolution. What has happened since then was but an extension in space of the universal revolutionary force actualized in France by Robespierre-Napoleon. (Kojève *Introduction* 160n6)

[236] Technological-nationalist idealism leads Rohmer and Morgan to repeat the mistake (in Kojève, especially in Fukuyama, and arguably in Walter Benn Michaels) by which Hegel's end of history has been understood to signal the end of class struggle. In contrast, Herbert Marcuse insists that Hegel's claim about history being over is greatly exaggerated and refers only to the history of Hegel's own economic class. While Hegel maintains that the only content of history is the struggle towards universal freedom, Marcuse agrees with Shlomo Avineri as he writes, "the concept of freedom […] follows the pattern of free ownership. As a result the history of the world that Hegel looks out upon exalts and enshrines the history of the middle class, which based itself on this pattern" (*Reason and Revolution* 227, cf. Avineri). Marcuse claims that even Hegel was aware of this, explaining that at the end of

another way of phrasing the contradiction between willing the nation and affirming the existing nation that encapsulates Charland's definition of technological nationalism: "Morgan's worldly goods and lively knowledge of economics would stand him in poor stead faced with a decision involving wind ferocity, chill factor, shifting snow banks and forest lore" (53). Rohmer is presenting a textbook case of Hegelian dialectic: the nation's resources are valueless without a human spirit to give them meaning; this is of course also the premise by which humans are ideologically separated from animals, which has allowed Indigenous peoples to be figured as "non-productive," as pre-national, and thus as an essentially non-human part of Nature, which I discuss in Part One regarding Flanagan and Janigan.[237] Likewise, Morgan's technology and credentials are—like the settlement taxonomy's geometric network of "resource towns"—meaningless abstractions without a connection to a naturalistic, geographically-based *volk* who can be shaped into human resources, a people expressive of their human relation to Nature as participants in a particular national project, and, indeed, embodying the wealth of nations. Even more interestingly, Rohmer does not figure this volkish knowledge as merely anachronistic or quaint folk wisdom; it is, as Morgan has stressed, *knowledge as human capital*. Rohmer does not simply contrast Morgan's "knowledge of economics" with practical know-how and local "lore," but these are included among specifically technical knowledge of wind speeds and chill

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Philosophy of History Hegel remarks, "This is the point which consciousness has attained," to which Marcuse replies, "This hardly sounds like an end" (*Reason* 227). Marcuse continues, "Consciousness is historical consciousness. […] The consciousness and the aims of his class were open to Hegel. He saw they contained no new principle to rejuvenate the world" (227). At Hegel's end of history there was no sign of a competing definition to negate the bourgeois identity, thus its aims and consciousness were (temporarily) left open. And of course the ambiguous stance Marcuse reads in Hegel's historicity results from the former's understanding of the material conditions which play a central role in nature, which in turn is part of human history.

[237] Cf. also Kojève's very technological-nationalist-sounding conflation of labour-action and exchange:

> the first spider changed the World by weaving the first web. Hence it would be better to say: the World changes essentially (and becomes human) through "exchange," which is possible only as a result of Work that realizes a "project." (52 n4)

factors—in other words, the *volk* knowledge is already specialized knowledge, fully integrated, or as McLuhan would say mechanized, into the rational episteme.[238]

But the image of human capital explicit in the MCDC project is not only an anachronistic romanticization of the division of labour from an out-dated nationalist perspective. Like always in the texts I'm looking at, this image is the idealist expression of material political-economic realities—in other words, the consequence of failing to distinguish between merchant and productive capital. The reality isn't that the North is in need of young professionals; it's that the nation itself is not materially a pre-existing reality. It's not a post-industrial nation because it has never been industrialized. The social and productive relations of a post-industrial, immaterial, knowledge economy are not material forces in Canada; so whether or not Morgan's cleaning woman is valuated as human capital—seemingly transcending class differences by enjoying the same benefits, etc.—Morgan will never be her colleague or office manager. He is her employer.

Thus, again, the aesthetics of a centre—of a fixed space—are appealed to as means of resolving peripheral problems of fluidity and mobility. Trying to imagine fixing the fluidity of labour movement—the flood of young people who leave Canada to pursue jobs in the US—Rohmer explains how the division of knowledge can be contained within the Corridor. He introduces Dr. Lloyd I. Barber, vice president of the University of Saskatchewan, who spoke at the conference on the topic of "human resource development." Barber contrasts the good

[238] The knowledge of the people/*volk* must be self-consciously scientific, philosophical knowledge or else it would simply count among the pre-critical, pre-historical (i.e., un-negatable) forms of behaviour, in which rules, customs, actions, and superstitions are indistinguishable, that is, the realm of pseudo-animalistic *technique* or art, not that of *sophia*, or, the wisdom proper to human reason. (As Russell says, Pythagoras did not invent the *practical* knowledge of the theorem which bears his name, as "Arithmetic and some geometry existed among the Egyptians and Babylonians, but mainly in the form of rules of thumb. Deductive reasoning from general premisses was [the] Greek [i.e., *philosophical*] innovation" (3).)

Kojève's previously-cited comment explains how this technical integration of natural knowledge needn't contradict the end of history premise: "animals also have (pseudo) techniques; the first spider changed the World by weaving the first web …" (52 n4).

mobility of human capital with the bad mobility of labour, here figured as the problem of lost young people, those forced out of the fold into exile from their native land. Dr. Barber says,

> "It is interesting to speculate whether so many of our able men and women would have had to seek outlets for their talents south of the border had we earlier evolved the bold systems approach to development north of our 'border' which is inherent in Mr. Rohmer's plan." (53)

If such an approach is not taken quickly, "our sons and daughters will be forced to continue to seek outlets for their talents in the United States and elsewhere" (53-4).[239] As in the Northwest of the CPR, which was built in part to prevent a possible invasion from the already-mobilized US military, Canada can only defend its existence as a nation by turning those forces inward, by developing itself on top of the material and Indigenous nation(s). In sum, Barber's remarks show how the entire MCDC concept takes the symptomatic *effects* of a properly-running centre/periphery relationship—the brain drain or migration of capital from periphery to centre—as *causes* to be remedied.

Seeing these effects as causes, Barber and Rohmer explain that the colonial history of expropriation and exploitation of land and resources are no longer real problems; rather, like the post-Jena extension in space of the Robespierrian ideal, past injustices represent the opportunity to perfect national development by bringing temporal matter into line with the Idea incarnated in the national space:

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[239] Barber's repetitious phrasing ("seeking outlets") reflects both bad editing and the iterative, serial, structural reproductions of the dominant form of capital in Canada as a mediator between empires. But editing aside, Barber's repetition participates in Rohmer's (and technological nationalist-carbon democrats like John Ballem and Jim Lotz's) proliferation of messages across genres. *The Green North* as a book is a repetition and condensation of the conference; *Exodus/UK* is the repetition in fiction of the same idea, as is—with some differences—Rohmer's *Separation* (1976). Bizarrely, *Separation* was literally repeated in 1982's *Separation 2*, which, a few changed sentences aside, is exactly the same book!

> Later, referring to the plight of many Canadians (we can call them Indians or Eskimos, but they are Canadians in the purest sense of the word) [Barber] emphasized that the mistakes were made a century ago, or 50 years ago or 25 years ago—and that decrying those mistakes will not change them. (54)

Notwithstanding the contemporaneous Sixties Scoop, ongoing residential schools, and the very resource and land dispossessions that Rohmer's plans and fictions (as well as those of fellow-technocrat-novelists Ballem and especially Lotz) hope to address, these "mistakes," like the forced dispossession and racism portrayed in *The War Between Us*, occurred *in time*, which starts long ago, and therefore, "25 years ago" belongs more to the "century ago" than to the present. This rhetorical containment of "mistakes" within distant time is complemented by the following rhetorical spatialization, through which the Corridor becomes a space of reconciliation and mutual benefit, acting as the subject of the sentence, providentially promising bounty to the now-inclusive collective pronoun "we"—which nevertheless still clearly excludes Indigenous people:

> "The Mid-Canada Corridor concept provides an admirable vehicle through which *we* can change, and the native Canadian can participate as a full partner in the excitement and wealth which are derived in the process of taming a new frontier" (emphasis in original 54).

The corridor is a space, but it is a space of mobility—it is space *as* mobility; like energy is in Rohmer's example of coal fuelling chemical plants, this form is a process: it's "a vehicle" "*through* which" all Canadians can participate in "the process of taming a new frontier." These are all movements, transitions, mediations. And as we saw Flanagan and Janigan relegate Indigeneity to a pre-historical, pre-national time, for Rohmer and Barber, the temporal reality of spatially-prior Indigenous populations in the mediatory space of Canada is contained ("mistakes

were made…years ago") and managed by the translation of space into movement; so defective forms of capital, once liberated from place-boundedness in reserves, will free First Nations' peoples and let them enter history as process.

In Van Nostrand's fantasy, a space can hold mobile capital; "we" can build "it" and make "them" stay. The imaginary of technological nationalism relies on the premise that temporal problems can be literally and figuratively *fixed* by the nation form as a time-container, lending the stability to attract and trap the capital—those Natural and Human resources—that, like Canada's lost flock, goes where most profitable.

Chapter 8

Periodizing the Canadian Northern Corridor

8.1 Spatializing Time: Bundling Canadian History in Infrastructure

The University of Calgary's School of Public Policy presents the following on their website:

> The National Infrastructure and Market Access Program – the Canadian Northern Corridor – was launched in June 2015, led by The School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary and the Centre Interuniversitaire de Recherche en Analyse des Organisations (CIRANO) based in Montreal. The program investigates the feasibility of a multi-modal transportation corridor in Canada's north and near north, providing access to ports on all three oceans for our renewable and non-renewable commodities. It is designed to undertake policy-relevant, multi-disciplinary research, led by the two institutions and supported by a network of researchers across Canada.[240]

In addition to making three publications available for public reading—"Planning for Infrastructure to Realize Canada's Potential: The Corridor Concept"; "Gains from Trade for Canada's North: The Case for a Northern Infrastructure Corridor"; and "Opening Canada's North: A Study of Trade Costs in the Territories"—the school features a slickly-produced video entitled "Canadian Northern Corridor Concept," which I will now examine.

The video opens on northern vistas: time-lapsed sunrises and sunsets, a lone pumpjack humbly genuflects in the shadow of the sublime Rockies. A CGI bird bursts from the window of an exquisitely-ruined farmhouse. Calgary appears, and we're drawn northwards to inuksuks and laughing children on snowmobiles. A confident male voice announces: "It's a vision of the future: connecting Canada, from coast, to coast, to coast." A tractor-trailer sweeps by, followed

[240] https://www.policyschool.ca/research-teaching/energy-and-environment/canadiannortherncorridor/

by images of a grain elevator, a bison, small ports, and a northern community of even more smiling people. “Driving trade, enhancing communities.” “Uniting north”—another inuksuk, “and south”—prairie silos. An ice road provides the background as the bold vision is announced:

> The time is now for Canada’s Northern Corridor. We are envisioning Canada’s next great infrastructure project. Four years ago, at the University of Calgary’s School of Public Policy, in partnership with CIRANO, […] we embarked on a journey to develop and promote the creation of the Northern Corridor.

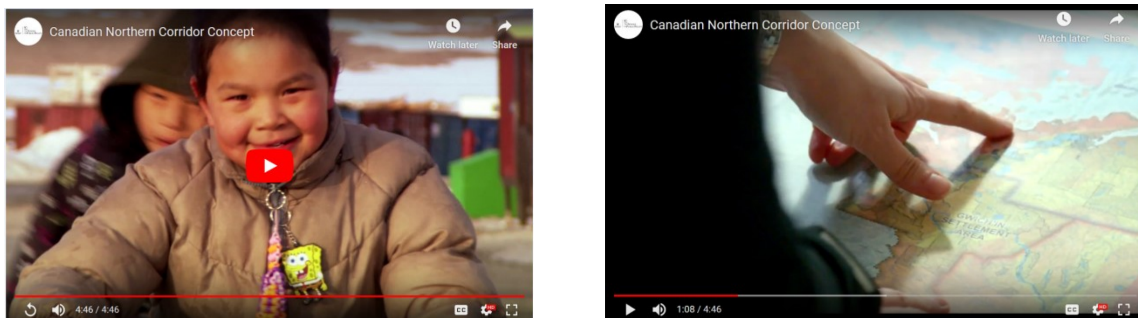

Fig. 7: Left: Carbon-democratic futurity Right: Inside the School, collaborators are examining documents and maps of the Gwich’in Settlement Area.

The young, bearded Kent Fellows explains, “The Northern Corridor is a concept for a multimodal transportation corridor, somewhere between a couple of kilometres wide up to ten kilometres wide, that goes right across Canada’s north and near north.” Jennifer Winter continues, “What the Corridor does is sets up the land for the *potential* infrastructure. So that could be anything from rail, roads, pipeline, transmission lines, and telecommunications.”

As a CN train passes, the narrator sets the Corridor’s technological-nationalist context: “Following in the tradition of Canada’s greatest infrastructure projects of the past, the Corridor will transform the Canadian economy.” Thus the narrator sketches the idealist premises of technological nationalism in the neoliberal period. In its earlier iterations, technological nationalism was inseparable from economic nationalism. In this chapter I will periodize the

Corridor concept, examining the current examples of technological nationalism against those of Rohmer's time by discerning how the claims each makes are structured according to the historical specificity of their respective political-economic premises. In the "tradition" invoked by the video, the nation was the site of resources whose value-as-equivalence promised Canada its place among the other nations of the world. Thus the national purpose was to work and transform the nation from out of its Natural *givenness* by building into the future. Rohmer's plan self-consciously partakes of this purpose. But I argue Rohmer's identification of the national space with its natural resources and these with "the human resource" also provides a marker to register the MCDC's periodicity. As a textual or narrative solution to material contradictions, the Corridor functions to mediate the global first-world shift from the politics and policies belonging to the industrial mode of production towards those superstructural elements apposite to a post-industrial, immaterial economy. In other words, the social and productive relations the Corridor articulates prefigure the greater transnational reorganizations that will be come to be grouped under the name "neoliberalism." At the same time, the Corridor acts as a national solution, mediating the persistence of the non-productive, anachronistic form of capital that assigns Canada its materially-peripheral place in the world system, while orienting the nation towards the idealist fantasy of post-productive, post-national, and post-historical fluid capital.

