Northern Spirits:
Canadian Appropriations
of Hegelian Political Thought

By Robert C. Sibley

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

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Canada's political existence has long been viewed as problematic. In confronting this historical reality, Canadian political philosophers have sought a theoretical discourse that would unite the country's diverse population and regions while respecting those forces that promote difference. If there is one philosopher who has provided this language of reconciliation it is G.W.F. Hegel.

Canadian political thinkers have turned to Hegel's thought for its possibilities in demonstrating how communities might be established that reconcile cultural and social differences and the freedom of the individual. Even allowing for differences in interpretation, Hegel's philosophy has allowed these thinkers to articulate 'modes of existence' that promote a reconciliation of oppositions aimed at an 'idea' of unity amidst diversity.

This essay focuses on three Canadian political philosophers — John Watson, George Grant and Charles Taylor — who, either as elaborators or detractors, have found in Hegel a theoretical language with which they could articulate their views on the Canadian political community. In this regard, the two questions to which this essay is a response are these: How have Watson, Grant and Taylor appropriated Hegel's thought to address their concerns about fundamental political matters? And is there anything in their appropriations on which we can still draw to address the continuing 'crisis' of Canada?

Given such questions, this essay is an inquiry into the animating principles of the Canadian nation-state these three thinkers espoused in responding to the country's problematic existence. Or, put differently, in examining the Hegelian Spirit as it relates to the phenomenon of Canada, I am inquiring into the shifting sensibility of what it means to be Canadian and, indeed, what may be our purposes as a political community, if any.

I conclude that as Canadians move into the twenty-first century — confronting globalisation, the lure of continentalism, the implications of multiculturalism and immigration and even renewed debated on the merits of 'pre-emptive' imperialism — Hegel still has much to say to us.

Dedication

This essay is dedicated to Margret Kopala.
Without her constancy, encouragement and prudent judgment,
it would not have been done. My gratitude and love are hers.

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PREFACE

Spirit in Canada

Hegel did not have much to say about Canada. In fact, Canada is mentioned only twice in Hegel's writings. The references come in the posthumous Lectures on the Philosophy of History, but only in passing. In a comment on the War of 1812, Hegel says the inability of Americans to conquer the Canadian colonies was due to their poor organisation. But looking to the future he goes on to say that the United States need not regard Canada or Mexico as "objects of fear." This augurs well for the United States because, unlike most European countries, it will not need to keep a large standing army to ward off threats of invasion. Such a fortunate situation might make the United States the "land of the future, where, in the ages that lie before us, the burden of the World's History shall reveal itself ..." ¹ And that, it seems, is the only thought the German philosopher ever gave to colonial Canada.

Canadians, however, have given much thought to Hegel. As John Burbidge points out, Canadian Hegelians have long "found Hegel's thought a basis for understanding society and religion, thought and reality." ² So it seems. Even the briefest survey of the literature shows a long-held interest in Hegel in Canada. In the recent past there are the studies of H.S. Harris: his massive two-volume work, Hegel's Development: Toward the Sunlight and Night Thoughts,

published in 1972 and 1983 respectively, which is widely recognised as the definitive intellectual biography of Hegel in the English language, and his subsequent masterwork, the two-volume Hegel's Ladder, which is a paragraph-by-paragraph commentary on Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit, published in the late 1990s.³ But there is also Emil Fackenheim's 1967 book, The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought, Charles Taylor's 1975 work, Hegel, Burbidge's 1981 On Hegel's Logic: Fragments of a Commentary and his 1992 study, Hegel on Logic and Religion: The Reasonableness of Christianity, all of which remain standards in the field of Hegelian scholarship. Additions to this list of Canadian Hegel scholars or interpreters would include Tom Darby, Barry Cooper, Leslie Armour, David McGregor, James Doull, John Conway, Philip Resnick, Mary O'Brien, Theodore Garaets, George Giovanni, to name a few.⁴ And, finally, there is the influence of the British Hegelian T.H. Green on Pierre Trudeau's political thought.⁵ Such a list has prompted some commentators to assert that proportionately, "Canada may produce more original work on Hegel than any other nation."⁶ Some even argue that Hegel's Spirit has been as fully articulated in Canada as it has been in the United States, if not more so. Because of the country's traditions and historical circumstances certain Hegelian principles have sunk deep roots in Canadian political culture and have been influential in Canadian political thought.

This interest in Hegel is not a recent phenomenon, however. The tradition dates to the mid-nineteenth century. While Hegelian thought made its first

impression in the United States with the arrival of German immigrants who became known as the St. Louis Hegelians, Hegel was introduced into Canada through Scottish immigrants who imbibed the thought of the Scottish Enlightenment.⁷ As Leslie Armour writes in his 1981 book, The Idea of Canada: "In the hundred years after 1850 the mainstream of philosophy in English-speaking Canada was more often than not Hegelian ..."⁸ Or, as David McGregor succinctly states: "Hegel looms large in Canada."⁹

The question, of course, is why? A philosopher lives only as long as his ideas continue to attract debate. If Hegel remains alive for Canadian thinkers, what is it about his ideas that remain so debatable? Philosophic ideas almost inevitably emerge in response to social and political conflicts or crises. Plato and Aristotle established Greek philosophy to find those principles of unity that could respond to the spiritual crisis of the Athenian *polis*. Kant's thought was rooted in the tensions of an eighteenth-century German society divided by religious and ethnic differences, and a geography that saw Germans scattered among many other groups. Hegel's famous reference to the Owl of Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom — "The owl of Minerva only takes flight at twilight" — suggests that philosophy comes into its own when a particular way of life is disappearing. People turn to philosophy in a civilisation's fading moments, when historical changes erode and transform past traditions and practices. The Canadian Hegelians certainly reflect this phenomenon. As Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott say,

We needed ideas that were capable of spanning spaces and which could link sub-cultures which, because of their distribution, tended to grow in significantly different ways.¹⁰

Hegel's political philosophy appeals to Canadian philosophers because it focuses on how complex pluralistic societies try to use legal and political systems and institutions to mitigate or offset those forces that threaten to tear them apart. Canadian thinkers have turned to certain Hegelian concerns — in particular, the question of the relationship between the individual and the rest of the community — to help them comprehend and respond to the tensions of Canada's existence, and to work out how different groups might be united politically despite their seemingly unresolvable differences. In a country such as Canada, with its ethnically and linguistically diverse population, a vast territory that needed to be held together, and its historical domination by other powers, the attractiveness of a philosophy that sought to reconcile this diversity even as it respects that diversity was valuable in helping to articulate an understanding of the country. What attracts many Canadian thinkers to Hegel, as Peter Emberley and Waller Newell remark in their 1994 book, Bankrupt Education, was his "argument for the essential unity and interconnectedness of things: philosophy and science, thought and nature, reason and experience."¹¹ Hegel, in short, appeals to Canadians because he offers a dynamic vision of political order that attempts reconcile what seemingly cannot be reconciled.

This particular employment of Hegelian thought contrasts to the more romantic tendencies of American thinkers. Where American Hegelians have

linked Hegel's concepts of progress and freedom to notions of American manifest destiny, Canadian Hegelians tend to emphasise the communitarian side of Hegel; that is, the Hegel who was concerned with the harmonisation of individual freedom and man's communal existence. For example, Francis Fukuyama drew on Hegel's notion of historical progress to conclude that with the collapse of communism, mankind has come to the end of its ideological evolution. The kind of liberal democracy practised in the United States was the final form of human government and was destined to transform the globe into a homogeneous likeness of itself. Indeed, Fukuyama argued that in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union the historical process that had seen the rise of feudalism, monarchism, fascism, communism and liberalism had come to its conclusion. Democratic practices and free markets such as those embodied in the United States had triumphed over all competing systems as the best way to organise human affairs.¹²

This triumphalist appropriation of Hegel can also be detected in the nineteenth-century St. Louis school of American Hegelians. Intellectuals such as Denton J. Snider and William Torrey Harris were greatly influenced by Hegel's social and political philosophy, especially in its capacity to reconcile the individual and the community and as a countervail to British empiricism. Snider, for instance, tied Hegel to the sentiment of manifest destiny when he argued in a 1904 book, Modern European Philosophy, that Hegel did not fully comprehend the potential of the United States to create a modern state despite its

unsophisticated and undeveloped people. Nor did the German philosopher realise the nation's capacity to create even more free states as it expanded westward. Snider, however, saw the United States as embodying the most recent form of the world Spirit: "The odyssey of the Hegelian World Spirit is clear — the United States has already arrived on the scene, bearing in its political structure the principle destined to become the *Begriff* of all future political reality."¹³ I shall pick up on this comparison of Canadian and American Hegelians when I consider John Watson's thought, but it is obvious that obvious Snider's Hegelian vision shares considerable affinity with that of Fukuyama.

Canadian Hegelians tend to be less absolutist — and less triumphalist — than their American counterparts, at least to some degree. For example, in a critique of Fukuyama's thesis, Tom Darby argues that "his total picture of the end of history is distorted" in assuming that "liberalism has won out," and that his sketch of the post-Soviet New World is overly optimistic in its triumphalism.¹⁴ This is an argument that George Grant considers and accepts. Similarly, Charles Taylor, like other Canadian Hegelians seem to be drawn to Hegel for the German's recognition that life is inherently dynamic, that there is no final solution to anything. For the Canadians, Hegel provides a framework that encourages people to recognise diversity and to allow particular cultures to develop and retain their distinctive features, while, at the same time, finding ways that allow those cultures to co-exist in a single nation-state. This idea of an integrated yet diverse society can be seen at the concrete level, or so the argument goes, in

such nation-building institutions as Canada's welfare and health-care systems, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, unemployment insurance and national pension plans and even Air Canada.

Some even argue that such institutional accommodations make Canadians, as a whole, unconscious Hegelians.¹⁵ Canadians seem to have grasped intuitively, if not reflectively, that the unending regional and ethnic tensions of our political existence and the constant continentalist temptation make us the kind of nation we are. They seem to recognise unconsciously that without the dynamics of that tension we would no longer be "Canadian," whatever that might mean. For example, we have generally tried to maintain a kind of dynamic balance in the country's political existence by offsetting one party's dominance at the federal level with the election of other political parties at the provincial level. We have regional pressures pulling the country apart, while, at the same time, we have various federal institutions trying to hold it together. Add to this the fact that, in the words of Ronald Beiner and Wayne Norman, "Canada has long been in a state of more or less permanent constitutional crisis" and continually feels the pressures of cultural diversity, polyethnicity and multi-ethnicity. The consequence of this, at least at the theoretical level, has been the pressing need to think through what these existential realities mean for Canada's social and political life.¹⁶

To be sure, the theme of crisis and survival runs like a bright red thread through the tapestry of Canadian historiography and political theory. Numerous

scholars point to a deep-seated uncertainty about Canada's political survival as an independent and united state on the northern half of the North American continent.¹⁷ For many observers this uncertainty about the country's survival — and what is necessary to ensure its survival — is the consequence of various historical experiences and the responses to those experiences. Canadian political history, according to some arguments, reflects the clash of conflicting forces: the internal pressures of geography; the pull of external political powers; and, the abiding tension in the relations between an ethnically and linguistically diverse population. Some historians see Canadian history as largely "a struggle to build a nation in the face of stern geographic difficulties."¹⁸ Others say the most crucial fact about Canada, and what makes Canada's survival so problematic, is the question of English-French relations — "two nations warring in the bosom of a single state," to quote Lord Durham's famous phrase. The notion that Canadians have a vast country to overcome, spaces and places to bring together, is perhaps the most fundamental assumption of Canadian political life. Some have even argued this reconciliation is impossible. Goldwin Smith, for example, claimed Canada as a political order was a mistake.¹⁹

Nevertheless, Canada did come to together in one fashion or another. It was a product of an age of nation building. The nineteenth-century saw a number of nation-states being formed — Germany, Italy, Australia, for example — as part of a worldwide movement for national unification. Canadian Confederation was part of this movement. But Canada's situation was somewhat different,

particularly in comparison to that other 'new society' on the North American continent, the United States. The American founders, guided by the principles of the Enlightenment, sought to create an ideal national type that would apply to all citizens regardless of their ethnic or linguistic background. The Americans thought it possible to elaborate a new nationality or national identity that was, broadly speaking, culturally and ideologically homogeneous. The newcomer was expected to cast off his European-instilled ideas of man and society and adopt a new set of ideas — the American way of life, so to speak — accepted by all.²⁰

Canada, by contrast, was conceived from the beginning to consist of two 'fragment' societies, each of which had its own values, traditions, and language. One was French speaking, Catholic, and, with some qualifications, agrarian and feudalistic; the other was English speaking, Protestant, commercially-minded and, conservatively liberal in its view of society.²¹ Given these differences, agreement on fundamentals was difficult. Historically, the creation of an ideal national identity, such as that espoused by the Canada Firsters in the late 1800s, in which all Canadians could see something of themselves, has been impossible. Canadians' historical preoccupation has been with differences, not similarities. Canadians have focused on trying to create a unified nation out of culturally disparate groups, but not with establishing cultural uniformity. There is no ideal national type because there is no overarching national 'faith' that all Canadians, whether French, English, westerner or other, could profess in common. As Barry Cooper points out, the central Canadian myth of the "survival of the garrison" has

little imaginative claim on Westerners. As he puts it, "the West is not a transplanted Ontario garrison."²²

The one element French- and English-speakers did have in common was their retention of ties with a transatlantic culture; imperial Britain in the case of the English, and, in the case of the French, Catholic Europe. Paradoxically, the one element the two fragment societies shared was that which precluded them from achieving a consensus on the fundamentals for a second 'new society' in North America, a Canadian way of life, if you will. Confederation saw the creation of a political entity that owed its birth to the concerns of both fragment societies to preserve their respective cultures. Certainly, there was some consensus among the two groups, but it was not derived from a particular culture or set of Enlightenment ideas narrowly conceived. Rather it was a consensus that recognised and even encouraged diversity. George Etienne Cartier expressed this view in supporting the idea of Confederation when he argued that nations had to be formed "by the agglomeration of communities having kindred interests and sympathies."²³ To believe that different races could be unified was, in his view, utopian and impossible. Thus, central to the 'interests and sympathies' of these two European founding 'fragments' was the view that conformity to a single national identity, a national faith, was not possible.

This 'question' of Canada's existence resides at the core of this essay as a sort of overarching — and unexplored — *leitmotif*. A comprehensive historical description of the Canadian experience is beyond the scope of this essay.

Nonetheless, I follow the argument that the establishment and maintenance of the Canadian political community, such as it is, has been achieved in the face of various conflicting forces, both internal and external. The interrelated factors of geography, economics and politics, of different traditions, religions and languages, of conflicting claims for national unity and regional autonomy, of communitarian impulses clashing with individualistic aspirations; all of these factors have gone into forming the complex political entity we know of as Canada. And the general thrust of this national 'tale' has been, and continues to be, the effort to reconcile these conflicting forces into a more or less unified whole. To repeat, Canadian political history reflects a continuous effort to reconcile the divergent stresses and strains engendered by historical experience.

Out of this historical situation has emerged the realisation among Canadian political thinkers of the importance of maintaining political and social institutions that preserve and reflect the dynamic balance of the country. Hegel's political philosophy has provided a way of doing this, at least theoretically. Hegel reveals a way of rationally mediating the tensions and conflicts that are inevitable in the Canadian balancing act. When Hegel posits the notion of the identity of identity and non-identity, the key word for Canadian political theorists is the conjunction "and," which implies the function of both linking and separating. That is to say, Canada's Hegelians sees the necessity for both a pulling away *and* a coming together, a need for disunity amidst unity.

By way of contrast, Hegel's American interpreters, and, to some extent,

his British interpreters, have a tendency to collapse the 'non-identity' side of the equation into identity. F.H. Bradley, for example, completely subsumes the individual to the Absolute. Josiah Royce, the American Hegelian, in adapting Hegel's principle of reconciliation, tried to replace the Hegelian Absolute with a community united by a common understanding of and feelings toward the world. In doing so he also reflected the greater tendency of Americans to read Hegel psychologically, which, perhaps, is indicative of the American concern for individual self-fulfilment. All of this suggests that American and British Hegelians tend to take differences and collapse them into a new identity that incorporates identity and non-identity. This is certainly evident in Fukuyama's end-of-history triumphalism, as well as Snider's manifest destiny sentiments.

But this is to ignore how in the Hegelian dialectic there is always a reaction against any 'moment' of equilibrium. This is the aspect of the dialectic that has been particularly fascinating to Canadian political thinkers. The Canadians seem to see identity and non-identity as two forces or entities functioning in a kind of yin-yang relationship; paradoxically, that which keeps them apart is that which keeps them together. In effect, the Canadian Hegelians seem to take the attitude that every "push" to overcome disunity and to create an absolute unity results in opposition or disunity. Conversely, every push that generates differences or diversity similarly turns into its opposite and generates forces that seek greater unity. This phenomenon can be seen in Canadian political history: When the forces of regionalism become too strong, Canadians

offset them with a stronger federal government; when the federal government gets too overbearing, regional pressures become more insistent.

Interestingly, Hegel's system-building reflects historical circumstances that Canada's nineteenth-century nation-builders (and, perhaps, even the twentieth-century constitution-changers) would have found familiar. At the time Hegel wrote, Germany was not yet a nation. The German-speaking people of nineteenth-century Europe were divided from one another by religion, ethnic origin, and by geography that left them scattered among Czechs, Slovaks, Poles and Frenchmen. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, German states were fragmented by quasi-feudal institutions that sought to maintain local identities, customs and traditions at the expense of German unity. Hegel himself both applauded and castigated the collectivism and corporatism of the Holy Roman Empire. He endorsed the ideals of the French Revolution and the rationalisation of Europe under Napoleon Bonaparte, while turning away in horror at the Terror and Napoleon's destructiveness.²⁴

Hegel's political philosophy, thus, reflects the difficulty of finding a way to integrate the diversity and differences among the peoples and states that would become the German federation, as well as providing the theoretical means for mediating the conflicts of geography, religion, ethnicity and language that divided nineteenth-century Germans. Or, to put it another way, Hegel's political philosophy reflects an attempt to work through the conundrums of identity and freedom and to address the problematic questions of the relationship between

the individual and the community, between freedom and collectivity. In this regard, Hegel's theoretical elaboration on social and political institutions and practical philosophy continues to make his thought relevant to contemporary concerns regarding issues of community, national identity, group identity and individual rights. Hegel's theories on modern institutions — the family, corporations and the state, for example — attempt to work through the problematic nature of the relationship between freedom and community with a view to reconciling both the egalitarian and the collectivist impulses. Hegel was, thus, among the first to consider the inherent conflicts and tensions of the institutions, practices and historical forces that have shaped modern society. As Shlomo Avineri expresses it, "His questions — if not always his answers — point to the direction of understanding that which is, today as much as in his own time."²⁵

All of this suggests that Hegel's attempt to account for his own historical situation has a certain applicability to Canadian experience. Canadian thinkers, in a context similar to that in which German thinkers such as Hegel found themselves, have sought a theoretical language that would unite Canada's diverse peoples and regions even while respecting those forces that promote difference and diversity. Hegel, in other words, provides a theoretical framework that encourages people to recognise diversity and allow cultures to maintain and develop their distinctive features.

It is this quality of Hegel's thought that, I suggest, makes him so attractive

to Canadian thinkers, including my representative 'Hegelians.' Each of the three philosophic thinkers I discuss in this essay — John Watson, George Grant and Charles Taylor — found in Hegel a theoretical language that provided a 'voice' with which they could articulate their concerns regarding Canada's situation. I argue that these thinkers' efforts at finding solutions to the problems of the Canadian political community were informed, in part at least, by their appropriations of certain elements in Hegelian thought. Hegel provided them with the means for both comprehending the conflicts of their times and for finding what they take to be solutions (or not, as the case may be) to those conflicts. This essay, then, considers how Watson, Grant and Taylor have 'read' Hegel, either as elaborators or detractors, in terms of their conception of the Canadian political community. Essentially, the question to which this essay is a response is twofold: How have Canadian thinkers employed Hegel to address their concerns about the political questions of their time, and is there anything in their appropriations that we can still draw on to address Canada's continuing 'crisis'? That there is much in Hegel's thought to draw on is my main contention, including such issues as the influence of technology, the problems of multiculturalism, the implications of globalisation, the lure of continentalism and, believe it or not, the renewed debate on imperialism and empire.

However, before undertaking this discussion I need to sketch some of the key Hegelian concepts that have attracted the most interest from Canadian Hegelians in confronting their concerns. In the first four chapters of Part One, I

focus on what I take to be key general concepts in Hegel's thought, namely, his project of reconciliation, his view of the state and its relationship to the individual, which includes the concepts of *Geist*, or Spirit, and *Sittlichkeit*, or ethical life, his understanding of the relationship between freedom and community and, finally, the idea of the master-slave dialectic as the engine of history. Then, in the concluding chapter of Part One, I return to the Canadian thinkers with whom I am concerned: to Watson, to Grant and to Taylor, specifically, all of whom employ these Hegelian themes to one degree or another in addressing the 'crisis' of Canada.

PART ONE

Hegel and the Spirit of Reconciliation

CHAPTER ONE

Overarching Concepts — Reconciliation, Freedom and the State

Iris Murdoch once remarked that knowing what a philosopher fears allows access to his deepest aspirations. "It is always a significant question to ask about any philosopher: what is he afraid of?"²⁶ Her observation certainly applies to Hegel. While applauding the French Revolution in its initial stages as a legitimate assertion of human freedom, Hegel turned away in horror when the abstract pursuit of unlimited freedom was used to justify Robespierre's Terror.²⁷ As Hegel wrote, "The fanaticism of freedom, put into the hands of the people, became terrible."²⁸

Hegel's 'fear' of disorder is reflected in the Preface of his 1807 book Phenomenology of Spirit in which he refers to the early nineteenth-century as "a birth-time and a period of transition to a new era." The world that once seemed stable and permanent reveals itself as "dissolving bit by bit." This dissolution is unsettling and full of foreboding. Yet, according to Hegel, there is an ordered, coherent and intelligible whole. If we could comprehend this whole we would see, as in a sudden burst of sunlight in a darkened cave, "the features of the new world." The coming-to-be of this new whole will be a time of upheaval, a time of diremption and disorder. Nevertheless, Hegel holds out the hope that once this 'new world,' this Spirit, is comprehended and actualised in its fullness, then, he

says, we shall overcome our diremption at the individual, the political and the metaphysical levels.²⁹ Even earlier, though, in the introduction to an 1801 essay, Hegel says that philosophy comes on the scene in times of need; when the beautiful harmony of existence is fragmented by the human mind's awareness of antinomies and diremptions in its concepts of reality; when people no longer have faith in their gods; when man is alienated from the natural world; when the individual no longer identifies with his community. As he states, "Dichotomy is the source of *the need of philosophy*."³⁰

Considering the purposes of my essay — the 'Canadian' appropriations of Hegel — I need not offer a detailed commentary on Hegel's philosophic enterprise. Nevertheless, it is necessary to provide some overview of his thought as a backdrop for my Canadian interlocutors. In this regard, I have appropriated the notion of Hegel's "project of reconciliation"³¹ as a conceptual lens through which I can view his thought. I do so for two reasons. First, the idea of reconciliation lets me side-step planting a flag in any particular Hegelian camp. Whether Hegel is interpreted as a revolutionary, a reactionary, a free-market liberal, a communitarian, a conservative or a Christian metaphysician, there is little dispute that he ultimately sought the 'reconciliation' of the various diremptions in human life, social, political and spiritual. Because the term reconciliation is so inclusive, as it were, I am lifted above the ideological fray to gain a broader overview of Hegel's thought.

Second, and most importantly, the notion of reconciliation better fits the

context and purpose of my essay: The appropriations of Hegel as a response to the 'crisis' of Canada. As my introductory remarks should have made clear, I am employing the idea of a 'project of reconciliation' because it offers an understanding of Hegel that finds considerable resonance in Canadian political thought. Indeed, it is not unreasonable to argue that the notion of reconciliation resides at the centre of Canadian political philosophy. Thus, the notion of reconciliation works as a structuring concept, allowing me to move more readily between Hegel's thought and the various appropriations of that thought on which I have focused. In short, Hegel's 'project of reconciliation' provides a lens through which I can track the passage of my 'northern Spirits'.

Reconciliation, or *Versöhnung*, is Hegel's term for the process of superseding the antinomies of man's existence, his sense of being alienated from the natural and social worlds in which he exists. In this process of reconciliation the diremptions experienced by the individual in terms of his self-comprehension, as well as the divisions the individual experiences between himself and the social world, are surmounted. Reconciliation, in the final analysis, is, for Hegel, that experiential condition in which consciousness knows itself to be at home both with itself and with others, including the 'Other' that is the whole. For Hegel, the ultimate means for this reconciliation is, of course, philosophy. Philosophy seeks to reconcile the individual by means of reason not simply to that which merely exists but to what is *real* or *actual*, or *das Wirkliche*. From his early essay Differenzschrift through to The Philosophy of Right, Hegel held that

the need for philosophy was rooted in diremption and conflict. Philosophy aims to comprehend and overcome such fundamental dichotomies as finite and infinite, subject and object, mind and body, thought and being.

This is certainly the aim of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit. The book explores the various ways in which human consciousness has attempted to overcome the myriad antinomies of human existence. At one level Hegel exposes all these strategies of thought as false 'reconciliations' — whether in the form of a master who asserts his self-certainty by dominating another, the stoic's flight into solitude in order to escape suffering, the attempted escape of the sceptic who seeks release from the world's claims by denying reality or the unhappy consciousness of the religious dogmatist who projects an ultimate justification of human existence into a realm beyond time. Inevitably, according to Hegel, all ways of escape fail because they are unable to maintain a concrete sense of reconciliation amidst the divisions they inevitably promote.³²

It is because of the seeming impossibility of permanently overcoming the tensions and discordances of human life that Hegel describes the process of the development of human consciousness in its quest for self-realisation and some ultimate justification for human suffering as "the pathway of doubt" or "the way of despair."³³ Nevertheless, Hegel is at pains to show that his 'way of despair' promotes the effort to seek reconciliation in the first place. That is to say, it is the tension of existence itself, the apparent incoherence between consciousness and reality, the existential experience of alienation, that engenders the dialectical

project of reconciliation. Thus, while Hegel never made the concept of reconciliation an explicit topic in his philosophy, it is clearly central to his thought.³⁴

The centrality of the concept of reconciliation for Hegel becomes transparent when the word's meaning in German is better understood. Reconciliation, or *Versöhnung*, has deeper philosophical implications than those generally applied to its English translation. *Versöhnung* carries a much more positive connotation than the English word reconciliation, with its sense of quietism, resignation or reluctant acceptance. *Versöhnung* possesses none of these suggestions of submission, surrender or acquiescence. Rather, the word involves a sense of affirmation and a process of transformation. This process can be understood as an overcoming of conflict, division and alienation that results, in the end, in the experience of harmony, unity and friendship or love.³⁵

Understood in this light, the concept of reconciliation provides a framework for comprehending Hegel's tale of Spirit's development as presented in the Phenomenology: An entity, a consciousness, experiences the presence of another entity or consciousness. Initially, the relationship between the two entities is harmonious because they were not aware of each other's existence. Somehow they do become aware of each other and the result, for some reason, is conflict between them. In the end, however, after aeons of conflict, there is a reconciliation. It is this basic pattern of order, disorder and re-ordering that is played out in repeated and interconnected ways in the Phenomenology as Hegel

narrates the development of Spirit-in-the-world from a state of immediate knowledge and unreflective consciousness to that of complete self-consciousness and absolute knowledge, or science and wisdom.

The essential point is that there is an abiding dialectical quality to the experiences of conflict or alienation and reconciliation. For Hegel, each is necessary to the other. As Michael O. Hardimon writes in his 1994 study, Hegel's Social Philosophy, "the experience of alienation is directed toward the ideal of reconciliation, and the ideal of reconciliation is contained within the experience of alienation."³⁶ Hence, at the centre of Hegel's phenomenology of consciousness resides an understanding of alienation, or *Entfremdung*, as both the opposite of and the pre-supposition for Spirit's self-actualisation in all its various manifestations. Indeed, I would argue that at the core of the concept of alienation is a fundamental antinomy, an emblematic existential condition that, according to Hegel, structures the overall pattern of the unity-within-difference of Being.

Philosophy, according to Hegel, uncovers the forms of diremption in order to achieve a reconciliation between the contraries of existence: reason and irrationalism, freedom and necessity, self and society, subject and object, and even philosophy and politics. But philosophy is not to be considered as mere consolation amidst the disorder of human existence. Philosophy "transfigures reality with all its apparent injustices and reconciles it with the rational ..."³⁷ The "ultimate aim and business of philosophy is to reconcile our thought, or the Notion, with reality." The "highest severance" confronted by philosophic thought

is that of the "opposition between thought and Being." And "the interest of all philosophies" consists in "grasping the reconciliation of this opposition."³⁸

Similarly, Hegel argues in the Logic that "the highest and final aim of philosophic science is to bring about ... a reconciliation of the self-conscious reason with the reason which is in the world — in other words, with actuality."³⁹

The Phenomenology, while focused on the struggles of the individual consciousness to resolve the tension between itself and reality in absolute knowledge (or self-conscious Spirit), does not ignore the need for reconciliation between the individual and the community, between subjective and objective Spirit. For Hegel, one of the most crucial forms in which the reconciliation of subject and object must occur is that of the reintegration of the single self and the other in such a way that each attains its particular fulfilment. Hegel writes:

The reconciling Yea, in which the two "I's" let go their opposed existence, is the existence of the "I" which has expanded into a duality, and wherein remains identical with itself, and in its complete externalisation and opposite, possesses the certainty of itself ...⁴⁰

This statement encapsulates Hegel's notion that the individual comes to know himself through the external world, including other individuals, that is 'other' to him, and that reconciliation amounts to the identity of self and other, or, in different terms, the identity of identity and non-identity. As subsequent sections of this essay will demonstrate, Hegel's efforts at reconciling the self and the other in and through 'community' is given much attention by the three Canadian Hegelians I consider.

Hegel's most concrete application of the concept of reconciliation emerges

in the social and political philosophy of Philosophy of Right. In this book Hegel extends the concept of reconciliation into the social and political realms with the aim of harmonising the relationship between the individual and his society, as well as unifying the modern individual's fragmented consciousness. Hegel writes that to the degree philosophy affords people the ability to recognise the actual world as rational, to perceive "reason as the rose in the cross of the present," as he puts it, then can people achieve a reconciliation that allows them to harmonise their desires for meaningfulness and intelligibility with the reality of the world in which they live. We are at home in the world when we know it, still more so when we have understood it.⁴¹

In particular, political philosophy seeks to comprehend and resolve the tensions that plague the political order. In modern times these divisions are, according to Hegel, characterised by the conflict between the claims of the communal ethical life, or *Sittlichkeit*, which he sees as characteristic of the Greek *polis*, and the modern principles of individual freedom that informed Protestant Christianity and the French Revolution. Thus, the essential political problem is the proper relationship between the community and the individual. And, for Hegel, the State represents the "true reconciliation" of thought and being, theory and practice.⁴² Again, Hegel's concern for the relationship between the state and the individual receives much attention by my three Canadian Hegelians. This, of course, makes it necessary to sketch Hegel's views on the topic.

CHAPTER TWO

Spirit and Sittlichkeit

Watson, Grant and Taylor, as we shall see, all express concern with the apparent diremptions of modern freedom and the seeming severance between the individual and the community. In this regard, it is worthwhile to consider how Hegel's thought can be understood as a response to the tension and fragmenting tendencies of modernity. Before I do, though, it is perhaps necessary to clarify a concept of Hegel's that I have been using without explaining what Hegel means by it; namely, the concept of *Geist*, or Spirit.⁴³

Obviously, given the focus of this essay, I cannot offer a detailed explanation of the concept, but considering its importance in Hegel's thought some elaboration is necessary, for at least two reasons. First, *Geist* is the systematic concept that overarches Hegel's philosophic enterprise; hence, an understanding of Spirit is needed to understand that philosophy. Secondly, Hegel's account of Spirit can be considered as his critical response to Descartes' 'thinking being', as well as Kant's transcendental ego. Hegel himself reveals the importance of the concept in a typically complex passage:

That the True is actual only as system, or that Substance is essentially Subject, is expressed in the representation of the Absolute as *Spirit* — the most sublime Notion (or Concept) and the one which belongs to the modern age and religion. The Spiritual alone is the *actual*; it is essence, or that which has *being in itself*; it is that which *relates itself to itself* and is determinate, *it is other-*

being and *being-for-itself*, and in this determinateness, or in its self-externality, abides within itself; in other words, it is *in and for itself*.⁴⁴ Spirit, Hegel seems to be saying, is both subject *and* object, an activity

which when it externalises or alienates itself appears as something finite, determinate and actualised in the empirical world. Yet in its appearances Spirit relates that which it externalised from itself back to itself and is thus transformed. In this manner Spirit develops as a process. It embarks on this process out of an inner necessity. In consequence the process of Spirit's development is the unfolding of that which is inherent in Spirit. At the same time, though, Spirit does not transcend or go beyond its own process because it *is* the process itself, it *is* the alternating yet interdependent pattern of alienation and reconciliation, of subjective and objective moments, as well as the forms of consciousness it generates to comprehend its own activities.

In this regard, Hegel does not identify Spirit and the individual knower, the I. For him, the personal or particular subject elicits only universals and therefore remains abstract. Hegel views the single individual, or the autonomous self, as an abstract universal because the particular 'I,' or ego, is simply any 'I' until it is contextualized and rises to *individuality*. As shall be seen, for Hegel a person is only truly an individual in relation to other individuals; only in this relationship with others does the particular I, the individual proper, emerge from the abstraction of universality.⁴⁵ This concern for the nature of the 'individual' will be shown to figure prominently in the thinking of both Watson and Taylor, albeit in different ways.

In Hegel's view, the notion of 'I' reflects the power of consciousness to

construct abstract meanings and adduce the structure of objects from concrete experience. This notion is certainly traceable to Descartes' *cogito* and the concept of the self as a substance whose essential nature is mental and not physical,⁴⁶ although it was Kant who reworked Descartes' 'thinking being' into a formal and transcendental principle of the unity of apperceptions.⁴⁷ In a sense, then, Hegel's concept of *Geist* is a response to Kant.⁴⁸

If, as Hegel maintains, consciousness is what *is*, and what *is*, is Spirit, then Spirit is consciousness, which, as I noted earlier, is the twofold of thought and being. This twofold is unfolded in history as consciousness develops to increasingly higher levels until finally it attains complete self-consciousness. Or, put differently, history reveals Spirit's self-recovery in complete self-consciousness. This process of Spirit's recollection is self-generating in that consciousness bears within itself the power of the negative. This suggests that, for Hegel, the development of consciousness, or the dialectic of Spirit, proceeds through struggle and strife, through diremption and division. This is because negation is rooted not only in the subject, or consciousness as Spirit, but also in the substance or object of thought. And, according to Hegel, this substance, this content, is always in the process of becoming subject.