The historically-specific premise of the present Calgary plan is that, like all earlier projects, this one will transform the economy; but the plan's periodicity shows through in its reliance on the historiographic aesthetics of mediation and not of production. In Rohmer's proposal "transformation" meant a change from one *kind* of thing to another—like bringing Canada as what Bell calls a "non-nation" up to date with the universal liberal form of the Nation, or, changing from a non-productive periphery to a chain of productive cities or centres. And

while the video makes no explicit distinction from this earlier essentially-*qualitative* discourse of Northern development, it nevertheless makes clear that the transformation it imagines has no pretence of production. The Calgary plan imaginarily resolves the historical-material contradictions of the nation form, productive forces, and the forms of capital that have been determining Canadian politics since before Confederation into a figure of smooth, lubricated mediation. Like McLuhan says of media, the Corridor does not presume to actually "transform," but to reinforce or accelerate what's already given—to change the scale and pace of human affairs.

Therefore, in contrast to Rohmer's time, transformation is not "development" in this plan, but simply the homogenization of consumer-activity. That is, the heralded transformation makes no claims about changing an economy dominated by an extractive, merchant form of capital into an industrial or even a post-material information economy, to overcome, as earlier projects like the CPR sought to do, a backward or pre-historical status—whether figured as an incomplete national ideal or as a materially-incomplete transportation infrastructure. Yet the claims for transformation are made by way of an aesthetic in which all the past, that is, the *historical specificity* and *materiality* of Canada's "great infrastructural projects"—Winter's "rail, roads, pipeline, transmission lines, and telecommunications"—will be bundled, as she says, "potentially" within a space of movement. So in the Corridor, as in a simplified version of Heidegger's Standing Reserve, or as in McLuhan's total seriality, the historical and the material are to be assembled within a manageable form.[241] The Calgary Corridor proposal takes Rohmer's

[241] In the epigraph to *Marxism and Form*, Fredric Jameson cites Lenin as saying intelligent idealism comes closer to the insights of materialism than does unintelligent materialism. Only the most unintelligent idealism could presume to bundle staples and history in the figure of an eternal transformation. From Pythagoras to Plato to Marx and Althusser, eternal forms are not things—like "transformation"—but the relations structuring things. The worldly triangle will always be an inexact representation; but the form of the triangle, discerned as knowledge by the Pythagorean theorem (e.g., by Socrates with Meno's slave boy), is a relation—the *ratio* of 3:4:5—and not the ideal shape or even the theoretical measurements of every possible triangle. When Marxists describe value, energy, or

idea of a nation-on-top-of-a-nation in a different but no less historiographically-literal direction. The proposal promises to arrange the stuff of Canadian history—already materially written in the infrastructure that provides the material basis for the imaginary nation—into a formal space. Here time is spatialized, movement is stabilized, fluidity is harnessed, and the great Canadian tradition of transformation will extend in post-historical perpetuity.

The narrator says this transformation will take place "particularly in the North," a spatial claim illustrated by a shot of a cabin whose electric light dazzles under the northern lights, giving way to other images of economic transformation (below).

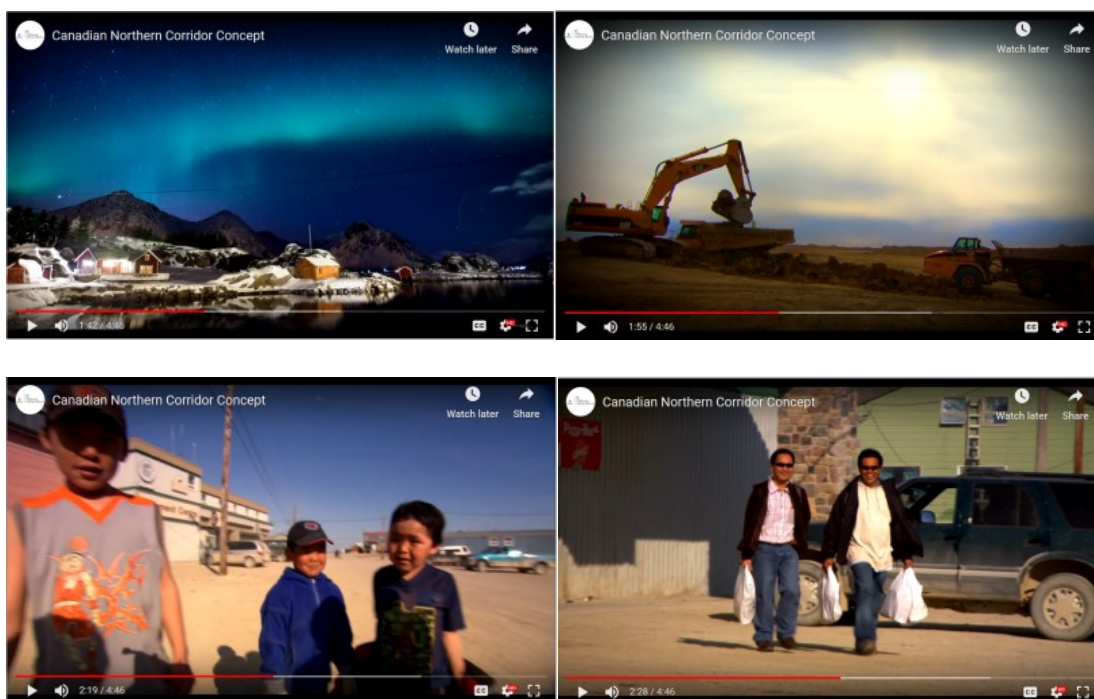

Fig. 8: Economic Transformation

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anything else as a social relation, this is what they have in mind. Thus in the commodity fetish, the form of the thing—its objectness—obscures the objective relations that make it up. As David Harvey says, Marx is interested in process, not in things. Capital is "value in motion." Movement is what makes the value, making it capital. Without motion, there is no capital. As we saw in Janigan, Flanagan, and de Soto, when property cannot be alienated, it's "dead." Intelligent idealism, then, would agree with materialism here, in that there is no capital in the ideal state, except as a relation, or, an abstraction of concrete reality. So, again, the Corridor is an imaginary resolution to the problem of how value can be both fixed and in motion within the space of the nation. This idealist/materialist consensus on process as the origin of value is also the key to the difference between necessary anachronism—by which the present is understood as the product of the past-as-process—and retcon, or, the process of making the past a thing in the present. (See note below on Rohmer as an "instinctive Hegelian.")

Winter says,

> What we'll see is established right-of-way where then companies can go and say 'Alright I'd like to build in this right of way' [One solitary Caterpillar lumbers along a frozen shore, followed by a shot of three trucks working—very slowly, carefully—with one another to "build" their project, apparently a small hole.]; and it's preapproved, so that will mean that the regulatory process is shorter, and we'll have a much better sense of the environmental impacts, as well as the economic benefits.

Like in all technological nationalist fantasies, and all idealism, the "stuff" transmitted through the infrastructure is secondary to the form, the "transformation": "[Narrator:] Envisioned to run approximately 7000 kilometres through mid- and northern-Canada, the Corridor will connect isolated communities, bringing them much-needed services and prosperity." As if anticipating a viewer's scepticism regarding such an easy equivalence of value and values, Fellows adopts an insistent tone: "This project *will* help Indigenous groups and Indigenous communities in northern Canada by increasing their quality of life—by two channels. The first is reducing the cost of consumer goods and reducing the costs of living in the north." There are certainly legitimate questions as to how a corridor for pre-approved but as-yet-unproposed transmission projects could "help" Northerners, and as I've said, these include the coupling together of two or more things that seem inseparable but are really different (i.e., value and values, Nature and human nature, labour and human capital). Fellows now *formally* addresses distinctions, but the distinctions he makes are merely aesthetic; they're word choices, and not real differences. So, "Indigenous groups" *and* "Indigenous communities" will benefit. And this by "two channels": reducing the "cost of goods" *and* reducing the "cost of living."

Like neoliberal concepts of "diversity" or the seeming interchangeability of process and substance, here quality-values are rhetorically substituted with quantity-value. Thus carbon democracy is structured into the aims and articulation of Canadian development discourse. Services and access to consumer products constitute the freedoms, entitlements, and the citizenship promised to the populations defined by their proximity to natural resources. Rohmer and Morgan made their arguments by way of the Providential premises structured into the German idealist theory of the state form. Here, too, such Romantic theological residues can be found clinging to the formal arguments of providing services—or as Fellows puts it elsewhere, "help"—to Northerners, those Canadians for whom those erstwhile antagonists values and value are resolved into a conceptual wholeness in which Deliverance manifests in Delivery.

Fellows next sketches the vast geography waiting to receive improved consumer services:

> Starting in the North, sort of Tuktoyaktuk, coming down the Mackenzie Valley in the North West Territories, branch lines obviously into Northern BC, Prince Rupert, crossing to Northern Alberta, Northern Saskatchewan, Manitoba, up to Churchill, Ring of Fire, across Ontario, Northern Ontario, into Quebec, and then out through the Maritimes. And, so, really linking all three oceans with ports and linking them to important landlocked regions, where we have good economic potential: mining, or whether that's agriculture, or whether, like I said, that's services.

Clearly reinforcing the premise that the subjects to be united by this technological nationalism are individual liberal consumer-subjects of carbon democracy, the accompanying images portray mobile, independent, and noticeably *single* things (below): one car drives along one road. One small group of slowly moving earth-movers represents "mining." As I argued in the last chapter, the figure of the Corridor does not refer to a location but an environment; again, the Corridor

signifies the smooth end of history: labour isn't human action upon a natural object because labour as the action of man alienated from his animal nature has been resolved. Thus in the video there are no images of construction or of things being done; there are only slow, solitary movements, reflecting those artisan-animal techniques Kojève identifies in the formalism of natural beings in ecological harmony with their environment—that naturalist symbolism by which a pumpjack is a "donkey." Nevertheless, the video's beings are definitely liberal subjects, evidenced by the fact that the images purporting to represent "projects" more closely resemble images of independent, small-time miners from Discovery Channel reality shows about Alaska gold or Yukon jade than any state or corporate project; just as the ice road image is more apropos of *Ice Road Truckers* than of a dependable supply-chain provisioning northern communities such as we tend to imagine when we think of "infrastructure" (below). And it's through such implicit reference to the reality-show idiom that the video's imagery focalizes the purview of the individual subject. The truck stands for a profession rather than a link in a corporate or national supply-chain. And thus the jobs that neoliberal development discourse promises will follow from state spending on infrastructure will have none of the always-implicitly-communal aesthetics of the factory or of labour. Any jobs which trickle down to under-served communities will have none of the community character typical of work in a single-industry or resource town. Instead, the utopian promise of the video lies in the carbon-democratic independence of the owner-operator, the always-mobile independent contractor competing with other owners of human capital.

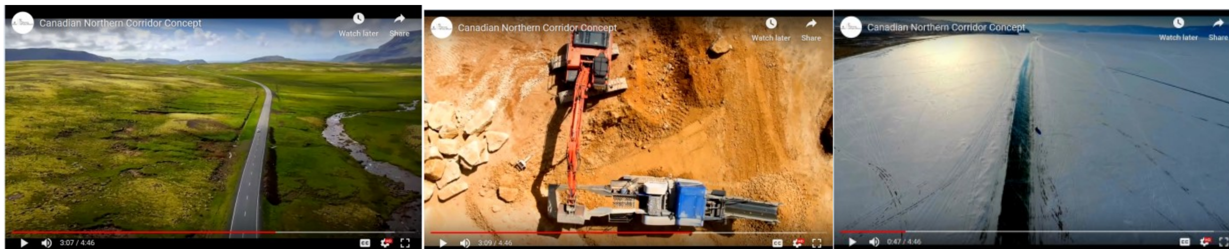

Fig. 9: Projects

Despite this imagery which reinforces the naturalness of the individual and of the market environment of the ideal carbon-democratic subject, it's noticeable that, except for a few smiling consumers in small towns, there are no people visible in the video. Where are the people who will be employed? As Fellows hints when he claims the Corridor will "help people along the route," the Corridor is an entirely mediatory instrument of technological nationalism, purely reflective of Canada's dominant form of capital. As an extractive economy with little production, and as a fully-immaterial carbon democracy, claims about the "economy" needn't refer to jobs, as the citizens of the nation are not workers or producers, but consumers. Exactly as in Scheer's promise to lower the cost of living without even paying lip service to wages, the "help" Fellows promises is not help working—as the name of the project (The National Infrastructure and *Market Access* Program) itself hints, it is help buying!

The narrator reinforces Canada's position as merchant-mediator, stating, "The Corridor will provide the infrastructure for increased trade opportunities. Both within Canada and with other countries." And echoing the vague urgency Busby mocked in Rohmer's solution in search of a problem, Winter warns, "There are costs to delaying. We have Canada signing new free trade agreements, and if we want to take the maximum advantage of our new free trade agreements, we also need the infrastructure to support our exports." Fellows sweetens the deal: "As a result of the Northern Corridor, we're looking at GDP gains that are definitely in the billions of dollars, so these are pretty significant in Canada's North." To the viewer questioning

how a nationally-articulated increase in GDP might strengthen a particular region, the narrator assures, “Development of the Corridor means a stronger Canada working together to build a plan that will benefit the entire country. It will have a net positive effect on the environment and the concept has already been endorsed by the Canadian government.” In other words, government authority assures these results, and, just as logically, the government would then be responsible should such “benefits” or “positive effects” fail to materialize. And in case it’s still not yet clear how a pre-approved corridor will benefit the environment, Winter explains, “We’re going to minimize the environmental impacts because it’s a set-aside right of way rather than all these one-off projects where we have environmental assessment after environmental assessment.” When quality and quantity are indistinguishable, it’s easy to claim that reducing the number of environmental assessments will minimize impacts! Winter’s claim makes sense as an analogy to the financial, human-capital conceit that repeated credit checks lower a credit rating. But she’s also deploying the naturalist aesthetics, like those Christopher Jones mentions, by which quantities like “smaller” or “fewer” share spatial similarity and metonymic proximity to qualities like “natural” or “harmony.”[242] Simplifying the processes of resource exploitation by way of naturalist aesthetics promises to bring together those elemental antagonists—the economy, ecology, and national home—into the same space, the etymological wholeness to which they belong, the *oikos*.[243] Most importantly, it’s this logic of analogy that enables Winter’s central claim: that in the market ecology which leads to the vanishing of the state, less interference promises less damage to the ecosystem—because the economy and the ecology are indistinguishable *in-and-as the ecosystem*. As Knopff and Cooper claim, and as Mansell does

[242] See Jones last chapter.
[243] (Again: “and it’s preapproved, so that will mean that the regulatory process is shorter, and we’ll have a much better sense of the environmental impacts, as well as the economic benefits.”)

below, Winter here repeatedly asserts that market ecology is indistinguishable from ecology as such.[244] Harmonizing the process is equivalent to manifesting harmonious substance.

The answer to the unstated question of how to eliminate government interference while managing the processes that will lead to these benefits seems to lie (as we'll see in the governance structure Rohmer proposes, and as it does for Fellows below) in downloading social responsibility from agencies to communities—where "community" is, of course, understood as a collection of individuals. Winter says, "We think that the affected communities, including Indigenous communities, will have a lot more *control*." She delivers the word "control" in an "uptalk," interrogative inflection as though it were followed by a question mark, just as the video cuts to Fellows—who authoritatively and masculinely interrupts, asserting, "The senate's been very supportive of the concept, they've endorsed the idea and actually just recently at the end of 2017, the government of Canada has endorsed that senate report." The video then cuts back to Winter, who is no longer floating the concept of "control": "That's why we're so excited about this because the potential for Canada is, is, fantastic!"

The video rhetorically contains the quality of the environment within the quantity of governmental action (assessments-and/as-interruptions). Such action represents spatial impediments to mobility, and these are figured like environmental hazards to economic activity. With the Corridor, communities are going to somehow possess more control, even though the right of way and the approval will already be approved long before any particular "potential project" is ever proposed. And because these are a lot of threads to string together, Fellows' male voice interrupts again, closing off the discussion by repeating that the government is behind the idea, so it must be good for Canada; or, again, if there actually *are* any environmental consequences or adverse effects on Northern communities and Indigenous peoples, then this

[244] See Knopff "Cowboys and Hunters."

must be the government's fault, an expression of government's incompatibility with market ecology and with any social or economic relations inhering in the kinds of capital, commodities, or activities that would take up within the neutral (and, simultaneously, downright-beneficent), Corridor. Despite the extreme minimalizing of actual project-related images of work or development, Fellows concludes "Canada is too big to think small," to which Winter agrees, "The future is now."

8.2 Periodizing Re/Production: Circulation and Circular Arguments

The Corridor piece ends with all the vague motivational appeals one would expect from a promotional video. But while semantically flimsy, these platitudes do in fact serve to rhetorically contain and structure the temporal and spatial differences in the conflicting periods, modes of production, and forms of capital the Corridor is meant to mediate and resolve. Declaring "Canada is too big to think small," Fellows analogizes the bigness shared by the project and Canadian geography. His appeal coordinates the broadest nationalist affect with the very specific national purpose of formalizing the flow of capital through the territory. And as the video's technological-nationalist narrative bundles the long history of Canadian infrastructure within the present moment's ideal of infinite growth and transformation, Winter's claim that "the future is now" performs the complementary extension of the present into the future. These current appeals to loosely-patriotic and tightly-economistic sentiment resemble the affective satisfaction that Rohmer's more nationalistic plan promised. But noticing the means by which such satisfaction is imagined to be delivered allows for a periodization of the political forms at work in each moment. Rohmer's utopian promise would come from the state: the national purpose was the construction of a new nation! The Calgary plan sees the extension of the nation as it currently

exists, to deliver what characterizes Canadians as carbon-democratic subjects into the future. Both plans presuppose an end of history. Rohmer's plan believes itself to be forward-looking, but in our moment it's apparent that the MCDC's protectionist economic nationalism is the content—that Lukácsian necessary anachronism—that allows for the Calgary plan's claims of retroactive continuity.

The mode in which foreign direct investment is articulated provides an obvious index to the Corridor's periodicity. In a chapter of *The Green North* called "Mid-Canada: A New National Purpose," Rohmer announces his bold "new national purpose" by claiming "Canada's attitude toward non-residential control of the economy shows in the refusal of government, in most cases, to recognize that it is contrary to the national interest to permit […] takeovers by foreign interests" (116). Unsurprisingly, this statement relies on a *petitio principii* ("*it's contrary to non-foreign interest to prioritize foreign interest*"), but as in Rohmer's other instances of question-begging, the form of the argument articulates the material-productive relations structuring thought in its moment. From the Kojèveian-Hegelian idealist standpoint—which in this dissertation I'm arguing is the paradigmatic Minerva's-Owl-like theoretical articulation of the material relations emerging from the shift of industrial to post-industrial modes of production—the great questions of history have been answered and the task of human activity is to enact *eudaimonia* or human satisfaction by administering the material world in accordance with the already-achieved ideal.[245] From Rohmer's end of history perspective, the logic of his

[245] The radicality of Kojève's assertion that human satisfaction is the criterion of the Hegelian Rational/Actual synthesis spurred his famous debate with Leo Strauss. Strauss rightly notes that the subject of such ultimate satisfaction would be indistinguishable from Nietzsche's last man. For his part, Fukuyama makes the best of Strauss's critique of the Hegelian end of history by synthesizing Kojève and Nietzsche in the book version of his end of history hypothesis. While it takes a lot of selective work to argue that the arch-historicist Hegel and the arch-anti-historicist Nietzsche effectively agree "in the end," such a conclusion is fully compatible with Kojève's thesis (that History is over when Man is satisfied and knows himself as such) as well as with the technocratic, administrative form of life that Kojève retired to. However, Strauss's concern reveals both his own commitment to the Nietzschean premise that historicity is radically subordinate to the will to power, and his utterly anti-Nietzschean practical

statement is circular but not necessarily fallacious as its conclusion does not refer to *producing* satisfaction in the way a syllogism or a "eureka" moment resolves a logical problem. Rohmer's statement refers instead to the circulation and distribution of satisfaction that has been determined beforehand; that is, Rohmer is not making a claim to a judgment that would negate a given and produce a new value; he's affirming and spatially-extending the value that already exists as given. Obviously, even in the case of the strongest and most self-sufficient nations, it's easy to imagine that a national interest could be advanced by foreign ownership or investment of entities on the first nation's soil. But in the idealist logic of technological nationalism, non-sequitur is the means to the truth lying beneath discourse; thus, Rohmer's (formally- and thematically-) xenophobic appeal acts as the occasion to articulate the immanent truth of self-referentiality as such. And, so, the real claim comes next:

> Wouldn't it be satisfying to know that we had a national goal, a national purpose for Canada, an identification that would move our legislators to protect our economy from foreign domination?

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conclusion that this will to power is best manifested in the human excellence available to the bourgeois liberal-democratic subject, the latter of which I contend is the referent of Strauss's disciplinary conceit, enthusiastically endorsed by Cooper, et al., of "political philosophy." The thesis of the philosopher becoming something else (i.e., the *political* philosopher) at the end of history is the moral of Strauss's and Bloom's reading of *The Republic*, where Socrates eschews the vocation of philosopher and becomes the bourgeois pedagogue.

This thesis is common to Straussians like Stanley Rosen who look at philosophy as a kind of activity that can arrive at final truths. In order for philosophy to defend itself from relativism and avoid becoming nihilism, the technique of philosophy has to be employed toward a different purpose once truth has been achieved. Rosen thus points to Hume's turn to writing history after completing his deconstruction of philosophy. Heidegger's late turn towards poetry provides Rosen's example of a wrong turn. Heidegger is wrong because poetry is not, as he thinks, where thought must dwell until our time of waiting ends and truth chooses to reveal itself further. For Straussians, poetry is what it was for Plato: deceiving the masses with myth. Once philosophy has arrived at the truth, philosophy negates itself "as something other than technique"; its vocation then becomes one of enlightened poetry, wisely deceiving the people in order to manage the perfect polis and preserve the best regime. If one is not inclined to become a bourgeois pedagogue, the other option is to write the truth and the story of its achievement, that is, to write history. (One wonders why, then, Hume is the paradigmatic Straussian post-philosophical figure, and not, say, Adam Smith, who—Kojève-like—left his intellectual work to become a customs official. Perhaps, in terms of Straussian "political philosophy" (i.e., practical utility), no one who admires Smith is served by pointing out that the very source of the triumphant *Idea* of the free market finished his working life as a government tax collector. More theoretically, one can speculate that Smith, by so explicitly explaining the division of labour, was always-already writing history, and not, as Smith himself surely understood his work, doing philosophy.) See Rosen, *Nihilism*, and note his encomium to his recently-deceased friend Kojève in the acknowledgements.

Such a goal exists. (114)

Here the simple circularity of *petitio principii*—in which identical contents masquerade as different premises—synthesizes with structural tautology, and the form of the statement provides the satisfaction. *"Given that national purpose (A) should be (A), wouldn't it be satisfying 'to know' we had a national purpose to render A as A?"*[246] Moreover, in this circular rhetoric, satisfaction is not the end of a particular action—like driving the history-making last spike that completes the CPR; rather, it's the reward for the end of action as such. And, to top it all off, the instinctively-Hegelian Rohmer posits this satisfaction in Kojève's very terms of completed knowledge: it would be "satisfying" "to know" that the premise and the conclusion were perfectly united—that is, that there were no contradiction between knowledge and satisfaction.[247]

Rohmer's by-now-familiar circular rhetoric demonstrates the historicity and periodicity of the form of argument in which satisfaction is structured in the form of a completed dialectic—where thought returns to itself, perfected. Perhaps-astonishingly, as much as it likely reflects imprecise thinking, hasty composition, or impatient editing, the circular structure of Rohmer's arguments performs the end of history of *Geist*- or *Dasein*-as-the-Being who reaches the end of the existential text and in this ultimate act of mental labour negates Being-as-incomplete. In finishing the philosophical process of knowing, the knower knows the end as such. This is the position of the Kojèveian Sage, whose only action/labour consists in the tautological repetition of

[246] I invite the reader to open any page of Fukuyama or Cooper's work and find exactly the same structure posing as "argument."

[247] Bringing together the Kojèveian and the Lukácsian threads of this analysis, the philosophical-technocrat Rohmer shows a process-based understanding that, as Lukács explains, structures both the difference between realist novels and historical novels as well as Marx's distinction between James Steuart and Adam Smith. For Lukács, Steuart grasps, instinctively, the birth of industrial capital in the historical preconditions of agrarian production. This pre-critical insight is then taken as given by Adam Smith. In each case, the particularity of the here and now is taken up with great care, and developed into even more realist means of representing historical particularity, but, as Steuart and Smith still lacked Marx's historical insight, their work remained "a product of realistic instinct and did not amount to a clear understanding of history as a process, of history as the concrete precondition of the present" (*The Historical Novel* 21). Rohmer's figure of the Corridor shows an instinctive understanding of value as motion, process, and relation, but lacking any grasp of the difference between idealist form and material relations, his understanding remains woefully pre-critical.

what is given.[248] From a materialist perspective the conceptual completion posited by the identification of national purpose with what "exists" (the final synthesis by which *A* becomes *A*) corresponds to quantity's overcoming of quality. Action is no longer oriented towards determining what is, but rather, as in post-Napoleonic Europe, toward spatially extending what is. Affectively, the source of human satisfaction shifts from labour, struggle, negation, and change to possession, affirmation, ordering, management, and the temporal extension of eternal growth. In political-economic terms, the corresponding form of action is total mediation, and its corresponding form of productive activity would be reproducing—or "helping"—the effortless flow of goods.

Let me insist that I'm not reading too much into Rohmer's prose. I'm showing that the discourse and premises shared in technological nationalism and carbon democracy, ranging from Rohmer's 1970s to the present are based, as are the premises advanced by the Chicago-Calgary-idealists, on absurdly circulatory rhetoric that isn't only reflective of cynical sophistry, but is also expressive of the truth presumed by idealizations of immaterial or knowledge economies, idealizations that are as much at home in the post-industrial US as in Canada's merchant-circulatory mode of production. At the end of history, when thought and action take the form of mediation, circulation, and reproduction, the satisfying goal that exists cannot call for the creation of something qualitatively new. Sage-like, Rohmer thus proclaims, "Such a goal exists

[248] I say "*perhaps* astonishingly" because it's also utterly unremarkable that the discourse which assumes the economistic dogma and the "it is what it is" ontology of late capitalism would conform to the thought of its most discerning phenomenologist (Hegel) and its greatest apologists (Kojève, Cooper, but, really, *ad infinitum*). Rohmer's instinctive understanding of philosophy is also an expertise in technocracy and a facility with jargon. As in Plato's *Republic*, the end of history requires that philosophy as action (i.e., *"as something other than technique"*) is severed from pedagogy, the latter becoming the technique or art of maintaining and reproducing the perfected state of human being. (As I argue in Part One, the Straussian "Political Philosophy" characteristic of the Calgary School "is a technique, not a field, but a mode within that field"; hence Socrates's insistence on purging the Republic of those over ten years of age, those who have experienced knowledge as negative, critical power.) From my materialist perspective I argue Rohmer is here negotiating this aspect of the end of history, which his plan presumes, by articulating the move from production (of qualitatively new knowledge or truth) to reproduction and circulation (of quantitatively extending what exists).

in the creation of a second Canada – Mid-Canada." The national goal is the reproduction of the ideal nation on top of the material nation, or, what is dialectically and tautologically the same thing, the materialization of the Corridor on top of the national Idea. Yet top and bottom, infrastructure and superstructure, are perfectly and *already* identical, perfectly mediated, in their synthesis as *Mid*-Canada.

Rohmer proposes the creation of what already exists. This is clearly not a productive creation, a building of a human life from the soil, in which value comes from action "in the strong sense." It's the *re*production of value, the second-order value that comes from drawing off of flows. It's an example of ordering in terms of McLuhan's seriality—the mechanistic process incapable of producing value or anything new, in which nothing follows but following. Just as the video's rhetoric of "transformation" served to bundle Canada's material infrastructural history within the ideal of post-historical lubricity, Rohmer's unarticulated ideal of reproduction bundles the rhetorical forms and images, the theory of value, and the mode of production that are concretized in the figures of the Corridor and of the carbon-democratic subject living within it. And since creating the doubled nation is imagined in immaterial terms—those of process, of energy, of value accumulating by proximity to movement—it's imagined as infinitely sustainable. Indeed, as an image of market ecology the political economy of the Corridor is a claim for sustainability as such. As in Scheer's claims about reducing costs of living without regard to, say, wages, the presumption is that value can be produced through the activity of ordering circulation correctly.