In Hegel's view, consciousness, or Spirit, "as thetic, antithetic, antinomious, and dialectical is the source of the motion of history."⁴⁹ But consciousness, in its self-reflexiveness, is also the source of its own unity. As the source of historical movement consciousness seeks its transformation to self-

consciousness, which, according to Hegelian science, is the ground of the reconciliation of the antinomies — thought and being, freedom and nature, phenomenal and noumenal — at the end of history. For Hegel, then, consciousness, or Spirit, contains both the roots of its diremption, as well as the seeds of its reconciliation. Inasmuch as man is the embodiment of consciousness, and, thus, of Spirit, man's concrete history, his institutional orders, his religious rituals, his artistic enterprises and political communities reflect the unfolding of Spirit-in-the-world. As Michael Allen Gillespie remarks, "history is thus the self-movement of consciousness."⁵⁰

Hegel argued there is an order to history that emerges from the end towards which history progresses. This end is freedom. The events of history reflect the progressive realisation in consciousness, and the subsequent embodiment in the concrete world, of the Idea of freedom, or Spirit, which is self-determined and self-motivated. History, then, is the progressive self-realisation and self-actualisation of Spirit, or freedom. The events historians attempt to account for are essentially about how Spirit has emerged out of Nature. Since man is the most spiritual of natural beings, history amounts to the progressive emergence over time of man's freedom, and, eventually, the complete realisation of human freedom, conceived as the reconciliation of Reason and Nature. Such is the *telos* of history.⁵¹

Hegel defines freedom in terms of self-direction, as Kant does with his notion of autonomy. In his analysis of the will in Philosophy of Right, Hegel's

main concern is to determine what is needed for a will to achieve its freedom. He asserts that there are two essential ingredients for freedom: attaining one's ends and acting voluntarily. This notion of voluntary follows both Aristotle's dictum about not regretting your actions regardless of the consequences and Kant's idea of autonomy, that is, obeying only those laws you impose on your self.⁵²

This "positive" definition of freedom as self-directed stands in contrast to the individual being directed, as it were, by what originates outside the individual, including desires that may be based on or shaped by language, cultural background or historical circumstances. As shall be seen in Part Four, such a notion of freedom is somewhat at odds with Charles Taylor's expressivist identity of freedom and an 'authenticity' rooted in communal attachment. But Hegel's definition of freedom as self-directed also appears to echo the concept of "negative" freedom; that is, freedom *from* coercion, or the absence of interference. We want not to be coerced or imposed on against our will because we want our lives to express our will. And we want our willing to express our true selves. However, Hegel also insists that the freedom to do as you please, to act arbitrarily, is not true freedom.⁵³ His "positive" freedom is based on the idea that satisfying unreflected desire is not genuine freedom because those desires, possibly rooted in our cultural embeddedness, may not reflect our best will. Genuine freedom — "positive," "concrete" or "absolute" — is not simply a matter of the capacity to satisfy desires, but an activity that fully realises reason. "The absolute goal ... of free mind is to make its freedom its object, that is, to make

freedom objective as much in the sense that freedom shall be the rational system of mind."⁵⁴

Hegel's idea of freedom is, of course, influenced by the Kantian idea of autonomy. But it is also derived from the Fichte's notion of absolute self-sufficiency. Taylor, as I shall discuss later, misconstrues this Fichtean presence as a flaw in Hegel's social philosophy by failing to acknowledge Hegel's critique of Fichte's notion of freedom. In The Science of Ethics, Fichte states that "the final end of my activity is absolute freedom, absolute independence of nature."⁵⁵ Hegel, however, criticised this idea of freedom, arguing that Fichte's concept of right, as derived from his definition of freedom, requires an ethical and political order in which individuals would have to restrict their freedom to allow for the freedom of others. For Hegel, this idea of right is flawed because it implies that relationships with others are a restriction on freedom rather than its enhancement. While freedom may be the hallmark of rationality for Fichte, and the summit of his system,

in a community with others, however, freedom must be surrendered in order to make possible the freedom of all rational beings living in community. Conversely, the community is a condition of freedom. So freedom must suspend itself in order to be freedom. This again makes it clear that freedom is here something merely negative, namely, absolute indeterminateness.⁵⁶

Such a view presupposes an "infinite sphere of freedom," as Fichte puts it, that exists prior to communal existence, a condition of freedom that is limited by the presence of others. The various forms of ethical life, including the state, are repressive of this original freedom because they are tantamount to an external

coercive power. Thus, the state, or the community in general, engenders hostility in the individual rather than the realisation that it is a necessary condition of his freedom. Hegel makes this point in his Lectures on the History of Philosophy:

The individuals (in Fichte's state) always maintain a cold attitude of negativity as regards one another, the confinement becomes closer and the bonds more stringent as time goes on, instead of the state being regarded as representing the realisation of freedom.⁵⁷

To be sure, Fichte says both that men are free apart from others and have their freedom only in the community. Nonetheless, he maintains that the community is a restriction on the self-positing 'I' and that, in the end, the 'I' can only regard the 'We' as a limitation on its freedom, not as its self-realisation. In other words, 'I' cannot have my identity completely authenticated in and through the 'We'. Because of this, the 'I' remains a finite will, not an absolutely infinite will. Fichte, it seems, "was unable to grasp the concept of infinity or Spirit, i.e., of identity in difference."⁵⁸

Indeed, for Hegel, the essential problem with Fichte's concept of freedom is its Kantian presupposition of a separation of morality and nature, and the consequence assumption that the two cannot be reconciled through moral action.⁵⁹ Certainly, Hegel shares Fichte's (and Kant's) notion that to be moral is to be rational and to be rational is to be free; hence, to act morally is to act freely. But he questions the confinement of the rationality that sustains morality to the rational thought of the individual rather than having any rational embodiment in social institutions. Such a conception of morality implies a separation of reason and nature, or 'I' and 'not-I'. In effect, Nature, the external world, is unrealised

Idea; the Idea exists only as concept, but not in reality. Only through the transformation of Nature, the 'not-I', into Morality, or 'I', is the unity of nature and reason possible.

But to make this possible requires converting 'not-I' into 'I', which means, obviously, the recasting of that which is other into that which is self. This is problematic. In confronting the 'not-I', 'I' become aware of its otherness and am thus made dependent in terms of my own determinations. In a world of myriad or endless others, I am constantly required to act, or determine the 'not-I's', in order to realise my self-identity and, hence, my moral freedom. But this is an impossible task and, in the end, I realise that I can never have complete moral freedom; in effect, I am always a slave to that which is 'not-I'. I must, as it were, recognise all others, and hope they recognise me, too.⁶⁰ This means my freedom and the fulfilment of my striving can be achieved only in and through the kind of society that encourages mutual respect, equality and co-operative effort. Moral duty and the moral law thus acquire an intersubjective dimension for Fichte.⁶¹ This, however, suggests a limit on my freedom, or, more specifically, suggests that my freedom is highly dependent on the recognition of others, that I can only be myself if others effectively agree to let me be myself. How then can I have any genuine sense of self-satisfaction that I have done the right thing on the basis of my own self-determinations rather than on some "subjective" element related to the choice of duties? In effect, I am free only in theory.

Hegel's response to this quandary is the concept of *Sittlichkeit*, or ethical

life, in which the "ought" has been overcome and conduct and duty are identical. While he bases his concept of freedom on Kant's notion of autonomy and Fichte's conception of self-sufficiency, he argues against what he sees as their inadequate understanding of the relationship between the self and the other. In particular, Fichte cannot realise genuine freedom — that is, the absolutely infinite will that allows for autonomous activity as well as fully actualises reason — because he lacks the concept of Spirit, which, for Hegel, undergirds ethical life.

To solve the problem of realizing an absolutely infinite will one must first solve the problem of conceiving a relationship with the other which does not restrict but rather guarantees my freedom; where the other is regarded neither as sheer limit or negation of myself ... Only through such a relation with the other can an infinite will be realized.⁶²

This understanding of Spirit and *Sittlichkeit* has been interpreted to suggest that Hegel's reconciliation of the individual and the community requires that the self masters the other and makes it its own. It is claimed that Hegel reduces the other to the same. Hegel's conception of the relationship between Spirit and ethical life, it is said, promotes excessive unity. And this, the argument goes, makes *Sittlichkeit* a questionable model for political community because it makes no allowance for unresolvable differences.⁶³ I would argue, however, that Hegel's notion of *Sittlichkeit* is more nuanced. To understand this requires some consideration of Hegel's idea of community and what might be called the dynamic of recognition essential to that idea. The basis of Hegel's concept of ethical life is the idea of man as a self-conscious being who actualises himself in his highest potential through his participation in and identity with a community.

Hegel's master-slave dialectic in The Phenomenology of Mind offers his most famous discussion of how self-consciousness develops.

Stated simply, self-consciousness begins from the individual's initial effort to make certain of his existence by engaging all that is other than himself and concludes with knowledge that what is needed for self-certainty is self-consciousness, and this is available only in and through the recognition of another self-consciousness.⁶⁴ Freedom, as Hegel makes clear, consists in "being with oneself *in* an other."⁶⁵ Distinguishing myself from the other is not a limit on my self, but rather an expression of my self. Thus, the other is not a restriction on my freedom, but a requirement for its actualisation.

The first stage of self-consciousness' development is its initial sensory encounter with external nature, an encounter with that which is not itself. In this encounter the individual consciousness seeks to show its independence from the other (and, thus, the dependence of the other) by destroying — or, to use Hegel's word, negating — it. Thus, the initial experience of self-consciousness in its encounter with the other is its experience of itself as essentially negative. Moreover, this initial encounter reveals the first principle of what might be called the dynamic of recognition. Here the individual consciousness seeks to be reconciled with that which is other by negating it. From the viewpoint of individual consciousness, this produces a kind of freedom in that it 'reveals' the disappearance of the other and, thus, emphasises the presence of the remaining individual consciousness.

However, this effort by the individual consciousness to negate the external world, to effectively consume it and take it into the self, is frustrating simply because there is too much nature. The external world can never be negated in its entirety. Nature defeats the individual consciousness in its passive abundance. The repeated efforts at negation merely reveal to the individual consciousness that, far from being independent of the world, it is utterly dependent on the world for its survival. Put bluntly, unless individual consciousness consumes some portion of the other (nature) it will die. Hegel argues that individual consciousness undergoes a psychological shift in its development when it encounters an other that is not passive, that struggles against being negated. The ensuing struggle, in which both consciousnesses seek to have their freedom by negating the other, results in each recognising the other as Other. But it is through the dynamic of this master-slave dialectic, as Hegel calls it, that the seeds of human society are sown by the willingness of proto-man to risk the death of his "animal" body in a fight for something created in the mind, the abstract notion of "pure prestige," or the desire for recognition from another who also desires recognition. This fight for domination which will determine who is master and who is slave not only sets history going, but provides for the genesis of community and the freedom a particular community entails.

Most importantly, the effort of self-consciousness to appropriate or negate the other, and, by means of that appropriation, to assert its own self or identity, "reveals self-consciousness as that which must relate itself to another being."⁶⁶

Or, as Alexandre Kojève puts it, "man is human only to the extent that he wants to impose himself on another man, to be recognised by him." Without this primordial fight "there would never have been human beings on earth."⁶⁷

However, Hegel maintains that

Man can only be truly 'satisfied,' history can only end, in and through the formation of a Society, of a State, in which the strictly particular, personal, individual value of each is recognised as such ... by *all*.⁶⁸

In other words, the historical development of individual self-consciousness comes about through the continued opportunities for recognition provided by the various forms of *Sittlichkeit*: the family, civil society and the rational state. In the latter, self-consciousness attains the height of political realisation. In the community and its social and political arrangements, the individual is able to recognise, attain and sustain self-consciousness — or freedom — because he sees in those arrangements the achievement of his own highest aspirations. As Robert Wallace writes, "For Hegel, the family, like the state, extend(s) the individual's ability to be with herself in what is other than her"⁶⁹ — that is, they extend something that Hegel defines as freedom. Thus, the master-slave dynamic begins a process that sees self-consciousness move from a position of immediacy when thought and will are one, to where, after its initial encounter with the other, there is a reflective retreat from immediacy — a moment of *Entzweiung*, or alienation — until, over time, thought and will are reintegrated at the higher level of right or law. For Hegel, *Sittlichkeit* reveals freedom in its actuality.

A similar movement occurs within the field of ethical life itself through free will's development of the Idea. Free will, Hegel explains, requires embodiment. This embodied will is sustained by "things" or "external objects." But as a will that has as its substantive purpose the realisation of its will, self-consciousness has as its initial mode of freedom the possession of "property" — the sphere of formal and abstract right — which is the first embodiment of freedom.⁷⁰ This initial freedom of immediate existence is not permanently satisfying, and thus self-consciousness negates this immediacy in the sphere of morality, placing itself in a condition of sublated immediacy. That is to say, self-consciousness is free in its subjectivity. In this condition, it is centred on its own intentions and purposes without regard to externalities. However, self-consciousness can only actualise its freedom in concrete existence. Thus, the sphere of morality is only an abstract moment in the development of *Sittlichkeit*.

For Hegel, then, ethical life is the form of community that best provides individual freedom. It is the community's self-consciousness — the "actual living soul of self-consciousness," as Hegel puts it — in the consciousnesses of its individual members, the perception of individuals that the community reflects and fulfils their highest and most universal purposes.⁷¹ Ethical life is the Idea, or self-conscious freedom, in its absolutely universal existence, "the concept of freedom developed into the existing world and the nature of self-consciousness."⁷²

Ethical life, too, has its own development. First, there is the natural mind of the "family" in which self-consciousness is united by love and feeling. This

primary bond is loosened through the developing reflexive individuality of self-consciousness, giving rise to "civil society" in which individuals relate to one another as "independent agents" linked by the "bond of reciprocal need." This is the "sphere of contract," the arena in which associations and groups emerge through the free choice of members seeking to express and form their social identity, their sense of community. The final reconciliation of self-consciousnesses occurs at the level of the state — that stage of ethical life and Spirit that provides the unity of autonomous individuality and universal substantiality. Self-consciousness, as Hegel states in Philosophy of Right, "in virtue of its sentiment toward the state finds in the state, as its essence and the end and product of its activity, its substantive freedom."⁷³ And, as he puts it in the Encyclopaedia, "*Sittlichkeit* is the completion of the objective Spirit, the truth of the subject and objective Spirit itself."⁷⁴ In *Sittlichkeit* Hegel's project achieves the reconciliation of the seemingly contradictory tensions between the autonomous freedom sought by modern individualism and the individual's concomitant desire to overcome his alienation from the natural world and from others.

Thus, Hegel sees the potential for community *within* modern freedom. His concept of *Sittlichkeit*, derived from his notion of recognition, promotes the view that freedom is not simply a matter of abstract rights, the avoidance of restraints or doing as you wish. Rather, it is about being able to "belong" to the community *in* and *through* mediations and institutions of your own reflective choosing. In trying to weave between Kantian and Fichtean formalism and Rousseau's

republicanism, Hegel attempts to show how the atomising tendencies of modern freedom are due to an inadequate comprehension of the subjective moment of willing. His solution "is to illuminate the objective moment of freedom so that the will's embodiment in concrete laws and institutions becomes transparent to modern self-consciousness."⁷⁵ For Hegel, then, the state is both the source and product of freedom. How so? To answer that question, further consideration of Hegel's notion of the state is necessary.

CHAPTER THREE

The Dialectic of the State

I argued in Chapter One that Hegel's philosophical project aims at reconciling the tensions between the freedom posited by the Enlightenment thinkers and the individual's longing to overcome his alienation from the Other, whether the natural world or other individuals. According to some interpretations, Hegel believed this reconciliation was possible in the embodiment of Objective Spirit in the state. Now, Hegel has often been criticised for fetishising the state and the community. But I argue that such criticism misses Hegel's concern for individual freedom. Hegelian man is essentially political. That is to say, Hegelian man exists not just as a self-interested competitor in the market place, but also in the context of an abiding political order, a state. The state, as the manifestation of Objective Spirit, is conceived of as an organic totality that includes the government, all other national institutions and the nation's culture. In its actions the state provides the arena or space where, under the rule of law, reconciliation is sought between the universal and the particular, the community and the individual.

For Hegel, the state can bring humans to consciousness of their freedom. Concomitantly, individuals who seek to satisfy their desires further the development of the state and contribute to the unfolding of freedom, thereby

fulfilling history's purpose. Hegel's state, thus, reveals the process of history and dialectic as the working out of the reconciliation between individual, or subjective freedom, and an internally organised state. As Hegel writes:

Freedom discovers its concept in reality and has developed the secular world into the objective system of a specific and internally organised state ... This is the goal of World History: the Spirit must create for itself a nature and a world to conform with its own nature so that the subject may discover its own concept and the Spirit in this second nature ... and in this objective reality it becomes conscious of its subjective freedom and rationality.⁷⁶

Since Hegel's notion of the state receives considerable attention in one way or another from Watson, Grant and Taylor, it is necessary to elaborate Hegel's view of the state.

Hegel's concept of the state as an arena of mediation in which conflicts between individuals or groups can be resolved has obvious similarities to the Hobbesian notion of the covenant by which men submit to the sovereign's overarching authority for the sake of their mutual survival. Yet, Hegel goes beyond Hobbes's contractarian solution. In his view, the Hobbesian commonwealth does not overcome the asymmetrical domination that characterised the initial master-slave relationship in that it merely makes the state the dominant partner in the relationship. This sets up the state or community as an external power that hovers over the individual.⁷⁷

According to Hegel, the individual finds in the state his essence and end; that is, his substantive freedom. The state is that entity in which and through which individuals actualise in concrete terms the recognition that is the motivating

ground of their struggle. In The Philosophy of Right, Hegel clearly says the state cannot be based on a social contract. "The intrusion of this contractual relation ... into the relation between the individual and the State, has been productive of the greatest confusion in both constitutional law and public life."⁷⁸ The idea of a contractual relationship between the individual and the state suggests the illusory element of choice where, in fact, there is no choice. And that is because for Hegel the state is "an entity whose authority transcends anything that might have been conferred on it by contractual choice."⁷⁹ Indeed, Hegel presents the state as a "person," both in the sense of possessing legal rights and obligations and in the moral sense. The state has agency, will and identity over time. In its most actualised form, it formulates plans of action, entertains reasons for its actions and assumes responsibility for those actions — or, as Hegel puts it, "the state is the actuality of the ethical Idea."⁸⁰

For Hegel, the state reflects and embodies the idea of free 'individual' existence that is the end or purpose of human existence. Hence, like any individual, the state cannot be treated as a means, but only as an end in itself. Its survival is not up for debate. And it is because the state has this enduring identity as an ethical 'person' that it is distinguishable from civil society and cannot be regarded contractually. Hegel warns against identifying civil society and the state:

If the State is confused with civil society, and if its specific end is laid down as the security and protection of property and personal freedom, then the interest of the individuals as such becomes the ultimate end of their association, and it follows that membership of the State is something optional.⁸¹

Hegel's point seems to be that the contractarian model confuses the distinctions between state and civil society by taking an instrumental view of the state and its institutions. Such a position treats the ties of citizenship and sovereignty as relations of interest and, thereby, undermines that which gives civil association its ethical weight — the overarching authority of political order.⁸²

Roger Scruton says that one of the more significant developments in modern political science has been the emergence of political systems that do the opposite of what Hegel warns against — that is, rather than dissolving the state in some provisional order of civil society, they undermine civil society by means of a coercive state. In the latter situation the distinctions between state and society are as lost as in the former because the autonomous institutions, associations and attachments that provide the basis of civil society have been effectively absorbed into the state. The result, Scruton warns, is "totalitarian government" that is not subject to the corrective influences of civil society because it places itself as an impersonal entity above the law through which it seeks to impose itself on society.⁸³ In short, we are back to masters and slaves.

In this light, Hegel's account of ethical life, particularly as it culminates in the state, provides a corrective, if not a resolution, to the initial asymmetrical relationship between the master and the slave in which the later concedes its dependence to the former. In the Hegelian state both self-consciousnesses mutually acknowledge their interrelationship by recognising themselves as members of a political community. It is this shift to intersubjectivity that allows

Hegel to avoid charges of excessive unity because he replaces modern atomism with intersubjective relatedness.⁸⁴

Geist, then, is not a subject that stands against an object, a transcendental ego opposed to the empirical, but, as Hegel famously says, an 'I' that is a 'We' and a 'We' that is an 'I'. In other words, Spirit is a social subject. As Robert Williams writes, "Hegel does not collapse the other into the same, mediation into self-mediation." Such claims are a caricature of Hegel's view, he says.

For Hegel, consciousness is not a disembodied, foundational, wordless subjectivity. Rather, consciousness is embodied, situated and equiprimordial with other subjects and the life-world. Consequently, subjectivity is actually intersubjectivity, and requires intersubjective mediation. This mediation is not reducible to dialectical self-mediation.⁸⁵

This notion of the 'completion' of the individual *and* the state or community needs to be emphasised, particularly in light of communitarian interpretations of ethical life that give greater emphasis to the communal side of the equation. While Hegel certainly regards the state as embodying the reconciliation of the individual and the collective, he is not implying some sort of undifferentiated collectivity. That would mean a reversion to pre-modern substantiality. Rather, he sees the state as accomplishing the actualisation of freedom, the maintenance of the universal contained within the particularity of civil society. The reconciliation of self and other that Hegel envisions is of a kind that takes into account the initiatives and actions of individuals and groups within society; it is not a unity or harmony imposed from the top down. Unlike liberal theorists who see the state

as merely a neutral instrument whose restrictions on individual freedom are accepted for the sake of peace and order, Hegel conceived of the state as enabling people to uncover their authentic individuality in relationships with others. By participating in the "Spirit" of the state in its various "moments," the focus of the individual's morality shifts from that of personal self-interest to that of the community as a whole. The individual transcends himself and contributes to the "good" of the community in which he enjoys both his freedom and satisfies his need to belong. The individual's self-conscious participation in the life of the state enables him or her to attain the full development of what it means to be human.⁸⁶

This is why, for Hegel, the modern nation-state and the principles of individual freedom go hand in hand. Each is necessary to the other. In its 'Idealist' form, the modern democratic state, with its recognition of intrinsic human rights and its equal capacity to provide people with a necessary sense of belonging, enables citizens to assert those rights and freedoms that reflect the truest purposes of human life, and, at the same time, unites these separate and particular individuals with the common good of the community and the fulfilment that comes from belonging to a community. This Ideal is the synthesis of the particular and the universal. If there is a single passage in Philosophy of Right that makes this Ideal explicit, it is this one:

The state is the actuality of concrete freedom. But concrete freedom consists in this, that personal individuality and its particular interests not only achieve their complete development and gain explicit recognition for their right (as they do in the sphere of the

family and civil society), but, for one thing, they also pass over of *their own accord* into the interest of the universal ... The principle of modern states has prodigious strength and depth because it allows the principle of subjectivity to progress to its culmination in the extreme of self-subsistent personal particularity, and yet at the same time brings it back to the substantive unity and so maintains this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself.⁸⁷

In light of this passage — and in consideration of the preceding analysis — I would argue that while Hegel seeks to overcome the fragmentary individualism of modernity and the resulting detachment of rights from communal duties or belongingness, he cannot be accused of promoting excessive unity or coercive collectivism. Indeed, by Hegel's criteria, the state loses legitimacy if it does not protect individual freedom. Hegel makes this clear in Philosophy of Right where he states:

The basis of right is, in general, mind [Spirit]; its precise place and point of origin is the will. The will is free, so that freedom is both the substance of right and its goal, while the system of right is the realm of freedom made actual, the world of mind brought forth out of itself like a second nature.⁸⁸

By this statement, it is clear that Hegel subscribes to the Kantian notion of a transcendent subject, but only as the ground for practical reasoning. What he questions, though, is the idea of regarding the individual as prior to society; that is, a self that is detached from history and tradition. The idea of an utterly free and autonomous self is an empty abstraction. The free individual exists in and through the order of *Sittlichkeit*. The individual and the community (or state) require each other to actualise Spirit. Freedom and community are concomitant. Freedom may be *actualised* only in community, but the true end of the

community or the state itself is *actualised* only to the degree it engenders individual freedom. Neither achieves its end without the fulfilment of the other.

"The state is the political unity with which one identifies and understands common action while maintaining individual and communal moral space."⁸⁹ Thus, Hegel's concept of the state is grounded in the concrete and the quotidian.

In fact, Hegel explicitly cautions against trying to create an immediacy of belonging between the individual and the community. He argues that long-established social conventions and traditions do not always produce self-conscious participation and, thus, are unable to reveal the inner reasons that make it necessary to codify cultural givens. To be sure, Hegel seeks to restore something resembling the immediacy of individual belonging in the constitutional state, but he does not want to ground it in a substantive account of the good. Instead, he mediates the relationship of the individual and the community through various forms of subjective freedom. The immediacy of a substantive identification of the individual and the community is characteristic of pre-modern communities. But this immediacy was irretrievably lost with the arrival of Christian subjectivity. Hegel is thus cautious about the excesses of civil society, and aware of its potential for undermining freedom. For him, civil society reflected both the achievement of modernity as well as its dangers; that is, civil society upheld the primacy of the individual against the individual obliterating traditions of the pre-modern world. But, at the same time, it threatened to sunder society through the proliferation of myriad demands for recognition. Hegel understands that strong

and unreflective communal attachments are not available to moderns. Instead, he emphasises the importance of trust among individuals as the foundation for both civil society and the constitutional state.

What are the conditions of trust?⁹⁰ Surely it is rooted in a sense of confidence that you receive fair and equitable treatment from the 'other,' whether this 'other' be an individual, the community at large or the state. This is both the means and the end of Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit*. Consider, for example, his ideas regarding the corporation. For Hegel, the corporation is more than an agglomeration of commercial interests or even a bureaucratic administrative order. Rather, it binds disparate moments of ethical life — the family, civil society and the state. It prevents individual freedom from degenerating into an endless competition for power by grounding individual recognition in pride in one's avocation, as well as in civility of conduct.⁹¹

While Hegel sees this linkage between freedom and abstract rights, he maintains that substantive freedom is embodied in family, civil society and the state. Such a position has obvious affinities to contemporary communitarian claims that we are always embedded in a particular cultural or community milieu. Hegel would share the communitarians' concerns about the excesses of individualism. But as I hope to make clear in this essay, he also would insist that the way to recast the politics of rights is through a more 'ideal' understanding of human freedom. For Hegel, the constitutional state and the rule of law, along with the intermediary associations of ethical life, should be the focus of

'communitarian' concern, rather than imposed notions of the good or an emphasis on attaining authentic identity. The excesses of individualism are mitigated not by replacing the politics of rights with the politics of communal good, but by the recovery of the Concept — the Spirit of freedom — within the institutions and political arrangements that protect individual rights.

Hegel is very careful to explain that the relationship of the individual and the community is a dialectical one. Each is dependent upon the other to further the "Idea" of the other. There must be reciprocity in obligations between the community and the individual. Certainly, the individual is obliged to sustain and enhance the "goods" of the community, both for his own sake and that of others. But the community, and the institutions through which it articulates its purposes, is also obliged to sustain and enhance the freedom of the individual. If freedom is man's essence, as Hegel asserts, then only to the degree the state furthers this freedom is it 'rational' and, thus, owed the individual's affirmation and loyalty.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Self and the Other

In my earlier discussion of Hegel's concept of recognition and the master-slave dialectic, I argued that the essential basis of Hegel's community is the idea of individuals as self-conscious beings who fulfil themselves and find their freedom in their participation in a community. Individuals, and communities, become aware of their deepest purposes and meanings in recognising each other. That is to say, they become self-conscious of the community as the objective embodiment of the individual who has his 'life' in all its significance in the community. In sum, for Hegel, individuals recognise who and what they are — that is, their most universal, or free, selves — in the activities and purposes of the community or state. And it is the ethical life that culminates in the forms of freedom that most satisfy the individual.

Focusing on his concept of the state, I argued that for Hegel the self-conscious 'reason' of the community is embodied in its individual members, individuals who, as members of the community, endeavour to fulfil their most universal goal, which is freedom. Individuals seek their freedom in the bonds of family, through the economic interactions of the marketplace and through participating in the political affairs of the state as the most developed form of ethical life. In this way they come to regard themselves not as separate or

isolated individuals, but as participants in that which unites them in a context of meaningfulness that transcends them as individuals. Thus, ethical life is the means by which individuals reconcile their subjective wills with the more universal will of the community and come to understand the community as an organic unity and the fulfilment of their freedom. As Hegel puts it:

The bond of duty can appear as a restriction only on indeterminate subjectivity or abstract freedom, and on the impulse either of the natural will or of the moral will which determines its indeterminate good arbitrarily. The truth is, however, that in duty the individual finds his liberation; first, liberation from dependence on mere natural impulse and from the depression which as a particular subject he cannot escape in his moral reflections on what ought to be and what might be; secondly, liberation from the indeterminate subjectivity which, never reaching reality or the objective determinacy of action, remains self-enclosed and devoid of actuality. In duty, the individual acquires his substantive freedom.⁹²

With this understanding of ethical life in mind, it thus appears that the community, particularly in the form of the state, uses the individual's dutiful obligations to aid the individual in his own efforts to be free. At the simplest level, the community provides customs and traditions that allow the individual to express a kind of second nature beyond that of instinct and desire. In this way, through habit and education, individuals begin to perceive their interrelation with the community. Some individuals are able to go further in their identification with the community and attain what Hegel calls an inner universality that allows them to perceive their own lives reflected in the universality of state affairs.⁹³

To be sure, as I noted above, Hegel at times seems to subordinate the individual to the community. He seems even to suggest the community is

indifferent to the individual's existence, as in these statements: The ethical order is objective freedom and, as such, "a circle of necessity" whose moments "regulate the life of individuals." Individuals are related to these ethical powers "as accidents to substance." At the same time, though, Hegel also declares that it is only in individuals that these powers become actualised.⁹⁴ To my mind this implies that Hegel is concerned with articulating a *separation* of the individual from the community, with ensuring that the individual is not completely identified with the community *all the time*. This is made clear in the section on morality in Philosophy of Right where Hegel works through the problematic nature of the individual's relationship to the community. The realm of morality is that psychological arena in which the individual determines within himself the rightness or wrongness of the conflicting claims of abstract right. This realm is the contrary of ethical life in that it is here where the individual sets his subjective will against the communal will.

Does Hegel think there is ever a moment when it is right for the individual to set his subjective will against that of the community? Perhaps surprisingly, the answer is yes. Certainly, Hegel argues that, for the most part, the will of a rational individual will accord with that of his community (because each recognises the other). Yet, Hegel finds in Socrates' defiance of his fellow Athenians the penultimate example as to when an individual's inner sense of right must be asserted against the community, when subjective will, in effect, supersedes communal will. And this happens when men look within themselves and

determine that what they recognise as right and good cannot be satisfied in society. And when does this take place?

When the existing world of freedom has become faithless to the will of better men, that will fails to find itself in the duties there recognised and must try to find in the ideal world of the inner life alone the harmony which actuality has lost ...⁹⁵

It is only in times when the world of actuality is hollow, Spiritless, and unstable, that an individual may be allowed to flee from actuality in his inner life. Socrates lived at the time of the ruin of the Athenian democracy. His thought vaporised the world around him and he withdrew into himself to search there for the right and the good.⁹⁶

My point in drawing attention to these statements is that while Hegel undoubtedly agrees with the communitarians about the importance of membership in a family and in the state as something that cannot be reduced to a matter of merely satisfying individual needs and desires or asserting individuals rights, he would disagree with communitarians because what he values in family membership or being a citizen of a state is how those roles enhance the individual's freedom.

In the above quotations, Hegel is saying that Socrates' moral freedom takes precedence over the community. In this case, Hegel describes an individual who possesses an identity that *transcends* the community. In effect, Athens failed in its obligation to enhance Socrates' freedom. And, on the theoretical level, this example implies that, for Hegel, the forms of *Sittlichkeit* develop out of, and are inseparable from, the individual's freedom. This issue — and the Socratic model from which it emerges — is central to my essay. John

Watson uses Plato's description of Socrates' situation as a kind of controlling trope for working through his understanding of the relationship between the individual and the state. Likewise, my conclusions regarding Charles Taylor's communitarian interpretation of Hegel hinge on what I take to be his misapprehension of Hegel's interpretation of Socrates' predicament. In fine, I argue that in his interpretation of Socrates' predicament, Hegel reveals that his concern for reconciling the individual and the community is not primarily about identity or a sense of belongingness, but first and foremost, about individual freedom. While Hegel acknowledges the problems of atomistic individualism and the importance of communal belongingness, his deeper concern was with constructing a politics of rights that enhance individual self-determination.

Hegel is concerned with strengthening the constitutional order so as to protect the rule of law and the intermediate associations that allow freedom to flourish. For him, as The Philosophy of Right makes clear, the will to freedom is embodied in both legal rights and political institutions. As rights-possessing beings, individuals find themselves living within a set of institutions — the family, the market, civil society, the constitutional order, the state — that can be shown rationally to be 'right' in the sense of its embodying the modern principle of self-determination. The family and the state and the institutions of modern society *extend* the individual's ability *to be with himself in what is other than himself*; that is, they extend that which is prior to the individual and more important than the individual — the Idea of freedom. Through the community and the state as a

whole, individuals can be what they truly are, free beings. Politically, this means constitutional relations among individuals and the state have to reflect the 'Spirit of a people.' Hegel sees this Spirit embodied in particular rationally-chosen (and chosen because they are rational) principles, not in specific cultures or traditions. For Hegel, the focus of our situatedness, and the satisfaction of our desire to belong, must be institutional rather than cultural because what is at stake in the relationship between the individual and the community is freedom, not identity.⁹⁷

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion — Spirit and the 'Idea' of Canada

It was my purpose in Part One to introduce the general Hegelian concepts that provide the theoretical structure for my study of 'Hegel in Canada.' The remainder of this chapter, following on the general sketch of Hegelian thought in Canada that I offered in the Preface, touches on elements of Hegel's philosophy that seem to apply to specific Canadian circumstances. This will set the stage for the three subsequent sections that form the main body of this essay, each of which consists of chapters pertaining to John Watson, George Grant and Charles Taylor respectively. Each of these thinkers, as we shall see, address various aspects of the Hegelian 'concepts' just mentioned.

For instance, Watson addresses much of his political philosophy to questioning the proper relationship between the individual and the state and the proper purpose of the state. Grant was concerned with, among other issues, the very survival of the Canadian nation-state, seeing its possible demise as the consequence of the modern technological mindset that promotes an excessive individualism destructive of communities. Taylor, likewise, devotes much of his thought to questions of civil society and how to reconcile the diverse elements of the Canadian state. I will, of course, elaborate on these topics as I consider each of these thinkers.

Before embarking on this discussion, however, it is necessary to reiterate the overarching concept of this essay: the 'movement' of Hegelian philosophy in Canadian political thought, or, if you will, the movement of Spirit in Canada. I use this trope bearing in mind the etymology of the word 'Spirit.'⁹⁸ As a noun, Spirit is derived from the Latin *Spiritus*, which, in turn, is derived from the verb *spirare*, to breathe. Indeed, *Spiritus* is the Latin translation of the Greek word for breath, *pneuma*. In the Augustan period, *Spiritus* came to refer to the breath or 'soul' of life, that which gives life to the physical organism. It also had connotations of courage and vigour. In Hegel's time, Spirit, or *Geist*, referred to the highest mode of existence or the principle of life. In this sense, Spirit is something dynamic, having to do with purpose and what it is that *is*. A phenomenology of Spirit is an account of why things are the way they are and not otherwise.⁹⁹ With this etymology in mind, my essay is an inquiry into the animating principles of the Canadian nation-state, the 'modes of existence' Canadian theorists have detected in attempting to respond to the problematic nature of Canada's political existence. Or, to put it differently, in examining the Hegelian Spirit as it relates to the phenomenon of Canada, I am inquiring into our changing concepts about Canada, our shifting sense of what it means to be Canadian and, indeed, what our purposes are — if any — as a nation.

Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott, as I have noted, argue for the importance of 'ideas' as a response to the 'crisis' of Canada: "We needed ideas which were capable of spanning spaces and which could link sub-cultures which,

because of their distribution, tended to grow in significantly different ways."¹⁰⁰ In terms of unifying 'ideas,' there is a kind of "philosophical federalism" at work among Canadian thinkers, "a natural inclination to find out why one's neighbour thinks differently rather than to find out how to show him up as an idiot."¹⁰¹

Hegel's philosophy, I would argue, has been employed with a similar impulse in mind. Canadian political thinkers have turned to Hegel's thought for its possibilities in demonstrating how communities might be established that reconciles yet respect cultural and social differences and the freedom of the individual. The sense of community that Canadians have generally experienced historically required that philosophy concern itself with people not simply as individuals, but as members of a community. Hegel's concept of reconciliation, in particular, like his dialectical method, does not allow for the dissolving of all differences or the elimination of opposition in some final absolute. Thus, Hegel's philosophy has allowed Canadian political thinkers such as Watson, Grant and Taylor to articulate 'modes of existence' that, even allowing for differences in their interpretations of Hegel, promote a reconciliation of oppositions and achieve some 'idea' of unity amidst our diversity.

Indeed, in reading Watson, Grant and Taylor I was struck by the thought that I was encountering what Hegelianism means in action and not simply as something to be studied for what it meant in the past. In all three thinkers there is an abiding sense that "Spirit" is at work in the here-and-now, percolating, as it were, in everyday life and the events of the world. My purpose over the

remainder of this essay is to track this movement of Spirit — the shifting modes or principles of Canada's existence, if you will — in my representative Hegelians. I hope to demonstrate not only that Hegel had much to say about Canada, but continues to do so.

ENDNOTES TO PART ONE

1. George W.F. Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction, trans. by H.B. Nisbet, (Cambridge, 1975), p. 162-171. Hereafter, Reason in History. Hegel's view of 'Canada' is, perhaps, questionable even at the level of empirical history. After all, the Americans feared the remaining British colonies in North America sufficiently to try to invade them a number of times between 1812-1814. Considering that Hegel published his lectures on the philosophy of history in 1820, he presumably had some knowledge of these events. But, then, from an Old World perspective, the North American battles during the War of 1812 were little more than a sideshow to more important events in Europe. Moreover, since both Canada and Mexico were colonies of European powers, Hegel might simply have viewed these territories as mere appendages of their European masters.
2. John Burbidge, "Hegel in Canada," The Owl of Minerva, 25, 2, (Spring, 1994), p. 218.
3. It is worth noting at least one sign of the respect shown to Canadian Hegel scholarship — the journal Clio devoted a special issue to the work of H.S. Harris. See, vol. 27, no. 4, (Summer, 1998).
4. Tom Darby, The Feast: Meditations on Politics and Time, (Toronto, 1981) was the first English-language study to put forward an interpretation of Hegel's "end of history" thesis. Barry Cooper's The End of History: An essay on modern Hegelianism, (Toronto, 1984), also considers this theme. Leslie Armour co-authored The Faces of Reason, (Waterloo, 1981), which remains the most comprehensive study of philosophy in Canada. David McGregor, Hegel, Marx and the English State, (Boulder, 1992), offers a Marxist Hegel. James Doull, while little published, is widely recognized as an influential Hegelian thinker. See especially his essays "Would Hegel Today be a Hegelian?" Dialogue, 9, (1970), p. 226-235 and "Hegel's Philosophy of Nature," Dialogue, 11, (1972), p. 379-399.
5. Trudeau credited T.H. Green for providing him with the "basic philosophy" on which he based "all my future political decisions," as well as his theoretical writing. See, Trudeau, Memoirs, (Toronto, 1993), p. 47.
6. David MacGregor, "Canada's Hegel," The Literary Review of Canada, (February, 1994), p. 18-29. Robert Fulford, "Keeping the Hegelian spirit alive," Globe and Mail, (Feb. 1, 1995), p. A9.

7. Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott offer a succinct overview of this phenomenon in The Face of Reason, p. 1-32.
8. Leslie Armour, The Idea of Canada and the crisis of community, (Ottawa, 1981), p. 79.
9. McGregor, "Canada's Hegel," p. 18-20.
10. Armour and Trott, The Faces of Reason, p. 19.
11. Peter Emberley and Waller Newell, Bankrupt Education: The Decline of Liberal Education in Canada, (Toronto, 1994), p. 159. They also argue that a "general legacy of Hegelianism" can be found in a variety of Canadian thinkers, including not only John Watson and George Grant, but also George Sydney Brett and Charles Cochrane. p. 161.
12. Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, (New York: Free Press, 1992).
13. Denton Snider, Modern European Philosophy: The History of Modern Philosophy, Psychologically Speaking. (St. Louis: Sigma Publishing Co., 1904), p. 737. Cited by James A. Good, "A 'World Historical Idea': The St. Louis Hegelians and the Civil War," Journal of American Studies, 34, 3, (December, 2000), p. 450. See also, John E. Smith, "Hegel in St. Louis," in Hegel's Social and Political Thought, ed. Donald Phillip Verene, (New Jersey, 1980), p. 223.
14. See Darby, The Feast, p. xxi-xxii.
15. I owe this point to John Burbidge, in conversation, Dec. 14, 1997.
16. Ronald Beiner and Wayne Norman, eds., "Introduction," Canadian Political Philosophy: Contemporary Reflections, (Toronto, 2001), p. 3.
17. This attitude is evident titles of books. I offer a few examples: P.B. Waite, Arduous Destiny; Donald Smiley, Canada in Question; David Bell, Roots of Disunity; Edwin Black, Divided Loyalties; J.L. Granatstein, The Politics of Survival; J.M.S. Careless, Canada: The Story of Challenge; Richard Simeon, Must Canada Fail?; Garth Stevenson, Unfulfilled Union: Canadian Federalism and National Unity; and Clarence Bolt, Does Canada Matter? Liberalism and the Illusion of Sovereignty.
18. Careless, Canada: A Story of Challenge, (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1970), p. 3.

- 19 Goldwin Smith, Canada and the Canadian Problem, edited and intro. by Carl Berger, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, [reprint of 1879 edition]) , 1971.
20. For this consensus view of American history, see Louis Hartz, ed., The Founding of New Societies, (New York, 1964); and Seymour Lipset, The First New Nation: The United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective, (New York, 1979).
21. Kenneth McCrae, "The Structure of Canadian History," in Hartz, The Founding of New Societies, p. 219-274; David Bell, The Roots of Disunity, rev. ed., (Toronto, 1992); Seymour Lipset, Continental Divide, (New York , 1990).
22. Barry Cooper, "Western Political Consciousness," in Stephen Brooks, ed., Political Thought in Canada: Contemporary Perspectives, (Toronto: Irwin, 1984), p. 213-238.
23. Peter Waite, ed., The Confederation Debates in the Province of Canada 1865, (Toronto, 1967), p. 50.
24. See "The German Constitution," in Hegel, Political Writings, Zibignew Pelczynski, ed., T.M. Knox, trans., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), and Hegel, Philosophy of Right, trans. T.M. Knox, (Oxford, 1942), esp. 230-256. On the historical context of Hegel's thought, see Joachim Ritter, Hegel and the French Revolution, trans. Richard Dein Winfield, (Cambridge, MA, 1982), Shlomo Avineri, "Hegel and Nationalism," Hegel's Political Philosophy, ed., Walter Kaufman, (New York, 1970), p. 109, and Shlomo Avineri, Hegel's Theory of the Modern State, (Cambridge, 1971).
- 25 Avineri, Hegel's Theory of the Modern State," p. 241
26. Iris Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 72.
27. Scholars have offered differing interpretations of Hegel's relationship to the French Revolution, ranging from those who view Hegel as continuing to support doctrines of liberation and revolution despite the Terror to those who see him as having fundamental metaphysical and theological concerns that are decidedly non-revolutionary. I mention only a few whom I have consulted without, however, separating them into left, right or even centrist camps. Darby, The Feast, esp. Chp. Two; Michael Allen Gillespie, Hegel, Heidegger and the ground of History, (Chicago, 1984), mainly Chp.

Two; Cooper, The End of History, p. 116-120; George Lukacs, The Young Hegel, trans. Rodney Livingstone, (Cambridge, MA., 1975); Joachim Ritter, Hegel and the French Revolution, (Cambridge, Mass., 1982); H.S. Harris, "Hegel and the French Revolution," Clio, 7, (1977), p. 5-18.

28. Quoted in Gillespie, Hegel, Heidegger and the ground of History, p. 38.
29. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Spirit, trans. A.V. Miller, intro. J.N. Findlay, (Oxford, 1977), #11, #12, p. 6-7. I use this translation throughout the essay. Tradition has it that Hegel finished the Phenomenology on the eve of the Battle of Jena on October 14, 1806. In a letter to a friend, Friedrich Niethammer, written on Monday, October 13, he claimed that at one point he saw Napoleon astride a white horse as he rode through the town. It was, it seems, a revelatory moment despite the upheaval caused by the war: "I saw the Emperor — this world-soul — riding out of the city on reconnaissance. It is indeed a wonderful sensation to see such an individual, who, concentrated here at a single point, astride a horse, reaches out over the world and masters it." See Hegel: The Letters, trans. Clark Butler and Christiane Seiler, commentary Clark Butler, (Bloomington, Ind., 1989), p. 114..
30. Hegel, The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy, trans. H.S. Harris and Walter Cerf, (Albany, N.Y., 1977), p. 89. His emphasis.
31. The phrase 'project of reconciliation' is taken from Michael Hardimon's Hegel's Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation, (Cambridge, 1994).
32. Daniel Berthold-Bond, Hegel's Grand Synthesis: A Study of Being, Thought and History, (New York, 1989), p. 2. This study offers a lucid overview of look Hegel's thought, particularly in its consideration of the metaphysics of Hegel's philosophy of history. I have relied on it a great deal.
33. Hegel, Phenomenology, #78, p. 49.
34. Bernard Yack makes this point in his review of Hardimon's book. American Political Science Review, 89, 2, (June, 1995), p. 486-487. Yack writes that "although Hegel relies on the idea of reconciliation throughout his mature moral and political thought, he never presents a sustained or systematic account of the subject." Hardimon himself remarks that reconciliation is a central organizing category in Hegel's thought as a whole and the main goal of his social philosophy. Hegel's concern, he says, is that spirit, or *Geist*, be

reconciled to the world as a whole and, thereby, to itself, and that man, as that being in whom spirit manifests itself, be reconciled to the social world in which he has both is subjective and objective being. Hardimon, p. 3.

Eric von der Luft likewise argues that reconciliation is Hegel's "most fundamental concern." Hegel's phenomenology of the development of consciousness involves the gradual coming-to-consciousness of the essential unity and harmony implicit in the phenomenal world's experience of disjunction and fragmentation. Hegel's dialectical method, his phenomenological analysis of historical development, the emergence of an ethical state out of abstract right; all are, Luft asserts, "built upon this basic idea of working out a means to reconcile opposing, bifurcated, or inconsistent forces and entities." Eric v.d. Luft, "Would Hegel Have Liked to Burn Down All The Churches And Replace Them With Philosophical Academies?" The Modern Schoolman, vol. 68, 1990, p. 45.

35. Hardimon, Hegel's Social Philosophy, p. 23-24, 85-87.
36. Ibid, p. 2.
37. Hegel, Reason in History, p. 67.
38. Hegel, Lectures on the History of Philosophy, vol. 3, trans. E. S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson, (New York, 1955), p. 160, 545. Hereafter, History of Philosophy.
39. Hegel's Logic: Being Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences (1830), trans. William Wallace, (Oxford, 1975), p. 8. Hereafter, Logic I. The other two parts of the Wallace translation will be Logic II and Logic III.
40. Phenomenology, #671, p. 409.
41. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, trans. T.M. Knox, (Oxford, 1967), p. 10-12.
42. Ibid, p. 222.
43. For different perspectives on the concept of Spirit, see Robert Williams, "Hegel's Concept of *Geist*, with commentary by Richard Dien Winfield, in Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit, ed. Peter Stillman, (Albany, 1987), p. 1-24; and Robert Solomon, "Hegel's Concept of *Geist*," in Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed., Alasdair MacIntyre, (New York, 1972), p. 125-149. I have drawn on both.

44. Phenomenology, #25, p. 14.
45. Phenomenology, #292, 293, p. 176-177. As Hegel writes, "we have a syllogism in which one extreme is the *universal life as a universal* or as genus, the other extreme, however, being the same *universal as a single individual*, or as a universal individual; but the middle term [individuality] is composed of both: the first seems to it itself into it as a *determinate* universality or as *species*, the other, however, as *individuality proper* or as a single individual [the autonomous self]."
46. Descartes writes: "[F]rom the fact that I know that I exist, and that meanwhile I judge that nothing else clearly belongs to my nature or essence except that I am a thing that thinks, I rightly conclude that my essence consists in this alone: that I am only a thing that thinks ... and insofar as [my body] is merely an extended thing, and not a thing that thinks — it is therefore certain that I am truly distinct from my body, and that I can exist without it." René Descartes, Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy, trans. Donald Cress, (Indianapolis, 1980), p. 93.
47. I have derived my comments on Kant's thought from the following works: Hans Reiss, ed., "Introduction," Kant's Political Writings, (Cambridge, 1970); Howard Williams, Kant's Political Philosophy, (Oxford, 1983), esp. Chp. 3; Susan Shell, The Rights of Reason: A Study of Kant's philosophy and politics, (Toronto, 1980), esp. Chp. 2.
48. On this claim, see J.N. Findlay's introduction to The Philosophy of Right and the essays of Robert Solomon and Robert Williams. Each of these scholars sees Hegel's philosophy of *Geist* as an instance of or descendent of Kant's transcendental philosophy. Solomon, for example, argues that Hegel's *Geist* "embodies an important attempt to resolve an important problem in Kant's philosophy." See Solomon, "Hegel's Concept of Geist," p. 131. However, Williams argues that it is "misleading" to stress the similarities between Hegel's *Geist* and Kant's transcendental ego because, in his view, Hegel makes a radical departure from Kant. See Williams, "Hegel's Concept of *Geist*," in Stillman, p. 3. Similarly, H.S. Harris points out that much of Hegel's early thought is "largely focused" on Kant's Transcendental Dialectic, but that while he employs many of Kant's terms, he rejects many of the assumptions on which those terms are based. See Harris's introductory essay in Hegel, Faith and Knowledge, trans. H.S. Harris, and Walter Cerf, (Albany, N.Y., p. 17-25).
49. Gillespie, Hegel, Heidegger and the ground of History,, p. 79. Gillespie sees Spirit's twofold nature as Hegel's "answer to the emptiness of the

transcendental unity of apperception." Hegel transforms Kant's placid "eternity of rest" into an eternal struggle of Being, of what is, with itself.

50. Ibid, p. 79.
51. For two other discussions of Hegel's concept of History, see: Hegel: Reason in History, trans. and intro. Robert Hartman, (New York, 1953); John Plamenatz, "History as the realization of freedom," in Hegel's Political Philosophy: Problems and Perspectives, (Cambridge, 1971), p. 30-51.
52. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, para. 4-7, p. 20-24. See also Michael Inwood, A Hegel Dictionary, p. 110-112. Inwood describes Hegel's definition of freedom this way: "Something, especially a person, is free if, and only if, it is independent and self-determining, not determined by or dependent on something other than itself."
53. Ibid, para. 15, p. 27.
54. Ibid, para. 27, p. 32.
55. Johann Fichte, The Science of Ethics as Based on the Science of Knowledge, trans. A.E. Kroeger, (London: Keegan Paul, 1897), p. 136.
56. Hegel, The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy, p. 144-145. I am indebted for my discussion of Hegel's critique of Fichte to Ken Foldes and Robert Wallace. Their respective essays, "Does the Solution to our Present Moral and Political Dilemmas Lie in the Theories of the German Idealists?", and "How Freedom Requires Community," can be obtained at the Paideia website. Again, respectively, www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Poli/Pol.Fold.htm and www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Poli/Pol.Wall.htm. Last viewed Feb. 20, 2002.
57. Hegel, History of Philosophy, p. 504.
58. Foldes, "Does the Solution to our Present Moral ...", p. 4.
59. See the "Morality" section in Hegel's Phenomenology, especially p. 365-366. Para. 600 reads, in part: "From this determination (the Kantian separation of nature and moral consciousness) is developed a moral view of the world which consists in the relation between the absoluteness of morality and the absoluteness of Nature."
60. Steven B. Smith, Hegel's Critique of Liberalism, (Chicago, 1989), p. 80-85.

61. Allen Wood offers a succinct summary of Fichte's moral philosophy in his essay "Hegel's ethics," in The Cambridge Companion to Hegel, ed. Frederick C. Beiser, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 211-233.
62. Foldes, "Does the Solution to our Present Moral ...", p. 6.
63. Charles Taylor, "Hegel's Ambiguous Legacy for Modern Liberalism," Hegel and Legal Theory, 1991, p. 76.
64. Hegel, Phenomenology, para. 174, p. 109. For various discussions of this section see Tom Darby, The Feast, p. 94-101; Judith Butler, Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France, (New York, 1987), p. 40-59; and Adam Krob, Hegel's Community: Synthesizing the Romantic and the Liberal, Ph.D. Thesis, (Duke University, 1997), Chapter Two. Perhaps, though, the most famous analysis of this dialectic is that of Alexandre Kojève's in his Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, edited by Allan Bloom, trans. by James Nichols, (New York, 1969).
65. Cited by Allen Wood, "Hegel's ethics," p. 219.
66. Butler, Subjects of Desire, p. 44.
67. Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, p. 13, p. 7.
68. Quoted by Patrick Riley, "Introduction to the Reading of Alexandre Kojève," Political Theory, vol. 9, no. 1, (Feb., 1981), p. 8. Riley is quoting Kojève's 1947 book Introduction a la lecture divine Hegel: Leçons sur la Phenomenologie divine l'Esprit, p. 184-185.
69. Wallace, 'How Freedom Requires Community,' p. 4.
70. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, paragraphs 33 to 46, p. 35-42. It should be noted that by "property," or *Eigentum*, Hegel has in mind everything that a person 'possesses,' including his mind and body. He held that in developing your mind and body you took possession of yourself and became your own property. See para. 57, p. 47-48.
71. Ibid, para. 147, p. 106.
72. Ibid, para. 142, p. 105.
73. Ibid, para. 257, p. 155.

74. Hegel, Philosophy of Mind: Being Part Three of the Encyclopedia of The Philosophical Sciences, (1830), para. 513, p. 253.
75. Vasanthi Srinivasan, Freedom, Community and Transcendence: A Comparison of select Western and Indian Thinkers, Ph.D. Thesis, (Ottawa, 1997), p. 120-121. She makes the additional point that "Hegel realizes that strong communal attachments are not possible for us moderns." p. 122.
76. Hegel, Reason in History, p. 208.
77. Leo Strauss, The Political Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes: It Basis and Genesis, trans. Elsa M. Sinclair, (Chicago, 1936), p. 57-58.
78. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, para. 75, p. 59.
79. Roger Scruton, "Hegel as a conservative thinker", in The Philosopher on Dover Beach, (Manchester, 1990), p. 51.
80. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, para. 257, p. 155.
81. Ibid, para. 258, p. 156. It is worth noting how Hegel defines the state's relation to the individual: "Since the state is mind (or spirit) objectified, it is only as one of its members that the individual has objectivity, genuine individuality, and an ethical life. Unification pure and simple is the true content and aim of the individual, and the individual's destiny is the living of a universal life [that is, 'living' as a citizen]." However, Hegel is also careful to point out the state is "rational" (that is to say, freedom actualized) only insofar as it manifests "the unity of objective freedom (i.e. freedom of the universal or substantial will) and subjective freedom (i.e. freedom of everyone in his knowing and in his *volition* of particular ends); and, consequently, so far as its form is concerned, in *self-determining* action on laws and principles which are thoughts and so universal." In other words, as I have argued, the individual and the state are reconciled insofar as each manifests the freedom and rational development of the other.
82. Scruton, "Hegel as a conservative thinker", p. 52.
83. Ibid, p. 52.
84. Patchen Markell, Bound by Recognition: The Politics of Identity after Hegel, PhD Thesis, (Cambridge, 1999), p. 106-109.
85. Robert Williams, Recognition: Fichte and Hegel on the Other, (Albany, N.Y. 1992), p. 142.

86. Krob, Hegel's Community, p. 175-177.
87. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, para. 260, p. 160-161. My emphasis.
88. Ibid, para. 4, p. 20.
89. H. Tristram Engelhardt, "Sittlichkeit and Post-Modernity: An Hegelian Reconsideration of the State," in Hegel Reconsidered: Beyond Metaphysics and the Authoritarian State, ed. H. Tristram Engelhardt and Terry Pinkard, (Boston, 1994), p. 221.
90. For a discussion of this concept, see Francis Fukuyama's book Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity, (New York: Free Press, 1995).
91. Srinivasan, Freedom, Community and Transcendence, p. 122-123.
92. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, para. 149, p. 107.
93. Ibid, para. 151, 153, p. 108-109.
94. Ibid, para. 145, p. 105.
95. Ibid, para. 139, p. 92.
96. Ibid, "Addition," p. 255.
97. Srinivasan, Freedom, Community and Transcendence, p. 131.
98. For the etymological roots of spirit, see The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology, Robert K. Barnhart, ed., (New York: The H.W. Wilson Co., 1998); Bloomsbury Dictionary of Word Origins, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Ltd., 1990); and The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia: An Encyclopedic Lexicon, vol. VII, (New York: The Century Co., 1903).
99. It must be remembered that for Hegel, "Spirit" must be materialized, and even that which seemingly stands in opposition to Spirit, whether nature or , matter, is permeated by Spirit. It would be a distortion to describe Hegel as an "idealist" in the sense of claiming some ontological primacy for the spiritual or mental *over against* the material. For Hegel, spirit or mind is a barren abstraction unless it is concretely embodied. See Richard Bernstein "Why Hegel Now?", Review of Metaphysics, 31, 1, (Sept., 1977), p. 58.
100. Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott, The Faces of Reason, p. 19.

101. Ibid, p. 4.

PART TWO

John Watson and the Spirit of Empire

CHAPTER SIX

Introduction — Idealism and Imperialism

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Otto von Bismarck, the Prussian leader who forged a German Empire out of 'blood and iron,' remarked that the most important thing to know about the twentieth century was that Americans spoke English. The point was obvious: an alliance between the British Empire and the United States, the world's largest English-speaking states, would create the most powerful political entity on the planet. Bismarck's remarks proved to be prescient. When he died on July 31, 1898 the Spanish-American War was coming to an end, the result of which was to hand over to the newly emergent American Empire the last remnants of the Spanish Empire, making the United States a global power.

Other men besides Bismarck made similar observations — Rudyard Kipling, English imperialist Alfred Milner, Winston Churchill and Theodore Roosevelt.¹ But the sentiment of Bismarck's words was given equally careful consideration in Canada, a country born of the clash of empires and whose political destiny was, it seems, linked to that of the British and American empires.² In the late nineteenth century men such as George Monro Grant and George Robert Parkin, and, later, Stephen Leacock, Andrew Macphail and James Cappon, all of whom described themselves simultaneously as Canadian

nationalists and British imperialists, pondered Canada's future on a continent shared with the United States. Some spoke of a grand alliance of the English-speaking people.

Parkin, the one-time Headmaster of Upper Canada College in Toronto and a self-described evangelist of empire, writing at his most optimistic in 1888, talked of the United States and the British Empire coming together in some sort of union that would overcome the "bifurcation of Anglo-Saxon national life" caused by the American Rebellion of 1776. He envisioned a new world order in which the British (which, of course, included Canadians) and Americans would work together to fulfil their providential mission of spreading the spiritual and material benefits of "Anglo-Saxon civilisation" around the world.³ George Monro Grant, the Principal of Queen's University from 1877 to 1902, also saw Canada's great mission to be that of healing the rift within the Anglo-Saxon nation; that is, to reconcile Britain and her wayward offspring, the United States.

No greater boon can be conferred on the race that the healing of [the] schism of [1776]. That is the work that Canada is appointed by its position and history to do. We are to build up a North American Dominion, permeated with the principles of righteousness, worthy to be the living link, the permanent bond of union, between Britain and the United States.⁴

Few of the Canadian imperialists can be accused of being anti-American. Rather, their political dreams of Anglo-Saxon unity reflected concern about Canada's future as an independent state on a continent dominated by the United States. They believed that Canada was in danger of being absorbed into the United States, first economically and then politically. It was this perceived threat

of American continentalism that made the question of Canada's relationship to the British Empire one of the major political questions at the turn of the last century. For imperialists such as Parkin, the issue of whether Canada became part of a united Empire or followed some other political destiny was "the greatest political question of the hour."⁵ The imperialists repeatedly warned that unless Canadians attached themselves to the Empire and all it stood for, the United States would inevitably absorb them. Canada, the imperialists argued, was simply too small a country to go it alone in the rough world of global politics. By the same token, an independent Canada — or, a Little Canada, as some disparagingly referred to the idea of Canada detached from its British connection — could not provide the spiritual scope, the psychological transcendence, to satisfy the highest aspirations of its people. Only through membership in the Empire, sharing in both the benefits and responsibilities of imperial citizenship, would Canadians overcome their colonial mentality and attain true greatness as a nation.

It is probably impossible to establish a firm cause-and-effect link between the enthusiasm for the British Empire among English-speaking Canadians at the turn of the century and the philosophic Idealism that dominated the Dominion's intellectual life at the time.⁶ Nonetheless, there is little doubt that the imperialist sentiments of many prominent Canadian nationalists were indebted to Idealist philosophy, and in particular to the Objective or Speculative Idealism of John Watson.⁷ Generally speaking, philosophical Idealism regards reality as an

aggregation of experiences that are formed, ordered and comprehended by Spirit. However, there is a distinction between the philosophies of Objective Idealism and Subjective Idealism. George Berkeley, who locates the essence of reality in the individual consciousness, arguing that nothing exists except the mind and its states, exemplifies the latter. The former, however, holds that reality is a rational order; it exists 'outside' the individual, but the individual is also part of that reality, part of the whole. In describing himself as an Objective Idealist, Watson, like Hegel, held that reality is, in essence, spiritual rather than material. Man can come to know reality for what it is in truth because he, too, is a participant in reality and is essentially a spiritual being. Or, put differently, Watson believed that Mind or Spirit is more fundamental than matter in the constitution of 'what is', and that man, in his capacity for reason, participates in Spirit and can thereby comprehend the essential rationality of reality. In this sense, Watson follows Hegel in trying to reconstitute the idea of a cosmic order as the foundation of his political thought.⁸

In the history of Canadian philosophy, Objective Idealism dominated the half-century from 1872 to 1922, achieving its stature, according to John Irving, "chiefly through the labours of John Watson."⁹ Even beyond Canada, Watson was recognised as one of the leading exponents of Objective Idealism in the Anglo-Saxon world.¹⁰ Within Canada, though, Watson's influence was considerable, touching everything from the formation of the United Church of Canada and the reform of the federal civil service to the development of

educational policy and school curricula.¹¹ Thus, those of Watson's politically-minded interlocutors who listened to him during his long career would have "heard much that could serve to give the argument for an increased imperial connection much philosophical substance."¹²

In Watson's thought, this linkage of imperialism and Idealism received its most explicit statement in the one book he devoted to political philosophy, namely The State in Peace and War, published in 1919. During his lengthy career Watson was best known, both in Canada and internationally, for his work on Kant and on religion and ethics.¹³ However, while I make use of other of Watson's writings as necessary, I focus on The State in Peace and War. It may not be Watson's most significant philosophical work, but it represents his most direct response to the political questions that dominated his time, particularly in the wake of the First World War. It is also his most overtly Hegelian work.

Watson's thought, it has been argued, should be understood primarily as a reaction to the religious climate of his time, the crisis of faith precipitated by evolutionary science and the higher criticism.¹⁴ Certainly, religion played a central role in his work. However, to interpret Watson's political thought as merely a tributary of his philosophy of religion is to reduce it to something akin to a civic religion. Such a procedure obscures the context and purpose of Watson's political philosophy. The political dimension of his thought cannot be understood as simply an offshoot of his theological concerns. Like Hegel, Watson holds that religion shares the stage with other products of human consciousness, including

art, philosophy and politics. In this regard, it is legitimate to apply to Watson the same procedure I took concerning Hegel. Which is to say, I intend to bracket Watson's philosophy of religion, along with his metaphysics¹⁵ and epistemology,¹⁶ and focus on his conception of man's social and political good.

In The State in Peace and War, Watson considers, among many other issues, the philosophical relationship between Idealism and imperialism, and provides, ultimately, a theoretical basis for promoting Canada's role within the British Empire. He sees the British Empire offering a political order that would reconcile the aspirations of the "individual," whether a single person or a single state, with the requirements and responsibilities of citizenship in a larger political community. This vision of an empire in which Canada would play a dynamic world historical role was sustained by a philosophic Idealism that, for Watson, provided an intelligible response to the social and political uncertainties generated by the First World War. Watson's Idealism, in turn, was drawn from Hegelian thought; that is to say, Hegel provided Watson with the theoretical means to address questions regarding the relationship of individual and the state, notions of power and reason and even evolution and progress that had suddenly become problematic as a result of the war experience. Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to sketch the political and intellectual milieu of turn-of-the-century Canada in order to situate my discussion of Watson's political philosophy.

In a well-known study, The Sense of Power, historian Carl Berger argues that imperialism was a form of Canadian nationalism. Men such as Grant and

Parkin, Leacock and Macphail, were imperialists because they saw in the British Empire the means to check the forces of a materialist ethos that threatened to overwhelm the values and traditions necessary to a properly functioning and humanly fulfilling social and political order. They saw the empire as the embodiment of a spiritual mission to spread the benefits of Christian civilisation around the globe. Canadians, as imperial citizens, would find true freedom and attain true nationhood in this enterprise. The movement for imperial unity reflected both a desire to preserve traditional values and an expression of Canadians' new found "sense of power" about themselves and their place in the world.¹⁷ Leacock, writing on the eve of the 1907 Imperial Conference, voiced this Idealist aspect of imperialism when he urged the conference delegates to

(f)ind for us something other than mere colonial stagnation, something other than independence, nobler than annexation, greater in purpose than a Little Canada. Find us a way. Build us a plan that shall make us, in hope at least, an Empire Permanent and Indivisible . . . We cannot in Canada continue as we are. We must become something greater or something infinitely less.¹⁸

This notion of empire was, for a time, highly influential. In 1889, the Imperial Federation League included about a quarter of the members of Parliament.¹⁹ Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier's imperial preference tariffs of 1897 revealed the influence of imperialist sentiments on the Canadian government's commercial policy. The influence of imperialism also was felt at the military level when Laurier, under pressure from English-speaking Canada, side-stepped his traditional French Canadian isolationism and agreed to dispatch Canadian troops to the Boer War in 1899. The imperial question dominated the political agenda

again in 1909 during the so-called naval scare. Canadian imperialists contended that Germany's rapid expansion of its naval power was a threat to British supremacy at sea; it was time, they said, for Canada to help Britain shoulder some of the costs for maintaining a fleet upon which Canada's own security depended.

While, for some, this notion of empire may be discredited today,²⁰ for many Canadian nationalists a century ago, the British Empire was a bulwark against the alien political tradition of the American republic. They confronted the rising power of the United States with trepidation and looked to the British Empire as a counterbalancing force. The British Empire, they argued, offered "the greatest secular instrument for the betterment of the world that then existed."²¹ With its world-wide sweep the Empire could ensure the progress of the human race through the dissemination of civilised standards. Canada's great privilege was to be able to participate in such a noble venture. By means of her imperial membership, Canada could fill her potential as a great nation in the world. In this way, Canadian nationalism was identified with imperialism. As Donald Creighton remarks, "the imperial idea became at once a popular enthusiasm and a reasoned political and ethical philosophy."²²

A representative example of this view came from one of Watson's own academic colleagues, James Cappon, who argued that the British Empire

represents an ideal of high import for the future of civilisation, the attempt to assemble in a higher unity even than that of nationality the forces which maintain and advance the white man's ideals of civilisation, his sense of justice, his constitutional freedom, his

respect for law and order, his humanity. It is an attempt to transcend the evils of nationality . . . without impairing the vigour which the national consciousness gives to a people . . . To reconcile the principle of Imperial unity with freedom of national development for all parts capable of using such freedom is the ideal of the British Empire.²³

Berger reinforces this view of the Idealist underpinnings of Canadian imperialism when he writes that "all the imperialists identified imperialism with an extension of Canadian freedom and her rise to nationhood."²⁴

Of course, this imperialistic Ideal was only one facet of the Spirit of the times. The political thought of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in Canada and elsewhere in the English-speaking world, reflected an age of transition, a world undergoing both destruction and construction at numerous levels.²⁵ In the face of change, Canadian intellectuals, like their counterparts in the United States and Britain, were forced to rethink their concepts of social and political order. The result was "a frantic search for an ideal, a new world view which explained the nature of man and his place in the universe."²⁶

Idealist philosophy blossomed first in Britain in the 1870s and then in Canada in the 1880s. It seemed to restore the validity of the Christian belief with its claim that reality was essentially spiritual. Indeed, the Idealism that informed Canadian intellectual life before the First World War can be seen as an effort to retain the universal moral authority of traditional Christianity and its monistic worldview against the challenge posed by the empirical sciences. Moreover, it offered a substantive response to those who viewed the social, political and economic realms of human activity in strictly materialistic or utilitarian terms and,

from the Idealist perspective, sought to reduce human relationships to the formulae of social Darwinism.²⁷

At the core of Idealist thought is the notion of the unity of the whole, the idea that all entities are merely differentiated aspects of one systematic and rationally ordered whole. Translated into political terms, Idealism suggests that a 'wholesome' political order expresses the collective will of a community composed of members who recognise that their fulfilment is bound up in their interconnectedness. In this regard, while it might be impossible to demonstrate a causal connection between imperialist-nationalism and philosophical Idealism, there seems little room to doubt that the "thinking in wholes" characteristic of Idealists was compatible with the belief of Canadian imperialists that Canada's national identity was tied to the political question of empire.²⁸

This compatibility between Idealism and imperialism is amply illustrated in Watson's writings. I will develop this claim more fully as I proceed, but at this point it is sufficient to observe that near the conclusion of The State in Peace and War, Watson addresses the question of international relations in the post-First World War era. His views are premised on the claim that the British Empire is "the only thoroughly successful experiment in international government that the world has ever seen." Using distinctly Hegelian language, Watson attributes the Empire's success to its "combining the freedom of the separate organs with the unity of the whole."²⁹

It is this concern with relationship of parts and wholes that is most

distinctly Hegelian about Watson's thought.³⁰ Borrowing from Hegel, the fundamental idea of Watson's philosophical system was the 'internal relationship of all entities.' Watson never strayed from this philosophic position. The concept of reality as rational, of the universe as reasonable and nature as essentially spiritual, remained the foundation of his thinking. And, on the basis of this metaphysic, Watson, like Hegel, perceives a linkage between man's religious experience, his social life and his political orders. In asserting the essential rationality of 'what is', Watson is also arguing for the immanence of reason in human affairs, including in man's social and constitutional orders. Watson follows Hegel in maintaining that the inherent rationality of constitutional orders is what underpins the moral purpose of politics as manifested in the various institutions of civil society. Watson held the fundamental Hegelian position that the world is rational and therefore knowable, and that the essence of human being is freedom. And it is from this metaphysical position that Watson derives his moral and political theory.³¹

For Watson, consciousness is an awareness of the order of reality, which all humans share. However, this awareness is individuated by the fact that the individual's experience of that order is so variously manifested. This means, however, that there is always a tension, an abiding instability, in the relationship of the self and other, the individual and the community (and even between one state and other states, presumably). His fundamental concern is to show how the relationship between the two entities is one of mutual interdependence, and that

the recognition of this truth is to achieve the only reconciliation available between the individual and the community.