But McLuhan's distinction between the activities characteristic of serialized mechanization and those of automation reminds us that these end of history ecological claims emerged from technological nationalism—from mechanistic ideas and images of technology as a

thing that can "do" certain things independent of human labour or activity. Thus the claims made upon figures of mediation like the Corridor can be materialistically dismantled. That is, the ideal of technology employed as the conceptual resolution to problems of production reveals the faultiness of both the analogy and its referent. Unlike the zero-sum mercantilist theory of value—akin to an old-fashioned generator powering a headlamp by drawing off the kinetic energy of a bicycle wheel—the idea that organizes the mechanics of movement in the Corridor (as well as in idealist understandings of transnational commerce, immaterial production, service or knowledge economies) is lubricity or a perfect seriality. It is this idealization of technology that undergirds or enables—that is, provides intelligibility to—notions of infinitely-sustainable growth. In terms of subjectivity, to the kind of national subject presupposed within such a technological-nationalist environment, technology appears as an agent that's able to act in the way that humans do. Thus technological-nationalist projects are imagined to be capable of uniting the nation by doing a kind of work, producing—like human activity-as-labour produces the human-as-labour-power—the nation it's uniting. In materialist terms, the assumption that technology can "work" provides the conceptual framework by which value can be imagined as 1) divorced from labour power (the wealth of those nations that have achieved industrialization), 2) as independent of scarcity and depletion (those most dreaded curses of a resource economy!), and 3) like seriality itself, as infinitely scalable.

In political-economic terms, the proposition that seriality can create value like productive labour does partakes of the fantasy of a perpetual motion machine, a fantasy which is always subject to two physical and conceptual impossibilities, both of which of course result from the disavowal of material production as, if not the ultimate source of value as Marxists would argue, at least *a very important part* of the process by which value is created! The first impossibility is

that a mechanism, once started, can run on its own volition, with no input, in pure frictionless process. But the second, and exponentially more insurmountable, impossibility consists in imagining how one might draw a surplus off of this first impossibility, to make the input-independent process into an output—all without slowing it down. To state the problem materialistically, it's impossible to 1) extract value without input, and 2) for production to consist wholly in energy returned with no investment, and, moreover, without 3) exhausting the supply.[249] However, there *are* always-already inputs in the Corridor, and these signal the nationalist aspect of the problem Rohmer is attempting to resolve. Labour and material resources are the first input, the source of the value waiting to be developed; FDI is the second input, the material necessity of investment in a production process, a fuel to keep things moving through the Corridor. Rohmer thus seeks to manage these materially-necessary inputs within the idealist container of the nation. In this container, like in the German Idealist Providence (last chapter) from which Rohmer draws, and as it does for Ian Macdonald, the ideal comes first, as the national purpose. And the material—the second-Canada—comes next. Rohmer's rhetorical question (another tautological syntagm) declares how satisfying it would be to know there were a means of manifesting the ideal, and the affective payoff is that such a goal exists. The first, nationally-circumscribed, Canada draws from raw material and labour power; the second Canada would manage this as well as the international-FDI input necessary for the first nation's value to become wealth. In this fantasy of mediation, the second Canada corresponds to perpetual motion's second-order impossibility, as it draws and produces value from the flows characterizing the economy and political regime of the first Canada.

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[249] This is another way of stating McLuhan's economistic "paradox," discussed last chapter—an ongoing consequence of the epistemic crisis caused by the transition from mercantilism to industrial and post-industrial modes of production. As Marx says, the superstructure always lags behind the infrastructure; or, more philosophically, Minerva's Owl only flies when the day is done.

But despite this sophisticated attempt to contain the antithesis of the nation-as-particular-*values* and the extra-national source of the nation's universal *value*, FDI is where the periodicity separating technological nationalism from carbon democracy shows through. Rohmer tries to answer the question of how to develop the second Canada as an independent nation without recognizing the source of the market forces that provide Canada-as-treasure-house with its market value, arguing "There are ways in which Canada can chart an economic course for Mid-Canada that would continue to attract foreign capital into the country to develop industries, and at the same time would prevent control of the new industries from slipping into foreign hands" (145). Ever the exemplar of mediation, Rohmer is half right. While there are many ways to attract FDI, none would also meaningfully "prevent control" of industries—precisely because the capital invested in these "industries" wouldn't be industrial capital, or capital fixed in one place in order to add value to materials. Rather this capital would—as it in fact does—control the industrial extraction and circulation of raw materials-as-commodities. (A basic thought experiment proves the point: were Canada to—yet again—attempt to nationalize the oil "industry," would it be expropriating a means of production? No, in fact, the infrastructure would much more closely resemble a corridor than a factory.) Naylor's history of Canada's dependency shows that the ways that capital is attracted are of necessity contrary to whatever might be protected by protectionism, they're non-protectionist! As David Morgan articulated in his musings on mobilizing military power to build the nation, Canada's sovereignty is not a matter of securing a border against *xenos*, but to create the best *oikos*. That is, nation building and national defence share the same object, and this is not obstructing movement, but facilitating movement through the space. The foreign is the source of domestic wealth. As in the most basic dialectic, the other is the source of the self.[250] Consequently, creating an attractive space for

[250] Surely, the essentially-Hobbesian dialectics of Kojève's followers count among the most basic forms of

foreign capital is not, as Rohmer sees it, a goal that's in tension with foreign control; rather, as far as "control" is a meaningful term, foreign investment and domestic self-determination are dialectically identical.

Far from being a solution in search of a problem, the Corridor is terminological problem that looks like a solution. It's an attempt to resolve idealist contradictions between Canada-as-a-nation and Canada's mode of production in relation to other nations in the world system. In proposing the answer, Rohmer is really articulating the question of why Canada has missed out on some of the things—like sovereignty, certain protections afforded by political-legal structures, etc.—that all other "developed" nations enjoy. The answer of course is that, materially-speaking, Canada has never been "developed": it has never developed from mercantilism into an industrial mode of production. Why has the limited development that has taken place proceeded willy-nilly, favouring subjects other than Rohmer's "people"? Because there isn't a people in the sense of a carbon-democratic subject with the associated class and economic interests, consciousness, and power located squarely *in the industrialized nation*. Just as Canada's means of production resemble a corridor and not a factory, the value that has historically accrued to Canada's national subjects is not based in labour but exchange. And, as Teeple's analysis suggests, the labour power or political leverage of national subjects are not tied to worker value. As Mitchell or Barney might say, there's never been a nationally-significant coal route to blockade, a mode of production to halt by striking, or a factory to sabotage.[251]

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dialectics. This self/other relation is of course present as well in the most sophisticated dialectics (or at least the most sophisticated *Hegelian* dialectics) e.g., Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self.*

[251] That is, these routes were absent in Canada during the periods in which they determined political possibility in industrializing nations. Blockades employed by Indigenous groups as well as similar forms of environmental activism and anti-capitalist tactics are different *kinds of actions* vis-à-vis the mode of production. That is, I would argue they're engagements with transportation infrastructure as such, and not with transportation infrastructure's place in production. (In this light, the claim made by the Value of Alberta Conference, which I mentioned in the Introduction—that Ottawa is "imposing a blockade on Alberta"—may be more apt than it first appears.) See especially Randall Amster "Blockadia" in *An Ecotopian Lexicon*.

The relation between political power and the political-economic structures of resource extraction is exactly what Mitchell means by carbon democracy. And in this light it is clear that Canadian carbon democracy (re)produces a different *kind of subject* from US or UK class-subjects because Canada's class structure is determined by different productive relations than are those of the hegemons. But Canada's historical specificity is also that of a settler nation, populated by metropolitan subjects who, in addition to their (space-biased) imperial/economic dependency relations, have maintained, invented, and recreated (time-biased) cultural dependencies of identities, traditions, etc. These specificities result in the fact that Canadian carbon democracy is much different from carbon democracy in other colonial states, like those of the Middle East that Mitchell so compellingly analyzes. Nevertheless, the post-material conceptual universality of circulation highlights the fact that the populations of both central and semi-peripheral nations are configured according to the relations of extractivism and global petroculture. Canada's particular version of carbon-democratic subjectivity is therefore what Fukuyama might call "the local flavour" of a first-world staples economy.[252] Missing this tension between the universal and particular at work in policies aimed at attracting foreign investment and retaining nationalist control of industry, Rohmer both correctly observes that "Other countries use these controls successfully," and mistakenly concludes with the non-sequitur, "and there is every reason to expect Canada would thrive under such a national program" (115).

I've already shown that Rohmer's proposed "national program" is based on an aesthetic reproduction of the traditional East-West colonial orientation Creighton called the St Lawrence Empire. Now the historically-North-South orientation characteristic of FDI compels Rohmer to

[252] According to Fukuyama, at the end of history all human societies will be ideologically homogeneous, but he stresses homogeneous does not mean "identical." He spends a good deal of *The End of History and the Last Man* explaining that different national identities and cultures will no doubt maintain unique qualities in the post-historical age, but these differences will be matters more of style or form than matters of content.

imagine a new version of Macdonald's National Policy.[253] But not even the grandest nationalistic infrastructure could circumvent or surmount the place in which the nation's value is spatialized: foreign space is the alienated locus of the domestic space's value,[254] and the Corridor needs to connect to an outside. Moreover, Rohmer's anachronistic appeal to a pre-Confederation mercantilist policy clearly persists in the Calgary plan and is especially obvious in Scheer's absurd claims that an energy Corridor "will move Quebec electricity west as much as it will move Alberta oil and gas east, and west." That is, the MCDC aimed to resolve the contradictions between national and transnational demands and between the incompatible US and UK forms of investment upon which Canada depends. Its goal was to organize the material space of movement and communication by way of the idealist aesthetic form of a national, productive space. But the plan was itself contradictory in that it sought to combat the transnational economics of modern industrial nations by imposing a mercantilist infrastructure of intra-national trade. The form of the infrastructure—a Corridor for resources whose value lay beyond its terminals—was imagined to be transitive of national content. The MCDC is the concretization of the idealist error that the "right idea" can organize material reality.

While infrastructure is media and therefore unable to transmit content, the idealist error is not easily corrected. My periodization shows that the MCDC forms the imaginary material, the Lukácsian necessary anachronism, by which the current plans can claim to be plausible. The

[253] It's not necessary that such orientation to be taken literally; in a way, it's impossible for any nation-wide transportation or resource development project to *not* repeat the CPR, the St Lawrence Empire, etc. As Naylor says, "the so-called Laurentian thesis that the country's development followed the route blazed by the fur traders reveals more about the direction of corporate linkage than it does principles of development economics" (25). So the Temporary Foreign Worker Program is structurally, and in terms of exception (next chapter), similar to the importation of labour for the CPR. But such a repetition is formal and aesthetic, needing none of the essentially-nostalgic nationalism to which Rohmer appeals, the affect-laden nationalist repetition of forms apparent, say, in the pastiched classicism of Washington D.C.'s National Mall or in the Third Reich's campy Romanism. This is why the Corridor both is and isn't anachronistic, and why it's important to discern between the two aspects. As Winter says of the resuscitated Corridor plan, "The future is now."

[254] This is the contradiction underlying Janigan's populist interpretation of the first National Policy; and the spatial dimension of the contradiction is especially apparent in the Hunter/Cowboy example, too, where the foreign Ottawa is the source of the problems of local indigeneity.

MCDC could not stabilize and spatialize the movement of value through the national space, but in the rhetorical structure by which the MCDC is articulated, its inability to solve the nation's problems can be explained away as the consequence of the wrong idea. The good news, according to the present proposal, is that the Corridor can be repeated, but this time with a substituted "idea," or, a different attitude toward FDI.

Naylor offers a way to materially understand and historicize the real contradictions and imaginary resolutions of Rohmer's plan, how they repeat those of Macdonald's policy, and how these can be seen as stemming from the dual inner and outer mediatory functions of the "mid" Rohmer invests in the figure of Mid-Canada. Naylor summarizes the historical development of capital interests in Canada—the history of mediating between dependency relations—in the terms by which the FDI question was posed in his moment, namely in the figure of the "branch plant." Branch plants of US firms located in Canada developed due to torsion between the forms of investment from the UK and the US, which demanded a dualism in Canadian policy: "The essential policy of the Montreal merchants from 1763 had been strict mercantilism within the British Empire together with free trade with the United States." Canada's main economic relationship with the US was as a transporter and mediator *within* the US supply chain, in which "American production of American goods was intermediated by Canadian merchants via the St Lawrence route." But even after the UK and the US essentially both reversed their positions on trade with Canada, Canada's function remained the same, except the mediatory position as intermediary with the US changed from facilitating corridor-type movement to providing fixed positions that were integrated into the US mode of production:

> Confederation and the National Policy were simply an adaptation of the old pattern, in light of free trade in Britain and the abrogation of reciprocity by the United States; but

> now the intermediation was to be internal. The branch plants represented a shift in the locus of production to inside the border. (36)

This integration was able to be experienced in Canada as encroachment of the foreign on literal, Canadian soil. But this is only one side of a dialectical whole taken from the point of view of a sovereign nation, especially one in which national belonging was understood in terms of the modern industrial model that had little connection to its economy, that is, whose interests were imagined to be served by protectionism. From the perspective of Canada's position as a mediator, branch plants served its interests and represented its integration into the organs of transnational commerce. The open challenge to a nation watching foreign production being done in Canada was in fact not evidence that production was being done in Canada and Canadians were missing out. Nor was this evidence of a change in the character of Canadian economic activity moving from transportation into production. Rather, as McLuhan says of media, the branch plant was evidence that Canada's mediatory position and role was being amplified, and its scope was extended, in this case, inward.

Branch plants were (and are) only producing *in Canada* from the idealist standpoint of the imaginary nation. From capital's point of view, Canada was still the mediatory space of transhipment through which goods and money had long flowed, the liquid space between empires.[255] For Naylor, this internal form of US production remained "production which could be shunted off to other parts of the internal mercantile system by the same [Canadian] merchant class in a slightly new guise" (20-21). It is my contention that this contradiction between the nation as a political space and the nation as political-economic space is still at work today. As I will discuss below, the Corridor is an imaginary resolution to the contradiction between

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[255] In late 2019, for perhaps the first time since Confederation, Trump warned Trudeau not to transship Chinese goods, not, in other words, to continue mediating the US supply chain.

individual merchant-class interests—those of competitors struggling against one another—and the interests of merchants as a class, for whom the nation must be competitive with other spaces in order to maintain the source of merchant capital. Easing the flow of capital into and out of the nation, the Corridor acts as a container for economic nationalism in a nation of consumer subjects figured as human capital. The imaginary Corridor appears as just the figure that could "shunt off" the conflict between the normative national merchant class onto the individual carbon-democratic citizen and claim to alleviate the latter's burden by providing "help."