Watson's arguments on this score were subtle and nuanced. While he does not see the state (or society) as taking precedent over the individual, Watson is not such a communitarian as some scholars suggest.³² On the other hand, neither does he promote subjectivist individualism. These distinctions point up the essential problem in Watson's political philosophy; what he calls "the problem of uniting public authority with individual freedom."³³ This 'problem' dictates the discursive plan for Part Two; answering it brings out what distinguishes Watson's appropriation of Hegel from that of George Grant and Charles Taylor. In this section, I undertake a survey of Watson's philosophic task, consider his notions of individuality and community, his theory of freedom and rights and compare his views to those of some of the British and American Hegelians who were his contemporaries. Finally, I will show how his Idealist thought points to a concept of "empire" — which I will consider again in the conclusion to this essay — that may have considerable relevance to the international political orders of the twenty-first century.

Watson's basic methodological approach to answering his fundamental political question is to compare and contrast his views with those of other philosophers over the course of western philosophic history. This essentially Hegelian method is readily apparent in The State in Peace and War, which begins with the experience of Periclean Athens and continues through Plato and

Aristotle, the Stoics and the Epicureans and through the political philosophies of the Middle Ages and into the modern period, starting with Machiavelli, Hobbes and Locke through to Kant, Hegel, Bentham, Mill and Spencer, and concluding with commentaries on Nietzsche, Haeckel and Treitschke.

Behind this historical approach is Watson's acceptance of the Hegelian notion that reason develops and evolves in and through historical experience. In this regard, as an entry point into Watson's fundamental political question, it is appropriate to consider the historical experience that occasioned Watson's venture into political philosophy, namely the First World War.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Watson's Political Problem

The destructiveness of the First World War is widely thought to have shattered the reputation of Hegelian Idealism, particularly its notion of reason manifesting itself in historical events and the existence of an ordering intelligence to reality.³⁴ By 1919, the Idealist view of the state, along with liberal political economy, was under siege.³⁵ If there is one thinker who exemplified this hostility toward the Hegelian view of the state, it is the English philosopher L.T. Hobhouse. Toward the end of 1918, with the First World War having just ended in an armistice, Hobhouse published a study of theories of the state, The Metaphysical Theory of the State. In a dedication to his son, a Royal Air Force officer who had been killed in France, he wrote: "In the bombing of London I had just witnessed the visible and tangible outcome of a false and wicked doctrine," the "Hegelian theory of the god-state." Hegel, in Hobhouse's view, was the intellectual source of German militarism, a proponent of absolutist State power over the individual, and that Idealists such as Bernard Bosanquet had been its "most faithful exponent(s)." The "central fallacy" of Hegelian Idealism was that it identified "the state with society and political with moral obligation."³⁶

Watson, like Hobhouse, regarded the First World War as a conflict between competing ideas about the state. However, in The State in Peace and

War he defended the Hegelian view of the state. Watson argues that, for Hegel, the state was not an instrument of coercive force, but "the highest expression of the reasonable will, the will which aims at the general good of the whole." For Hegel, the state as a whole is "the custodian of the conditions under which a given people manifests its ideal ends."³⁷

These contrasting views are significant. Hobhouse's Hegel may not have much credence among scholars today: No longer is Hegelian philosophy identified with "the philosophy of modern totalitarianism," as Karl Popper once put it.³⁸ Nevertheless, during the first half of the twentieth century, and particularly in the aftermath of the First World War, Hegel was out of favour in scholarly circles. Particularly in British philosophic circles, Hegel was held responsible not only for providing the philosophical underpinnings of German militarism, but also for subordinating the individual and social relations to the interests of the state. Watson, however, argued that Hegelian Idealism, properly understood, provides a theoretical reconciliation of the individual and the state eminently suitable to liberal-democratic orders. Thus, the contrast between Hobhouse (and other critics of Hegel) and Watson can be boiled down to a conflict between two ideas of what constitutes the proper relationship between the individual and the state.

Watson's views on this topic are, as I shall discuss momentarily, similar to those offered by T.H. Green in Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation and Bernard Bosanquet in The Philosophical Theory of the State.³⁹ But rather

than simply recasting the thought of Green and Bosanquet, Watson preferred to elucidate his Idealist philosophy through an historical survey of political thought from ancient Greece to his own times. Such a method obviously follows Hegel's historicist approach to philosophy, but, at a philosophic level, it also reflects the Hegelian concept of *Aufhebung*, or sublation. Like Hegel, Watson sees the movement of reason manifesting itself through developments wrought by historical experience that incorporate past events, including the philosophic thought of the past, into a new whole. For Watson, philosophic 'moments' embodied the understanding of the essential intelligence underlying the order of reality, and this understanding was available to a particular thinker at a particular moment in time. This historical approach to philosophy allowed Watson to compare and contrast the past with the present and, thus, distinguish that which was true and universal from what was not. This method is, of course, similar to Hegel's in the early section of the Phenomenology in which the inadequacies of past modes of thought about reality are exposed and sublated into higher modes of consciousness. In following Hegel's method, Watson demonstrates that the truth of Idealism resides in its capacity to show that the various historical understandings of reality as revealed by empirical thought, while valid within certain limits, cannot be regarded as conclusive.⁴⁰

In considering the various ideas about the relationship between the individual and the state offered by past philosophers — everyone from Plato and Aristotle to the Stoics, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau and even

Spencer and Nietzsche — the overarching point Watson makes is distinctly Hegelian: The history of philosophy reveals how the inability to reconcile freedom and duty in the political community has been due to the experiential limitations of human consciousness at any particular historical moment and, hence, the incomplete comprehension of the rationality of the whole.

In this regard, I obviously need to consider what Watson means by 'individual' and 'community'. Throughout his work, Watson dismisses the ideas of atomised individualism put forward by the empiricists and positivists as simplistic and a distortion of reality. At the same time, though, he criticises what he sees as the inherent flaws and conceptual inadequacies of Rousseau's and Kant's notions of the individual. Behind Watson's political thought, then, is a fundamental concern for the problematic nature of individual identity and the relationship of self and other. To be sure, Watson's thought on this matter is embedded in a complex conceptual system that he worked out over the course of his philosophic career. There are, for example, arguments opposing the atomised individualism of the positivists and empiricists, a rejection of the materialist determinism of the evolutionists, opposition to the contractualism of Rousseau and Kant, a refutation of the kind of unitarian political system put forward in Plato's Republic, and, finally, a rejection of the idea of a universal world government.⁴¹

Nevertheless, there are key emblematic statements, and even particular paragraphs and sentences, that encapsulate or summarise the nature of

Watson's Idealism on the metaphysical, epistemological and political level. When closely studied they reveal core themes in Watson's political and social thought that are germane to the concerns of this essay. 1) How is modern individuality even possible? 2) What is the function of civil society in terms of individual freedom and moral obligations? 3) Is there a tension between moral autonomy or freedom and unity and purposiveness within society? And, finally, 4) can the purposes of the nation-state be reconciled with those of the individual?

The questions regarding the proper relationship between the individual and the community emerge almost immediately in The State in Peace and War when Watson, referring to Pericles' funeral oration, defines the fundamental political problem to be that of "uniting public authority with individual freedom."⁴² Yet, a close reading of the text shows that Watson provides the answer to his own questions almost immediately, albeit in an esoteric manner. That is to say, the core themes of Watson's political philosophy can be extracted from his commentaries on two Socratic dialogues, the Apology and the Crito, that follow his statement about the fundamental political problem concerning him. Watson's commentaries on the two dialogues contain in a highly condensed form his basic political philosophy, and the remainder of the book is, in larger measure, a working out of the permutations and ramifications of these dialogues.

Watson sees the issue of Socrates' defence of himself during his trial and the reasoning behind his subsequent refusal to flee the Athenians' death sentence as paradigmatic to addressing his basic political question: that is, the

relationship between the individual and the community. Furthermore, I would suggest that the statement with which Watson concludes his commentary on the two dialogues in The State in Peace and War neatly encapsulates his concept of the *proper* relationship between the individual and society. The burden of these two dialogues, Watson states, is:

Disobey the law when a higher impersonal law would otherwise be violated; obey the law where only one's own individual interest will be adversely affected.⁴³

The remainder of Part Two is largely an exegesis and exploration of this statement. Hence, I shall frequently refer to these dialogues as I proceed.

Watson argues that the Apology is "indirectly a discussion of the problem how far the individual is under obligation to obey the law of the state." The question in Crito, on the other hand, is "whether it is permissible to act contrary to a higher law, and so violate one's conscience."⁴⁴ Nearly thirty years earlier, in his 1895 book, An Outline of Philosophy, Watson alluded to these two dialogues in a chapter on moral philosophy. In a statement that evokes the figure of Socrates described in the 1918 book, Watson says that an individual must learn to set aside his individualistic inclinations and see himself as an "organ of the community."⁴⁵ The statement is revealing. Not only does it set up a particular notion of the social good, but it also establishes the basis upon which one can criticise society.⁴⁶ I shall return to this claim later. For now, though, the conceptual connection between the 1895 book and the 1919 books needs further elaboration. For example, the earlier book contains a compressed historical

interpretation of the evolving conception of political community. In little more two-and-a-half pages, Watson offers a history of the development of political community — from the classical Greeks through to the Stoic, the Romans, the Christians and, finally, of the modern period. In the 1919 book, Watson devotes several chapters to the same task. And he concludes the latter book by reinforcing on the political level what he had argued in the earlier book regarding morality.

I shall work through Watson's arguments in these chapters in due course. In the meantime, a summary of some of Watson's key arguments is necessary. Essentially, Watson argues, as does Hegel, that the historical development of the Ideal of political community parallels the Ideal development of the moral individual. The Ideal of the individual, already latent in the Greek polis, has progressed to the point where it has become in modern times the grounding principle of all civilised forms of political community. No longer is it permissible to identify morality with the customs and laws of a particular community, class or group. Morality, Watson asserts, "must rest upon the wider basis of humanity."⁴⁷

These comparisons underscore not only the close links between the two books, but also the consistency in Watson's thought. More importantly, they also contain in compacted form some of the major philosophic concepts with which Watson was concerned, namely individual rights and the nature and function of the community or the state, and the proper relation between the two. As I have noted, Watson's theory of the state is tied to his notion of the development of

reason in history. And, like Hegel, he sees this development of reason reflected in the dominating political order of the times. This assumption is evident in the Preface of The State in Peace and War, where Watson outlines his intention to describe how the "idea" of the state has developed from the time of Plato and Aristotle, through to the Roman Empire and the Middle Ages, until, finally, in the modern nation-state, with its notions of sovereignty, contract, natural law and a system of checks and balances, we see the emergence of a concept of the state "as existing for the establishment of the external conditions under which the highest human life may be carried on."⁴⁸

In describing the development of the Idea of the state, Watson articulates a concept of the state as one of "inseparable relation." The state, he says, is "a community of rational beings not externally bound together but organically connected."⁴⁹ Unless this view of the state is accepted — that is, the idea that man is his own 'end' only to the degree he possesses a social consciousness — then, Watson argues, we are forced to accept the contractarian conception of the state as an external power, an agency of force, whose main function is to keep individuals from interfering with each others' rights. For Watson, though, such a conception of the state means there can be no real reconciliation of the individual and the community, no substantive identity of freedom and duty.

Watson implicitly articulates his quest for a reconciling "principle of society" with his lengthy citation of Thucydides' account of Pericles' funeral oration. Pericles refers to Athens as the singular political community in which a

balance between public and private lives and, most importantly, between public duty and private freedom, had been achieved. Watson's purposes in beginning his defence of Idealist political philosophy with Pericles' funeral oration are not only thematic but also rhetorical. By beginning with Pericles, Watson not only consciously linked his time to that of the ancient Greeks, but also the First World War to the Peloponnesian War. Such a linkage implied that the war between Britain and Germany paralleled the conflict between Athens and Sparta. More deeply, it also implied a parallel between British and Athenian democracy and German and Spartan militarism at the philosophical level. In this way, Watson is suggesting that Hegelian Idealism offers a defence of British democratic principles and not, as critics such as Hobhouse would have it, the destruction of those principles.⁵⁰

Pericles' funeral oration is one of the most comprehensive statements ever made about the relationship between the citizen and the community. According to Watson, it expresses the fundamental political problem to be one of "uniting public authority with individual freedom," of binding men together in a "free and orderly community."⁵¹ For the Athenians of Pericles' time, Watson says, the *polis* was both the protector of citizens' freedoms, as well as the promoter of the citizen's highest potential. In this regard, according to Pericles, Athens achieved the two main goods of political community: it was "pervaded by a single mind, and it allow[ed] free play to the capacities of the individual." In this way the Athenians solved what Watson's contemporary, Bernard Bosanquet, referred to

as the paradox of self-government;⁵² that is, the condition of obeying the rules of the political community while at the same time obeying oneself.

It is understandable, then, why Watson devoted the single largest section of The State in Peace and War to an examination of Greek political thought, particularly that of Plato and Aristotle. According to Watson, the question of how reconciliation between the citizen — or, in modern terminology, the individual — and the community could be achieved is central to both philosophers' political thought. "The problem of politics is to bind men together in a free and orderly community."⁵³ Hence, through the prism of Watson's reading of Apology and Crito, we can see how Plato and Aristotle help Watson deliver his Hegelian answer to his fundamental political concern.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The 'Citizen' and the Community

For Plato and Aristotle, Watson argues, the freedom of the citizen and the fulfilment of the philosophic life are possible only in a political community. Political duty does not necessarily mean a curtailment or restriction on the citizen. Indeed, at the core of their political thought is the claim that political obligation was the condition for freedom: "Plato and Aristotle assume that the City-State is the necessary condition for the highest life." Only in and through the *polis* is the citizen able to distinguish between his real and his apparent purposes. This, in turn, implies a relationship between the community and the freedom of the citizen. As Watson observes, the Platonic question of "what is a good man?" is intrinsically tied to the question "what is the good state?" Because the *polis* is the necessary condition for the best life, then the study of politics is inseparable from morality; that is, political philosophy is inherently linked to moral philosophy.⁵⁴

Watson compares this view with that of the Sophists and Cynics, who, rather than seeing the *polis* as the necessary condition for moral freedom, saw it in a more utilitarian manner. Political obligation is merely a social contract for maintaining peace among citizens, each of which is bent on satisfying their own selfish interests. Political community, according to this theory, reflects the

surrender of some portion of freedom in order to secure selfish interests. Thus, there can be no true reconciliation of the citizen and the community for the Cynics and the Sophists.⁵⁵

In setting Plato and Aristotle's 'Idealist' view against the more materialist position of the Cynics and the Sophists, Watson establishes a framework for his own political philosophising. He aligns his Idealist stance with what today would be called a communitarian view of politics, and sets that perspective against a more contractarian point of view, which he sees as reflecting a materialistic and egocentric worldview. As he works through his book, he attributes this materialist metaphysic to thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. For Watson, these thinkers are descendants of the Greek Sophists and Cynics.

It is on this claim that Watson takes his stand against social contractarianism. The mistake the contractarians make is to conceive of individuals as having a nature separate from the community. For Watson, there can be no concept of the individual apart from the community. As he puts it, "the principle of society is present in individuals, and without it they would not be themselves or rational."⁵⁶ Outside the community there is no freedom, only animal existence. Conversely, Watson places his own Idealist position within the metaphysical camp of Plato and Aristotle in which, with whatever modifications of their political thought must be accepted, "the freedom of the individual was shown to be compatible with the authority of society."⁵⁷

According to Watson, Plato articulated the problematic nature of the tensions between the citizen and the *polis* in two early dialogues, Apology and Crito. In the Apology, Plato asserts that the community has no right to retard by force a citizen's efforts to develop himself to his highest potential. The citizen is in the right to assert his own conscience as the final authority if he possesses a higher truth than that put forward by the community in its claim to authority. In the Crito, however, Plato balances the principle of freedom against the principle of community duty. Watson maintains that in setting forth Socrates' refusal to flee Athens in order to escape death, Plato is saying that the authority of the *polis* supersedes the claims of the citizen when he is acting out of self-interest. Unless the citizen is acting on the basis of a transcendent principle, then the authority of the community must prevail.⁵⁸

According to Watson, Plato, in these two dialogues, articulates the view that the citizen is capable of realising his highest potential only within a community, only in relationship with others. As such, the community must be organised in such a way as to allow for the development of that potential. To say this, though, is to assert knowledge of what it is to be most fully human; to know, in other words, the nature of reality. For Plato, the one person capable of knowing what *is*, is the philosopher. But only a few are capable of being philosophers; thus, only a few are able to experience the rational order of the whole. Or, to put it differently, only a few are capable of being free and, thus, of pursuing the best life. Furthermore, while Plato permits a certain differentiation

within the city, he denies any differentiation within the classes. For Watson, though, Plato's political order assumes a basic distinction between those who govern (the public authority) and the governed (the mass of citizens). Such a distinction, he argues, degrades both, denying the governed the opportunity to participate in government and removing, or abstracting, the governing class from the valuable insights gained by participating in everyday life. In effect, a strictly hierarchical society denies people the opportunity to fulfil their true potential as human beings.⁵⁹

For Watson, a person's true potential resides in his capacity for reason. But to be a reasoned human being requires being able to share in the life of the community. Reason, in other words, is manifested in the dialectical relationship between the individual and his community. In Watson's view, Plato's account of reason is one in which reason is the preserve of the governing class and is imposed on the unreasoning masses. Reason exists in the external ordering of the *polis*, not in the identification between the inner life of citizens and the outer ordering of the public authority. Behind this notion of the *polis* is Plato's "conception of a special race" which, because it possesses reason, is entitled to rule. Such a claim, though, "denies that reason is a universal possession."⁶⁰ And, in Watson's view, that betrays the essential flaw in Plato's political theory. Plato was unable to conceive of a political order beyond the Greek *polis* in which the highest forms of reason could be present in more than a small elite ruling class.⁶¹

Watson, in keeping with his linkage of Periclean Athens to his own times,

makes a similar claim against the rulers of nineteenth-century Germany. Under the regime of Frederick William the Third "the democratic and national movements towards unity and liberty were stifled in their birth" and "the mass of the people were kept out of even moderate rights for many years." The state was conceived of as power "infinitely superior to the individual," a political entity to which the individual owed obedience. This suppression of individual rights and the notion of an absolutist state were contributing factors in the rise of German militarism in the late nineteenth century that led the First World War. Watson particularly faults the philosophies of Treitschke and Nietzsche on this score.⁶²

Watson's point in linking his criticism of Plato's conception of political order to that of nineteenth-century German thinkers is to defend his own argument that the state is an organic entity in which all members must actively participate if the state is to remain united and, equally important, if its individual members are to realise their highest potential as reasoning beings. On this issue Watson takes his guidance directly from Hegel and the Philosophy of Right. Defending Hegel against those who accuse him of fomenting German militarism and statism, Watson says that Hegel saw the state as "an organism in which life is continually streaming from the centre to the extremities, and back from the extremities to the centre." The unity of the state is maintained not by force or the imposed order of a ruling class, but by "the deep-seated feeling of order which is possessed by all."⁶³ To be sure, as Watson observes, this Hegelian conception of the state is implicit in Plato's own description of the best *polis*:

The State must be not only organic, but every member in it must take an active share in all its concerns, unless we are to have a conflict of classes and a consequent weakening of the body politic.⁶⁴

Nevertheless, this description fits in with Watson's criticism of Plato that I noted earlier, namely, that Plato failed to conceive of a political system in which philosophic reasoning was possible for more than an elite few. Plato did not account for the possibility that political orders grow and change with the development of human consciousness. Plato's theory rests upon what Watson sees as the untenable assumption that the city can be made virtuous by the alteration of external conditions. Plato's effort to completely identify the citizen and the community fails because it "takes away that intense consciousness of personality that is the condition of the higher life. He who has no self cannot be unselfish."⁶⁵

Watson's interpretation of Plato on this point can be questioned. In his commentary on Apology and Crito, Watson clearly describes Socrates as subsuming his self-interest to the city and seeing himself as an organ of the community, while, in another context, asserting the priority of his self on the basis of his allegiance to the demands of conscience. This suggests that Plato did, in fact, allow for a certain differentiation between the citizen and the community, acknowledging that the interests of some citizens could at times supersede those of the community. Watson seems to have missed some of the nuance of his earlier interpretation of Plato.

For Watson, however, Aristotle provides the corrective to Plato's

excessive unity. Aristotle, he says, recognised that while man is fundamentally a political animal and that political community is rooted in private life, no community can achieve the kind of unity or complete organisation that is necessary in the household. In this way, Aristotle vindicates property as the bedrock of moral life, and the family as the necessary if insufficient precondition for political community. Nonetheless, the political community is essential if the citizen is to achieve his highest potential. This, in turn, suggests a mutual interdependence between the two. The *polis* is logically prior to or presupposes the citizen, but the *polis* owes its reasons for existing, its end or purpose, to the needs of citizens, including the satisfaction of higher needs. In Aristotle, then, Watson discerns what for him is the most crucial element of classical Greek political philosophy: The essential principle that the development of man's inherent intellectual and moral virtues — the reasoned life, in short — is possible "by the concentrated activity of various minds all working towards a common end;" that is, in a political community.⁶⁶

Both Plato and Aristotle recognised that reason is the standard by which politics is to be judged and fulfilled. They recognised that "the real bond of the State is therefore reason. It is reason that binds men together by teaching them to understand one another."⁶⁷ The rational life enables each citizen to develop his capacities to the fullest without unwarranted interference from other citizens or the *polis* as a whole. It was this capacity for rational and virtuous life that the ancients understood as freedom. The life of reason taught the citizen to

subordinate his self-interest to the laws of the community, but this subordination of personal desires was conceived of as a loss of freedom. To recognise rationally that my self-interest is broadly identical to that of the community as a whole is to align my will with that of the community. Which to say, my freedom is identical to my duty. A virtuous life or philosophic life cannot be attained if I indulge only in satisfying selfish desires; my freedom is obtained in obeying laws that I recognise as expressing rational will.

Nonetheless, Plato's and Aristotle's understanding of the relationship between the citizen and the community remains flawed, according to Watson. Both see the purpose of the *polis* as securing the possibility of the best life, which, of course, is the life of philosophy. However, both say that only a few are capable of being philosophers. Implicitly, then, in Watson's view, Plato and Aristotle promote a political community the ultimate purpose of which is to allow a few to enjoy the life of the mind. Those who lack the highest capacities of reason work to allow a few to fulfil their potential. As Watson puts it: "Aristotle is led to regard the main body of the people as instruments for the production of the highest results in the person of a few privileged citizens."⁶⁸

Watson objected to this aspect of Plato and Aristotle's political thought. In a statement that again recalls his interpretation of the Apology and the Crito, Watson concludes that while Plato and Aristotle "set the example to the world of a polity in which the freedom of the individual was shown to be compatible with the authority of society,"⁶⁹ they failed to recognise that the capacity for reason is

latent in all men and, hence, that all men are deserving of equal treatment in the community, and of participating in the political arrangements of that community. All men possess the potential to develop those virtues that constitute their freedom. Which is to say, there is a general, rational law binding on all men.

Such a claim about the evolution of reason again points up how Watson, following Hegel, thought that reason develops historically. The philosophical concepts of the past are not frozen in time. They reflect understandings of reality at particular historical moments and provide "stepping stones" to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the individual and the community.

The development of political theory from the fundamental idea of Plato and Aristotle that the State exists for the production of the best life, through the long and troubled period of the Roman Empire and the Middle Ages, is a continuous development, in which one element after another obtains prominence, until we reach the period of the modern Nation-State, in which the ideas of check and balance, of a law of nature, of absolute sovereignty of contract and utility form stepping stones to the clear and simple conception of the State as existing for the establishment of the external conditions under which the highest human life may be carried on.⁷⁰

For Watson, then, the study of these historical moments allows the philosopher to distinguish those ideas and patterns of human conduct that are true and universal from that are false and transitory. On this topic, I turn to the next 'stepping stone' in Watson's philosophic history.

CHAPTER NINE

Universalising the Citizen

Watson credits the Stoics with enlarging the notion of reason to make it universal. He roots this development of reason in the collapse of the ancient *polis* and the subsequent establishment of the Macedonian Empire under Alexander the Great and, later, the creation of the Roman Empire. Stoicism provided the theoretical bedrock for Roman law. The empires of the ancient world forced men to look beyond the narrow confines of the *polis* and reconceive their understanding of the relationship between the citizen and the community. The centralising nature of imperial rule excluded masses of men from the kind of participation in political life that would satisfy their longing for community. The vastness of the empires required a new understanding of the self-conscious citizen that had been central to Plato and Aristotle. If the citizen could no longer seek fulfilment in the moral and religious life of his city, where was he to find meaning and purpose in life?

According to Watson, the Stoics and the Epicureans attempted to conceptualize a new understanding of human nature that would account for the experience of imperial politics. With the empire's borders having obliterated ancient boundaries and the ultimate political power residing in the hands of a single man, the emperor, the Stoics argued that a citizen could turn away from

the political life and still find his fulfillment in his identity with "the great State of the World," which comprised both political (or moral) and religious life.⁷¹ What sustained this aspiration was the idea of the essential homogeneity of humans regardless of their different customs and traditions. A man might be shut out of the political life of his particular city, but he could still conceive of himself as part of the greater whole because the political order, such as it was, reflected the rational order of the world. While a man might be alienated from the political order, he still knew that his life had meaning because he, like all other men, was subject to the law of reason that was manifested throughout the universe. Furthermore, since all men possess the same fundamental rational nature — that is, all men are parts of the whole — it could be asserted, as the Stoics claimed, that what is reasonable for one is reasonable for all.

For Watson, then, Stoicism, with its notion that all men are essentially free and equal because they share the same rational nature, provided the basis for natural law theory as it was practised in Roman jurisprudence and, later, throughout the Western world.

The recognition by the Stoics that all men have the same fundamental nature was an idea that inspired the Roman lawyers to convert a narrow legal system fitted only for Rome into a system of universal legislation that has formed the starting-point for the jurisprudence of all civilised peoples.⁷²

As well, the Stoics' law of reason prepared the way for the positive universal religion of Christianity and its claim that beyond all worldly differences men are equal in the eyes of Heaven. In this fashion, says Watson, Stoicism effected a

fundamental shift in man's self-comprehension that helped bridge the political transition from the *polis* to the nation-state. Moreover, it embedded in the consciousness of the West the notion of a world-state.

This notion of the world-state is a crucial one in Watson's political thought, and I shall return to it later when I discuss Watson's theoretical support for imperialism. However, it is necessary to look at some of his arguments now because they have a direct bearing on his views of how the modern nation-state came to be. Watson's discussion of Stoicism recalls Hegel's claims in the Phenomenology for the development of stoical consciousness whereby the individual, whether master or slave, retreats into an inner life in response to external domination and necessity.⁷³

In this stage of consciousness the inner life attempts to stand as a bulwark against a hostile and frustrating outer world. In effect, though, consciousness seeks to retreat from a fearful, alienating world to some refuge in the mind. This "abstract universal," as Hegel called it, manifests itself at the political level in a relationship between the individual and the state that is decidedly different from that of the Greek *polis*. During the time of the Roman Empire the notion of the public citizen working for the good of the community with which he identified his interests largely disappeared. It was replaced by the citizen as a private person who did not give much regard to communal concerns outside his own particular interests. Instead, the interests of the whole were placed in the hands of the Emperor, and those who served him. The result was to reduce the citizen to an

atomistic self disconnected from the public life his community. Where the citizen of the *polis* could see his own universal self in the institutions and monuments of the city, the imperial citizen, restricted from participation in the political life of the Empire in any way comparable to that of the Emperor's, was at a loss to find a public mode of conduct that would satisfy his need to belong to the wider community. In Watson's words: "The appropriation of all political functions by the Roman Empire naturally shut out the individual from any direct political relations, and this forced him back upon himself ..."⁷⁴

Hegel is clear on what this meant: the effective alienation of most citizens from the political life of their community. Watson offers only a gloss on Hegel's analysis, however his description of the Roman Empire clearly indicates that he adopted Hegel's analysis as his own. For example, in an argument that as we shall see has considerable bearing on his moral support for imperialism, Watson points out that under the Empire anything like an independent political life disappeared in the conquered peoples. An emperor who had gathered all power in his own hands retarded other possibilities of political development. The result, though, was that the Stoic conception of a law of reason — in which all men were free and equal as citizens of the world — had no substantive influence on imperial affairs, since, juxtaposed to the Stoics' argument, was the claim that only the singular will of the emperor made law.⁷⁵

Watson concludes that the Stoic concept of a universal reason possessed naturally by all man — which therefore made all men fundamentally equal — was

flawed because it found no concrete expression in the real world. The Stoics made the mistake of thinking that man's highest ideals are not tied to the concrete realities of daily life. They conceived of an ideal abstract self but ignored Aristotle's insight that man is a political being. Such an ideal implies a political order in which all are equal, a world-state, in other words. The problem was that such a world-state was unachievable and, thus, the Stoic ideal effectively alienated the individuals from the bonds of community that provide the substance of concrete life.

Nonetheless, the Stoics provided a powerful transformative idea. In particular, Stoical consciousness helped give birth to a consciousness amenable to the emergence of Christianity. The Christian principle of men's equality in the eyes of God was similar to the Stoic notion of natural equality, Watson argues. Where the Stoics had rooted the law of reason in the rational order of the cosmos, the Christians grounded natural law in a supernatural Being. In this way, Watson argues, Stoicism provided a conceptual bridge between the ancient *polis* and the modern nation-state by offering the Ideal of a world-state that could realise itself through the organisation of the various nation-states. And for Watson, as we shall see, it was the British Empire that manifested or actualised this Ideal, at least in principle.

Watson does not ignore that vast stretch of time between the Roman and the modern worlds. He sees the medieval world and its idea of monarchs, who, even as they claimed divinely-given authority, remained subject to natural law,

playing out the actualisation of the Stoics' abstract universal. In effect, the medieval world provided a corrective principle to overcome the alienation between the citizen and the political order experienced under the Roman Empire. According to Watson, it generally was held that a King's authority was derived from God. This authority was needed to maintain order in this world. But the function of the King was, in Watson's words, "to maintain justice, to suppress vice and crime, and to maintain the Catholic faith."⁷⁶ Such an understanding of the King's secular function implies a particular relationship between the ruler and the ruled, between sovereign and subject. This relationship is one in which the people are obliged to obey the ruler, while the ruler, in turn, is obliged to maintain the conditions for their well-being. However, implicit in this relationship is the notion that the subject — or a group of subjects such as an assembly of the people — is the source of political legitimacy. The subject had natural rights that could not be reduced or impaired by the Ruler or a prince; in fact, the purpose of the Sovereign was to protect the subject.

Watson also held that the medieval conception of the relationship between ruler and the subject re-establishes in different form the ancient concept of the *polis* as the highest form of community. This is reflected in the exaltation of the Sovereign as the sole representative of the common interests and common life of the community. Out of this notion grew the idea that the princely ruler was the single power standing above the subject, commanding his loyalty in return for protection. Thus, during the medieval era the idea emerged that "the origin of the

State is to be found in a contract of subjection made between the People and the Ruler." This idea eventually developed to the point where "all subordinate power was to be delegated by the sovereign power, the State," which acted in the interests of the whole.⁷⁷

Watson's argument closely follows Hegel's on the development of the 'state' as the sovereign power during the medieval period. In The Philosophy of History, Hegel writes that the development of monarchies out of the feudal order resulted in the rise of a supreme authority whose dominion embraces all — a political power so-called, whose subjects enjoy an equality of rights, and in which the will of the individual is subordinated to that common interest which underlies the whole. Hegel concludes that this arrangement of power set the stage for the coming-to-be of nation-states in that the necessary condition for the establishment of monarchies was the emergence of particular nationalities.⁷⁸

Watson's argument is similar. He says that with the development of the idea of the sovereign state, political speculation about the growth of nation-states begins again. Thus, medieval thought "prepared the weapons for that combat between the Sovereign State and the Sovereign Individual which fills the subsequent centuries."⁷⁹

According to Watson, Thomas Aquinas reconciled the individual and the community by reconciling Church and State. Aquinas accepted Aristotle's description of man as a political animal, and politics as a natural expression of what it means to be human. Moreover, like Aristotle, Aquinas held that it was in

and through the community that the individual was able to attain the good life. For Aquinas, every political community requires a ruler whose chief function is to establish those laws that provide for continuance. Which is to say, the ruler's obligation is to provide those conditions by which the members of a community can seek the good life, understood in its Christian context to mean obeying God's will. Since the ruler is the medium of God's will it is the duty of every subject to obey the ruler since to do so is, in effect, to obey God's will. And since the Church has jurisdiction over the interpretation of divine law, and embodies the "unity of faith" that overarches all particular states, it is right and proper that the Church require Christians to "obey their earthly rulers, because such obedience is essential to the order and stability of society."⁸⁰

Here again, we see Watson drawing on his paradigmatic model of Socrates' relationship to the Athenian *polis* as articulated in Apology and Crito. Just as Socrates justified his disobedience of the communal will by appealing to a higher spiritual authority, so, too, does the Church allow the communicant to claim a "spiritual" loyalty that transcends the political order in which he lives. At the same time, though, echoing the rationale Socrates' articulated in Crito as to why he had to accept the authority of the city, Aquinas says it is the obligation of subjects to obey the earthly authority when what is at issue is not a matter of transcendent conscience.

Aquinas, thus, established a unifying bond between sacred and profane powers. Each is necessary to the other in the sense that only through their

interaction is it possible for men to enjoy the good life. The Church requires the existence of profane power because without it there would be no means by which to direct people towards God's will. Conversely, without the sacred, rulers would have no end or purpose beyond the pursuit of power. In Watson's view, then, Aquinas provided an excellent example of Hegel's concept of *Aufheben* (not to say *List der Vernunft*, the cunning of Reason) by reconciling the apparent dichotomy of the sacred and profane realms in such a way that their opposition is overcome without sacrificing their necessary distinctiveness.

The Aquinian moment of a reconciliation of heaven and earth, of natural law and positive law, was short lived. After Aquinas' death, the clash between sacred and the profane was renewed. This time, however, the strength of the *national* monarchies, especially that of the French King Philip IV, overcame the efforts of a weakened Church to maintain the medieval doctrine of the unity of faith under the dominion of a single Emperor. This "imperial idea" could not be sustained by the end of the fifteenth century. With the growth of cities and the expansion of trade and commerce, along with the schism in the Church, the national idea came to dominate men's minds. In particular, the prominence of the French monarchy under Philip threw into doubt the medieval doctrine of "the universal dominion of the Emperor."⁸¹

What is theoretically important in these historical developments is how the abstracted desire of the "imperial idea" represented by the Holy Roman Empire, with its Christian notion of the equality of all men, was to be made concrete

through the development of a nation-state that embodied the awareness of the value of diverse, if subordinate, forms of human organisation. The development of the nation-state reconciled, in principle, the universal ideal of human equality and freedom with the ancient idea that the political community should provide the conditions necessary for the citizen's quest for the good life.⁸²

According to Watson, Niccolo Machiavelli was the first political thinker to comprehend the significance of the Church's waning influence, and announce the nascent nation-state as its replacement. Machiavelli saw that the notion of a political empire co-extensive with the Christian faith was an empty abstraction. He recognised the commingling of nationalism and monarchy in the wake of Holy Roman Empire's fragmentation. The resulting disorder prompted him to ask how a strong, united and efficient authority could be established. His answer was to abandon the idea of natural law as the guide for political science. He went further, teaching the radical lesson that sound political order depends on the capacity of the ruler to do what was necessary to maintain the state, even if this meant acting contrary to traditional morality. The idea of an empire co-extensive with Christian Europe had faded, and, for Machiavelli, the only way to restore integrity to a fragmented Italy was for a prince of commanding intellect and strong will to make himself master of a people who would take up arms against the domination of a foreign power.⁸³

Watson acknowledges that there is a distinction between individual morality and the morality of a ruler who is acting to ensure the survival of the

state. As representatives of the state, rulers sometimes have to use modes of action that would earn the individual condemnation. But in comments that have considerable implications for his philosophic support for imperialism, Watson is careful to say that the state, and the ruler who represents the state, cannot be completely absolved of all moral responsibility. In a rebuttal to Machiavelli, Watson argues that the morality of a ruler's acts has to be judged in terms of the effect they have "upon the whole spiritual life of the nation."⁸⁴ The actions of a state, like the actions of an individual in his dealings with his community, are to be judged on the basis of their ultimate consequences.

In making this argument I would argue that Watson is, again, extending the lessons he extracted from Apology and Crito. To recall: For Watson, the former dialogue asks how the citizen's obligation to the community is to be determined, while the latter asserts that a citizen may not set his will against the community on the basis of self-interest. Watson's resolution to the dialogues' conundrum is: You can set yourself over the community only when obeying the communal authority violates a higher impersonal law. But you must obey the community's laws when your conduct is solely self-interested. Watson applies the same criteria to his analysis of Machiavelli's political ethics. No state can conduct itself solely at the expense of other states "as if the real interest of one nation were necessarily in antagonism to the interests of all other nations." For a state to act this way is contrary to "the higher interests of the State," ignoring that all states, like all individuals, are enmeshed in a relationship with other states.⁸⁵

Watson is essentially saying that Machiavelli's reaction to the abstractness, and hence the impossibility, of the medieval "imperial idea" has gone too far in the other direction. Machiavelli abandons the concept of a more universal humanity in favour of safety and order in a particular state. For Watson, this is flawed because it ignores the need to maintain a balance between the universal and the particular. Machiavelli may argue that only by means of a ruler's authority is it possible to preserve a particular state's existence and secure the freedom of its citizens, but, in Watson's view, the real consequence is to inflate the power of the ruler and open the door to tyranny. As in Roman times the interests of the state become bound up with the interests of a single person who may or may not act out of self-interest. Stated another way, the interests of the one are potentially at odds with the greater good of the many. Thus, Machiavelli's political theory implies that the individual takes precedence over the community, the particular comes before the whole, and morality is in tension with law. Hence, Machiavelli fails to reconcile the individual and the community.

Watson's moral philosophy, informed by an organic metaphysical worldview, cannot accept this tension of law and morality. His objection emerges most clearly in his rejection of the social contract theories of Hobbes, Rousseau and Kant. None of them is able to find a definitive way to reconcile the individual and the public authority. They fail, in Watson's view, because their respective metaphysical theories are flawed. On this point, we turn in the next chapter to consider Watson's critique of contractarianism.

CHAPTER TEN

The State in Question: Hobbes, Rousseau and Hegel

According to Watson, the basic political problem after Machiavelli was to establish the legitimacy of the nation-state. On this subject Watson devotes four chapters of The State in Peace and War, wherein he considers the thought of Thomas Hobbes, James Locke, James and John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, among others. While he perceives the differences between these thinkers, he argues that they share in common — and in distinction from his own Idealist view — a materialist metaphysic. The result, ultimately, is that they regard political community as fundamentally a utilitarian contract among individuals who are to be kept orderly by the state's threat of force.

Watson's harshest criticism of this materialist ethos is directed against Spencer. Like the Sophists, Spencer saw the relationship between the state and the individual as one of perpetuate tension and conflict, a condition where "what is gained by the state is lost by the individual, and what is gained by the individual is gained at the expense of the state."⁸⁶ Watson traces this notion of an enduring tension between the community and the individual to Hobbes. Hobbes, he says, thinks individuals can be adjusted to the community if absolute power is contracted to a Sovereign, or Leviathan, who alone can mediate among conflicting interests. Indeed, for Hobbes, the state is based on a contract

between the rulers and the ruled: "A contract or pact is made by which individuals hand over their power to some individual or individuals, who henceforth act with the combined power of all individuals."⁸⁷ Watson says this view is based on the assumption that prior to the contract men have rights; that is, natural rights that precede the establishment of a community and are only surrendered in order to better secure individual interests, satisfy the desire for recognition and avoid violent death. However, Watson thinks this view divorces rights from duties and intrudes an unbridgeable barrier between the community and the individual. Rights, he argues, are tied to community:

[T]here can be no right which does not flow from the consciousness of a common interest on the part of the members of a society, since a right implies recognition by the common will.⁸⁸

Hobbes's political philosophy is flawed by his metaphysical assumption that the individual exists apart from or precedes the community in some state of nature.

Watson makes a similar argument against Rousseau. Like Hobbes, Rousseau asserts the primacy of the individual, while at the same time seeking a political process in which conflicts between and among individuals are subject to an overarching authority. That authority is the state, which, for Rousseau, is the objective expression of the collective general will. Within the political order the people are sovereign, and through the agency of the government, which applies the general will, they express their sovereignty. Again, though, Watson regards such a claim as theoretically inadequate. On the one hand, if I am originally free, as Rousseau argues, then obviously some freedom is lost in submitting to an

association involving others. On the other hand, if association with others increases my security and goods, then, at least on the material level, I am freer than in the non-social environment of a state of nature.

Rousseau, Watson argues, would have each person hand over his natural freedom to the general will, only to receive that freedom back in the form of a social or moral freedom that reflects the individual's rational identity with the greater good of the whole. The flaw, though, is that implicit to the notion that the social contract requires an identity between the individual and the whole is the corollary idea that the individual who does not attain this identity can be forced to obey the general will. Watson, however, citing Rousseau's Social Contract, says this "means nothing less than that he will be forced to be free."⁸⁹ But this implies, in turn, that as the expression of the general will the state is ultimately based on coercion and the threat of force.

In this regard, Watson summarises social contract theory along these lines: The creation of a contract establishing the sovereign power requires agents who are naturally free and rational, and able to agree amongst themselves to give up some natural freedom in exchange for the safety and protection afforded by a political community. Such an agreement implies that individuals possess an autonomous existence prior to the formation of political order, but they chose to surrender some of their autonomy for the sake of security or social freedom. It also means that those who do not accept the social contract, who do not willingly subsume their particular will to the general will, can be forced to be free.

The State is thus constituted by an original contract, the terms of which are that all members of the people give up their freedom in order to take it back again as members of a commonwealth. By this contract a man does not sacrifice any part of his freedom, since the contract is an expression of his own will. The State, then, at once frees the individual from himself and protects him against enslavement by others. It uses its power to "hinder the hindrance of freedom..."⁹⁰

For Watson, though, the idea that an individual can be 'forced to be free' is theoretically and morally incoherent. He refers to the French Revolution to make his point. The revolution, he says, forgot that freedom, and the possibilities of self-development that go with it, cannot be obtained by external compulsion. In an essay written in 1915, "German Philosophy and Politics," Watson argues that the French Revolution demonstrated the ultimate danger implicit in social contractarianism: What began as a project against tyranny, degenerated into a "ruthless attempt to 'force other nations to be free.'"⁹¹ Such a statement has obvious implications for Watson's ideas about the purposes of imperialism, and we shall return to this issue when we consider his views of empire in the concluding chapter of Part Two. In the meantime, Watson makes his point: Rousseau's contractarianism is inadequate in terms of reconciling the individual and the community.

To be sure, Rousseau, like Plato and Aristotle, understood that political community is founded on more than a contract, that 'community' is intrinsically linked to the development of men as rational and moral beings. Indeed, Rousseau saw the civil state as the embodiment of moral freedom. In this light, Rousseau's famous phrase that "man is born free and everywhere is in chains"

should not be regarded as a criticism of political community, according to Watson. Rousseau merely recognised that civil liberty was distinct from natural liberty, and that the law was possible only in a lawful community. The question for Rousseau, though, was how to establish an association that can defend and protect civil society while, at the same time, allowing the members of that society to be free unto themselves even as they obey the will of the community. His answer was the concept of the general will, understood as those expressions of the common good that form the basis of law-making and political decision-making. This general will could be manifested in an open assembly where all citizens could make their voices heard and thus form the general will.

Watson, however, knew the notion of direct democracy was not only impractical in a modern nation-state, but also raised the prospect of majoritarian tyranny. "The general will is not the mere sum of individual wills," he said, "but the will of all in so far as the common good is its object: and law is its expression, but only in so far as it is what it ought to be."⁹² In other words, for Watson, the general will is not simply the consensus of a majority; rather, it reveals the degree to which the actions of the political community as a whole reflect the underlying metaphysical order of reality. Rousseau does not grasp this, Watson says, because he did not distinguish between the general will and the will of all. But Watson argues that what is best for the good of the whole "is by no means manifest to every citizen in his ordinary mind; his real will must be revealed to him."⁹³

With this argument Watson is, again, drawing on the lessons of Apology and Crito. The former dialogue, it will be recalled, seeks to determine how the individual's obligation to the community is to be determined; the latter maintains that individuals cannot set their wills against the community out of self-interest. Watson reiterates this dictum in his critique of Rousseau. He suggests that Rousseau's confusion between the general will and the will of all resulted from his failure to distinguish among individuals manifesting their true freedom on the basis of right will — a higher impersonal law — and those who act on the basis of uncomprehending self-interest or private will. The idea of a general will cannot be sustained because the metaphysical basis of social contract theory — the rational individual apart from a community — precludes such a possibility.

Although he endorses Rousseau's linkage of civil freedom and the general will, Watson did not think Rousseau's understanding of the true nature of the concepts to be adequate. Rousseau continued to cling to the fallacy that man could be free (and rational) apart from society, whereas, for Watson, it is only in society that man has any substantive freedom.⁹⁴ Indeed, for both Rousseau and Hobbes, social or civil freedom emerges from the repression of natural freedom. Rousseau may argue that civil society embodies a moral freedom that is not merely the renunciation of natural freedom; that is, he means by freedom the recognition of a law and a will with which my egocentric self may be at odds, but which reflects my higher self.⁹⁵ In Watson's view, though, Rousseau still assumes that natural man is at odds with man as a political being. While both

Hobbes and Rousseau insist on the priority of the individual, they nevertheless argue for a sovereign power that imposes limits on the individual. They, like Plato, are guilty of wanting too much unity. In this way, contractarianism fails to reconcile the individual and the community.

For Watson, then, the underlying assumption of social contract theory is that isolated individuals are ends unto themselves. Only the willing acceptance of all to enter into a reciprocal relationship is the basis for the state. But Watson argues that just as the relationship of a husband and wife points to ends beyond those of self-interest, so, too, are the members of a political community bound up in an inseparable relation that exists apart from any contract and goes beyond their own self-centred desires. "It may be expressed by saying that it is the relation of a community of rational beings not externally bound together but organically connected."⁹⁶ Watson concludes that so long as we fail to grasp this organic connection to each other we are forced to accept the idea that the only thing that holds humans together, the only basis for political community, is force.

According to Watson, however, man in his nature is essentially social, and it is through community that man realises his qualities as a rational being. A passage summarising his rationale for rejecting social contract theory recalls his commentary on Plato's Crito — the individual possesses his highest humanity when he acts on the basis of motives other than self-interest; that is, when he acts as a social being.

Only in society have men any rights, and rights are justified because they are the necessary conditions of the moral life.

Morality is not the willing of the individual nature, but the willing of the social nature. If we separate morality from society, and suppose it to be a law by which the individual is an end to himself, it is not possible to go beyond the abstract rule to do one's duty for its own sake, and such a rule gives no guarantee, of any specific duty whatever. Morality is essentially social, and the institutions of the State can be justified only as essential to the development of this social morality.⁹⁷

There are also echoes of Crito's higher self as the standard of moral conduct in Watson's notion of the nation-state as formally perfect. He argues that the modern nation-state is, in principle, potentially capable of accommodating all that the individual could *reasonably* want in political life.

In truth, the State is not the result of any self-surrender of an original position, but the recognition that such an opposition is one-sided and abstract. The State is neither a despotism, forcing individuals to submit to its commands, nor is it an arbitrary agreement of individuals to protect their personal rights by making concessions to others; *it is the recognition and realisation of the essentially indivisible nature of the consciousness of self and the consciousness of other selves.*⁹⁸

Hegel, according to Watson, was the one modern thinker able to convincingly refute contractarian political theory in favour of an organic conception of community. For Watson, Hegel provided the way to overcome the atomistic assumptions of the social contractarians, and, in this overcoming, provide the deepest insight into the nature of the modern nation-state. As he wrote in an 1894 essay, Hegel's "general conception of society and the state seems to me to be, in its grand outlines, a remarkable synthesis of the just claims of the individual and the universal."⁹⁹ Given this claim, it is instructive to look at Watson's appropriation of Hegel as they highlight his concerns.

Watson points out that while Hegel accepts Rousseau's and Kant's fundamental principle of moral freedom, or the free will, as the distinctive quality of man, he sees their conception of human freedom as flawed by its abstractness. In particular, Kant's defect is to conceive of morality and individual rights as somehow in opposition. For Kant, morality is conceived of as willing duty for duty's sake. As such it is "perfectly empty" in that it remains a universal or general law that can never be realised outwardly. Kant's claim regarding individual rights effectively isolates the individual from others because it conceives of the individual as an end in himself. This leads to a purely subjective view of morality, and an abstract and negative view of rights. If morality is understood as the willing of duty for duty's sake, it becomes impossible to actualise in any substantive external manner because I can never go beyond the empty general law to do my duty. I cannot see my duty in the world. My duty remains something abstracted from my concrete existence. If human freedom is purely subjective and has no outward expression that does not require the surrender of its autonomy to some degree, then, as far as Kant is concerned, individual rights exist only at the behest of the community. This means that rights are imposed externally by the state, which is effectively to maintain the atomised individual in his isolation and independence from others. For Hegel, though, Watson argues, this Kantian notion of rights belonging to individuals in their isolation from one another leads to the idea of the state as an external or alien power whose function is to keep individuals from harming one another.¹⁰⁰

In attempting to surmount the Kantian antinomy, Watson writes, Hegel seeks to overcome the opposition between morality and rights by showing that freedom involves the outward realisation of what is inwardly demanded by reason, and that the state and society are the arena in which this reconciliation takes place. For Hegel, human freedom loses its abstractedness and becomes concrete or actualised by externalising itself in a system of law and institutional order. Watson sees this concretization of human freedom, or true individuality, embodied in Hegel's notion of *Sittlichkeit*. In Hegel's ethical system "the inwardness of morality and the mere externality of law are reconciled."¹⁰¹ Hegel's political thought "is really an attempt to unite the two ideas of freedom or self-determination, and organic or spiritual unity."¹⁰² His vehicle for this reconciliation of the subjective and the objective is civil society and the state.

This concept of political order echoes Plato and Aristotle in terms of achieving some identity between private persons and public authority, but Watson believes Hegel's thought goes beyond that of the Greeks. Hegel accepted the ancient understanding that the political community must be an objective and concrete manifestation of the inner will of the people. But he also asserted that the political community had to embody this inner will through more than custom and tradition. The modern state, while retaining the sense of community of the ancient *polis*, must also reflect modern subjectivity. Hegel conceived of the state not as the product of a contract among autonomous and isolated individuals, but rather as an organic expression of individuals' rational

identification with their community, an identification rooted in the fundamental social nature of humans. With his concept of *Sittlichkeit*, Hegel removes the last vestige of the false theory that the State is based upon contract, making its foundation to rest upon the true principle of the common will, as distinguished from the mere sum of individual wills.¹⁰³

Watson adopts Hegel's "organic conception" of the state and rejects the notion that identifies the state with the power of the majority to impose its will and 'force others to be free'. No one can be made 'free' by force, Watson says, concluding that

It is not any number of separate individuals, choosing to make a pact with one another that justifies the existence of the State. The real justification is to be found in the social nature of man ... The whole complex organisation of society gets its justification from its fitness to realise man's essential nature, and different political constitutions must be judged by this standard.¹⁰⁴

Hence, the state is not some arrangement for controlling individuals or keeping them from interfering with the 'freedom' or rights of others. Rather, the state is the highest expression of human freedom as manifested through the objective institutions that make up the state — family, property, civil society, the courts, the government, the constitution — and it operates by the free assent of the individuals to those institutions.

Perhaps the single most comprehensive statement of Watson's appropriation of Hegel's political thought regarding the proper relationship between the individual and the community comes in a passage at the beginning of the tenth chapter of The State in Peace and War. The passage follows

Watson's philosophical history of the various concepts of political community from Plato's *polis* through to the modern nation-state. It is worth quoting because it reveals not only the concluding judgement of Watson's philosophical career, but also lends theoretical weight to his Idealist view of empire.

As the ultimate object of society is the development of the best life, each individual must recognise the rights of his neighbour to as free development as that which he claims for himself. The justification of this claims is not any fictitious "right of nature," but the just claim that without freedom to live his own life under recognised external conditions, he is not capable of contributing his share to the common good. A man has rights that are recognised by society, but they are not made right by legislation, as Bentham held, but are recognised because they are essential to the development of the common good. The possession of rights and their recognition by society are not two different things, but the same thing; for, as the individual claims rights in virtue of his being an organ of the common good, so the State recognises his rights on the ground that they are required for the realisation of the highest good of all. *The State, we may say, is under obligation to secure to the individual his rights, and any State that fails to do so ceases to fulfil its essential function.*¹⁰⁵

For Watson, then, the state does not exist as some sovereign entity that rules over other community institutions such as churches, volunteer organisations or even other governmental organisations. The state is the net that holds all these other entities together. It holds them together not because of some absolute superiority over these other organisations, but because it is the final means by which these organisations can be harmonised so as not to interfere with one another. The state, in other words, is the Ideal of reconciliation made real. As far as Watson was concerned, the Hegelian conception of the state provides a modern answer to the question with which Watson was most

concerned: What is the proper relationship between the citizen and the community? The modern state, grounded in the notion of popular sovereignty, provides individuals with the opportunity to develop their full human potential through their participation in the community. The individual, in turn, identifies with the state because he recognises in its laws and institutions the embodiment of his own rational will.

The question of Apology — to what degree must the citizen obey the laws of the community? — is also answered (or perhaps averted): The modern state, so far as it manifests the rational will of the whole, does not impose laws on the individual that are contrary to the rational will of the individual. Similarly, the question posed in Crito — can the citizen oppose his conscience to the will of the community? — becomes made moot because, theoretically at least, the individual's conscience, his subjective freedom, is reconciled to the objective laws of the state. In sum, Hegel answers the problem Watson had traced to Pericles: How to unite public authority with private freedom.

How, though, does this reconciliation of freedom and duty, morality and law, manifest or actualise itself? What are the particulars of Watson's conception of the relationship between the individual and the community? My discussion so far suggests that for Watson the community is the condition for the emergence of self-consciousness or individuality, and, equally, the full development of that individuality is the end of community. This suggests that Watson sees the relationship between the individual and the community in symbiotic terms.

Other commentators have not interpreted Watson this way. He is generally thought to give priority to the community over the individual. Leslie Armour, for example, in his 1981 book The Idea of Canada and the Crisis of Community says that Watson "constantly makes the point that community comes *before* individuality."¹⁰⁶ On the other side of the issue, Frederick Hoffner thinks Watson gives priority to the individual over the community. "For Watson, the problems of political society were not a case of protecting the individual from the unified purposes of the state but of transforming the unified purposes of the state into the service of the individuals."¹⁰⁷ I side with Hoffner on this debate, but I also think that Watson's position is more nuanced. For Watson, I argue, the question of the proper ordering of the relationship between the individual and the community is not a question of which takes priority or precedence, but rather, as I have said, a matter of symbiosis.

Watson himself lends weight to a symbiotic interpretation in The State in Peace and War when, in an apparent borrowing from Hegel's understanding of the emergence of self-consciousness, he argues that to know oneself psychologically as an individual, different and separate from other individuals, one must first become aware of others who are distinct from oneself. But an awareness of one's difference from others is possible only if one recognises one's relationship to them; that is, if one is conscious of the underlying unity that makes possible the discernment of difference. As Watson puts it — still borrowing from Hegel — "Identity is necessary to difference." In other words, the

recognition of a relationship between self and other, and the sense of community born from this recognition, is only possible if one is already self-conscious. Hence, self-consciousness is co-present with community.¹⁰⁸

Perhaps the best way to grapple with this conundrum is by considering Watson's concern with "atomism" and his theory of relative sovereignty. Not only does Watson's critique of atomism underscore his opposition to contractarianism, but it also highlights the distinctiveness of his Hegelian response to the purposes of the modern nation-state and, as I shall show in my conclusion to Part Two, his hopes for the British Empire. Interestingly, as we shall see in Part Four, Watson's argument on this topic foreshadows Charles Taylor's own criticism of atomistic individualism, although Watson comes to a different conclusion than Taylor about how atomism can be overcome.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Watson's Theory of Relative Sovereignty

In a certain sense, Watson does seem to grant the priority of the community over the individual in arguing that the individual is incapable of realising his higher potential outside a community, regardless of how inadequate that community may be in actualising the universal principle of reason. In his 1895 book, An Outline to Philosophy, Watson stated that "the true good of the individual" is identical to "the consciousness of a social good":

What holds human being together in society is this idea of a good higher than merely individual good. Every form of social organisation rests upon this tacit recognition of a higher good that is realised in the union of oneself with others ... It is still true that only in identifying himself with a social good can the individual realise himself.¹⁰⁹

However, in The State in Peace and War, Watson makes a more nuanced argument, pointing out that if self-consciousness is relative to the consciousness of other selves, and the development of this self-consciousness is possible only in contrast to other selves, then there is an abiding tension in the relationship between the individual and the community. In self-consciousness we become aware of the rational order of reality. Self-consciousness is thereby unifying; not, as Kant would have it, separative. But at the same time we also become aware that this order is manifested, however inadequately, in other objects, including other human beings. It is impossible to have one without the other. But this

means a fundamental tension exists in the relationship between self and other because the individual and the community can never be absolutely identified. Furthermore, any attempt to forcefully bring about the complete identity of the individual and the community, or, for that matter, the complete identity of different groups within a state, is to fail to recognise the true ends of each. In an analysis of rights that consciously echoes his commentary on Apology and Crito, and Socrates' criteria for criticising one's city, Watson says that as an "organ of the common good" the individual has a duty to criticise the community in an effort to improve it when it falls short of its true purposes.¹¹⁰

What does this mean in terms of Watson's efforts to find reconciliation between the individual and the political order within which he discovers himself? Essentially, Watson follows his Socratic model, asserting that criticism of a particular social or political order, and, hence, the effort to change that order for the better, is justified when those demanding change do so on the basis of principles that transcend their own self-interest. That is to say, when they act in accordance with the principles of right reason. This means there can be no notion of the individual, acting on the basis of self-interest, taking precedence over the community. Watson does not believe individual rights are prior to the good of the community as a whole. However, neither does Watson espouse the absolute supremacy of the state or the community over the individual. Near the end of The State in Peace and War, in an obvious reference to the Socratic model with which he began the book, Watson reiterates his core thematic

concern about the individual's relationship to the state when he says it is right for individuals to resist the law if that law does not express the common or rational good. "The conscience of the individual may be higher than the law of the state."¹¹ This notion of a kind of dynamic tension between the individual and the community is at the core of Watson's theory of relative sovereignty. The best way to approach this theory is indirectly through a consideration of Watson's concerns about atomism.

Watson obviously sees the individual and the community as symbiotically linked. In Idealist terms, there is no possibility of either the individual having priority or supremacy over the community, or of the community, in any of its forms, including the state, having supremacy over the individual. For Watson, the community in all its forms is the functioning differentiation of individuals. It is in this individuation that the individual experiences freedom, which Watson defines as the condition of being able to express this process of individuation. However, in seeking one's own individuation, reason dictates that one recognise the right of others to do the same since that which makes others different, is, like one's own uniqueness, the ground of their freedom. Thus, reason fosters the awareness of common good among individuals that can, by means of the state and its institutions, further the freedom and the sense of belonging of all. In this schema, the purpose of the state becomes the safeguarding of the individual's freedom through a system of rights that ultimately redounds to the benefit of the state.

Watson outlines his view of rights in the tenth chapter of The State in

Peace and War, "System of Rights," arguing that man has rights that are recognised by society. But they are not made rights by the state's laws, but are recognised as rights because they are crucial to the development of the common good. The notion of natural rights is, he says, a fiction. Rights are not properties one possesses but modes of recognition by others of the realms of freedom available for the individual's best possible development. Rights, including property rights, are not intended to protect the individual from an alienating society; they exist through others' recognition.¹¹² By implication, then, the individual needs the state in order to be free.

In Watson's view, this vital relationship between the individual and the state and the system of rights it engenders is undermined by the kind of atomistic politics that come out of a mechanistic metaphysical view of the world in which individuals are regarded as being utterly separate from and independent of others. Politics, by this view, is an imposition on an original freedom. Such a utilitarian understanding of politics threatens the state and, ultimately, the freedom of individuals, since the state is the preserver of freedom. The problem with atomistic and utilitarian accounts of individual rights, including those of Jeremy Bentham, James and John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, was that they undercut the moral basis of rights by focusing on rights as a matter of satisfying individual egos. Such a notion of rights, Watson argued, was an insufficient basis for communal obligation, and this was the crucial flaw in social contract theories.

To reduce the contract to a mere expedient for attaining a larger amount of happiness does not explain why any man should be under obligation to assent to the contract, if he thinks he would obtain more satisfaction by purely individual initiative.¹¹³

By contrast, Watson argues for an ethical conception of politics in which the state is obliged to protect the rights of individuals. In a statement that has major implications for his views on empire, Watson explicitly says any state that fails to secure the rights of its members has "ceases to fulfil its essential function."¹¹⁴ In other words, the state that does not assure its citizens' freedom loses its legitimacy.

Watson compares his ethical understanding of the state with that of individualist thinkers such as Herbert Spencer, who was much influenced by Darwinian evolutionary theory. Spencer regarded society as analogous to a living organism whose component "cells" are engaged in the struggle to survive against all other "physiological units." However, since the social organism, unlike the natural organism, has no central consciousness, there can be no suggestion that the "cells" might exist for the sake of the whole. Rather, it implies that the whole exists to serve the parts. Translated politically, Spencer's analogy implies that that state is the means to serve the individual's ends. "There is such an opposition between the individual and the State that what is gained by the State is lost by the individual."¹¹⁵ For Spencer, then, the relationship between the individual and the community or state is fundamentally antagonistic.

According to Watson, this atomistic view of political and social relations leads to the view that the individual is utterly independent of other selves.

Moreover, it implies that communal relations and political life are somehow unnatural, albeit necessary. This tension or alienation between the individual and the community is dangerous. While Watson agreed with Hegel that the division of powers among various political, social and economic organisations and institutions could provide strength and cohesion to the state, he also saw that it could create the appearance of the state as merely the aggregate of individuals fighting for their self-interest. In an argument that has obvious echoes of his criticism of Machiavelli's thought, Watson says such a condition can leave individuals psychologically fragmented, forced to act different roles depending on the realm or institution in which they find themselves, and leading private lives that are different from their public lives. We may want individual, social and political morality to be one and inseparable, says Watson,

but the complexity of modern life is so great, and the various forms of organisation so many and distinct, that often a man will act in different spheres in ways quite inconsistent with one another. The man who in private life is considerate and unselfish may in his public life display all the rancour and bitterness of faction ... deny(ing) that the nation should be guided by the same principles of morality as are binding on the individual.¹¹⁶

Watson was concerned that this fragmentation of the individual would undermine the integrity of the state. If self-interest becomes the dominant motive in public life, politics degenerates when public figures come to regard their interests as identical to those of the state. When this happens the possibility of rational politics is lost and the bonds of community unravel as each individual asserts his self-interest without regard for the ends of the state as a whole.

According to Watson, this is the result of Spencer's refusal to grant any interference with the absolute rights of the individual: "His doctrine, if logically developed, would lead to the conclusion that the State has no function whatsoever" beyond a modest role as a disputes arbitrator.¹¹⁷

At the other end of the spectrum from those such as Spencer, who asserted the sovereignty of the individual, Watson set those who, in his view, advocated absolute state sovereignty, such as Nietzsche, Haeckel and Treitschke.¹¹⁸ These German thinkers, Watson says, distorted Hegel's thought by ignoring his insistence on the state's rational grounding and replacing that substance with power. While Hegel believed in the absoluteness of the state in the sense that it provided the final political authority in relation to its own citizens, as well as in dealings with foreign states, the other three Germans ignored Hegel's declaration that *will*, not *force* is what binds the disparate elements of the state together. Nor does Hegel regard the state as the instrument of conquest and domination. For Hegel, the continuation of politics is art, philosophy and religion, not war. Indeed, it is impossible for Hegel, who held the state inviolable, to advocate world-dominion for some particular state. A philosopher who is an exponent of free will (which is also the moral will) cannot at the same time advocate an absolutist doctrine in which the state has "no limits but its own selfish interests."¹¹⁹

But the post-Hegelian philosophers had stripped Hegel's thought of its "Spiritual" substance and replaced it with a materialist element. It was this

substitution of *will* by *power* that led to the rise of German militarism. As Watson put it in reference to Nietzsche's influence: "His worship of power has been eagerly caught up by the new Germany which came to self-consciousness after 1870" with a mission "to 'carry heroism into knowledge and to wage war for the sake of ideas.'"¹²⁰ For Watson, state absolutism was merely the other side of sovereign individualism. The former abstracts the state from the individuals of which it is composed, effectively severing it from reason and making the state an end in itself. Similarly, the latter abstracts the individual from his community and makes the atomised individual an end unto himself. Thus, we have two abstract theories of the relationship between the individual and the community that are seemingly impossible to reconcile.

The underlying assumption of social contract theory, as I argued in a previous chapter, is that isolated individuals are ends unto themselves. Only the willing acceptance of all to enter into a reciprocal relationship is the basis for the general will. Watson, however, argues that members of a political community are bound up in an inseparable relation that exists apart from any contract and goes beyond their own self-centred desires. "It may be expressed by saying that it is the relation of a community of rational beings not externally bound together but organically connected."¹²¹ Watson concludes that unless we acknowledge this organic connection to each other, then we are forced to accept the idea that, ultimately, the only thing that holds humans together, the only basis for community, is force. Watson cannot accept this. His response to this tension

between the individual and the community is his theory of relative sovereignty. In an adaptation of Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit*, Watson argues that there must be demarcated spheres in which the individual is sovereign and others within which the state or community is sovereign.

The question, of course, is what is the principle of demarcation? Leslie Armour suggests that Watson does not make this principle entirely clear.¹²² I cannot agree. By drawing upon Watson's paradigmatic model of Socrates' situation, it is possible to discern the principle underlying Watson's notion of relative sovereignty. Watson, as I have tried to show in examining his critique of social contract theory, does not accept the idea that the state's existence can be justified as merely an aggregate of individuals choosing to make a pact with one another. The state's justification resides in the essential social nature of man, and man's freedom or individuality consists of the concrete realisation of this social nature. The complex organisation of society obtains its justification from its capacity to realise man's essential nature, and, according to Watson, different constitutional orders must be judged by this standard.

The absolutist state must be condemned not only because it is not suitable for realising man's nature, but also because it does not grant the individual adequate scope to determine his life as he sees fit. This same objection also applies to an attempt to subordinate those institutional and communal forms through which a man's life is best realised. This does not mean that any particular form of organisation, whether a trade union, a corporation or

even a religious institution, can be absolutely independent of the state. While social institutions must be able to manage their own affairs, none can act contrary to the good of the community as a whole. For Watson, then,

The principle of the enlightened state is to grant freedom of action to all legitimate forms of organisation within its boundaries, but it cannot surrender its ultimate power of harmonising differences without ceasing to be a state.¹²³

But what is the principle of determination on which the state can intervene in other organisations? Watson's answer, I would argue, evokes both Pericles' funeral oration and its definition of the essential political problem: "uniting public authority with individual freedom," as well as his paradigmatic response to this problem in his commentaries on Apology and Crito. It bears repeating: The former dialogue amounts to a discussion of the individual's obligations to the state, while the latter dialogue considers the integrity of individual conscience in the face of community demands. To recall Watson's penultimate judgement regarding these two dialogues: "Disobey the law when a higher impersonal law would otherwise be violated; obey the law where only one's own individual interest will be adversely affected."¹²⁴ Watson's theory of relative sovereignty reflects this criterion for determining the proper spheres of the individual and the state.

In an argument that underscores his notion of the moral empire which I will consider in this section's concluding chapter, Watson says the state should not intervene in the conduct of other organisations when to do so would "violate its own nature;" that is, when it would be undermining its essential function as the

guarantor of the rights of the individual. This, of course, makes the state a moral agent, albeit an indirect one. Watson is emphatic on this point: "The state cannot directly promote morality." Or, to put it differently, the state can intervene in the affairs of an individual agent or organisation only when it is defending a "higher impersonal law" for the good of the whole; that is, to say, when it is acting on the basis of the "rational will."

Watson offers the example of the relationship between church and state. While the state can legitimately play a role in harmonising conflicts of authority among different civil organisations, it must not interfere with the private beliefs of its citizens except insofar as an ecclesiastical body attempts to impose its creed by force, or the beliefs if promulgated are inimical to the good of the whole. Because it serves as a central regulative body, "the state has a right to see that the internal organisation of either church or civil association shall not be inconsistent with the organisation of society at large." For the state to fail in this function would be to allow a church or a corporation to act capriciously and, thus, "subvert the end and purpose for which political institutions exist."¹²⁵ In failing to fulfil its obligations as a regulative body, the state would be violating its "conscience" or "rational will."

With this example, Watson distinguishes between absolute and relative sovereignty. The former, he says, is incompatible with the independent actions of another entity. The latter, however, is only incompatible with a certain kind of activity. A body may have supreme power within its own sphere, but be subject to

power beyond that sphere. Again, Watson offers the example of the church, as well as the family, corporations and trade unions, arguing that each is beyond interference by the state insofar as they have certain recognised spheres of operations with which the state cannot legitimately interfere.

Watson contrasts his views with those espoused by Harold Laski in his 1917 book, Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty. Laski asserts that Hegel's concept of the state points to a monistic unity of power in which society is subordinate to an "all-embracing one, the State." In such a monistic society, Laski said, "what the state ordains begins to possess for you a special moral sanction superior in authority to the claim of group or individual." The individual is required to surrender his personality to the state's demands, to make his will identical to that of the collective. Laski, like Watson, used the example of the relations between church and state to illustrate his concerns about sovereignty. Unlike Watson, however, Laski saw the modern Church "compelled to seek the protection of its liberties lest it become no more than the religious department of an otherwise secular organisation." Laski's point, obviously, is that the state cannot be all-embracing of society without undermining the role and purposes of other social organisations.¹²⁶

Watson rejects this argument with his theory of relative sovereignty, defending an Idealist conception of the state in which state power does not interfere with the internal organisation of the church (or any other civil association) unless the church acts outside its proper sphere. What makes the

state sovereign over all other entities is that, first, its authority encompasses all citizens, and, second, because it possesses the final authority for harmonising relations between individuals and organisations within society.