The passage from the MCDC's vision of the state as a protectionist instrument to the present Corridor proposal's view of the state as the manager of resources that are not—primarily or only—in the space of the Corridor, but that pass through the Corridor marks the periodicity dividing Rohmer's paleo-neoliberalism from the current moment. The conceptual premises of the current proposals reveal the space of the nation is a passage rather than a site. In the successive period three things—1) technology as a force of production and transportation in a commodity chain (Wallerstein), 2) the political function of state projects, and 3) the idealist proposed region of Mid-Canada—vanish into the purely formal "right of way." Just as the more concrete version of value or the wealth of nations—the national purpose of wages and jobs and production—is replaced by the purpose of reproduction, pursued by the essentially mediatory figure of "help" and the management or mitigation of costs of living.

Nevertheless, that latent features in Rohmer's period have become dominant in the present period is apparent in the fact that the question Rohmer struggled with has been answered. Just as the figure of the nation as a sovereign space of positive-liberty entitlements (the content that techno-nationalist projects were assumed to transmit), has given way to a view of the nation as a site of exception and the obstacle-free movement of negative liberty (whose content is

carbon-democratic consumer freedoms of low cost goods and vague “services” delivered along this right of way), FDI is no longer the villainous figure, a foreign interest competing with the national working class. Rather the nation must be competitive with other resource-spaces, those other places Van Nostrand says capital will go if we can’t make it “stay.” The freedom of movement and the “right” of way is the means by which the nation can compete for FDI, again, not as investment in anything that could be called “national” production under the old idea of work belonging to a sovereign *volk*, but like in the branch plant form, as a spatialization of mediatory capital. In the MCDC, Rohmer sought to repeat a contradictorily protectionist/liberalizing National Policy. From the point of view of capital, this goal—unlike that of building a second nation, which simply “exists”—has been accomplished! Naylor explains the National Policy’s peculiarity, arguing that because the policy was engineered to attract foreign capitalists, conventional liberal economic analytical tools—structured as they are according to a nationalist perspective—can’t be used to analyze its results. For instance, tariffs are normally used to protect “an existing industrial structure rather than in augmenting the supply factors of production available to the economy.” Industrialists want protection, not increased competition from those on the other side of the wall the tariff usually enforces. The National Policy served the interests of the merchant capitalists and prevented the emergence of any significant strata of “local industrial entrepreneurs.” Likewise the dominance of the merchant form of capital meant merchant pursuits prevailed over industrial ones, and the mode of production remained archaic. Nevertheless,

> The economic “nationalism” pursued by the Tories did not contain any internal paradox. Attracting foreign capitalists and branch plants was explicit policy, a mercantile device for capital accumulation, and its short-run results were fully anticipated. The Tory

> politicians used mercantilist fiscal devices conceived in, and appropriate to, a world where international capital transfers took the form of bullion flows. It worked for Canadian mercantilists in the nineteenth century; in the twentieth century, it was their undoing. (20)

Now, in the 21st century, Tory politicians are hoping that the nationalist appeal of mercantilist aesthetic forms (the political-economic premises behind the protectionism common to current populist nationalism) will smooth out the contradictions of a staples economy, mediating the passage to a carbon-democratic market ecology in which access to goods is equivalent to jobs, and where lowering cost of living is same as producing more wealth.

However, it remains difficult to see how idealism can manage material contradictions. As Naylor explains, the merchant nation is always a loser because its national character is spatialized to be incompatible with the transnational character of capital. The nation is stultified by its dependence on and subservience to foreign capital; capital in the nation is stultified not only by a strongly-interventionist, non-*laissez faire* government, but also by the (capitalist) state apparatus, self-contradictorily reproducing conditions favourable to a backward form of capital. Naylor modifies Innis's staples theory to explain how these formal contradictions have worked historically:

> The contradiction between the requirements of Canadian merchant capital and those of Canadian industrial capital was thus decided in favour of the merchants. Industrial capital needs cheap raw materials, easy credit conditions, and low transportation costs; merchant capital relies on regional scarcities of raw materials and goods to obtain high prices extracted through credit costs, transportation rates, and merchandise mark-up. Merchant capital, typified by a low ratio of fixed to circulatory capital, also needs rapid turnover,

> and cannot undertake long-term risky investment. It is, therefore, oriented towards abetting the quick extraction of staple output, rather than industrial processing. (21)

Moreover, this formal contradiction, by which the state is structured to pursue the interests of a form of capital which is fundamentally anti-national—which is another way of saying the space of the nation is incompatible with the idea of the nation—is the reason why the technological-nationalist projects against which Cooper particularly rages, like the CPR and CBC, are, clearly, hostile to the West. Of course, nationalist projects are not, as Cooper repeatedly puts it, anti-Western by way of a Platonic idealist "regime" or an essential arrogance inherent in the "Laurentian" identity. Rather, from the point of view of the development of capital, Confederation's projects have severed the West from the source of motion by which it can turn its staples into capital, especially by foreclosing the annexationist option of geographic contiguity with an industrialized state, that is, with the US, whose state structure supports a modern form of capital accumulation. The North-South orientation was accommodated economically, through the branch plant, but not politically.

Furthermore, as Janigan's use of Louis Riel displays so well, an idealist perspective encourages the conclusion that settlers and Indigenous peoples have been "equally" ignored and abused by Ottawa. And through the unintelligent-idealist mistaking of the *relation* to Ottawa for a *thing* (Western identity), whiteness appropriates indigeneity via (the relation of) subalternity. Framing the West as being in perpetual struggle with Ottawa (i.e., a thing defined by its relation) has the convenient effect of reducing the struggle over ownership or right to the land to the struggle over *alienating* resources. That is, the struggle between Indigenous peoples and settlers over who has sovereignty over land takes a backseat to the real struggle, that of who gets to *sell* the land and its resources. Who has the *right to* the land becomes, as Winter puts it, who gets to

cede the *right of way through* the land. These days, it's quaint to think that you need to *work the land to own it*. Now *you need to own the land in order to put it to work*. That is, the land is not the source of staple commodities, but is potentially capital—all that's needed is motion, a pipeline or a Corridor, to turn it into value. This is how the settler-colonial historiography I examine in Part One represents an attempt to resolve the contradiction the various Corridor plans seek to mediate, exemplified as between FDI and nationalism.

8.3 Completing Canadian History: Oeconomizing the *Xenos*, Indigenizing Foreignness

> To be sure, boundaries could be, and regularly were, contested; that is, the juridical recognitions coming from the two sources (the state itself and other states) were conflicting. Such differences were ultimately resolved either by adjudication or by force (and a resulting eventual acquiescence). Many disputes endured a latent form for very long periods, though very few such disputes survived more than a generation. What is crucial was the continuing ideological presumption on everyone's part that such disputes could and would be resolved eventually. What was conceptually impermissible in the modern state-system was an explicit recognition of permanent overlapping jurisdictions. Sovereignty as a concept was based on the Aristotelian law of the excluded middle. […]
> Sovereignty however was never really intended to mean total autonomy. The concept was rather meant to indicate that there existed limits on the legitimacy of interference by one state-machinery in the operations of another.
>
> Wallerstein *Historical Capitalism*

In June 2018, a year after the Senate recommendation Fellows touts, Robert Mansell elaborated the Public Policy School's vision in "The Canadian Northern Corridor Concept: *Building Canada's Future*," a presentation given at the Canadian Academy of Engineering AGM and Symposium. A slide answering the question "Why pursue the corridor approach now?" states:

- There is a renewed Government of Canada focus on infrastructure:
- The Government of Canada acknowledges its responsibility to ensure significant new investments in key strategic infrastructure that will increase trade and economic growth;

Mansell goes on to point out that the 2017 and 2018 federal budgets allocated several billion dollars

> to the Trade and Transportation Corridor Initiative, to contribute to achieving the Transportation 2030 objectives of modernizing transportation infrastructure [and] to the National Trade Corridors Fund over five years to strengthen the efficiency and reliability of national trade corridors.

This information is accompanied by a graph of FDI (below). For Rohmer the presence of FDI had been an index to grave national threats, which the Corridor was urgently needed to rectify. Now, though, it is a lack of FDI which signifies a threat. For Rohmer and his colleagues (especially Ian Reid) the state's responsibility was to defend Canadian sovereignty by investing in infrastructure. Mansell's argument retains the claim that the state has the responsibility to invest in infrastructure (or, as we know from the video, *the possibility of infrastructure*); however this responsibility is now figured as the responsibility to secure ever-more FDI. And so, the techno-nationalist form Rohmer developed as a bulwark against FDI remains the figure of national-economic salvation. As I've shown, Rohmer ignored that one of the central historical functions of Canada's federal policy (e.g. the National Policy) has been to facilitate the movement of transnational capital. My materialist methodology sees the idealist premises behind the Corridor plans as expressing the continuous need for a national project to mediate foreign capital. The Calgary plan, like Van Nostrand's proposal, now discards the always-contradictory protectionist content in favour of offering protection by ensuring Canada's competitiveness. Now one antagonistic form held together in Macdonald's National Policy—the interest of merchant capital—supplants the other antagonist—political nationalism— and assumes the full patriotic content of a national purpose. Consequently, the purpose, which has always been the alibi for nationalist infrastructural projects, takes its contemporary form, that of attracting and managing foreign investment in the form of branch plants.

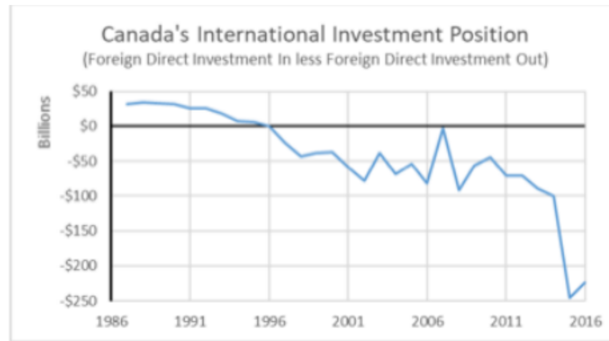

Fig. 10: [Mansell's graph, captioned:] "Deterioration of Canada's international investment position; Canadian investment abroad has outgrown foreign investment in Canada. Source: CANSIM376-0051. International investment position, Canadian direct investment abroad and foreign direct investment in Canada, by country"

My periodizing perspective separates each plan by way of the "national purpose" each presumes. Where Rohmer follows the typical appeals of technological nationalism by which the output or return expected of any project is as much the affective form of nationalism as it is any vulgarly-conceived content like copper, the purpose in the Calgary plan is nothing less than "national purpose" as such (in which, as Barney and Charland put it, the nation *is* communication). Rohmer, in the 1970s discourse of economic nationalism, sees FDI and foreign takeovers as particular contents of transportation, things that can be managed and contained by the idealist spirit-genius of the nation that ought to be actualized in infrastructure; today, while there's a great deal of lip service paid to a transcendental national purpose, the discourse of infrastructure also clearly identifies *what's to be transported as the essence of the nation*. In the ideograms—ubiquitous in Alberta—"I ♥ [Maple Leaf] Oil & Gas" and "I ♥ Canadian Energy," the commodity is still as tied as ever to the nation,[256] but now it's a commodity that both springs from the nation and whose success on domestic and international markets must undoubtedly redound back to the nation, region, race, etc. This popular-discursive collapse of what is already valuable and what ought to be set in motion to become value shows how the Canadian resource

[256] And/or to the region, for example in I Alberta Cattle Commission, "I ski Alberta," etc.

imagination presumes to continue the economic trajectory and geographical orientation of global capital without regard to Canada's historical particularities. Rohmer believed Canada could develop outside of industrialism and "continue to attract foreign capital into the country to develop industries, and at the same time would prevent control of the new industries from slipping into foreign hands" (115); now the Calgary plan presumes a Corridor will likewise allow Canada to immediately begin reaping all the benefits of post-industrial, immaterial production.

Still, Canada's historical particularities as a peripheral staples economy generate ever more contradictions, especially when these (quantitatively-exchangeable) staples are understood to be transitive of (qualitatively-unique) national values (not to mention the idea that these values can then be exported to bless other nations!). Today, the national purpose extractive projects claim to advance relies on branding Canadian oil as *better than* foreign oil. Numerous critics have pointed out the utter irony of such claims, explaining that Canada's bitumen is, by every objective instrumental measure, of much lower quality, more difficult to produce, process, transport, clean up, and is much more energy- and capital-intensive than oil from virtually any other source. Considering the ease by which these claims can be empirically refuted, it's genuinely depressing that the repeatedly-disproven claims of Ezra Levant, Alykhan Velshi, and Ethical Oil made such a comeback before, and even more after, the Alberta conservatives' return to power in 2019.[257] But, as Sheena Wilson shows in her analysis of the racist, misogynist, and homophobic conceits smeared across the texts disseminated by Ethical Oil, and as Mark Simpson's concept of lubricity likewise suggests, the semiotic functions of such "branding" are

[257] Thankfully, the resurgence of these ideas is somewhat less upsetting than it could be due the felicitous fact that, instead of benefiting from any authoritative heft of the government, these claims thus far have communicated all the gravitas of the sub-Peter Sellers*esque* "War room" that issues them; witness, for instance, the dignified eloquence of the Alberta Government's official tweet directed at Greta Thunberg!

far more concerned with affective production—that is, with ideal of the nation—than with any material or even empirical entity.

And I argue it's just this absence of materiality—of social and productive relations—that allows the affective equivalences between value and values that structure contemporary development discourse.[258] That is, the equivalence characteristic of circulatory capital is the material *relation* that is understood to be a *thing*—the "right idea"—that unites the historically-specific periods of technological nationalism and the post-historical universal homogeneous state to be manifested by neoliberal carbon democracy. The present period is characterized by neoliberal assumptions of mobility, flexibility, immateriality—all assumptions that privilege the "motion" that creates value. Conversely, the conceptual sovereignty of spaces—those things which relations are imagined to organize—is devalued. Motion and things are structured, that is, by an aesthetic ideology of relation which assigns conceptual priority to value-as-motion over any national boundaries, these latter at bottom representing obstacles to movement. Accordingly, the Calgary version of the Corridor, by purging itself of any too-concrete nationalist content and by removing the 1970s' city/centre aesthetic and the industrial mode of production it expresses can now claim to integrate the *xenos*. Having always been the necessary other side of the *oikos*'s coin, the *xenos* is unified with its complement within the national project via the "market":

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[258] These relations are of course exactly what vulgar Marxism calls *infrastructure*. It is my thesis that technological-nationalist or carbon-democratic infrastructural projects are not actually infrastructural. They are structures of reproduction not production. This is the lesson to take from Charland's contradiction. Technological nationalism proposes in the same breath to build or produce, *and* to unite or reproduce the nation. Part of the work of this dissertation is to separate such conflated claims, categorizing them respectively as material and ideal, as production and circulation, etc.