Behind this concept of the state is Watson's Idealist claim that sovereign power is not identical to government, but rests upon the will of citizens as a whole, or, rather, on their rational will, which, as he notes, is not always the same. This rational will is not expressed in one particular institution, but in all institutions. Nevertheless, the state is that institution by means of which all other institutions are brought into harmony with one another. Most importantly, it is the singular institution charged with protecting the rights of individuals from the unwarranted interference of other subordinate institutions. The character of state action, if it is to fulfil its essential purpose, "is limited to the external conditions of the good life." The state is not absolutely supreme in the sense of including all other institutions; rather, it possesses relative sovereignty in that its central function is to ensure that all other institutions have the freedom to manage their own affairs without interference from others.¹²⁷

Watson's concept of relative sovereignty is, thus, his theoretical answer to the question of maintaining a proper relationship between the individual and the community or state, of reconciling freedom and duty. For Watson, the Idealist state honoured and even promoted individual autonomy and social pluralism while, at the time, satisfying the need of individuals to belong to a community. In this way he rejects Laski's view of the state as simply another social organisation:

such an understanding ignores the crucial 'harmonising' function of the state in comparison to that of other institutions. To be sure, Watson concedes that Laski was right to be concerned about an absolutist state in which all individuals and organisations are subordinate to government and possess no real independence. But under the theory of relative sovereignty, the state's 'supremacy' was only relative to that of other social institutions. Through its government function, the state was the ultimate authority, but its power was (or should be) dedicated and limited to its own "sphere" — guaranteeing the rights of individuals and harmonising the conflicts among individuals or other institutions. All other social entities could enjoy their own relative sovereignty, so long as they did not violate the sovereignty of others. The state may be said to include all of a society's institutions, but this does not grant it any absolute right to determine the actions of subordinate institutions. By Idealist standards, any state that attempts this has failed to be a proper state. As Watson concludes:

Freedom of life to citizens to form what associations they please, and to construct rules for their own guidance, is implied in the whole conception of the State as the organisation by which the best life is realised. It is by the free action of various subordinate forms of association that progress is made possible in the community, and the function of the State is not to dictate to those institutions their action or to impede its exercise, but to aid them in every way compatible with their harmony with one another and with itself.¹²⁸

In this statement Watson's appropriation of Hegel's emphasis on the reconciliatory function of the state is readily evident. Certainly, Watson concedes that Hegel granted the state and its bureaucracy more power than Britons, Americans and Canadians may find comfortable. But Hegel did so only because

he saw the state as "essential to the realisation of the good will."¹²⁹ This argument may sound similar to Spencer's notion that society exists for the benefit of its members. However, it must be remembered that for Watson the individual's self-development ultimately redounds to the betterment of the community since it is only in the community that the individual's development is possible. For Watson, freedom — the capacity to develop one's reason — is the freedom to try to achieve an identity with the whole, whether at the political or the metaphysical level. The good of the whole is attainable only by securing the good of the individuals who make up the whole.

In this regard, Watson's views on the state as they emerge from this theory of relative sovereignty stand in contrast to both those who emphasise the autonomy of the individual and those who fear the power of the state. For example, where Kant and Rousseau maintained their perspectives on the state in terms of the social contract, Watson held that Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit* effectively demonstrated the inadequacy of social contract theory. Similarly, Laski and other critics of state monism, who saw Hegel as at least partly responsible for German militarism and the promotion of state absolutism, had, according to Watson, confused the Idealist conception of the state with an absolutist idea of the state.¹³⁰

In an effort to draw out the nuances of Watson's theory, it is worth comparing his thought more directly with that of his contemporaries, particularly others who were influenced by Hegel. For example, in a famous passage in his

Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation, T.H. Green questions how Hegel's notion of the state as the basis of individual development can be reconciled with the experience of an "under-fed and untaught denizen of a London yard with gin shops on the right and left."¹³¹ Green suggests Hegel is being "seriously misleading" about the state given the abundance of historical evidence showing how "the requirements of the state have so largely arisen out of force directed by selfish motives," and when the only reason individuals obey the state is out of fear. In Green's judgement, "Hegel's account of freedom as realised in the state does not seem to correspond to the facts of society as it is, or even as, under the alterable conditions of human nature, it could be." Hence, he argues that citizenship does not require the individual to conform to the laws of the state "since those laws may be inconsistent with the true end of the state, as the sustainer and harmoniser of social relations."¹³² In other words, for Green, Hegel's conception of the state as the embodiment of the common good is too benign and even naive.

Bernard Bosanquet, another British Idealist, takes a more positive view of Hegel. In a direct reply to Green's argument, Bosanquet argues that the psychology reflected in Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit* reveals how individuals, even though they may not consciously concern themselves with abstract notions of the common good, nonetheless express this common good to the degree that they conduct themselves as law-abiding citizens, treat others with fairness, respect the property rights of others and expect others to respect their

"belongings." Even the ordinary labourer is aware in some fashion that his well-being depends "on something in common between himself and others." Thus, Bosanquet asserts,

it is not true that either the feeling or the insight which constitute a consciousness of a common good are wanting to the everyday life of an average citizen in a modern State.¹³³

Like Watson, Bosanquet says the state constitutes "the entire hierarchy of institutions by which life is determined." The family, the trade union, the corporation, the church and the university; all are included in the state "not as the mere collection of the growths of the country, but as the structure which gives life and meaning to the political whole."¹³⁴

Watson's account of the Ideal relation between the state and the individual — and the proper role of the state in this relationship — is, obviously, much closer to that of Bosanquet's than Green's. Yet, as Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott note in The Faces of Reason, Watson is "substantially less conservative"¹³⁵ than Bosanquet. This suggests that there are nuances to Watson's political thought that require further consideration if I am to adequately explicate the distinctiveness of his appropriation of Hegelian thought. Indeed, I would argue that despite Watson's apparent communitarian regard for the state and his rejection of the idea of intrinsic human rights, Watson comes down more on the side of the individual than either Green or Bosanquet. Such a claim requires development, and so I turn in the next chapter to more directly compare Watson's Hegelianism with that other English-language Idealists.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Watson contra the British and American Hegelians

There are numerous concepts that would allow me to compare Watson's thinking with that of other Hegelians.¹³⁶ But in keeping with Watson's use of Apology and Crito as the poles around which his political thought turns, it is perhaps most illuminating to compare his thinking on "obedience" — that is, the obligation of the individual to obey (or disobey) the state or community — to that of other thinkers. This concept, I suggest, has a ready application to Watson's fundamental political concern about the relationship between the individual and the state.

Watson's metaphysics, it will be recalled, asserts that the individual's real or ideal nature is that of self-conscious and active reason. Thus, the individual's *real* will is the rational or general will. From this metaphysical position, it logically follows that if the individual acts in a way contrary to the rational will, then the community or the state is justified in imposing its will on the individual in so far as that communal will is itself a reflection of the rational will. The state can legitimately interfere with the individual's life, including requiring the individual's obedience of the laws, when such interference serves the greater whole or the rational will because it is that rational will with which the individual, in striving for his truest nature, seeks to identify himself even if he does not know it.¹³⁷

However, Watson is careful to point out that while the will of the whole of the citizens should be the basis of state action, that does not mean the absolute agreement of citizens is the only condition for realising the general will. Watson argues that the concept of the rational will provides the means for justifiably opposing the state, particularly absolutist government. While an absolute ruler may believe he is acting for the good of the whole, such absolutism is contrary to the fundamental character of individuals as rational and social beings. Individuals cannot be forced to act, even if such action is promoted with the best of intentions because what is "imposed" by the state has the character of force and not will. And, as Watson puts it, "a free being cannot agree to be forced to act."¹³⁸

Watson's argument implies the individual can legitimately resist a state that interferes with the development or attainment of his 'truest' self when such interference is, at the same time, deleterious to the good of the whole; that is, contrary to the rational will of which the individual is a part. This is a tricky point to understand. Watson seems to be saying that so long as the individual's will reflects the rational will (whatever that may be), the state is in the wrong if its actions interfere with the self-development of the individual when that self-development is, or would be, good for the community. A state that interferes with an individual's ability to identify himself more closely with the rational will is acting contrary to the rational will that it is supposed to represent and, therefore, is failing in its essential role. And that, Watson says, grants individuals the right to criticise the state and, if necessary, oppose it through rebellion. Watson is explicit

on this point: Rebellion is permissible if "the conscience of the rebels is really better than that which is embodied in the existing state."¹³⁹

The question, of course, is how do you truly know whether the rebels' conscience is better than that of those who govern the state? Watson does not directly answer the question — and perhaps it is an impossible question to answer with any certainty — but I would suggest that his Socratic template provides a standard for judgement. To again recall his summary of Socrates' position: "Disobey the law when a higher impersonal law would otherwise be violated; obey the law where only one's own individual interest will be adversely affected." For Watson, that 'higher impersonal law' is the rational will. So long as the individual knows with utter certitude that his actions reflect the will better than those of the state, then he may be entitled to rebel against the state. This does not mean, however, that Watson is granting the individual priority over the state. Rather, he is saying that the individual is expressing the rational will that the state should embody, thus, acknowledging an identity between himself and the state.

Such an interpretation of Watson's thought provides an intelligible response to those of his contemporaries who accused Hegelian Idealism of providing insufficient scope for legitimate disagreement and conflict in society, particularly in regard to state's coercive power.¹⁴⁰ Watson's insistence that those who wish to criticise the state or, at the extreme, engage in rebellion, have to be certain their morality transcends that articulated by the state, provides a standard of judgement that places the onus on critics of Idealism to offer a coherent

alternative to the Idealist position. This Watsonian assertion supports Armour and Trott's statement in The Faces of Reason that Watson is 'less conservative' than, say, Bosanquet.

To be sure, in the tenth chapter of The State in Peace and War, in which he analyses the modern state, Watson defends Bosanquet's argument that all society is under the final control of the state, and that it is the state which provides meaning to the political whole. This defence is made in the context of a response to critics such as Desislé Burns, Bertrand Russell and G.D.H. Cole, who had attacked Idealism — and Bosanquet, in particular — for its theoretical inadequacies regarding international relations.¹⁴¹ These critics had attacked Bosanquet's idea of the state as a complete and self-determining political entity for failing to adequately account for the realities of international conflicts between states. Cole, for example, argued that Idealists like Bosanquet had followed Hegel in reifying the state to the point where they identified the state with society. The result was a failure to appreciate the diversity and plurality in society; in effect, the Idealists expected too much unity from the state. The same applied to Idealist notions of international relations. The Idealists made the mistake of regarding states as unified actors, when, in reality, international relations among states were conducted among diverse people and organisations. In modern society, Cole argued, state power was not exercised exclusively between two sovereign (and rational) wills, but also involved myriad individual and group interests.

However, Watson, with his theory of relative sovereignty, rejects the idea that Idealism fails to account for social diversity. The Idealist state promotes diversity by having as its fundamental purpose the self-development of individual citizens. What sets the Idealist state apart, however, is that, unlike any other organisation, its powers overarch all citizens. In this regard, Watson responds to critics like Cole by claiming that they were guilty of reducing the state to the government, of mistaking the part for the whole. Government, Watson says, is merely the organ through which the state endeavours to harmonise the various organisations of society. Critics like Cole incorrectly assert an antagonism between the state and society when, in fact, they are referring to tensions between government and non-government organisations. On this point, Watson approvingly quotes Bosanquet's definition of the state as that entity "which gives life and meaning to the political whole." By this definition, the state encompasses all the associations of society through which the general will is expressed, but cannot itself be identified with any one association, including government. Moreover, as Bosanquet's definition implies, it is the institutions of society that affect the power of government and thereby promote the general will. Thus, it is not a case of the state being opposed to the plurality of society, but rather of society providing the vehicle for giving life to the state, which, in turn, functions to sustain the diversity and plurality that gives life to society.¹⁴²

What Watson is essentially claiming, then, is the reconciliation of freedom and obligation, of civil liberty and the general will, in and through the state. With

this claim, Watson defends Bosanquet, who, he says, had clearly pointed out the importance of subordinate institutions to the vitality of society and, ultimately, the state. Bosanquet's critics had failed to catch his distinction between the state and government. While governments might act antagonistically toward individuals, the Idealist vision of the state still held out the possibility of a harmonious community.

Despite this defence of Bosanquet, however, there are subtle differences between the British theorist and the Canadian, particularly on the question of the individual's obligations to the state. Watson, as I have already noted, gives greater priority to the individual than may at first appear given his obvious communitarian concerns. But he does not follow Bosanquet in granting the community ultimate primacy. To draw out this point, a brief foray into Bosanquet's thought is required.¹⁴³

Near the end of The Philosophical Theory of the State, Bosanquet considers the "vexed question" of the basis on which the state can be criticised. In its proper form, he writes, "the state exists to promote good life, and what it does cannot be morally indifferent." But, at the same time, the state's actions cannot be identified with the deeds of its agents or morally judged in the same way as private actions. This is so because the state's actions are always "public acts and it therefore does not act within the same relations of morality that bear on private life." Since the state is the "supreme community," the determinant function within the whole, it is itself "the guardian of the whole moral world and

not a factor within an organised moral world."¹⁴⁴ If agents of the state act in immoral ways, that reflects the failure of their private morality, not any immorality on the part of the state as the expression of the general will. In other words, the moral incoherence of politicians and bureaucrats is a personal failing, and does not reflect the failure or inadequacy of the whole political community.

Bosanquet's point seems to be that the immorality of those who represent the state does not provide grounds for assuming some inadequacy on the part of the state. States cannot be judged by standards of private conduct. This seems to make sense; after all, an individual can behave badly in his personal life, but admirably as citizen, or vice versa. Being a citizen is not the same as being a good friend or family member. But are the two spheres mutually exclusive, as Bosanquet seems to imply? Bosanquet's theory of the state would seem to suggest not. In his theory of the state, Bosanquet says the state should not be regarded as an entity separate from other forms of social life, but as the overarching framework within which rational social life is possible. To recall the definition with which Watson concurred: "It (the state) includes the entire hierarchy of institutions by which life is determined ... the structure which gives life and meaning to the political whole, while receiving from it mutual adjustment." Or, to use Bosanquet's even more telling definition:

The state ... is thus conceived as the *operative criticism* of all institutions — the modification and adjustment by which they are capable of playing a rational part in the object of human will. And criticism, in this sense, is the life of institutions.¹⁴⁵

Such a theory of the state's rational activity clearly implies that citizenship is itself

a sphere for the expression of the rational will, which, of course, includes the subordinate spheres of work, pleasure and personal relations.

The overarching nature of the state also is brought out in Bosanquet's reference to the state as having the rightful exercise over society of "absolute physical power," of possessing "the only recognised and justified force."¹⁴⁶ To be sure, Bosanquet is referring to more than physical coercion; he is also referring to the 'force' of law, routine, organisation, tradition and custom. Without this power the state would be unable to harmonise the competing claims of individuals and groups. And, it is this complex of institutional arrangements that manifest the rational or general will. Thus, our *real* will is our will to be citizens, and we actualise this will and — attain our individual freedom — by conforming to the institutions of our society. Like Rousseau, Bosanquet regards the individual who subordinates his immediate desires — or actual will — to the discipline of societal institutions as 'being forced to be free'; that is, attaining his real or rational will.

For Bosanquet, then, force is inherent in the state, although it need not be identical to physical force. Citizens can govern themselves to the degree they accept the authority of their social institutions and fulfil their social responsibilities. Self-government is the necessary criterion for rational life and the manifestation of human freedom. If so, then how can an agent of the state, as a citizen, reject 'private' morality in his public functions? The logic of Bosanquet's theory of the state implies a close identity between morality and citizenship.

Yet, Bosanquet's statement that the state is the "supreme community" cannot be reconciled with his theory of the state as the expression of rational wills if he maintains there is no linkage between the state and private life. How can the state have a duty to maintain the conditions for individual moral development if it is not, in some sense, a factor in the larger moral world? If the state cannot be criticised on moral grounds, then all that seems left to question is whether the state and its agents are efficient in carrying out their functions, moral or otherwise. On this view, though, it does not matter if we are talking about a tyrannical state or a constitutional state.

This point brings me back to Bosanquet's 'vexed question' about criticising the state: Are the public and private spheres mutually exclusive, as Bosanquet seems to imply? It is on this question that Watson takes issue with Bosanquet, and, in doing so, reveals his distance from the stricter communitarianism of British Hegelianism.¹⁴⁷ "By a curious process," Watson writes, Bosanquet "seems to take all the responsibility from the State and to impose it upon its agents."¹⁴⁸ However, Watson does not think the state, as the reflection of public will, can so easily evade responsibility for its actions. To be sure, as I noted in my consideration of Watson's views on Machiavelli in Chapter Nine, Watson perceives a distinction between individual morality and the morality of a ruler acting on behalf of the survival of the state. Those who represent the state sometimes have to use modes of action that would earn the individual condemnation. However, Watson also says that state representatives cannot be

absolved of all moral responsibility. The morality of their actions can be judged in light of its effect 'upon the whole spiritual life of the nation.' In this regard, Watson asserts that when agents of the state act immorally they are acting against the true or rational will of the state. If these acts are not seen as due to the state, then no one can be held responsible. And if immoral actions by agents of the state do not reflect the rational will, then responsibility lies elsewhere. If they are acts of the government, which, as an organ of the state, expresses the actual will of the citizenry, then "it must be held that the really responsible agents are the people and not the immediate agents."¹⁴⁹ In other words, there can be no easy distinction between the private actions of individuals and the public acts of the state. The state has moral obligations even though its actions are of necessity different from those of private individuals. The state, as Watson put it, must in practice be held to be an organised institution and cannot be regarded as justified in acting immorally by its distinction from the individual citizen when it indulges in breaches of faith, fraud, violence or cruelty.¹⁵⁰

What makes this argument significant is that it highlights Watson's symbiotic conception of the relationship between the individual and the state, and distinguishes his thinking from that of British Hegelians such as Bosanquet. Bosanquet was inclined to grant the state priority over the individual, and so absolve individuals of responsibility for their government's behaviour. Bosanquet, indeed, seems to absolve the state of the kind of moral conduct expected of citizens, which means, in effect, that individuals do not have the right to act

against the state when it acts immorally or in contradiction to the rational will.¹⁵¹

Paradoxically, perhaps, Watson shows greater concern for the autonomy of the individual in more closely identifying the state and its citizens, particularly when it comes to emphasising the responsibility citizens have to monitor the morality of the state. Watson grants individuals the obligation to oppose the state if it acts contrary to the rational will. Bosanquet tends to express the relationship between the individual and the state in more absolute terms — for instance, "minds and society are really the same fabric regarded from different points of view."¹⁵² Watson, however, as his theory of relative sovereignty demonstrates, expressed his understanding of the organic relationship of the individual and the community without this absolutist language. While he accepted Bosanquet's notion of an overarching unity to the state, he also subscribed to the view that the general will of the state relied on a balance between the individual's self-development and the social character of individuality. For all his defence of Bosanquet, Watson is less of a communitarian than some commentators might think. In some ways, Watson shares a greater affinity to American Hegelianism than to British Hegelianism.

The American Idealists, like the British, saw the individual defined by his membership in the community, which consisted of an ever-widening circle from family and friends to the state. As James Good points out, the St. Louis Hegelians appropriated Hegel's organic conception of the individual to argue that "freedom only arises within the constraints of social relationships and can only be

achieved in the face of opposition represented by those constraints." Similarly, American Hegelians employed Hegel's concepts of freedom and the state, along with his master-slave dialectic and philosophy of history, to argue that the emergence of the United States was a world-historical event. Even the Civil War was seen by the St. Louis Hegelians, including W.T. Harris, William Brokmeyer and Denton Snider, as a manifestation of the development of World-Spirit, a dialectical clash between principle and the law out of which would emerge a better country. Hegel's principles of dialectical relation, the concept of reconciliation and the notion that all antagonisms are provisional, were adopted by these intellectuals as a rationale for comprehending the chaos of disunion, war and reconstruction.

William Goetzmann, in his 1973 anthology of the writings of Hegel's nineteenth-century American followers, The American Hegelians, observes that American intellectuals saw in Hegel's philosophy a way of thinking that allowed them to come to terms with and even direct their dynamic and expanding country. "Virtually every event in nineteenth-century America," he writes, "could be fitted into the ongoing dialectic and the unfolding process of the concrete universal." Hegelianism, then, in Goetzmann's words, was "a philosophy of unbounded optimism born out of a virtually infinite series of desperate situations, and it thrived on clashes and confrontations." Hegelianism was the ideal philosophy for a country continually confronted by expanding boundaries and an ever-increasing population. Hegel's thought provided a way of thinking that

amounted to "a kind of Manifest Destiny of the Mind, aiming always towards the formation of the greater community."¹⁵³

At the level of politics, too, American Hegelians subscribed to Hegel's concern that the state's unity must be "concrete," that is, organically whole in both preserving and vivifying the individual parts. As Lloyd Easton, in his 1966 book Hegel's First Followers: The Ohio Hegelians, points out, men such as J.B. Stallo and August Willich "brought out, directly or indirectly, the liberal element in his (Hegel's) political philosophy."¹⁵⁴

Perhaps, though, the American philosopher who can be most directly compared to Watson is Josiah Royce, generally acknowledged as the greatest systematic philosopher the United States has produced.¹⁵⁵ Like Watson, he was influenced by Hegel.¹⁵⁶ They also shared interests in metaphysics, epistemology and religion. In 1897, Watson and Royce debated each other in a famous series of lectures on Christianity and Idealism before the Philosophical Union of the University of California at Berkeley.¹⁵⁷ Finally, they also shared similar political concerns. Like Watson, Royce was concerned with the relationship of the individual and the community, particularly in the face of the disintegrative tendencies of atomistic individualism. And it was against these fragmenting forces — "the modern revolt against moral tradition," "the restless spirit of our reforming age,"¹⁵⁸ as he put it — that Royce offered his theory of community in his 1908 book, The Philosophy of Loyalty, which has been described by one scholar as Royce's "version of a world unified and redeemed."¹⁵⁹

At the core of Royce's theory of community is the concept of loyalty. By this term, Royce does not have in mind any negative connotations we might apply to it today — militarism, political oppression or blind obedience, for example. For him, it meant what we might define as "commitment"; that is, an intensely personal sense of ethical obligation. As he used the term, loyalty entails the "willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause." Royce maintained that the moral imperative for the individual was always to maximise his "loyalty" to the community, whether to one's city, the state or, indeed, the cosmic order. The ultimate ethical rule was to be loyal to loyalty itself.¹⁶⁰

Behind this concept of loyalty or commitment was Royce's insistence that the life of a fully developed individual, the person who exemplified loyalty, was lived in the dialectic between the private and the social spheres. Our individuation depends not only on the struggle to fulfil some self-chosen life plan, but also on our capacity for self-sacrifice. To achieve complete self-fulfilment, Royce insisted that the individual, through his free choice of a "cause," renounce his selfishness, his self-interest. Only by recognising one's selfishness can one see the emptiness of egoism and renounce it.¹⁶¹ Watson, it will be recalled, says much the same thing in The State in Peace and War where, in his critique of Plato's promotion of excessive unity in the *polis*, he says that the "intense consciousness of personality" is the necessary if insufficient condition for higher consciousness. "He who has no self cannot be unselfish."¹⁶²

Royce expresses a similar sentiment with his concept of loyalty when he argues that it is the idea of commitment to a cause that awakens a man to his social nature and satisfies his sense of belonging by uniting him with others who serve the same cause. At the same time, though, this commitment also fosters a man's sense of freedom because he is aware that his choice of a cause is made of his own volition. In effect, "loyalties" create community — families, corporations, unions, armies and nations — in which individuals are able to simultaneously preserve and surrender their individuality. Commitment to a cause unifies individuals with their community, but still allows them to retain their freedom by virtue of their voluntary decision to serve the cause.

Royce's concept of loyalty also echoes the Socratic conundrum in Watson's thought: 1) How do you decide where your loyalties reside — with the individual conscience or the authority of the state? 2) How do you know that the cause to which you have committed yourself is a good one? And, 3), what happens if you have conflicting loyalties? Royce acknowledges such questions:

Loyalty is a good for the loyal man; but it may be mischievous for those whom the cause assails. Conflicting loyalties may be general social disturbances; and the fact that loyalty is good for the loyal does not of itself decide whose cause is right when various causes stand opposed to one another.¹⁶³

He also sees the irony of a situation in which conflicting appeals to loyalty serve the concept itself: "Where such a conflict occurs, the best, namely loyalty, is used as an instrument in order to encompass the worst, namely the destruction of loyalty."¹⁶⁴

Royce's response to these concerns, his attempt to furnish further criteria for determining the worthiness of the individual's cause and avoid a clash of loyalties, is the principle of "loyalty to loyalty." The individual satisfies his loyalty or commitment only if that loyalty can avoid being destroyed by the loyalties of others. In choosing his cause, then, the individual ought to choose the cause that is most likely to further the loyalties of, and satisfy the self-realisation of, other members of his community. Ultimately, Royce "specifies the cause of universal loyalty as the highest and most general cause the moral agent can and ought to serve."¹⁶⁵

But how is this universal loyalty to be concretely served? Royce is aware of this question. He acknowledges that by virtue of the individual's nature and social embeddedness, the individual belongs to a family, a community, a state and to humanity. "In order to be loyal to loyalty, and in order to be a person at all, I must indeed unify my loyalty." Initially, the individual must choose his cause or causes; these causes must satisfy the individual's whole self, some of which will no doubt involve conflicting loyalties. In the end, these competing causes can form one cause "only in so far as they constitute an entire system of causes." And it is on this point that Royce, sounding very much like Watson, touches the bedrock of his concept of universal loyalty: "My loyalty will be subject, therefore, to the ancient difficulty regarding the one and the many." Unless loyalty is "one in its ultimate aim" there can be no overarching universal principle of loyalty that will do justice to the varied instincts and myriad social interests of the individual.¹⁶⁶

Royce, it seems, offers no easy resolution of this problem. To avoid a charge of empty formalism, he offers the notions of "decisiveness" and "fidelity." In the face of ignorance about the future, the individual simply has to decide on a cause and course of action that furthers loyalty itself. This decisiveness also requires fidelity to the cause. The only justification for abandoning a cause is if the cause involves "disloyalty to universal loyalty." To abandon a cause unjustly is to destroy an individual unity of purpose. But considering the complexity of human relations and the relative ignorance in which individuals exist, how is the individual to know with any reasonable confidence that his choice of loyalties is a good one?

Peter Fuss, in his 1965 book, The Moral Philosophy of Josiah Royce, defines Royce's concept of loyalty as a "doctrine of right conduct" in that it imposes on the individual certain social obligations while at the same time maintaining that those obligations are freely chosen. Royce's loyal man submits to the authority of his community as an "institutionalized social cause"; and he does so freely because such a choice conforms to his own natural impulses, capacities and needs.¹⁶⁷ In this way, Royce, like other Idealists, seems to offer a way to harmonise the good of the individual with good of the community as a whole. However, the question remains: What kind of guidance or standard does Royce's concept offer for choosing rightly?

Fuss describes Royce's doctrine as unsatisfactory, particularly with regard to providing a practical criterion for determining the relative worthiness of

conflicting causes to which to be loyal. He argues that employing the principle of "loyalty to loyalty" is of little help in arbitrating either the rightness of the individual's choices or the worthiness of the causes he chooses. In the former case, the principle of universal loyalty is supposed to serve as a criterion of subjective rightness, whereas in the latter application, the principle is intended to function as a criterion for objective rightness.¹⁶⁸ Supposedly, in evaluating his loyalty to a chosen cause, the individual asks himself whether his loyalty coincides with or is not purposely harmful to the loyalties of others. Obviously, this is a difficult thing to know. Faced with two equally worthy, if conflicting, causes, and unable to ascertain the consequences of his choice, the individual simply does not know which cause best serves universal loyalty. So how does he decide?

Royce, as I have noted, offers notions of "decisiveness" and "fidelity." Presumably, the individual undertakes a thorough examination his conscience (like, say, Socrates), and determines that he is serving his cause decisively and faithfully, and that he has done everything he can to make sure his cause is morally right. By this account, the individual's conduct is subjectively right, and, to that extent, morally worthy. But Royce's principle of "loyalty to loyalty" is more problematic. Universal loyalty may aim at an overarching social harmony of all loyalties, but given that the consequences of even morally worthy actions are often unknowable, then, as Fuss states, the principle of "loyalty to loyalty" is not only "highly abstract," but comes nowhere near providing "the dependable

criterion of the objective worthiness of causes" that Royce would like.¹⁶⁹

Royce's philosophy of loyalty bundles traditional conceptions of "conscience" into a single package: benevolence, justice, courtesy, honesty, patriotism and even good manners. For Royce, the concept of loyalty systemises these virtues and customs, organising the individual's conscience into something more than a cluster of dictates and formal imperatives. Indeed, almost by definition, loyalty offered a conceptual restorative for the institution of the family. Furthermore, the concept obviously has considerable application in terms of maintaining social harmony between, say, the rich and the poor, labour and corporations, and even church and state. In this regard, the concept of loyalty was intended to preserve social stability against a time of fragmentation. Nonetheless, in all effort to provide for individual self-realisation within the community, Royce cannot quite find the link of self and other, the concrete example that provides a standard for judging right action from wrong action.

Watson succeeds where Royce fails. To be sure, Watson echoes Royce in many of his social concerns. For example, Watson's notion of duty seems to parallel Royce's concept of loyalty in terms of their respective purposes. Duty, according to Watson, "implies the identification of the subject with a universal end in which the true self may be realised," and "freedom is the capacity ... of this self-identification."¹⁷⁰ In the union of oneself with others we experience the freedom available to us as human beings. Duty *is* freedom not because it negates desire or self-interest, but because it transforms desire into a higher end

that leads to the complete "realisation of the complete nature of the self." To grasp the conception of duty-as-freedom is to realise the universal through the particular, to comprehend the identity between the willing of the law and the willing of the self.¹⁷¹ But Watson, I suggest, provides the missing element to Royce's moral code, the principle that gives substance to Royce's formalism, the formula for deciding *how* to decide between two conflicting loyalties. I refer, of course, to the Socratic template Watson derived from the Apology and Crito. Applying Watson's standard, the Roycean individual faced with two worthy, if conflicting, loyalties should base his choice on whether it violates a higher impersonal law or whether it mainly furthers his self-interest.

Anticipating the overall argument of this essay, I do not want to make too much of these differences between Watson and his British and American counterparts, particularly in terms of attributing to Watson *alone* some uniquely "Canadian" Hegelianism. Furthermore, my brief analysis here obviously begs for a much more thorough comparison and contrasting of Watson's thought to that of his contemporaries than I can undertake given my purposes. Yet, despite the brevity of my discussion, what seems most striking about Watson's Hegelianism is how he is more balanced and less absolutist than either Royce or Bosanquet. In brief, Watson is more readily able to accept the dialectical interdependence of the individual and society. Sustaining this position is Watson's understanding of reason as something that develops historically. By complementing his theory of history with a developmental epistemology, Watson is able to place a greater

emphasis on individuality and history than British Idealists such as Bosanquet and even Green.¹⁷² At the same time, Watson's recognition of the symbiotic interdependence of the individual and the community avoids the triumphalism of the St. Louis Hegelians.¹⁷³

For Watson, there is no question of the individual having priority over the community. But conversely, neither can the community claim priority over the individual. And that is simply due to the existential reality that the community is nothing more than "the functioning differentiation of individuals."¹⁷⁴ Freedom, says Watson, is that condition in which one can 'individuate' oneself and not be regarded as an entity identical to some overarching organisation. At the same time, though, this free individual must also recognise the freedom of others since their individuation is the necessary condition for his freedom.

The individual, like Socrates in the Apology, can take as his authority the law of his own reason. At the same time, though, like Socrates in the Crito, the individual also recognises that the outward laws and institutions of his community are embodiments, however imperfect, of that same rational order. Moral development depends upon the capacity of the individual consciousness to discern the identity between his own reason and that of the community and, in doing so, to feel himself, like Socrates, constrained by his reason to submit to the public authority of the community. And he can do this, can accept his duty, because he sees that the laws of the community, while imperfectly expressed, are in fact an expression of his own higher self which perceives itself as a

reasoned participant in the rational order of the whole.¹⁷⁵

For Watson, then, to further the general will is to further one's own freedom. Where Royce wants the individual to achieve self-realisation through what amounts to a renunciation of the self to some overarching loyalty, and Bosanquet seeks the individual's identification with the state, Watson tries to reconcile the tensions between the individual and the community. Watson opposes both those who emphasise the individual at the expense of the state and those who set the state above the individual. Watson's Hegelianism amounts to a reconciliation or balancing of 'absolute' opposites.

Watson extends this notion of reconciliation to relations between states. Just as the state must not hamper the individuation of its citizens, so, too, must there be no attempt to eliminate differences between states. States are differentiations of the organic unity of man as a whole. The purpose of all states is "to secure the best conditions of life for the citizens in harmony with and limited by the universal principles of morality." Thus, "the good of one state cannot be separated from the good of another."¹⁷⁶ A 'community' of states can exist only if its purpose is to protect and enhance the individuation of its members.¹⁷⁷

This view comes through clearly in Watson's opposition to the kind of statism promoted in Germany before and during the First World War.¹⁷⁸ Yet, in the wake of Germany's defeat in 1918, Watson was equally opposed to the notions of world government that were then fashionable. For him, the independence of each state is necessary for the good of humanity as whole

since each state has its "special mission." The better each is able to fulfil its mission, the better it is for the whole of humanity.¹⁷⁹ Such a claim has obvious implications regarding Watson's support for the British Empire. Indeed, Watson's Idealist notion of international relations is best reflected in his support for empire. A concluding consideration of Watson's conception of imperialism is a good way to highlight his distinctive Hegelianism.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Conclusion — The Imperial Spirit

Watson does not accept the idea of a world-state, or any other notion of world government, that would erase the differences between nations and cultures. To be sure, a world-state that is based on the combination of variously differentiated states is a "possible ideal." But a "world-state which abolishes all the differences of race and nationality and individuality is an empty ideal."¹⁸⁰ For Watson, the true Ideal of international affairs is the uniting of love of country with devotion to the rational development of humanity as a whole. How, though, does Watson's support for cultural and political autonomy accord with his support for British imperialism? An answer to that question can be discovered by considering Watson's resort to Hegel's master-slave dialectic, and how in that dialectic man's inner diremption and the tension between self and other are overcome.

Watson's use of the dialectic is allusive and indirect. His most overt reference to the master-slave dialectic comes in Chapter Nine of his 1895 book, Outline of Philosophy, where he concludes an analysis of Kant's kingdom of ends and the notion that morality requires individuals to conceive of themselves as members of a social organism. The passage in question also reflects a highly compacted summary of Watson's essential political teaching regarding the proper relationship of the individual and the community. His choice of words in the

passage calls to mind his frequent allusions to the two Socratic dialogues of the Apology and the Crito, and the basic question of his political thought: how to reconcile public authority and individual inclination. It is worth quoting the passage in full:

In purely savage life it [moral consciousness] takes the form of submission from terror to a superior force. But even in this imperfect form, there is implied the recognition of a law superior to the caprice of individuals. For, in submitting to one who is superior to himself in courage and contempt of life, the savage recognises that there is something higher than his merely individual self. Thus there arises some sort of social order.¹⁸¹

Watson's Idealist view of empire can be drawn from this passage. In his view, the history of the development of consciousness reveals that morality has emerged from "the ever clearer consciousness of the unity of each with all."¹⁸² This does not mean, though, that Watson's philosophical Idealism was blind to the abuses of empire. Like it or not, the development of consciousness has meant the use of violence, the conquest of some people by other people, the forced submission of "savages" to a superior civilisation. He describes how the "purely savage life" submits out of "terror" to a "superior force."¹⁸³ Such language may pale in comparison to Hegel's graphic description of the "Terror of Death" at the hands of the master.¹⁸⁴ Nonetheless, Watson does not ignore the hard realities of Spirit's development: "The first contact of the civilised trader with the savage races has often led to the most deplorable results; the natives have been robbed, corrupted by opium, murdered in cold blood and sold as slaves."¹⁸⁵ Yet, he also insists on the equal truth that out of this conquest, and implicit in it, has

come the further development of freedom, and hence the development of a higher moral and social order.

Watson essentially argues that even in submitting to a greater power, the savage is implicitly acknowledging and accepting the superiority of his conqueror's civilisation and, thereby, justifying the conquest. However, to accuse Watson of advocating a might-is-right justification for imperialism is to misinterpret the full import of his argument. Watson's Idealism is not promoting empire for the sake of conquest or material gain, although he does not deny that this is how most men see it. Watson sees in the submission of the "savage" — by which he simply means a being lacking higher self-conscious development — an implicit recognition of a principle of order that transcends the savage and, at a deep level, the longing for the knowledge of that order. For Watson the beginning of morality requires the awareness and acceptance of a principle that is higher than one's self-interest. This higher principle, the law of reason, is supposed to be embodied in the "chief" or master.