To be clear, I'm not asserting the correctness of orthodox Marxist diction, but showing how in idealism—or at least without an intelligent idealist perspective that can discern between the ideal and the material (for example the qualitative difference between production and reproduction, between value and values, between industry and mediation, etc.)—the terminological confusion in development discourse by which infrastructure is posited to be both productive and cultural is inevitable because meaningful distinctions cannot be made. The absence of meaningful distinctions signifies the end of history.

united, moreover, with the most characteristic literality in the name of the project, "The National Infrastructure and Market Access Program."

Identifying national infrastructure *as* access to international markets, the problem of foreignness is resolved. Just as the idea of "national infrastructure" seamlessly connects the economic goal of transnational transmission to the nationalistic East-West orientation (Scheer's claim the Corridor will move Quebec electricity westward "as much as" oil going "east and west"), the concept of "market access" contains the true object the infrastructure hopes to manage—the North-South-oriented FDI—within the form of the national infrastructure. To be sure, this affective and conceptual mediation of the erstwhile problematic *xenos*—dutifully performed in Mansell, Fellows, and Winter's nationalist appeals—reflects the most banal economistic common sense within neoliberal free trade dogma. Still, the Corridor's formal function as an instrument of this mediation tells us a lot about the material basis for the ideological shift from technological nationalism to carbon democracy. As an imaginary resolution to both material and idealist problems—working to hold incommensurables together and structure each in relation to the other—the Corridor concept historicizes the changing relations of production. Thus the Calgary plan marks a significant shift when its claims are compared to those of Rohmer's time, where nationalist sentiment was aimed at resources in general, in effect relying on the abstract equivalence of human resources and raw materials. While Rohmer, like many other contemporaneous writers, saw a need to educate Canadians about the value and extent of their resources, in the 1970s these resources didn't have any fetishized "Canadianness" to them. These days one would be hard-pressed to muster the indignation for an eye-roll if oil boosters were to gushingly equate the thick stickiness of Canadian oil with maple syrup. But fifty years ago it would have registered as quite an absurdity

if Rohmer had claimed that Canadian oil or copper or nickel was the "best" or "cleanest" in the world—because his vision was to catch up with and surpass industrialization, to build a chain of extractive and manufacturing settlements as though they had emerged historically from an industrial-manufacturing boom. The value of resources was seen to belong to a national production process, thus the equation of Canada's natural resources with its human values—the equation *The Green North* itself works so hard to articulate—remained incomplete. While Rohmer confusedly relies on the city/centre aesthetic of industrial production to argue for a post-industrial mode of production, and while he obviously doesn't distinguish between production and circulation (let alone between industrial and the various forms of finance capital), he never completes the anachronism by fully separating the *source* of post-industrial value from labour. Indeed, instead of understanding value as coming from extraction and circulation, instead of seeing value as inhering, fully-formed, in the nation and its subjects, the mode of production Rohmer's proposal (and his fiction) presumes clearly calls for the North to be "developed" by armies of workers and machines drastically transforming the landscape as a national project. Of course such a separation—in which value can be seen as inhering in the human resource—is exactly what his work is attempting to articulate and which it leaves unfinished. Having discerned this unfinished process, the true historicity of *The Green North* is revealed: what was, in its historical moment, an attempt to organize resource extraction according to the rationality of the state form, is now visible as a means of conceptually synthesizing extractivism with the administrative logic that in Rohmer's time was unable to be thought of as something separate from the state (except when glimpsed as the threateningly irrational antithesis of greedy corporate fingers). In others words, it's only after the period that *The Green North* was beginning to articulate that governmentality appears as a form of rationality, independent of governments.

The self-evidence of governmentality as an organizing force completes the conceptual shift *The Green North* was articulating within the labour-capital relation, in which labour power was ceding way to human capital. The completion of labour's removal as the source of value from the discourse of development is obvious when one compares *The Green North*'s 1970s techno-nationalist imagery of mobilization with the video's minimalist portrayal of technology, labour, and machinery. The video's extreme stylization of activity also imaginarily completes the history of the nation, which began with the *idea* of *terra nullius*, an idea which has now fully materialized. For Rohmer, Canada's value lay in its fullness as a treasure-house. The state's responsibility was to unlock and distribute these treasures, *to work* to bring the material reality of the nation in line with its idealist plenitude. In the video, we see that the state has finished its work. Having connected the North with the world, the Corridor has dissolved the particular space into universal smoothness. Northerners are finally reconciled with their environment; and with nothing left to negate, human struggle gives way to consumer behaviour. Having united fullness and emptiness, the ecological and the economic, the state vanishes, leaving in its place the totemic monoliths of pumpjacks and inuksuks, the automated steam shovels operating in slow motion—so many parts of the sublime scenery of the once-again empty North.

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Rohmer's goal was to allow Canada to catch up to industrialized nations by showing how Canadian materials were abstractly-equivalent to, or, *exactly the same as*, other materials on the world market, even though the time in which Canada could have developed as an industrial power had passed. Rohmer's anachronism consisted in imagining that national settlement would follow the pattern of an industrial stage of development; he mistakenly equated the aesthetic form of modern, metropolitan settlements with a historical form of the mode of production.

Further confusing things, he read the pattern of Canada's historical settlement as part of a production chain rather than one of national and international transportation and intermediation.

The University of Calgary plan now performs a very similar anachronism, taking the aesthetic sophistry (just one particular manifestation of the universalist idealism shared among technological nationalists and neoliberals) of Canadian oil discourse and imagining that the marketing ploys of branding can find purchase on a resource sector that has little to do with manufacturing. In chronotopic terms, the historical fact of Canada's having missed industrialization offers a distinct advantage when it comes to narrating Canada into the post-industrial world economy of immaterial production, or, in other words, into the idealism of the neoliberal end of history. Thus "I ♥ Canadian Oil" somehow means Canadians make better oil, or make oil better, which encapsulates the Ethical Oil argument. But the lesson to learn from examining the Corridor idea is that it's not only shills like Levant who make claims confusing aesthetics with history. Indeed, Van Nostrand's whole argument is based on the reality that Canada, as a first world country, is required to make oil "better"—in terms of pollution and labour—than oil is made in less-regulated nations.[259]

Mansell's presentation exemplifies how, at the same time as the content of resources is more explicitly thematized as "national" today, relations beyond the nation are so much more clearly integrated into narratives about the *purpose* of "national" infrastructure than they were in Rohmer. Indeed, after an early slide proclaiming "Non US Demand for Canadian Exports is Growing" and an accompanying graph showing the "value of Canadian exports" (astoundingly "excluding oil and natural gas"!), Mansell's plan clearly shows the Corridor's purpose is

[259] I see no reason to doubt the sincerity of Van Nostrand's argument, published in the liberal-centrist *The Walrus*. Indeed, I'm inclined to read his sincerity as the affective framework that allows him not only to hold the aesthetic and the historical together, but to then use his confused observation as an example of the hindrances Canada has to overcome and to propose his solution: that the nation de-regulate *en masse*, establishing the Corridor as an *a priori* zone of exception.

primarily to secure foreign investment in Canada. Obviously, the Corridor's aim is not simply to facilitate Canadian exports, but to facilitate these exports as returns on investments. The video was able, as Scheer is, to skip this essential intermediary objective and stay in the idealist realm of ethically-branded nationalist affect. But the detail (such as it is—relative to the video's soft-focus lubricity, at least) of Mansell's presentation shows how the original nationalist content of the Corridor—Rohmer's fixed and "normal" place for Canadians to live, retained in Van Nostrand as a domestic home for locals and foreign capital to "stay"—has vanished in order to be replaced by the current period's more mediatory understandings of infrastructure as that which accelerates the scale and pace of capital. Likewise, the associated governmentality has shifted from technological nationalism to carbon democracy.

The figure of economic value operating in the development discourse that animates Alberta's provincial government (under both Notley and Kenney), the Scheer campaign, and the Calgary Corridor plan is not about the price of Canadian oil in the interest of spatially-rooted "Canadians"—for example, promising high prices for producers and low prices for consumers. Nor does this discourse aim to advance development according to any nationalist content. Rather, the form of value it privileges requires that the Corridor is not actually an infrastructure at all, but a zone—a zone in which (if it's made sufficiently competitive) FDI can continue its internal financing structure, allowing Canada to remain the mediatory space, a link in the global supply chain that favours merchant capital and the rent form. Just as Naylor describes the National Policy's shunting off of production to other places within the ambit of Canadian merchant capital, the Corridor, as national purpose—upon which Scheer urges us to "deploy our collective will on a project that will unite our country"—represents interests that are no more or less "national" than ever before. They're simply, like they always have been, class interests with

no fixed connection to any nation, region, or space. The Corridor transcends space as it bundles space and history within timeless motion: “The future is,” as Winter says, “now.”

In this “now,” national purpose and national interests have been identified and determined to be correct. As I showed in Part One, the triumphant Idea shapes Canadians as a certain relation to resource extraction. Political and economic problems from Western alienation and resource management to First Nations’ poverty and the “underserved” status of northern communities is the result of the incomplete implementation of this ideal. This incompleteness is materially manifested as insufficient resource exploitation, insufficient development of the energy that connects Canada’s *oikos* to its *xenos*, and the solution is to do much, much more of the same. Having overcome the industrial-productive assumptions that hampered Rohmer, the Calgary plan no longer aims to produce, but to reproduce and transmit. Canada’s history is the history of grand technological feats. In the Corridor’s “now,” infrastructure and national purpose are united, and Canada’s history is completed. The carbon-democratic relation, like Pythagoras’s ratio of 3:4:5, is perfect: all that remains to do is to transmit this relation across the space of the nation and into the future.

Conclusion

The Camp as *Nomos* of the Market Ecology

So far, my periodization shows how Rohmer advances a liberal-democratic citizen-state relation to argue for the infrastructure that will facilitate a neoliberal idealist end of history, with all of its conscious and unconscious Kojèveian-Hegelian assumptions. In this way, as in his fiction, Rohmer's work is historical, progressive, and authentically engaged in figuring what is to come. Yet, from the current moment, we can see how Rohmer's already-anachronistic liberal-statism provides the necessary anachronism for the present.[260] For example, he uses assumptions belonging to a labour theory of value to articulate the new period's demands to overcome the industrial period's labour-capital relations and to transition to the human capital of the post-industrial mode of production. From our perspective, liberalism is visible as a conceptual structure that mediates the material and ideological on the way to manage the crises and contradictions in the mode of production.

In this Conclusion, I argue that the Corridor offers an opportunity to understand the always-vexing phenomenon by which liberal premises continue to work in support of ruthlessly anti-liberal conclusions and how the concept of freedom justifies policies of what Marcuse calls unfreedom. In his deeply-felt argument for a Corridor, John Van Nostrand provides neoliberal premises for advancing a Kantian, liberal goal. I argue his conceptualizations are anachronistic as they rely on the most pre-liberal Hobbesian premises of the state of nature and competition as the basis for the neoliberal common sense.[261] My periodizing historicization shows how, despite

[260] I'm using this term here because I use it throughout, and I explicitly tie Lukács's concept to the figure of the vanishing mediator, but there are other, related and non-literary-critical concepts that work here, too. For example, it might be helpful to say that Rohmer's plan shows how liberalism participates in the Hegel's Ruse of Reason (i.e., whatever is actual is rationally intelligible), the historical premise that Marx refined into the Ruse of History, and which Kierkegaard existentially refined in his aphorism "We live life forwards, and understand it backwards."
[261] Like Rohmer, Van Nostrand is remarkably Kojèveian in his assumption of these premises, which I've thus far called "instinctively-Hegelian." These include the fetishization of the form of the master-slave dialectic into a

its quite different affect, the liberal plea is structurally identical to the governmental argument that Fellows uses—making "government" as a political structure the scapegoat for contemporary problems, which ought to be post-political (and which constitutes the cruel irony of Flanagan's proposal to municipalize reserve governments).[262] Of course, Van Nostrand's claims, like Fellows', are rhetorical. But they are enabled by a structuralism that I argue is itself an infrastructure, what connects each of the texts I look at in this dissertation, and the mode of production they presume. While I'm not primarily concerned with the rhetoric Van Nostrand uses to advance his proposal, I'm extremely interested in how his arguments partake of the dehistoricizing and depoliticizing structure common to all the other texts, formalizing the *oikos*/*xenos* into the figures of carbon democracy and market ecology. Throughout this dissertation I've analyzed the structuralist rhetoric authors and experts have employed towards creating a naturalist, market-ecological common sense. The logic Fellows uses to position the "Canadian government" as both the highest authority and the (if-necessary) scapegoat for whatever promises fail to materialize relies on the same contradictory collapse of necessary and illegitimate power applied to the Canadian government in *The War Between Us*. The film shows the absentee government's treatment of the Japanese-Canadians was based in ignorance of the citizens' true value as human capital. Therefore the government was anachronistic as well, as it treated its subjects according to an outdated, literal state racism. Nevertheless, the government

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structuralist master narrative that explains all of experience, and, by explaining everything, signifies the end of history.

[262] Which, I hasten to add, does not mean that particular governments or governments in general are *not* to blame for problems of development and resource extraction—this being Rohmer, Lotz, Coates's, et al.'s point. The historical point here is that these critics of government's responsibility in matters of justice regarding development in Canada are, like Marcuse, exposing the betrayal of liberal values. What I'm showing now is how, in particular cases like that of the Corridor, liberal ideology acts as a vanishing mediator to negotiate the shift from one mode of production to the next. Like in *The War Between Us*, this operation makes political authority into a *xenos*, the anachronistic form of fate and agent of inequality, which, once overcome, will give way to the market ecology of the work camp. Therefore, the appeal to liberal values in arguing for the Corridor betrays liberal principles by naturalizing governmentality and casting the form of government as *xenos* or illegitimate (and—who knows?—maybe the state form is illegitimate, but it's not for the reasons neoliberalism assumes!).

performed the necessary formal reorganization of human capital within the space of the camp, which immediately becomes a market ecology in which skills and morality quickly become harmonized. The government's actions are clearly unjust, but as I argued in the Introduction, the market ecology its actions precipitated provides the post-historical vantage by which historical injustice can be judged (as history itself is judged to be unjust). The government, then, which cannot realize the true content of its subjects' value, is a purely formal, structural force, like epic Fate. It might do unfair things—even some neoliberals complained that it wasn't "right" for Harper's government to legislate labour actions as illegal before they even took place. But rightness or wrongness can only be determined as content. The declaration of Japanese-Canadians to be, in essence, illegal, contained no content beyond the decree itself.