Watson, however, also recognises that the problem with the master — or, by extension, the superior civilisation — is that while he is in possession of a higher Ideal of himself, he does not necessarily understand himself as a moralising agent who needs to act on the basis of reason. The master can too easily fail to recognise that it is only to the degree that he embodies a principle higher than his own self-interest, a higher impersonal law, that his use of power is justified and his authority legitimated. Thus, in Watson's view, rulership over

others is only justified if the rulers exercise their authority for a good that transcends their own desires. Unless the master is consciously acting on the basis of a higher good, he has no legitimate authority. The savage, Watson seems to suggest, 'submits' only because he can see that the master is exercising his authority under the guidance of a higher principle, not on the basis of caprice and selfishness.

Watson's notion of moral leadership on the part of those with power and authority certainly accords with the early twentieth-century Idealist view of imperialism that cast the British Empire as an agent for developing the spiritual potential of mankind, including the "savages." As David Boucher points out, Watson was like many other British Hegelians, including Edward Caird, Bernard Bosanquet, J.A. Muirhead, Henry Jones and D.G. Ritchie, who believed that whatever one's view on how Britain had acquired its empire, there was no way it could retreat from the moral responsibilities of protecting its subject peoples. The Idealists believed that "out of the chaos was emerging a more human and responsible attitude to native peoples."¹⁸⁶

Imperial rule was acceptable, then, so long as the power and authority of the empire-builders was aimed beyond the satisfaction of their own interests. This is the basic position Watson takes in The State in Peace and War when he discusses international relations in the post-World War One era. He was well-aware of the exploitation and violence that inaugurated the British Empire, but nevertheless believed in the effort, as Caird puts it, "to make our government

tend to the good of the governed, and to open to the governed all the privileges of their governors."¹⁸⁷ For Watson, the British Empire comes closest to this mandate. It is, he says, the only successful experiment in international government because it has fulfilled his fundamental political concern of reconciling 'individual' peoples in an imperial community. Or, to repeat Watson's phrase: The Empire succeeded in "combining the freedom of the separate organs with the unity of the whole."¹⁸⁸

Empire exemplifies Watson's theory of relative sovereignty at the international level. For Watson, states are differentiations of the organic whole that is mankind, and the *true* aim of each is to secure the best conditions of life for its citizens such that they are in harmony with the universal principles of morality. The good of one state cannot be separable from that of another. Nonetheless, in the same way that there must be differentiation among individuals in a particular state if the good of the whole society is to be achieved, so too, at the international level there needs to be independent nations with different cultures. Each state, Watson argues, has a "special mission" to develop its particular form of civilisation. "The independence of the state is essential to the good of humanity."¹⁸⁹ Following his organic theory of community, Watson maintains that conflicts between independent states are not justified because the *true* mission of any state cannot be incompatible with that of another state. "Properly understood the mission of one nation cannot be incompatible with the mission of another."¹⁹⁰

Obviously, Watson does not support the concept of a world-state or the expansion of internationalism that seeks to suppress nationalism. He rejects Bertrand Russell's proposal for an International Authority that would see people shed their patriotism and surrender national sovereignty. In his rejection can be seen in his concern for a balance between 'national' and 'international' interests, or between the individual and the community. While rejecting a parochial nationalism, he recognises the idea of internationalism as a utopian abstraction:

The union of the love of country with devotion to the cause of humanity is the true ideal, and neither a selfish patriotism nor a vague humanitarianism that leads to nothing but neglect of the duty that lies nearest.¹⁹¹

Or, to put the idea in more contemporary phrasing, Watson suggests acting imperially, while thinking locally. Indeed, the British Empire is Watson's model for the reconciliation of the national and the international. He supports the autonomy of nation-states and cultures; nevertheless, he argues for the legitimacy of imperialism on the grounds that a civilisation with a more developed rational consciousness can exercise political authority over a less developed state — if that authority is wielded for the good of that state's citizens.

Watson extracts from Hegel's master-slave dialectic the ethical substance of imperialism. Idealism, with its emphasis on citizenship, duty and patriotism, as well as its exhortation that one must take responsibility for the world's weaker or less civilised members, provided the moral foundations for that side of imperialism which saw the Empire as less an economic and military enterprise, and more as an agent for the development of mankind's higher spiritual potential.

Watson responds to those who see imperialism in a less favourable light by putting forward the ethical caveat that the Empire is justified if it is a force for civilisation, which, for Watson, meant the increasing development of the moral consciousness. As he put it:

The only justification for the rule of a superior over an inferior people is that the former should regard as its special task the elevation of the latter to its own level.¹⁹²

In other words, there is a 'right' imperialism and a wrong 'imperialism,' and as far as Watson was concerned, instead of rejecting empire, imperialism should be consciously directed toward the goal of preparing subject people for self-government and an understanding of their inherent freedom. Furthermore, lifting a colonised people to a higher level of consciousness does not require the destruction of their culture. Fitting in with his idea that each culture, each state, has its mission, Watson says that only the "better elements in the older civilisation must be recognised and fostered." Nor should the imperial nation expect to maintain a permanent rule over the colony. It must, he says, "take the necessary steps to fit them for self-government."¹⁹³ In other words, it is the duty of the imperial power to raise the self-consciousness of the colonial citizens.

Watson uses British rule in India as his main example of enlightened imperial rule, of one civilisation trying to lift another to a higher level of rational development. But he also applies this standard of recognition to the allies' treatment of post-war Germany. While Watson may have rejected the criticism levelled against Hegelians by the likes of Hobhouse, Cole and Russell, he

echoed their condemnations of states that act immorally. In The State in Peace and War, after criticising Bosanquet for effectively granting the state an exemption from morality, Watson decries states that lower the standard of human morality by engaging in torture, using poison gas or targeting civilians during war. Watson does not at this point specifically name which states he has in mind, but given the context of his comments there is little doubt that he was thinking of Germany.¹⁹⁴ However, Watson does not let the allied states off the hook. On the issue of German war reparations, he applies to them the same moral standard he applies to the German state. Watson argues that to impose heavy reparations on German would only confirm the view that Allied war aims were motivated by commercial self-interest. In a prescient warning, Watson said harsh reparations would only stir the "racial pride" of the German people and serve to perpetuate their militarism and "prepare for the next war."¹⁹⁵

Sustaining Watson's argument against reparations is his teleological view of human reason and the historical development of the rational will. Germany may be guilty of starting the Great War, but it is also a state with legitimate interests in the world. German militarism would not be overcome by being suppressed through the economic diminishment of the German state, but only through the recognition and acceptance of the German nation as a part of the community of states. With this argument — an argument, I suggest, that has certain similarities to contemporary notions of nation-building, foreign aid, international development and Third-World debt relief — Watson makes concrete

his notion of rights as applied at the international level. That is, rights are not a property we possess inherently, but recognition by others of the spheres of freedom needed for full self-development, whether as an individual or a nation-state.¹⁹⁶

Watson sees this notion of relations reflected, however imperfectly, in the British Empire and the relations between Great Britain and the Dominions. The empire, he says, represents a "form of government (that is) founded on principles which appeal to the highest political ideals." In a statement that echoes his theory of relative sovereignty, Watson judges the empire's "remarkable success" to be based on "combining the freedom of the separate organs with the unity of the whole." Within the empire there exists the greatest possible freedom for the self-development of each member state and the greatest possible sense of belonging to a community of common sentiment and common ideals.¹⁹⁷ That is to say, the empire as a whole expresses a general will that is embodied in the various forms of the different member states. Or, to put it another way, the imperial arrangement provided a credible response at the international level to that essential political problem: 'uniting public authority with individual freedom.'

To Watson's way of thinking, then, imperialism, despite its origins and abuses, is not inherently morally offensive because it speaks to an Ideal morality, a way for states to conduct themselves in ways that go beyond self-interest. For states to use other states as mere instruments for satisfying their own desires is "entirely immoral," Watson says. But especially in the case of "races inferior in

civilisation," it is a duty to "rule them entirely with the end in view of gradually making it possible for them to lift themselves to a higher plane."¹⁹⁸

For Watson, the British Empire was a model of the kind of state that served this ideal end, as well as an example of the proper relationship between different nations.

This group of groups has thus shown by a brilliant example what may be effected when the outlook is that of free men, attached by the bond of common descent and common or at least similar institutions, and all performing their part in furthering the success of the whole. *We have in this modern State an almost perfect example of the unity in diversity which we have already seen to be necessary in a single nation.* The common will is the hidden spring of this community of nations, a will which is manifested in each and yet is necessary to the harmony of the whole. Here we have the real general will present in its degree in every one of the co-operating groups.¹⁹⁹

Here again, Watson's understanding of the questions Plato raised in Apology and Crito can be discerned. In concluding his discussion of the master-slave dialectic, Watson argues that the "true good of the individual" is identical to "the consciousness of a social good," and the recognition of this identity, implicit even in the slave's submission, provides the "moving principle" to the development of moral consciousness. *True* empires are based on the recognition, unconscious or not, of "a higher good that is realised in the union of oneself with others."²⁰⁰

At the centre of Watson's political philosophy is the Hegelian effort to establish a moral world-community grounded in the universalising aspect of human reason. To Watson's mind, such a community, with its emphasis on

reasoned authority and organic unity, as opposed to the claims of individualistic thinkers such as Spencer, would provide stability and coherence at time of rapid social change, without sacrificing a faith in progress. To be sure, Watson did not assume this *real* will would or could be achieved comprehensively with ease; like Hegel, he never forgot that there is a great deal of difference between the *actual* and the *real* will. Still, like all Idealists, he saw history as a process by which individuals and their communities gradually developed a great awareness of and identity with the rational or general will and the underlining spiritual order of existence.

For Watson, history showed that the development of the rational will best occurred in a well-organised state composed of institutions through which individuals could enjoy the freedom and fulfil the duties necessary for their self-development. Just as Pericles had declared the "great impediment to action" to be "the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action," so, too, did Watson see the institutions of society — democratic governance, a system of rights and laws, parliamentary debate, to name a few — as a means for promoting the "self-criticism and self-correction" necessary for developing the common good. Contrary to those who saw Idealist philosophy as too abstract, or providing unwarranted support for the established order, Watson saw it providing the reflection necessary for choosing actions wisely and in accordance with the best insights into the rational will. Watson employed Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit* to argue that a rational and moral state (or rational and

moral empire) was grounded in the recognition of the freedom of all and respect for one's traditions as embodiments of universal reason. He saw that the deeper problem of modern political order was not so much a matter of protecting the individual (or the individual state) from an absolutist state (or system of states), but of making the state serve individuals.²⁰¹ In a time of social change it was imperative that the interdependence of individuals (and states) be recognised for the good of the whole.

It is only by mutual dependence upon each other that the best powers of men are called forth into exercise. Wide-spread industry tends to eliminate purely self-referent interests, by bringing men into intimate relations with each other, it generates that mutual trust and confidence which result in a healthy tone of public morality . . . *The seeming sacrifice of independence is really the condition of the only independence that is worth having.*²⁰²

That last sentence might serve as Watson's final theoretical justification of imperial order. As a philosophic Idealist, he saw empire as providing the kind of reconciliation of freedom and duty that allowed a community of individuals to stand against disintegrative forces that threatened their civilisation. In this regard, Watson anticipated many of the current communitarian arguments against the supposed fragmentary tendencies of individualistic liberalism, including those of George Grant and Charles Taylor. As I shall show in Parts Three and Four, his Idealism finds a number of echoes in the thought of my other Hegelians, as well as some distinctive differences.

ENDNOTES TO PART TWO

1. John Lukacs, The End of the Twentieth Century and the end of the modern age, (New York, 1993), p. 174-175.
2. Canada was born out of the clash between the two largest empires of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the French and English Empires. More recently, like it or not, Canadians have had to define themselves as best they can in terms of their perceived relationship to the great imperial power of the twentieth century, the United States. See David Bercuson *et al.*, Colonies: Canada to 1867, (Toronto, 1992), p. 480. However, I would also like to speculate about a slight Teutonic tinge to Canada's bloodline. For those such as myself who have a weakness for historical coincidences it is curious to note that in the same year that Bismarck began the unification of Germany — 1864 — the major push for Confederation began with the Charlottetown conference. Might it be suggested, then, that Canada's existence as an independent political state is linked to the rise of the modern German state, or, more precisely perhaps, the British response to the rise of the German empire? After all, the last British garrison sailed from Quebec in 1871 even as German soldiers continued to occupy French soil. See W.L. Morton, The Canadian Identity, 2nd ed., (Toronto, 1972), p. 47-48.
3. See George Parkin, "The Reorganization of the British Empire," Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, XXXVII, (1888), p. 187-192. This essay contains the essential elements of Parkin's imperialist thought. It was later expanded into a book, Imperial Federation: The Problem of National Union, (London, 1892). The essay is reprinted in H.D. Forbes, ed., Canadian Political Thought, (Toronto, 1985), p. 156-165.
4. G.M. Grant, "Our National Aims and Objects," in Maple Leaves: Being the Papers Read Before the National Unity Club of Toronto at the 'National Evenings' During the Winter of 1890-91. (Toronto: National Club, 1891), p. 20.
5. Parkin, "Imperial Federation," University Magazine, I, 1, (April, 1902), p. 193.
6. A.B. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era, (Toronto, 1979), p. 195-196.

7. The most detailed account of the influence of Idealism in Canada remains McKillop's 1979 book, A Disciplined Intelligence. See also his essay, "The Idealist Legacy," Contours of Canadian Thought, (Toronto, 1987), p. 96-110. Other articles that touch on Canada's Idealist heritage include, Terry Cook, "George R. Parkin and the concept of Britannic Idealism," Journal of Canadian Studies, X, 3, (1975), p. 15-31; Robert J.D. Page, "Canada and the Imperial Idea in the Boer War Years," Journal of Canadian Studies, V, 1, (1970), p. 33-49; D.L. Cole, "Canada's 'nationalistic' imperialists," Journal of Canadian Studies, V, 3, (1970), p. 44-49; Allan Smith, "Metaphor and Nationality in North America," Canadian Historical Review, 51, 3, (1970), p. 247-275, and "Conservatism, Nationalism and Imperialism: The Thought of George Monro Grant," Canadian Literature, 83, (Winter, 1979), p. 90-116. For a comprehensive historical and biographical sketch of Watson's life and his influence (besides that of McKillop's), see Christopher Humphrey, The Sage of Kingston: John Watson and the Ambiguity of Hegelianism, Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University, Montreal, 1992.
8. Idealism, according to the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, is "the philosophical doctrine that reality is somehow mind-correlative or mind-coordinated — that the real objects constitute the 'external world' are not independent of cognizing minds, but exist only as in some way correlative to mental operations. The doctrine centres on the conception that reality was we understand it reflects the workings of mind." See, p. 355-357. I wish to draw this definition to the reader's attention because throughout my essay I have deliberately capitalized Idealism. I do so on the assumption than there may be some conceptual confusion, as it were, between the philosophic doctrine and the common contemporary usage of the word "idealism" as referring to some kind of sentimental high-mindedness or utopianism. In other words, an Idealist is seldom, if ever, an idealist.

The antecedents of Speculative Idealism are Hegel's critique of Kant and the subsequent neo-Hegelian thinking of British Idealists such as Benjamin Jowett, T.H. Green and, in particular, Edward Caird, who was Watson's philosophic mentor. Watson acknowledged the influence of the British Idealists, especially Caird, but his philosophic thought shows some significant departures from their thinking. In the prefaces to the 1895 first edition and the 1898 second edition of Outline of Philosophy, Watson says he is defending the "Idealistic position, as least as held by such writers as the late Professor T.H. Green and the present Master of Balliol (Edward Caird)." In particular, he acknowledges a debt to Green's Prolegomena to Ethics and his Philosophical Works and Caird's Comte and Critical Account of the Philosophy of Kant. Nevertheless, as one of Watson's students

wrote, while Watson "remained faithful to the general principles which they (Green and Caird) expounded, he developed his own original methods of exposition and made significant contributions of his own, particularly in the field of the Philosophy of Religion." See J.M. MacEachern, "John Watson," Some Great Mean of Queen's, ed., R.C. Wallace, (Toronto, 1941), p. 25-26. Similarly, a more recent student argues that even in his non-religious writings Watson "saw himself not only as an interpreter of Green and Caird, but also as a philosopher who used British Idealism as a basis for his own distinctive philosophical system." See Robert Taylor The Darwinian Revolution: The Responses of Four Canadian Scholars, Ph.D. Thesis, (Hamilton: McMaster University, 1976), p. 173.

9. John Irving, "One Hundred Years of Canadian Philosophy," Philosophy in Canada: A Symposium, (Toronto, 1952), p. 6.
10. Irving, "Philosophical Literature to 1910," Literary History of Canada: Vol. I, Canadian Literature in English, ed. Carl F. Klinck, (Toronto, 1976), p. 454. Irving writes: "One of the great teachers of philosophy in Canada during the last hundred years, Watson was the first philosopher in this country to achieve an international reputation through his writings. British and American historians of philosophy always list him as one of the leading representatives of the Idealistic movement in the Anglo-Saxon world." Clifford Williams points out that in thirty years between 1885 and 1915, one or more of Watson's books were used as texts in at least twelve of the fifteen universities in Canada and certainly in all the larger departments of philosophy. See Williams, The Epistemology of John Watson, Ph.D. thesis, (Toronto, 1966), p. 6.
11. Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott, The Faces of Reason: An Essay on Philosophy and Culture in English Canada 1850-1950, (Waterloo, 1981), esp. Chps. Seven and Eight. Other more recent books have looked at Watson's influence on public educational policy. For example, B. Anne Wood, Idealism Transformed: The Making of a Progressive Educator, (Kingston and Montreal, 1985); and Peter C. Emberley and Waller R. Newell, Bankrupt Education: The Decline of Liberal Education in Canada, (Toronto, 1994). Finally, John Burbidge, in a brief essay that sketches the widespread influence of Hegelian thought in Canada, points out how after their encounters with Idealist teachings at Queen's University, including that of Watson's, "Presbyterian clergy spread across the country preaching a vision of 'seeing life clearly and seeing it whole'; words which, as he remarks, "molded several generations of Protestant thought, and contributed to the intellectual foundations of the United Church of Canada." See "Hegel in Canada," The Owl of Minerva, 25, 2, (Spring, 1994), p. 216.

12. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence, p. 196.
13. McKillop notes that in 1976, nearly four decades after Watson's death in 1939, two of the books he wrote on Kant, Kant and his English Critics (1881) and The Philosophy of Kant Explained (1908), were selected to be reprinted by a New York publisher as among the eleven most important studies of Kant's philosophy. See McKillop, "The Idealist Legacy," p. 97. And, until recently, Watson was the only Canadian philosopher to give the Gifford Lectures, which he presented in 1911 and 1912. These lectures were published in 1912 in Watson's study of religion, The Interpretation of Religious Experience.
14. Elizabeth Trott, Experience and the Absolute, Ph.D. thesis, (Waterloo, 1971), esp. Chp. XII; Williams, The Epistemology of John Watson. Williams writes that "the ultimate interest Watson has in philosophy is the support it may offer to theology and to a justification of religious belief." p. 46.
15. For the purposes of my essay I have bracketed Watson's metaphysical and epistemological theories as beyond the scope of my inquiry. It suffices to note that Watson's morally purposive politics was sustained by certain metaphysical assumptions, the most essential assumption being "the internal relation of all entities." (The quotation comes from Clifford J. Williams, The Political Philosophy of Two Canadians: John Watson and Wilfred Currier Keirstead, M.A. Thesis, (London, Ont., 1952), p. 1.) In other words, Watson's moral theory is grounded in a metaphysical system which itself is sustained by a particular epistemology. As he put it: "A theory of conduct is, or ought to be, the exact counterpart of a theory of knowledge." Watson, "Hedonism and Utilitarianism," Journal of Speculative Philosophy, X, (1876), p. 271. There is, thus, a direct link between Watson's comprehension of reality, the knowledge humans are capable of attaining of that reality, his historicist methodology and his political philosophy.
16. In terms of a theory of knowledge, Watson follows Hegel, claiming that rational intelligence cannot exist in a universe that is itself not rational. Thus, the rationality of the universe is an indispensable condition of human consciousness. The rational and the real must be identical: if it cannot be demonstrated that the universe, or objective reality, is structured in an orderly and comprehensive manner that is amenable to human consciousness, then there is no way to prove that human consciousness can have knowledge of the world. If the real and the rational are not reconciled the world is senseless and purposeless.

This Hegelian assertion that the real is rational and the rational is the real is

the basic assumption of Watson's Idealist metaphysics. Like Hegel, then, Watson argues that we can know the world, or objective reality, because the world possesses characteristics similar to those of human intelligence. And, at the end of the process of knowing the world, there is an ultimate identity between the subject and its object. We are finally reconciled to the world.

Ultimately, for Watson, our knowledge of the world is the ground of our freedom, and moral autonomy. Following Hegel, Watson argues that freedom resides in an increasing knowledge of the world. Or, put differently, knowledge of the world is the source of morality, which is our freedom. See Watson, The Interpretation of Religious Experience, Vol. II, (Glasgow, 1912), p. 31-32. And, Comte, Mill and Spencer: An Outline of Philosophy, (Glasgow, 1895), p. 142-145. On this topic, see Williams, The Epistemology of John Watson, esp. Chp. 3.

17. Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914, (Toronto, 1970), p. 259. Berger's book is still the single most comprehensive study of the imperialist ideas of Canadian conservatives. I have drawn from it to provide the historical context to Watson's political thought.
18. Stephen Leacock, "Greater Canada: An Appeal," University Magazine, VI, 1, (April, 1907), p. 132-141.
19. Carl Berger, ed., Imperialism and Nationalism, 1884-1914: A Conflict in Canadian Thought, (Toronto, 1969), p. 2.
20. Even today there are some who argue that Britain's domination of the world did not produce an evil empire. Lord Max Beloff, a professor of government and public administration at Oxford University, has argued that on the whole the British Empire had been a force for good in the world. "There's no question in my mind that Britain, through its colonial administration, brought quite a lot of benefit to people around the world. There is little doubt that the positive outweighed the negative." Quoted in "Three Cheers for the Empire," Ottawa Citizen, June 29, 1997, A1. Beloff's argument is presented at greater length in History Today, 46, 2, (February, 1996), p. 13-21.
21. Berger, The Sense of Power, p. 217.
22. Donald Creighton, Canada's First Century, (Toronto, 1970), p. 91-92.

23. James Cappon, "Canada's Relation to the Empire," Queen's Quarterly, XIX, 2, (Oct.-Dec., 1911), p. 98-99. Cappon held the Chair of English and was Dean of Arts during his long career at Queen's University between 1888 and his retirement in 1919. He and Watson knew each other well.
24. Berger, The Sense of Power, p. 120.
25. It is beyond the scope of this essay to inquire into the specifics of this age of transition. It is sufficient to observe that coupled with the external manifestations of crisis were the destabilizing influence of new ideas. The theories of Darwinian science, the spread of commercialism and social atomization, the philosophical claims of empiricism and the increasing skepticism towards the Christian metaphysical claim; all these new modes of thought were undermining old traditions, old certainties, old authorities. People, the intellectuals argued, were losing their way spiritually and psychologically. As S.E.D. Shortt remarks: "In the quarter century preceding the Great War Canadian intellectuals confronted what they termed a 'Social Crisis.' In common with many of their articulate contemporaries, they believed that accelerated social change had swept aside familiar institutions yet left nothing in their place. See Shortt, The Search for an Ideal: Six Canadian Intellectuals and their Convictions in an age of transition, 1880-1930, (Toronto, 1976), p. 137.

This sense of crisis was well expressed by Arnold Haultain, a well-known writer of the period. Less than five years into the twentieth century, he published an article that is highly revealing of the spiritual and psychological state of mind of a thoughtful man contemplating what direction the last century of the millennium might take. It is worth quoting him in detail: "The nineteenth century seems to have brought us to the edge of a precipice, and to have left us there gazing wistfully into outer space. That rather smug era led us to believe that we stood on *terra firma* whence ... we might bridge any chasm that presented. It was a scientific century, and — so it seems to us now — rather a myopic one. Given matter and motion; given a collection of atoms and a law of evolution ... it constructed you a cosmos. But things have changed ... Materialism, we begin to think ... does not explain everything. The *terra firma* is not as solid as it looked, and we see before us a *terra incognita* without any foothold from which to bridge what appears to be an unconscionable length of span ... [This is] an age that finds no anchorage in materialism, yet is afraid to drift; an age which feels that the nineteenth century solution of the world-problem was inadequate, yet that is too far removed from the solutions offered by the eighteenth century to derive much comfort from them; an age which sees that it must find a solution for itself, but has no data for the task, and as yet can do little more

than stand shivering timorously at the brink. Arnold Haultain, "A Search for An Ideal," The Canadian Magazine, XXII, 5, (1904), p. 427-428.

26. Shortt, The Search for an Ideal, p. 3.
27. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence, p. 229.
28. On this point, see Wood, Idealism Transformed, p. xi.
29. John Watson, The State in Peace and War, (Glasgow, 1919), p. 271-274.
30. Cappon remarked that Watson was "profoundly influenced by the ideas of Hegel." See, "A School of Idealism," Philosophical Essays Presented to John Watson, (Kingston, 1922), p. 1. John Irving also points out that shortly after his arrival at Queen's University in 1872 Watson "identified himself with the St. Louis Hegelians" and was soon contributing to their Journal of Speculative Philosophy. See Irving, "The Development of Philosophy in Central Canada from 1850 to 1900," Canadian Historical Review, 31, 3, (Sept., 1950), p. 273. See also, Armour and Trott: "Watson's entire metaphysics was, throughout his life, determined in part by his interest in Kant and Hegel, especially his interest in Hegel." p. 291.
31. On this point, see footnote #16.
32. See, for example, Armour and Trott, p. 233-234.
33. Watson, The State in Peace and War, p. 2-3.
34. See, for example, Douglas Owsam, The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State 1900-1945, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) and Barry Ferguson, Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark and W.A. Mackintosh 1890-1925, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).
35. Stefan Collini, "Hobhouse, Bosanquet and the State: Philosophical Idealism and Political Argument in England, 1880-1918," Past and Present, 88,72, (1976), p. 86, and Sandra den Otter, British Idealism and Social Explanation, (Oxford, 1996), p. 209-213.
36. L.T. Hobhouse, The Metaphysical Theory of the State, (London, 1918), p. 6, 16-19, 23-25. Michael Freeden points out that regardless of whether Hobhouse's assessment of Hegelian Idealism was valid, his book was "the most considered, critical and influential examination of Hegelianism to

emerge out of the war." See Freedman's Liberalism Divided: A Study in British Political Thought 1914-1939, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 33.

37. Watson, State, p. 129-130.
38. Karl Popper, The Open Society and its Enemies, vol. II, 5th edition, (London, 1966 [1945]), p. 78.
39. Watson acknowledged his debt to Green's and Bosanquet's work in a draft preface to The State in Peace and War. See "Preface," Notebook 4, Box 5, John Watson Papers B, Queen's University Archives.
40. Armour and Trott discuss Watson's historical method more thoroughly, p. 235-236. See also Frederick Hoffner, The Moral State in 1919: A Study of John Watson's Idealism and communitarian liberalism as expressed in The State in Peace and War. M.A. Thesis, (Kingston: Queen's University, 1998), p. 11, and Humphrey, The Sage of Kingston, p. 36-38.
41. Armour and Trott, p. 234.
42. Watson, State, p. 2-3.
43. Ibid, p. 8-10.
44. Ibid, p. 8-10.
45. Watson, Outline of Philosophy, p. 232-233.
46. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence, p. 199. McKillop refers to this passage as "the most revealing and suggestive statement made by a Canadian philosopher in the nineteenth century." He concludes that much of the social philosophy in English Canada in the twentieth century reflected Watson's "moral imperative."
47. Watson, Outline, p. 230-233.
48. Watson, State, p. vii.
49. Ibid, p. 120.
50. I am indebted to Hoffner's thesis, The Moral State in 1919, p. 12-13, for this idea.

51. Watson, State, p. 1-3, 46. I should like to point out that even in referring to the pre-modern world, Watson uses modern terms such as "individual," when, in fact, he should be using a pre-modern term like "citizen" when he refers to classical Greece or "subject" when he refers to the medieval period. Strictly speaking, the concept of "individual," like that of "state," can properly be used only with the arrival of modernity. In this regard, I have retained Watson's terminology when it is used in a direct quotation. Otherwise, for the sake of philosophic consistency, I have substituted words such as "individual" for "citizen" and "state" for "polis" where appropriate.
52. Bernard Bosanquet, The Philosophical Theory of the State, 3rd edition, (London, 1920), p. 50-52.
53. Watson, State, p. 46.
54. Ibid, p. 48, 17.
55. Ibid, p. 4, 47-48.
56. Ibid, p. 121-122.
57. Ibid, p. 48. I refer the reader to Endnote #51, where I point out that in making logical distinctions in his terminology, Watson is not careful with his conceptual vocabulary, using words such as 'individual', 'society', and 'state' when he should be using words such as 'citizen', 'community' and '*polis*' when discussing Plato's thought. Plato, after all, was a pre-modern and did not possess the modern historical sense, and therefore could not have conceived of an 'individual' in the sense that we use the word. Thus, where he refers to Plato and Aristotle, Watson should be saying, "the freedom of the citizen was shown to be compatible with the authority of the community." Obviously, I cannot repeatedly correct Watson's vocabulary and therefore suggest the reader provide his own terminological substitutions where necessary.
58. Ibid, p. 10.
59. Ibid, p. 30-31.
60. Ibid, p. 32.
61. Ibid, p. 28-32, 51, 54.
62. Ibid, p. 169-175. Watson's comment on Nietzsche is worth quoting in full: "The aggressive and ambitious spirit which since 1870 has characterised

the German people has been intensified by the writings of Nietzsche. In his later years, it is true, he spoke of nationalism with contempt, advocating a united Europe, and calling for men of rigid austerity and self-discipline; but his worship of power has been eagerly caught up by the new Germany which came to self-consciousness after 1870." p. 157.

63. Ibid, p. 167, 172.
64. Ibid, p. 31.
65. Ibid, p. 30. I refer the reader back to Endnote #57 to reiterate the significance of Plato's lack of historicist sensibilities.
66. Ibid, p. 47.
67. Ibid, p. 21.
68. Ibid, p. 33.
69. Ibid, p. 48.
70. Ibid, p. vii-viii.
71. Ibid, p. 54.
72. Ibid, p. 57.
73. Stoicism, says Hegel, "is the freedom which always comes directly out of bondage and returns into the pure universality of thought. As a universal form of the World-Spirit, Stoicism could only appear on the scene in a time of universal fear and bondage, but also a time of universal culture which had raised itself to the level of thought." Hegel, Phenomenology, p. 121.
74. Watson, State, p. 51. It is perhaps worth quoting Hegel again to show just how close Watson's thought paralleled the German's. "The picture of the state as a product of his own energies disappeared from the citizen's soul (during the Roman Empire). The care and oversight of the whole rested on the soul of one man or a few. Each individual has its own allotted place ... All activity and every purpose now had a bearing on something individual; activity was no longer for the sake of a whole or an ideal ... Death, the phenomenon which demolished the whole structure of his purposes and the activity of his entire life, must have become something terrifying, since nothing survived him. But the republican's whole soul was in the republic; the republic survived him, and there hovered before his mind the thought of

its immortality." Hegel, Early Theological Writings, p. 156-157.

75. Ibid, p. 62-63.

76. Ibid, p. 67.

77. Ibid, p. 68-69.

78. Hegel, The Philosophy of History, p. 398-400.

79. Watson, State, p. 68-69.

80. Ibid, p. 72.

81. Ibid, p. 73.

82. Ibid, p. 79.

83. Ibid, p. 81.

84. Ibid, p. 87. Watson does not specify which particular ideas of Machiavelli's he has in mind, but it could well be some of the more, well, Machiavellian sentiments in The Prince. For example, in Chapter XVIII, Machiavelli writes that while a prince "should not deviate from what is good, if that is possible, but he should know how to do evil, if that is necessary." Or how about this thought in Chapter XIX: "A prince who wants to maintain his rule is often forced not to be good." I doubt Watson would not understand such *realpolitik*, but he would also be too prudent to say such things publicly to those who might not have the capacity to understand them.

85. Ibid, p. 87.

86. Ibid, p. 160.

87. Ibid, p. 91.

88. Ibid, p. 99.

89. Ibid, p. 106.

90. Ibid, p. 114-115.

91. Watson, "German Philosophy and Politics," Queen's Quarterly, XXII, 4, (1915), p. 335.

92. Watson, State, p. 107.
93. Ibid, p. 109.
94. Ibid, p. 105. Hoffner makes this point, too. The Moral State in 1919: A Study of John Watson's Idealism, p. 18.
95. Ibid, p. 107.
96. Ibid, p. 120.
97. Ibid, p. 119. My emphasis.
98. Ibid, p. 124. My emphasis.
99. Watson, "The Problem of Hegel, The Philosophical Review, III, 5, (1894), p. 549.
100. Watson, State, p. 128.
101. Ibid, p. 129.
102. Watson, "German Philosophy and Politics," p. 341.
103. Watson, State, p. 192.
104. Ibid, p. 195-196.
105. Ibid, p. 222. My emphasis.
106. Leslie Armour, The Idea of Canada and the Crisis of Community, (Ottawa, 1981), p. 84
107. Hoffner, The Moral State, p. 70-71, 124.
108. Watson, State, p. 122-123.
109. Watson, Outline, p. 229.
110. Watson, State, p. 222.
111. Ibid, p. 229.
112. Ibid, p. 222-223.

113. Ibid, p. 195.
114. Ibid, p. 222.
115. Ibid, p. 160.
116. Watson, Hedonistic Theories: From Aristippus to Spencer, (Glasgow, 1895), p. 12.
117. Watson, State, p. 193.
118. Besides his critique of these three in State, Watson also examined what he considered to be their influence on German militarism in two essays written in the early years of the war. "German philosophy and Politics," Queen's Quarterly, vol. XXII, April-June, 1915, p. 329-344, and "German Philosophy and the War," vol. XXIII, April-June, 1916, p. 365-379. The fundamentals of these articles are contained in Chapter Eight of State in Peace and War.
119. Watson, State, p. 168.
120. Ibid, p. 171.
121. Ibid, p. 120.
122. Armour, The Idea of Canada, p. 89.
123. Watson, State, p. 128-129.
124. Ibid, p. 8-10.
125. Ibid, p. 197. Williams' thesis, The Political Philosophy of ... John Watson, offers a detailed summary of Watson's distinction between state and government, p. 14-22.
126. Harold Laski, Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917), p. 1, 8, 270.
127. Watson, State, p. 200-203. Hoffner's thesis, The Moral State, provides a succinct comparison of Watson and Laski, p. 50-51.
128. Ibid, p. 208. Watson makes the point that whatever form the state takes, "it is a State just in so far as it actually realises the rational will." p. 224.
129. Ibid, p. 207. Hoffner makes this point, too. p 59.