Having established the formal structure of the internment camp, the state has completed its world-historical role, and now vanishes as irrelevant. In other words, Van Nostrand begins with the camp after the state has already vanished in terms of an agency to organize spaces. The sprawl and temporariness of the work camp is the conclusion, not the occasion. While there is a different orientation to time—the film looks at the past from the present, and Van Nostrand looks at the future from the present—what's common to the film and the Corridor plans is that the action of the government is separated from the space that it creates. The government should not intervene in markets, but it should intervene in organizing people and things into the space that will come to be after the government disappears. To sum up, both the Calgary plan and *The War Between Us* take for granted that the state is the necessary agent to reorganize people and settlements according to a universal rationality. This rationality is a market ecology that will facilitate investments of human and other capital as well as smooth flows of goods, consumers, and energy. In other words, this ecology heralds the end of history that Cooper identified: the

market ecology that makes the work camp identical to the space of the transnational corporation. By posing this coordination as the state's necessary and anachronistic responsibility, the film and the Corridor concept both implicitly call for the vanishing of the state at the end of history. The state's responsibility is nothing more or less than the spatial resolution to time.[263]

Now I will briefly look at how Van Nostrand apprehends a symptom of post-historical lubricity—the unplanned work camps sprawling across the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo—as evidence of the market-ecological givens that require the vanishing of the state. Van Nostrand's Corridor proposal resolves the period-differences between Rohmer's and Mansell's visions of the state's "responsibility" to invest in infrastructure into much more specific and consequential claims on the state's responsibilities. Once again, this imaginary resolution is enabled through the Corridor form, this time as a figure that reaches the logical conclusion that the state is incapable of transmitting content. Just as Charland's technological nationalism contradictorily presumes the existence of the nation its purpose is to build, in Van Nostrand, the Corridor becomes the vehicle to bring about the vanishing of the state *precisely through its function*, which is to manage the crisis left by a state that has already vanished. Discerning this vanishing in Van Nostrand's thesis shows how in his view—like all Corridor proposals—the state's responsibility isn't simply to facilitate economic development (the priority of the Calgary plan) or to develop quality of life (Rohmer's priority). The responsibility pertains to managing

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[263] Thus ending history. For Hegel, Being is the Idea which is unfolded in space and time respectively as Nature and Mind. Cf. Agamben:

> What happened in the camps so exceeds the juridical concept of crime that the specific juridico-political structure in which those events took place is often simply omitted from consideration. The camp is merely the place in which the most absolute *conditio inhumana* that has ever existed on earth was realized: this is what counts in the last analysis, for the victims as for those who come after. Here we will deliberately follow an inverse line of inquiry. Instead of deducing the definition of the camp from the events that took place there, we will ask: What is a camp, what is its juridico-political structure that such events could take place there? This will lead us to regard the camp, not as an historical fact and an anomaly belonging to the past (even if still verifiable), but in some way as the hidden matrix and *nomos* of the political space in which we are still living. (*Nomos* 106)

the nation's people in accordance with the economic naturalism the state should bring about. In other words, the population of Wood Buffalo needs to be carbon-democratically configured.

The assumption common to the Corridor plans is that only the state can mediate the irrationality of non-state-led development. In the way that the concepts of state and nation are popularly understood—i.e., as *governments*—this seems like a very statist premise; but it's clear that the agency involved in such grand proposals as the Corridor is not "*an* agency," but agency itself; not a thing, that is, but a process; not government but governmentality. In Van Nostrand, Rohmer's imagistic complaints about the finger-like quality of infrastructural development give way to concrete, specific examples of irrationality, but these examples are determined just as aesthetically as Rohmer's. That is to say, the target of the critique is the irrational costs of haphazard settlement, a focus that, like Rohmer's, obscures the utter rationality of the financial interests behind the haphazardness (if these are understood not as national interests, but national-*class* interests). And just like in Rohmer, it's only from the transcendental point of view of the imaginary nation that such things appear irrational; likewise, it's this imaginary point of view—of values over value—that lends this rationality its moral weight. In each case, a moral argument is made by way of an aesthetic argument that presumes the economic premise to be natural (i.e., not the kind of thing one could rationally argue against). So, even for the liberal urban planner, phenomena like the profit motive and the fundamental right for property to be alienable, whether as commodities or as rents of public or common land, are presumed to, as de Soto says, "represent" an underlying ecological truth. Thus the means of solving problems of value's priority over values can only appear as the management of what's ecological. Imagining that the government can manage capital flows to make merchant capital into fixed capital, or turn FDI

into GDP, leads to the fantasy that the government's mediatory function is one of power instead of passivity. And the Corridor is the imaginary container for this structural dynamic.

Illustrating this dynamic, Van Nostrand gives the example of Wood Buffalo:

> [Wood Buffalo Mayor] Melissa Blake […] complains that while her city pays the bills associated with runaway expansion, it doesn't always share in the financial benefits. Under provincial law, it can't tax projects that are under construction, even though it's obliged to provide them services. The oil companies also get a break on property taxes, paying roughly three-quarters of what they would pay if they were assessed like other businesses.

In this example, political structures are working improperly, and it appears the state is the solution—indeed, the Mayor explains how the state should solve this problem! But within the parameters implied by the argument, based as it is on the ideology that private property should be alienable, the state can really only solve the problem by its disappearance. As presented, the problem is two-fold: 1) the area and the population of the state aren't responsibly coordinated. Since the injustice exists as a matter of jurisdiction, it's only natural the state form ought to fix it. However, 2) the structure of the state—and its relations to provinces and federal authorities, its legal responsibilities to citizens and corporations—enables some things and excepts/de-politicizes other things. In the Blake example, the expected solution would be that provincial law should be changed—however complexly—to accommodate for the extraordinary challenges of extractive projects. But instead, recalling Rohmer's circular argument and premises, the structural aspect of the problem is identified with the state structure itself. Therefore, the conclusion is that the state structure should give way to a different agent of rationality. Van Nostrand is presenting the clichéd neoliberal formula: a problem is identified as something the

state should solve; the state's structural inability to solve the problem thus suggests changing the state in order to solve it, or changing to a different model of management—like the market; thereby the idea of the state or nation is appealed to in order to imagine reorganizing things to get the state out of its own way.[264] Since intergovernmental or jurisdictional problems are hindering resource development and extraction (as indeed they have since before Confederation), the only solution is an entity that can provide the transcendental perspective from which to judge what counts as "rational."

The problem, then, in Rohmer, in Van Nostrand, in Mansell—in all those who wrestle with the role of politics in a staples economy—is how to identify human values and then to coordinate these with economic value. We've seen that Rohmer firmly retains the state form as the rational agent to manage economic value. But we've also seen that the periodizing issues *The Green North* is negotiating are finally resolved in our time by coordinating the value of Canadian oil with Canadian values—or, "better oil." And the (no longer) paradoxical way this coordination is imagined—whether in the junk arguments of Ethical Oil, or in the more sophisticated or at least more sincere proposals of Rohmer, the Calgary plan, or Scheer—is by appealing to a greater "value" generation of *better* extraction. Value is henceforth not to be created by a national workforce in the name of national development directed by a national government. Value comes from governmentality, the smoothness and rationality of doing things efficiently. In Van Nostrand's simple understanding of costs, better extraction is imagined by way of appeals to better management of costs, and, finally, (aesthetically) better spending.

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[264] Like all supporters of a Corridor, Van Nostrand is presenting an argument from aesthetics, an argument by fallacious analogy to aesthetic criteria. And thereby the argument, such as it is, is another *petitio principii*: the state is something that should responsibly represent the interests of capital and those of citizens; since it's not representing either of those interests, it's not doing what it should. Since it's structurally incapable of representing these interests, then its responsibility is to facilitate what is. So far so good. But the source of the problem is not contained in the terms of the argument.

A similar rhetorical process is apparent in arguments over the Carbon Tax. The pricing of carbon is a liberal/conservative, market-fundamentalist solution if there ever was one, and it's favoured by the majority of energy producers in Canada. In the current Liberal version of the tax, the government's role is already as minimal as possible. By subscribing to the neoliberal "revenue-neutral" form, the state is already getting out of the way. And Scheer's 2019 campaign climate plan, which amounts to requiring certain emitters to invest in a fund that will invest in cleaner energy solutions is essentially the same as the Liberal version. Where the carbon tax will rebate consumers for whatever extra they are calculated to pay, Scheer's plan will give relief to consumers by not having them pay in the first place. In each case, the government is figured as a non-agent; it can't actually "do" anything except to mediate—or to "help"—natural ecological processes.[265]

The neoliberal tenet of the ineffective, if not incompetent, state is shared by Liberals and Conservatives alike. In stating Fort Mac's very real problem of jurisdictional irrationality (the overlapping that Wallerstein called "conceptually impermissible in the modern state-system"), Van Nostrand isn't only returning to Rohmer's idea of the MCDC, but to the aesthetic ideology Rohmer was articulating and which would proceed to dominate the neoliberal period. Like technological nationalism, the Corridor resolves aesthetic problems, but it can only resolve them aesthetically. So, we notice that the rhetoric in which the real, material problems of Wood Buffalo are posed takes truisms and jargon as much for granted as Rohmer did. For example, Van Nostrand expands on Blake's complaint regarding the ability to tax construction projects:

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[265] Government is presumed to have *some* agency, but only as reflective of/projected onto the leader as super-agent: so Trudeau himself is the taxer of families and killer of jobs, whereas Scheer = Rob Ford = cuts to services. This denial of government's agency, and the simultaneous projection/affirmation of individual agency common to liberals and conservatives, is how the contradiction between general-class and individual-class interests, discussed below, is phenomenologized and managed.

> But the problem is less about finding the money to build for the long run than it is about using what we're already spending more productively. Just setting up a temporary settlement for 1,200 workers costs nearly $50 million, plus operating costs of $600 million over ten years. Building a permanent community would be less expensive for the oil companies; it would also benefit provincial taxpayers, who currently absorb some of the costs of these camps through reduced royalty payments.

Van Nostrand's admonition in favour of "spending more productively" is identical to Rohmer's claim that developing transportation "along a lateral line […] would spur mineral resource development more *coherently*." And as anything other than an aesthetic statement, it's just as meaningless. Spending could only be judged "more productive" if the cost or ownership were somehow uniform and articulated as what Marxist political economy terms "objective conditions" (for example, say, in regard to use value or Marx's socially-necessary-labour time). The problem is that the costs are shared among subjects with different interests. Without a more complex understanding of interests, it's hard to see how objective things like "costs" wouldn't always-already logically pertain in the neutral, law-based market.

So, the real problem for Van Nostrand is that there's no ordering principle governing the irrational interests in the current form of the market. As he sees it, the right idea hasn't yet been determined that could manage the primal state of nature into an ecological harmony. The only solution then, is for a vanishing mediator, a Prime Mover to set things in order, put them (as though a perpetual motion machine) in action, and then slowly back away. This mediator is the liberal-democratic state; and, as this is the referent to the liberal appeals Van Nostrand makes, we see how liberal premises are both *anachronistic and necessary* to complete the transition to neoliberalism: government is the necessary anachronism for governmentality. The state form is

the agent that will bring the vanishing state—chiasmus-like—into the formal state of vanishing. From the aesthetic ideology in which the Corridor is imagined as a resolution, an agent could never compel or coerce market forces like competition to work more coherently or enforce *laissez-faire* without actually *laissez-faire*, or, vanishing! As Wallerstein explains, a producer is constrained by "objective constraints, meaning they exist in the absence of any particular set of decisions by a given producer or by others active in the market. These constraints are the consequence of the total social process that exists in a concrete time and place." To be sure,

> there are always in addition of course other constraints, more open to manipulation. Governments may adopt, may already have adopted, various rules which in some way transform economic options and therefore the calculus of profit. A given producer may be the beneficiary or the victim of existing rules. A given producer may seek to persuade political authorities to change their rules in his favour. (21)

That is, agents can engage with socially-necessary or objective conditions, but as in any structuralist schema, the structure itself refers to the aesthetics of a self-regulating ecology. As Barthes says: "Ultimately, the narrative has no *object*: the narrative concerns only itself: *the narrative tells itself*"; therefore, any analysis of political-economic structure that doesn't apprehend the structure itself as the ordering of productive relations remains in the aesthetic. Without a critique of the economistic dogma behind concepts like "rationality," objective things—like costs—are by definition and in their essence "coherent."

Obviously, it's less "productive" for both Apple and Google to make their own separate smartphone operating systems when they could cooperate, but for the term "productivity" to actually mean anything requires that it signify far more than a ratio of phone quality to dollars invested. Like Rohmer, Van Nostrand is stuck in a naturalist aesthetic of use. Thus, Van

Nostrand presents his personal and professional views on development in a remarkably Rohmer-like idiom:

> What would a rational approach look like? In 2009, the Alberta government commissioned my firm to create one. The initial reports, the Comprehensive Regional Infrastructure Sustainability plans, were released in 2011 and 2012; they envisioned new settlements, including a town north of Fort McMurray and additional, smaller commuter hubs up to two hours away.
>
> Wood Buffalo knows it needs to do something about the scattershot work camps multiplying to the north and south of Fort McMurray, but it hasn't yet requested that land be released for development in those areas. Instead, its expansion plans are focused on Fort McMurray itself, and last year, the province announced the release of 22,000 hectares of land for that purpose—an area more than double the boom town's current size. Until a similar release is announced for the hinterland, trailer parks with poor access to services will continue to be the norm.

Like Rohmer, Van Nostrand is articulating very consequential problems of development in an extractive economy. But he follows Rohmer also in failing to ask who is the subject presumed in this "rational approach." Who, for example, would be financing, investing in, collecting taxes for, employing workers to build, or being employed in building these rational settlements? It might indeed "be less expensive for oil companies" to invest or cooperate in urban or community development on some different timescale than the one they're currently using to measure their interests. But would their adoption of this different timescale then be more "rational" than their current measures? Does, in the end, the fundamental problem of planning and development boil down to corporations being ignorant of their own narrowly-financially-determined interest? Van

Nostrand's continued reliance on "rationality" is the key to the anachronism of technological-nationalist projects. The subject whose interest and sense of utility is aesthetically offended is the technological-national citizen, that imaginary subjectivity belonging to Rohmer's moment, whose interest was rationally understood as national purpose, and who was already in the process of vanishing to be replaced by the carbon-democratic citizen.

Van Nostrand's aesthetic confusion prevents him from seeing that the movement from techno-nationalist subject to carbon-democratic subject is itself the resolution to the intolerable structural condition of overlapping jurisdictions he's reacting to, and which Wallerstein describes above in relation to sovereignty. Dialectically, this overlapping corresponds to the transnational centre-periphery relationship, in which the national-political structure of the periphery needs to be accountable to its polity while maintaining fealty to its various dependency relations. Moreover, the example of Wood Buffalo expresses how the structural contradiction of overlapping jurisdictions and of the centre-periphery relationship are reproduced *within* the nation. The imaginary citizen, aghast at irrational spending and unseemly planning, to whom Van Nostrand and Rohmer appeal is the subject of transcendental technological nationalism, not of carbon democracy. And one lesson to glean from this confusion is that, like always, it seems the aesthetics of a city—of the well planned, liveable spaces characterizing the modern post-industrial descendants of pre-industrial boomtowns—are unlikely to materialize and govern life within a Corridor.

Articulating this missing perspective—the aesthetic premises behind the city and national infrastructure—reveals that Van Nostrand is wrestling with the most basic contradictions of class and individual interests as they are assembled within the state form, a form that, moreover, expresses its own dialectical tension between its transnational and infra-national aspects.

Wallerstein explains that in regard to objective situations like world-wide “commodity chains linking multiple production processes,”

> it is clear that the rate of accumulation for all the ‘capitalists’ put together became a function of how wide a margin could be created, in a situation where this margin could fluctuate considerably. The rate of accumulation for particular capitalists, however, was a function of a process of ‘competition’, with higher rewards going to those who had greater perspicacity of judgement, greater ability to control their work-force, and greater access to politically-decided constraints on particular market operations (known generically as ‘monopolies’). (17-18)

In other words, the uniform objective conditions that ought to encourage subjects like Van Nostrand’s “oil companies” to cooperate with one another and with the various levels of government to invest in fixed capital are those same conditions that require their competition. Furthermore, objective conditions (i.e., the only criterion one could imagine for judging “rational” behaviour) form the deterministic background against which the “choice” and “individual responsibility” that characterizes market behaviour takes place:

> While the interest of all capitalists, taken as a class, seemed to be to reduce all costs of production, these reductions in fact frequently favoured particular capitalists against others, and some therefore preferred to increase their share of a smaller global margin rather than accept a smaller share of a larger global margin. (Wallerstein 17)

It’s clear that the historical specificity of Van Nostrand’s Corridor proposal differs from Rohmer’s, whose aesthetic of rationality was based in a naturalistic analogy between the nation’s geology and its political geography. For Rohmer it “made more sense” for Canada’s resources to be developed according to the East-West orientation of Confederation. Yet, still, the aesthetic

from which Van Nostrand derives his concept of rationality is no less based in assumptions that the nation's interests should reflect an aesthetic harmony with its political geography; but instead of the route of settlement, it is economistic, market-theological principles Van Nostrand takes to be given Nature. The various levels of state administration are competing when they should be cooperating. The state needs to mediate and facilitate an environment so that the oil companies can cooperate like they would naturally do—in harmony with their interests *as a class*. The competition of market behaviour is disavowed vis-à-vis the private enterprises and projected onto the state.[266] In this way, his argument performs the same displacement of responsibility as Fellows performs in his interruption that the state supports the Corridor, so if there are problems, they are the state's responsibility. Thus in Rohmer, Fellows, and in Van Nostrand, the Corridor acts as a container for the neutral/benevolent space of the market. This is of course only one side of Wallerstein's dialectic, that of the interests of capitalists as a class (and so the very "responsibility" of the nation as a patron of the much-pandered-to "middle class," who are most often portrayed as capitalists in the form of "small business").

Meanwhile the other side of the dialectic, that of competition, is projected onto the state form. Both Mansell and Van Nostrand's main argument is for the government to make Canada more competitive as a space for FDI. And from Rohmer to now, the problems of overlapping jurisdiction, squabbling, and Mitchell-like interest are the evidence for the urgent need for the Corridor, which, as a concretization of the rationality of the state, would transcend the petty competition of individual interests and would incarnate the transcendental perspective Rohmer and Goering imagine would judge the competition for "best." In other words, by building a nation on top of the nation, the state would fulfil its role to manage or streamline the problem of

[266] Also projected onto the state is the unequal access to state power, which Naylor calls bribing, but which here is exactly what all companies should be given.

its own overlapping jurisdictions, to make the territory of the state into a market. With the establishment of such a market-state, the state's role of facilitating capital according to an aesthetic ideology comes to its post-historical self-evidence, self-knowing: what's rational is actual and what's actual is rational; the interests of capital are those of the state. And in Canada this means that the form of the nation is rationally that of a Corridor for fluid "communication," or as is commonly invoked in development discourse, projects, and liberal-democratic dogma in general, "dialogue."

Dialogue or working together is exactly the way that Van Nostrand imagines solving problems of complexity. He cites his work in Thompson, Manitoba, which "sits on one of the largest and purest nickel deposits in the world." In 2006, when Canada's Inco sold its interest in the Brazilian Vale, "the project involved both underground and surface operations, and directly employed 1,600 of the town's 12,829 residents, one-third of whom are Aboriginal. (Indirectly, it employed more than twice that number.)." Despite this extraordinary local presence, it was determined that "the smelter was not up to code, and an upgrade would have cost $1 billion, so Vale decided to decommission the smelter in 2015 and ship the nickel to Sudbury, resulting in a loss of local employment." In 2011 Van Nostrand's firm "set out to address the challenges facing the community," and he describes the enormous complexity of the process that entailed:

> our first hurdle was to identify who actually lived there. Information was scant, and bringing the various stakeholders to the table wasn't easy. Nor was figuring out what to do once we got them there. The disparities were daunting: a foreign multinational [Vale] with revenues of $60.4 billion (US) that year; five distinct Aboriginal organizations; the local chamber of commerce; the local economic development corporation; the municipal

> government; the province; and the dim shadow of the federal government. It was difficult to establish trust or even draft effective terms of reference.

Van Nostrand is explaining how difficult it is to determine the interests involved in large development and extractive projects. It's even difficult to determine who might have interests! He goes on to describe that,

> The process took two years, but resulted in a diversification plan that incorporated regional interests, socio-economic development goals, land-use planning, infrastructure expansion, and—critically—Aboriginal concerns. It allowed both regional and urban Aboriginal groups to be fully engaged in planning for the long-term sustainability of their communities and their land bases. An updated regulatory framework was adopted in September 2013 that allowed for changes to local zoning bylaws, and other components of the plan could make their way into the province's Northern Development Strategy.

Compared with Wood Buffalo's woeful lack of progress in identifying, bringing together, and negotiating agreements among its interested parties, Thompson represented a resounding success. Thus, Van Nostrand concludes,

> Thompson could be a model for what will be one of the biggest challenges along the mid-Canada corridor: the Ring of Fire, a mineral-rich 5,000-square-kilometre section of northern Ontario that stretches from the James Bay Lowlands to a point 500 kilometres north of Thunder Bay.

But, …something's missing. A story about the complexity and difficulty of articulating and managing divergent interests has somehow led to the proclamation of a portable

governmental formula, a process, like that of Mitchell's democracy expert.[267] What's missing is the recognition that the form of dialogue—or, formalized dialogue—presumes an end of history claim, where differences are acknowledged, but they are acknowledged as the same kinds of things, in this case, interest-as-such. So, the resolution to the problem of conflicting interests is the management of interests within a transcendental, essentially-Kantian, practical reason. This perspective can't of course define interest or evaluate interests in terms of time (something now versus something different later), or even in the most basic matters of space; it took years for his firm to figure out who even lived in Thompson! The reason why the complex interactions of interest that defied form are now argued to be formally resolved is likely due to the fact that divisions of labour and commodity chains, development sites, and expertise are as much a part of what must flow through a Corridor as any resources, and that these things—including, of course, people—have interests that overlap as much as the jurisdictions. Likewise, the communities Van Nostrand says need to be planned according to this formalized dialogue are, exactly like current settlements, not *cities*; they are not political units based in the polis form, and nor are they places to stay from the point of view of interest-as-such. They are transitory places, not regions. The spatial belonging that Van Nostrand imagines the subjects of dialogue to possess is a function of carbon-democratic subjectivity: that subject required by a first world extractive staples economy. This subjectivity retains the image of the industrialized subject, who, in a relatively homogeneous and stable space can know its interests as class or individual interest. But there's nothing industrial or space-based about Van Nostrand's example. It says nothing of the return of the smelter to Thompson, of how the essentially-chain-like nature of extraction and processing relates to the town. In other words, how does the rational cooperation, the rational planning, and

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[267] (To be fair, Van Nostrand is clearly interested in complexity, and his claims are not nearly as absurd and offensive the expert's in Mitchell's neoliberal parable. I'm just drawing attention to the surprising movement back and forth between substance and process in his formula for determining the relationship between value and values.)

the rational management of interests correspond to the rationality of the kind of industry going on in Thompson? To answer this question would require differentiating between fixed and circulatory capital, as well as addressing the one-sided presentation of general class interest, with the individual side conveniently removed from consideration (e.g., what's in it for Vale?).

Wallerstein explains that the contradiction between capitalists as a class and as a group of antagonistic individuals forms the dynamic—or the *rationality*—which compels the state to invest or fix capital, in effect supplementing sectors which for whatever reason are missed by the torrent trickling down.[268] The accumulation of capital requires both ever-more purchasers and ever-lower labour costs, while redistribution of profits to ensure new purchasers cuts into global profits. Hence, historically,

> individual entrepreneurs [have] found themselves pushing in one direction for their own enterprises (for example, by reducing their own labour costs), while simultaneously pushing (as members of a collective class) to increase the overall network of purchasers (which inevitably involved, for some producers at least, an increase in labour costs). (17)

[268] And so, neoliberal fundamentalism or market theology notwithstanding, there is historically nothing essentially antinomial between *laissez-faire* capitalism and the state. Adam Smith, in a pathologically-repressed passage of *Wealth of Nations*, says that the state ought precisely to intervene and pick up the slack in necessary but unprofitable endeavours like public education:

> In the progress of the division of labour, the employment of the far greater part of those who live by labour, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very simple operations; […] The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations […] has no occasion to exert his understanding, or to exercise his invention […] He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become. The torpor of his mind renders him not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment, and consequently of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life. Of the great and extensive interests of his country he is altogether incapable of judging; and unless very particular pains have been taken to render him otherwise, he is equally incapable of defending his country in war. The uniformity of his stationary life […] corrupts even the activity of his body […] His dexterity at his own particular trade [is] acquired at the expense of his intellectual, social, and martial virtues. But in every improved and civilized society, this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, *unless government takes some pains to prevent it*. (emph. added 603)

Thus elucidated, this conflict reveals the source of the "lower the cost of living argument" in contemporary Corridor proposals, which is somehow seen as being related to the Corridor as a way of increasing price of oil. Higher prices abroad, lower ones at home!

More than registering the conflict between consumer and producer interests that the Corridor proposes to mediate or metaphorically "fix," as a concretization of market-ecological rationality, the Corridor would materially and literally "fix" the main contradiction of Confederation:

> The economics of capitalism has thus been governed by the rational intent to maximize accumulation. But what was rational for the entrepreneurs was not necessarily rational for the workers. And even more important, what was rational for all entrepreneurs as a collective group was not necessarily rational for any given entrepreneur. It is therefore not enough to say that everyone was pursuing their own interests. Each person's own interests often pushed them, quite 'rationally,' to engage in contradictory activities. The calculation of real long-term interest thereby became exceedingly complex, even if we ignore, at present, the degree to which everyone's perceptions of their own interests was clouded over and distorted by complex ideological veils. (Wallerstein 18)

Images of the Corridor—what Rohmer saw as a nation built on top of a nation, and that the video presented as an eternal present of prosperity built on top of technological-nationalist history—perform the ideological veiling of the structural reproduction of the same old contradiction within the merchant class. Who might be the subject who benefits from the planning Van Nostrand urges, especially when, according to him, even oil companies can't see their best interest through their veils? (Wallerstein gives a suggestive answer as he concludes his account

of historical capitalism, "I provisionally assume that historical capitalism did in fact breed a homo economicus, but I am adding that he was almost inevitably a bit confused.")

Van Nostrand's idea of interest is confused as it's incapable of articulating spatial and temporal dimensions. Following the logic by which the thing gives way to the movement, values give way to value-in-motion, and substance turns into process; the logic that counters the problem of quality with quantity, sees better extraction as what leads to better spending. This tendency, already apparent in Van Nostrand's argument that Canada should deregulate to make the first-world staples economy competitive with those of the third world, sees the solution to the problems of liberalism as more liberalism, as perfecting the Hobbesian-Lockean synthesis of the state and citizen as a spatial relation of freedom. One notices, however, that things pertaining to political liberalism (those things protected by regulations) are answered with appeals to economic liberalism, which concludes—as Janigan, Flanagan, and de Soto do—in the priority of property over the bearer of property as the bearer of rights to mobility and access. This categorical slippage stems from the difference between the incompatibilities liberalism holds together, for instance between self-determination and democracy. But it will suffice to point out that the substitution of economic liberalism which presumes to apply the negative form of freedom for whatever contents positive forms might demand is a rather satisfying definition of neoliberalism.

Van Nostrand's liberal appeals, then, are perfectly compatible with the standard petrocultural narratives of building more pipelines to reduce fossil fuel use, of the related capitalist banalities by which the right consumer spending will fight climate change, by which fracking can cure breast cancer, and so on.[269] And indeed the perfected state-citizen relation of

[269] For example, but, really, *passim*: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/industry-news/energy-and-resources/article-liberal-government-says-trans-mountain-pipeline-could-fund-

spatial freedom would manifest in the carbon-democratic consumer subject, the subject presumed in all of these liberal-idealist fantasies.

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