130. Hoffner, p. 50-52, 60.
131. T.H. Green, Principles of Political Obligation, (London, 1895), p. 8..
132. Ibid, p. 123-128, 148.
133. Bosanquet, The Philosophical Theory of the State, p. 267-271.
134. Ibid, p. 139.
135. Armour and Trott, p. 236.
136. Sandra den Otter places Watson among the "second-generation" Idealists, such as Bernard Bosanquet, who extended the arguments of "first-generation" Idealists like T.H. Green and F.H. Bradley. In their political philosophy, she says, all the Idealists stressed to one degree or another the importance of the community for individual freedom and identity, the moral role of the state, and various ideas regarding self-development. See den Otter, British Idealism and Social Explanation, p. 6-7.
137. Watson makes the point that an individual's will in any given circumstance is not necessarily identical to the will he should have or would have if he truly knew his *real* nature. Such a claim, of course, implies that acting according to the rational will is tied to Watson's epistemological theories and the notion that education is, or should be, devoted to the development of one's essential rational nature. See, State, p. 109-111.
138. Ibid, p. 110-111.
139. Ibid, p. 230-233. The only situation where Watson seems to grant the state absolute authority, including the right to restrict individual freedom and require the forfeiture of that life, is in a time of war. This is justified, Watson says, because if the state itself is extinguished, the social conditions necessary for the exercise of freedom are themselves lost. See p. 231.
140. Den Otter makes this point, observing that "a recurring criticism of Idealist social philosophy has been that the Idealists dangerously misjudged conflict, discord, and disharmony within modern society." p. 198-199. For example, in The Metaphysical Theory of the State, Hobhouse attacks Idealism for not paying sufficient attention to the state's coercive capacities. See p. 77.
141. See Watson, State, p. 209. The critique to which Watson refers was Desislle Burns, Bertrand Russell and G.D.H. Cole, "Symposium: The

Nature of the State in View of Its External Relations," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, new series, vol. XVI, 36th session, 1915-1916. I am obliged to Hoffner's thesis for bringing this article to my attention, p. 52-55.

142. Watson, State, p. 205-210.
143. I have drawn on various scholars for my brief analysis of Bosanquet's thought, particularly, John Morrow, "British Idealism, German Philosophy and the First World War," Australian Journal of Politics and History, 28, 3, (1982), p. 380-399; John Morrow, "Liberalism and British Idealist Political Philosophy: A Reassessment," History of Political Thought, 5, 1, (1984), p. 91-108; Peter Nicholson, The Political Philosophy of the British Idealists, (Cambridge, 1990); Vincent Andrew and Raymond Plant, Philosophy, Politics and Citizenship: The Life and Thought of the British Idealists, (Oxford, 1984); as well as the previously cited material from Stefan Collini, "Hobhouse, Bosanquet and the State," p. 86-111, Den Otter, British Idealism and Social Explanation and Michael Freeden, Liberalism Divided,
144. Bosanquet, The Philosophical Theory of the State, p. 299-302.
145. Ibid, p. 139.
146. Ibid, p. 171, 140.
147. Hoffner suggests — rightly, in my view — that Watson was moved to criticise Bosanquet because he had the experience of the First World War on which to draw. p. 65.
148. Watson, State, p. 217.
149. Ibid, p. 219.
150. Ibid, 219-220.
151. Den Otter observes that many of Bosanquet's contemporaries thought that he "did not allow the individual sufficient rights against the state, and that he had placed the state above the morality which constrained individuals." p. 175-176.
152. Bosanquet, The Philosophical Theory of the State, p. 144.
153. James A. Good, "'A World-Historical Idea': The St. Louis Hegelians and the Civil War," Journal of American Studies, 34, 3, (December, 2000), p. 451-452. Henry Pochmann, New England Transcendentalism and St. Louis

Hegelianism, (Philadelphia: Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, 1948), p. 13-15. William H. Goetzmann, The American Hegelians: An Intellectual Episode in the History of Western America, ed. by William H. Goetzmann, (New York, 1973), p. 15. Goetzmann's introductory essay remains the best single summary of Hegel's influence in the United States of which I am aware. Other helpful studies on which I have drawn include Lloyd Easton, Hegel's First American Followers: The Ohio Hegelians, (Athens, Ohio, 1966); G.A. Kelly, "Hegel's America," Philosophy and Public Affairs, vol. 2, no. 1 (Fall, 1972), p. 3-36; John E. Smith, "Hegel in St. Louis," Hegel's Social and Political Thought, ed. Donald Verene, (New Jersey, 1980), p. 215-226; and John Herman Randall, "Josiah Royce and American Idealism," The Journal of Philosophy, vol. LXIII, no. 3, (February, 1966), p. 57-83.

154. Easton, Hegel's First American Followers: The Ohio Hegelians p. 223.
155. It is beyond the scope of my essay to offer any detailed consideration of Royce's thought. I have therefore confined myself to those elements of his thinking that seem to me to have direct political implications. Given this limitation, I have generally confined myself to Royce's moral philosophy as espoused in his 1908 book, The Philosophy of Loyalty, and some of the secondary literature on Royce, including John Clendenning, The Life and Thought of Josiah Royce, revised edition, (Nashville, Tenn., 1999); Bruce Kuklick, Josiah Royce: An Intellectual Biography, (New York, 1972); and Peter Fuss, The Moral Philosophy of Josiah Royce, (Cambridge, 1965).
156. Richard Bernstein, "Why Hegel Now?" Review of Metaphysics, vol 31, no. 1, Sept. 1977), p. 29-60. This essay offers a useful overview of Hegel's influence on American philosophy.
157. McKillop, "The Idealist Legacy," p. 99. It would be a worthwhile scholarly project to do a close exegesis of this debate with a view to extracting whatever distinctiveness there may be in their respective versions of Idealism.
158. Josiah Royce, The Philosophy of Loyalty, (MacMillan: New York, 1908), p. 3-6.
159. Clendenning, The Life and Thought of Josiah Royce p. 299.
160. Royce, The Philosophy of Loyalty, p. 9, 44-45.
161. Clendenning, p. 299.

162. Watson, State, p. 28-30.
163. Royce, The Philosophy of Loyalty, p. 111.
164. Ibid, p. 254.
165. Fuss, The Moral Philosophy of Josiah Royce, p. 215-216.
166. Royce, The Philosophy of Loyalty, p. 180-181.
167. Fuss, p. 221.
168. Ibid, p. 222-225.
169. Ibid, p. 226-228.
170. Watson, Outline, p. 257.
171. Ibid, p. 211.
172. See Armour and Trott for their comparison of Green and Watson, p. 217-220.
173. Goetzmann succinctly captures this 'triumphalist' aspect to American Hegelianism in arguing that what attracted men such as Royce to Hegel was "a kind of Manifest Destiny of the mind, aiming always towards the formation of the greater community." p. 16. This suggests, at least to me, that what appealed to American thinkers about Hegel was not so much his Idealism, as his dynamism.
174. Elizabeth Trott, "Caird, Watson, and the Reconciliation of Opposites," in Anglo-American Idealism, 1865-1927. ed. W.J. Mander, (Wesport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 88.
175. Watson, State, p. 229-230.
176. Ibid, p. 248.
177. Trott, p. 89.
178. Indeed, Watson cites Hegel in his attack on those theorists such as Treitschke whom he says instilled into the minds of young Germans that their longing for unity could be satisfied by completely identifying with the German state. What the theorists forgot was Hegel's distinction between

Will and Force. Watson writes: "The State according to Hegel is based upon Will, its binding cord being not force but the deep-seated feeling of order which is possessed by all." State, p. 171-172.

179. Ibid, p. 249. See also Armour and Trott, p. 222, 236.
180. Watson, State, p. 55-56.
181. Watson, Outline, p. 227-228.
182. Ibid, p. 227.
183. Ibid, p. 228.
184. Consider this statement: "In that experience it (the slave's consciousness) has been quite unmanned, has trembled in every fiber of its being, and everything solid and stable has been shaken to its foundation." Phenomenology, #194, p. 117.
185. Watson, State, p. 271
186. David Boucher, "British Idealism, the State, and International Relations," Journal of the History of Ideas, 55, (1994), p. 682. See also Clifford Williams, The Political Philosophy of ... John Watson, p. 53-54.
187. Edward Caird, "The Nation as an Ethical Ideal," Lay Sermons Delivered in Balliol College, (Glasgow, 1907), p. 114. Cited by Boucher, p. 683.
188. Watson, State, p. 272.
189. Ibid, p. 249.
190. Ibid, p. 262.
191. Ibid, p. 261.
192. Ibid, p. 274.
193. Ibid, p. 275.
194. Ibid, p. 219-221.
195. Ibid, p. 270.
196. Watson summarizes his understanding of human rights this way: "A man

has rights which are recognised by society, but they are not made right by legislation, as Bentham held, but are recognised because they are essential to the development of the common good. The possession of rights and their recognition by society are not two different things, but the organ of the common good, so the State recognises his rights on the ground that they are required for the realisation of the highest good of all. State, p. 222.

197. Ibid, p. 272-273.
198. Ibid, p. 221. Williams, The Political Philosophy ... of John Watson, p. 57-59.
199. Ibid, p. 273. My emphasis.
200. Ibid, p. 229.
201. Ibid, p. 2, 111, 227-228. On this argument, see also Doug Owram's assessment of the influence of Watson's thought on the development of Canadian social institutions in The Government Generation, p. 90-93, Hoffner, p. 68-70, and Williams, p. 48-51, also discuss this topic.
202. Watson, "Education and Life. An Address ..." (Kingston, 1873). Quoted by McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence, p. 199-200. My emphasis.

PART THREE

George Grant and the Spirit of Tyranny

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Introduction — The Impossible Country

George Grant is often credited as the thinker who awakened Canadians from their nationalist slumbers. It is said that the publication of Lament for a Nation in 1965 sparked an intense period of confident Canadian nationalism. Thanks to Grant, Canadians began to reflect on what made Canada distinct and worth preserving. Out of this reflection, so the argument goes, came various artistic and political responses for maintaining the country's sovereignty.¹

Such claims might seem at odds with Grant's own statement in Lament about "the impossibility of Canada." Grant was explicit in stating that Canada was bound to disappear as a sovereign and autonomous nation-state. He argued that foreign and domestic policy decisions made by successive Liberal governments dating to the beginning of the Second World War had undermined any claims Canadians continued to assert regarding their status as an independent nation. Canada may have retained the formal trappings of a nation-state, but, in Grant's view, these were more show than substance. Canada, he declared, had ceased to exist as a nation in all but name, and the loss of this aspect of nationhood was a matter of time. Even the nationalist policies of the Trudeau regime were superficial — Grant sardonically refers to them as "traces of care" — and did little to hold back the forces undermining Canadian sovereignty. "Below the surface,"

Grant said, "the movement towards integration continues."²

I have no intention of debating, more than three decades later, whether Grant was right or wrong at the practical (or political) level about Canada's 'disappearance.' Arguments have been made on either side, but it is beyond my purposes to engage in a debate whose final practical outcome remains in the future. Indeed, it has been argued that Grant himself was a major inspiration for whatever nationalist efforts have been made to maintain the Canadian nation-state. Nevertheless, Grant always denied that he was trying to engender any such nationalist responses to save Canada. As he put it in 1985,

Because people quite rightly want finite hopes, people have read a little book I wrote (Lament for a Nation) wrongly. I was talking about the "end" of Canadian nationalism. I was saying that this is over and people read it as if I was making an appeal for Canadian nationalism. I think that is just nonsense. I think they just read it wrongly.³

Given this, and in line with this essay's concerns about the various responses to the 'crisis of Canada,' I am strictly interested in obtaining a deeper philosophic comprehension of Grant's judgement regarding Canada's political fate, not any 'finite hopes' about its practical future.

Admittedly, Grant seems straightforward about why Canada has disappeared. In Lament, written in the early 1960s, he argues that the philosophic principles upon which Canada was founded have given way to those of the American Republic. In Canada, these 'American' principles are represented by the Liberal party, big corporations, bureaucratic government and technology. Together, these aspects of the modern age effectively promote

social and political arrangements that make all particular cultures and nation-states redundant. The United States best exemplifies these modern principles, and because Canadians on the whole think the principles of modernity are good, there is little of substance to provide Canadians with reasons for maintaining an independent political existence. When they ascribed to the goods of modernity exemplified by the 'American way of life,' Canadians effectively surrendered those characteristics that once distinguished Canada from the United States and gave it a reason for being. Thus, Grant concludes, Canada disappeared as a sovereign nation-state because of the "character of the modern age."⁴

By the late 1960s, Grant had little further to say about Canadian nationalism, arguing that the crisis facing the Canadian nation-state is not one that Canadians alone confront. Indeed, the title of his 1969 essay collection, Technology and Empire, suggests Grant had come to the conclusion that the crisis facing Canada was not solely a national issue. This idea is bolstered by a remark he made following the book's publication: "I think the great question for people, whether they're Canadians or Americans in North America, is how you live in the midst of the technological monolith."⁵ This section of my essay attempts to explicate what Grant means by this statement; that is, how the 'loss' of a sovereign Canadian community can be attributed to 'the character of the modern age' and the realities of living in a technological world, and what is an appropriate way of responding intellectually to this condition.

To decipher this statement it is necessary to bring forward my claim that

Grant's linkage of modernity and Canada's political fate is bound up with his philosophic relationship to Hegel.⁶ The influence of Hegel on Grant's thought is well-known, as is his 'turn' from Hegel. Nevertheless, there has been little close commentary on the connection between Grant's Hegelianism, both in its initial appeal and its subsequent repudiation, and his claims regarding the 'impossibility of Canada.' I attempt to bring out some of the salient aspects of this connection in Part Three. In brief, it is my argument that Grant's claims regarding Canada's 'disappearance' are rooted in his response to Hegel's thought. That is to say, Grant's lamentation about Canada and its 'theoretical' impossibility is intimately related to his interpretation of the philosopher whom he once described as the great exemplar of modernity.⁷

Grant was criticised throughout his career for his allegedly implacable pessimism toward modernity, particularly in regards to Canada's political future. Lament for a Nation, for instance, was attacked as an indulgence in Loyalist nostalgia, a "panic remembrance" of Athens and Jerusalem.⁸ More generally, while Grant was praised for revealing the "terrible nihilism"⁹ of modernity and the "destruction of man's inner life in a technological society,"¹⁰ he is also accused of having a less than adequate response to the modern crisis, of offering no constructive alternative to modernity.¹¹

Such criticism falls short of grasping Grant's philosophic enterprise. Those who fault Grant for not providing a systematic response to modernity are to some degree betraying their own ascription to the assumptions of modernity. Those

who criticise him for offering no systematic philosophical program as a countervail to the modern project miss what is perhaps *the* ground of his thought: the vast distance between necessity and goodness. Grant does not share the modern historicist assumption that historical events lead inevitably to the betterment of mankind. In rejecting this view, Grant set himself against the prevailing liberal faith in progress.

This argument suggests that, for Grant, the fate of Canada has implications far beyond any parochial concern for what happens to Canada as a sovereign nation-state. Indeed, Grant saw Canada's 'disappearance' as a moral or philosophical question bound up with the character of modernity. In this regard, those who criticise Grant for his pessimism are, in a certain sense, right; but they are right for the wrong reasons. Grant was certainly pessimistic about modernity. But the fact is that Grant was not a 'modern.' He was a Platonist within Christianity. That is to say, his consciousness was at its deepest philosophical level pre-modern, and he saw himself as a witness to modern nihilism. Grant implied as much in saying, "the Western world might well be a failure."¹²

Grant often stated that the most essential need in the modern world was to somehow bring together in the same thought the truth of classical reason and modern technological thinking.¹³ His philosophic career was an attempt to do so. Early in his career, Grant believed Hegelian philosophy provided him with the means to achieve this unity of thought, and that this philosophic reconciliation

would provide the theoretical basis for the continuation of Canada as a genuinely sovereign political community. But eventually he recognised Hegel's synthesis was impossible. He saw that it was impossible to reconcile the metaphysical assumptions underlying pre-modern philosophy with the ontological assumptions on which modern thought is based. Either the classical assumption of natural order of which humans are part is true, or it is not; either the modern assumption of an unordered universe subject to human ordering is true, or it is not.

Given this, any substantive understanding of Grant's thought requires some comprehension of the philosophical and theological concepts that inform his politics. The disappearance of a particular nation-state such as Canada might be necessary under the imperatives of modernity, but Canada's disappearance — or that of any particular political community — might not necessarily serve the 'good.' From this position, Grant's insistence on the distance between necessity and goodness is both a repudiation of Hegel and a moral judgement regarding the Hegelian modern project. As I shall attempt to demonstrate, it is this rejection of the modern, or Hegelian synthesis, and many of its concrete manifestations that underlies Grant's judgement on Canada. Grant's thought as a whole can, in this regard, be said to constitute a continuous re-assessment of Hegel's philosophy, an ongoing re-consideration that opens us to a deeper comprehension of what Grant meant by the 'impossibility' of Canada.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Canada's 'Fate'

In his essay "Canadian Fate and Imperialism," Grant states that "man cannot help but imitate in action his vision of the nature of things."¹⁴ And if that vision is at odds with the reality of the given world — which, for Grant, is subject to a divine order — then men's lives will be violent, chaotic and without meaning. For Grant, then, statecraft requires soulcraft. If the latter lacks harmony then so too does the former. This is Grant's concern as a *political* philosopher. As a philosopher, Grant seeks to reawaken for himself and for others the *eros* of the soul in its pursuit of the Good. But as a *political* philosopher Grant knows, as Plato knows, that the Idea of the Good can only be known in the quotidian routines of life.¹⁵ It is impossible to leave the cave and remain human.

It is with this in mind that Grant says how only in loving our own — our bodies, our families and friends, our neighbourhoods, cities and countries — is it possible to experience that which is beyond calculable reason and will-to-power, and, thus, achieve even a modicum of what it means to "not be one's own." In such experiences we are vouchsafed a brief glimpse beyond the cave. As he states:

Love of the good is man's highest end, but it is of the nature of things that we come to know and to love what is good by first meeting it in that which is our own — this particular body, this family, these friends, this woman, this part of the world, this set of

traditions, this country, this civilisation.¹⁶

In other words, only in the lived realities and particularities of the material world is any knowledge of a transcendent good possible.

Grant's attachment to Canada, and his lament for its 'impossibility,' is grounded in this idea of loving one's own. The phrase "one's own" is Grant's coda both for the rootedness which, in his view, modern technological society denies, and an existential response to the threat he perceived the United States to represent for Canada. In the modern project, as represented by technology and American capitalism, one's rootedness or particularity — culture, class, nation, traditions — is denied a uniqueness or meaning apart from its function in and value to the overall productive task of society. But without "one's own" there can be no experience or knowledge of what it means to be "not one's own." And without this latter experience, the former is meaningless.

Such a view draws on classical thought in which the private realm, the household and the family are regarded as the necessary, if insufficient, conditions for the establishment of a worthy public or political realm. But it also echoes the classical philosophers' concerns about the importance of the private realm such as the family being prior to, and an essential prerequisite for, the political realm. Politics, as Aristotle (and Hegel) argued, may be the arena where the means and ends of society are debated, but in order to enter this debate, humans must remain rooted in a private realm that addresses their requirement for the necessities of life, including the psychological necessity of love and

intimacy. It is this grounding in the private realm that prepares the citizen to enter the common or public realm. Grant says as much in "Canadian Fate and Imperialism" where, in an allusion to his claim in Lament about the 'impossibility' of Canada, he writes:

It is true that no particularism can adequately incarnate the good.
But is it not also true that only through some particular roots,
however, partial, can human beings first grasp what is good and it
is the juice of such roots which for most men sustain their partaking
in a more universal good.¹⁷

For Grant, though, technological society erodes this prerequisite private realm and, in doing so, undermines the public or political realm. At the individual level, the subjection of the private realm to the productive and administrative requirements of a technological order has meant that the formation of individual character is sacrificed to the imperatives of the technological conquest of nature. Even one's thought becomes an object for the distortions of technologically-rooted psychoanalysis and sociology.

Something similar happens at the political level. The particularity of Canada is submerged beneath the imperatives of modernity as expressed in its dominant doctrines, namely modern liberalism and technology.¹⁸ Canada is regarded as merely a means for the imposition and extension of the technological system as a whole. As Ian Angus writes in his 1997 book A Border Within: "Standardisation of culture by technology requires that all that is one's own be pressed into the service of empire."¹⁹ In such a situation, Grant argues, love of one's own becomes even more necessary if one is to possess any vision

of the good at all. Only through loving particular things are we able to hold to any idea of a good that is not simply a surrender of 'one's own' to the demands and imperatives of technological development.

This concern is at the heart of Lament for a Nation in which Grant contemplates the tensions between differing Canadian loyalties and how the forces (and temptations) of economic and cultural integration are tending to submerge the particularities of Canada. On the surface, Lament relates the story of how Progressive Conservative Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and his cabinet colleague Howard Green attempted to maintain Canadian sovereignty against the connivance of Lester Pearson and the Liberal Party, and how the Conservatives, under attack by Canada's pro-American corporate and bureaucratic elites, lost the debate on stationing U.S. nuclear warheads on Canadian soil. Grant's anger was directed against all those who conspired to bring about the downfall of the Diefenbaker government in 1963, particularly the Liberal establishment and the Canadian business elite. Not that he was fond of or even admired Diefenbaker. Grant was explicit in saying "(n)othing in Diefenbaker's ministry was as noble as his leaving of it."²⁰ Yet, Grant saw Diefenbaker's fate as symbolic of the weakness of Canadian conservatism in countering the pull of American culture and economic prosperity. The fall of the Diefenbaker regime highlighted Canada as a *cosmion*, to use Eric Voegelin's word, of mankind's confrontation with those forces that were transforming the world.²¹ "Lying behind the immediate decisions arising from our status within the

(American) empire is the deeper question of the fate of any particularly in the technological age."²²

What was it that Grant tried to hold on to as his 'own'? Why, and in what way, did he eventually realise it was impossible to do so? How did he respond to this existential situation in a way that was itself not tantamount to partaking of the technological liberal imperative? The first question is essential in gaining some purchase on Grant's thought. Grant saw in Diefenbaker a nationalism and a sense of conservatism that was similar to his own. Twenty years earlier, he had written a number of political pamphlets that more or less reflected beliefs traceable to both his grandfathers, one of whom, George Monro Grant, was influenced by John Watson and the other, Sir George Parkin, who was an ardent promoter of the British Empire.²³

Grant's conservatism should not be misconstrued. He is not hostile to change or even to technology.²⁴ Nor does he express a fondness for the familiar or nostalgia for the past. Grant's conservatism is not reactionary or revisionist. Rather, it reflects a particular understanding of the relationship between the individual and the community, between self and other. It is akin, I argue, to the Hegel's conservatism. Hegel, as I argued in Part One, held that while the modern state embodies the unity of individuals, it is not an undifferentiated collectivity harking back to premodern substantiality. The freedom of the individual achieved in the modern state reflects the fact that personal individuality and particular interests attain their fullest development within the community. At

the same time, individuals freely accede to the common or universal interest, recognising it as their own will, taking "it as their end and aim and are active in its pursuit."²⁵

Grant asserts something similar when he says "a society only articulates itself as a nation through some common intention among its people."²⁶ Like Hegel, then, Grant holds that nations or communities are to be understood by reference to the fundamental ideas or intentions that guide them. Grant's political thought begins with the assumption that "a nation (or state or political system) is a partnership that is to be understood primarily or fundamentally by understanding the purposes of the partners in forming the partnership."²⁷ This implies at the theoretical level that individuals enjoy their freedom as citizens not solely in satisfying their egocentric or materialist desires, but in the recognition that their best interests are linked to the community, and that they are most free and fulfilled when there is a reconciliation of individual desire and communal purpose. Grant's conservatism is thus grounded in the assumption of an overarching good; in his case, the "good" of Canada as a sovereign nation-state able to exist so long as it holds to the essential idea or intention on which it was founded: "an inchoate desire to build, in these cold and forbidding regions, a society with a greater sense of order and restraint than freedom-loving republicanism would allow."²⁸

The order that Grant sought to conserve, the tradition he believed essential to Canada's existence, was that shared by the country's founding

political cultures, the British Empire Loyalists of English Canada and the ultramontane Catholics of French Canada. For Grant, the Canada Act of 1791, which provided for the division of Quebec into two colonial provinces, and met the demands of the English-speaking Loyalists for their own legislative assembly, was the 'primal' constitutional document. It, along with the constitutional arrangements of the nineteenth century, expressed the determination of both the French and the British not to become part of the American republic. But beyond the determination not to be American was the recognition by both linguistic groups that they could preserve their own cultures only if they remained separate from the United States. Neither the French nor the British would survive as autonomous cultures if they did not come together, if their diversity was not constituted as a unity. Grant writes about the French Canadian motives for joining Confederation: "The French Canadians had entered Confederation not to protect the rights of the individual but the rights of a nation."²⁹ This rejection of American republicanism and the supposedly individualistic ethos that went with it was central to Grant's understanding of the 'idea' that gave Canada its reason for being. So long as that idea held, particularly among the ruling elites, then Canada was possible. And it was this possibility, this good, that Grant loved as his own.

Grant admired French Canadian nationalism and its insistence on maintaining a French nation in the heart of North America. He saw it as a bulwark against the press of the modern project. But to remain independent, Canada also

had to be British. As he wrote in Lament,

Growing up in Ontario the generation of the 1920s took it for granted that they belonged to a nation. The character of the country was self-evident. To say it was British was not to deny it was North American. To be a Canadian was to be a unique species of North American.³⁰

Grant's 'conservative' concern for the preservation of a Canadian national identity embedded in its British heritage is most revealingly stated in some of his few direct reflections on Canadian foreign policy. In two pieces published in 1945 Grant asked two questions: "Have We a Canadian Nation?"³¹ and The Empire, Yes or No?,³²

In the first article he argued that nationalism at its most positive "embodied in an individual culture ... unique contributions to the world." In the particularity of a nation "the colour and glory of life are not found in uniformity but in diversity."³³ However, unlike European countries that had had centuries to see the slow and organic maturation of their cultures, Canadians have had to create their culture around "certain conscious ideas."³⁴ For Grant, the essential or primal Canadian 'idea' was the conscious decision to avoid a revolutionary severing of our links to Britain. To cut these ties, consciously to abandon our traditions and founding principles, opens us to the revolutionary principles of the United States. Canada, said Grant,

will only continue to exist as long as we represent something individual and special in ourselves ... If we don't have that belief in our own way of life, if we don't continue to practice these [conservative] values, we will soon cease to be a nation. If we cut ourselves off from our roots, we will die. We always have the alternative to being Canadian — we can become American.³⁵

In his understanding of the conservative ideas that held Canada together, Grant emphasised the reconciliation of individual freedom and social order. Canadians share with Americans a belief in the individual's inalienable rights. But Canadians differ from Americans is in their equal regard for the need to maintain social harmony. Canadians want their freedom, but not so much freedom that it threatens the pattern of social order. "Our inherent conservatism said order and self-discipline are a natural concomitant of freedom."³⁶

On this point, Grant sounds distinctly Hegelian.³⁷ To recall my discussion in Part One, one of Hegel's key concerns in Philosophy of Right was to synthesise the negative freedom of modern liberalism and the positive freedom of ancient republican thought regarding the identity of the individual and the community. For Hegel, freedom and duty or social order go hand in hand; freedom is impossible without the corresponding recognition of duty because our rights are claims that others must recognise if they are to be effective. Hence, the underlying idea of the modern state is the reconciliation or synthesis of individuality and universality. Hegel sought to strike a balance that avoided the extremes of atomistic individualism or coercive collectivism.

The state is the actuality of concrete freedom. But concrete freedom consists in this, that personal individuality and its particular interests not only achieve their complete development and gain explicit recognition for their right (as they do in the sphere of the family and civil society) but, for one thing, they also pass over of their own accord into the interest of the universal ...³⁸

In an argument that holds a foretaste of his concerns for the ways in which technology undermines this reconciliation of the individual and the community,

Grant writes that the great problem facing Canadians at the end of the Second World War was how they were going to organise their society efficiently as required by industrial society — Grant would later use the phrase 'technological society' — without sacrificing individual freedom. With its conservative heritage, Canada was uniquely positioned — "the compromise between the individualism of the U.S.A. and the extreme social order of the U.S.S.R.,"³⁹ as Grant put it — to maintain this balance. It was smaller than the United States and lacked the urgencies and compulsions of superpower politics, and was therefore better able to address the problems of democracy in an industrial society. What allowed Canada to maintain this independent compromise of freedom and order was its stature in the British Empire, according to Grant. On this point Grant obviously echoes his forebears. His sentiments are little different from those of either his maternal grandfather, George Parkin, the international promoter of Imperial federation and self-described evangelist of empire, or his paternal grandfather, George Monro Grant, who shared with Parkin the ideal of Canada and the other Dominions linking with Britain to oversee a globe-spanning empire dedicated to civilising the world.⁴⁰

The sentiments of the elder Grant certainly find an echo in his grandson's thought. This suggests an indirect Hegelian influence on the younger Grant through the medium of his grandfather, who, as head of Queen's University in the later decades of the nineteenth century, was on intimate terms with John Watson and deeply influenced by him.⁴¹ Grant's biographer, William Christian, notes that

"G.M. Grant's influence on his grandson was strong but indirect; it came through the curriculum and the other structures of the institution he had formed."⁴² And those structures were, as I showed in Part Two, imbued with a "Queen's spirit" that was in large measure shaped by Watson's Hegelian Idealism.⁴³ Grant, it might be said, was an Hegelian even before he seriously encountered Hegel.

This is reflected in Grant's attitude toward the turn-of-the-century idealism of his forefathers who identified Protestantism and liberalism and regarded the Empire as a force for progress. As Grant wrote, "it was quite hard for me to leave the progressive liberalism of the nineteenth century because of the second war."⁴⁴ This lingering Idealist liberalism is evident in Grant's other 1945 pamphlet, The Empire, Yes or No? in which he expresses optimism at the development of a "new world order." In a world that threatens to divide into two power blocs, the British Empire would be the power that counterbalances them. As far as Grant was concerned, those who spoke against the British connection because of some notion about Canada's so-called colonial status were being mendacious. They were also dangerous. Behind their demands for independence from Britain was an implicit ascription to the ideas of the American revolution, which, in Grant's view, promoted political decisions that would subordinate Canada to the United States. And this subordination, Grant said, would be most evident in Canadian foreign affairs.

Like John Watson,⁴⁵ Grant advocated a special role for Canada as a member of the British Commonwealth. Because Canada is both a North

American nation and a member of the world-spanning Commonwealth, it can play an influential role in ensuring that the United States takes its "proper place" in world affairs. With the world seemingly divided into "the two immense continental empires of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., and the maritime empire of Great Britain," there was considerable danger of continental regionalism. Grant saw the Commonwealth as a potential counterweight to regional isolationism. With its decentralisation, its diverse cultures and its need to act co-operatively, the Commonwealth was "an ideal the world must strive for."⁴⁶ Moreover, Grant, again like Watson, saw Canada's membership in the British Empire (or Commonwealth) as a means to ensure its own sovereignty and its independence of action in world affairs, as well as promote world peace. As he wrote:

Cut off from the British nations, as an independent country, we would have little alternative but to join the South American nations in the hemispheric Empire of the U.S.A. And as part of that we would be strengthening the power of the U.S.A. to retire into isolation. We would be abetting its ability to establish an anti-Russian block. We would be increasing the chance for an American-Soviet conflict. On the other hand, as a member of the Commonwealth, we would be doing the exact opposite. Friendly to the U.S.A., we would still not be her satellite. By our world-wide interests, we would, as her chief neighbour, be pulling her out of continental isolation and towards effective commitments to a world order.⁴⁷

Like Watson and his grandfathers, Grant also saw a high moral calling in Canada's Commonwealth membership. In an odd foreshadowing of the concept of the imperial Hegelian world-state that he would later repudiate, Grant argued that Canada's aim "must be the upward climb of mankind into a perfect and effective world government."⁴⁸ With its particular traditions and circumstances,

Canada provided a balance between the extreme atomistic freedom of the United States and the extreme communitarianism of the Soviet Union. Or, to put it another way, Grant saw Canada's continued existence as both a political and a philosophical issue:

It is important that this continent should have this diversity of social philosophy. The great question of the modern world is going to be to what extent, and within the complicated patterns of industrialized civilisation, freedom and authority can be integrated.⁴⁹

Grant, like Watson, saw Canada as embodying an idea, the fate of which may be a harbinger of the fate of the West. Thus, in a most Hegelian manner, Grant makes Canada's existence a civilisational (and, hence, philosophical) concern.

Despite the optimism of his two 1945 essays, Grant in private was not so hopeful. Letters he wrote at about the same time as his essays show a deepening concern about the future, particularly the impact of industrialisation on the traditions that had sustained both Canadians as a whole and as individuals.

As he wrote to a sister in early 1945,

I am now somehow suddenly scared ... at the moment, this colossal, material change of industrialism has been too much for our great tradition (really a remarkably thin veneer) of personal responsibility, the dignity of the individual.⁵⁰

Grant's hope for a new world order along these lines was broken by the Truman Doctrine and its division of the world into two power blocs. With the outbreak of the Cold War, Grant largely fell silent on explicit political matters regarding Canada's status as a sovereign nation — until the 1965 publication of his most famous book, Lament for a Nation.

In this book, Grant details the consequences of what he had warned about twenty years earlier; that is, Canada's absorption into an American empire. Grant chastises the surrender of Canada's liberal elites to the Americans during the defence crisis of 1962 and 1963. He singles out the bureaucratic mandarins, including those in External Affairs who, he says, "did not have the stuff of loyalty" and, as a result, "were the instruments of a policy that left Canada a satellite internationally." Against this, Grant contrasts the "loyalty" of John Diefenbaker, who, whatever his faults and failings, held to the idea that while Canada was an ally of the United States, it was also an independent nation and need not take its marching orders from the White House. Diefenbaker learned differently, of course. His government was defeated in the 1963 election and replaced with that of Lester Pearson, who quickly acceded to the American demands.⁵¹

Behind Diefenbaker's electoral defeat Grant saw the defeat of Canadian nationalism at the hands of a business, cultural and political elite more concerned with profit and power than nationhood. As he stated: "The economic self-seekers had never been the ones to care about Canada as a nation." But behind this obeisance to economic self-interest Grant also saw an even deeper deprivation. Canada, he argued, had been founded with the deliberate intention of creating an alternative, 'conservative' political order on the North American continent. The betrayal of Diefenbaker's government by the country's elite revealed that those in positions of power no longer cared to maintain the old "idea" of Canada, no longer embodied the Spirit that had once served to sustain Canada's existence.

As a consequence, not only was conservatism impossible, but so, too, was Canada. In Grant's words,

The impossibility of conservatism in our era is the impossibility of Canada. As Canadians we attempted a ridiculous task in trying to build a conservative nation in the age of progress, on a continent we share with the most dynamic nation of earth. The current of modern history was against us.⁵²

When Grant declares "the impossibility of Canada," he means no more and no less than that the nation has abandoned its former intention to preserve itself as politically and culturally (and conceptually, I might add) separate from the United States. Canadians, unconsciously or not, wanted to insert themselves into the dynamo of the southern Republic. "Canada has ceased to be a nation" not because its formal political existence has come to an end, but because the 'idea' that had provided its meaning and purposiveness was no longer seen to be worth preserving. The Canadian elite had given its loyalty to economic well-being instead of full independence. But as far as Grant was concerned, to be satisfied with consumption as a way of life, to identify freedom with consumer selection, was to be a creature of technique and utilitarian liberalism. As he wrote in another context:

Over the last centuries, the most influential people in the English-speaking world have generally taken as their dominant form of self-definition a sustaining faith in a necessary interdependence between the developments of technological science and political liberalism.⁵³

At the core of Lament for a Nation, then, is the claim that conservatism, particularly as expressed in the Loyalist tradition in Canada, had reached its

historical end-point and that, as a result, "after 1940, nationalism had to go hand in hand with some measure of socialism." Yet, even socialism could not save Canada because it shared the progressivist, pro-technological assumptions of liberalism. Grant saw that the essence of contemporary liberalism was the identification of freedom and technology. Modern secular man believes his freedom requires control of the world, and this was to be accomplished through the application of technology.⁵⁴ But for Grant it was this kind of thinking that contributed to the 'impossibility' of Canada.

After his 1969 collection of essay, Technology and Empire, Grant seems to have stepped away from the nationalist cause, at least in a direct way. Or, more accurately perhaps, his understanding of it shifted to a higher level. Grant came to see the crisis facing Canadians as not one they faced solely as Canadians, but as Westerners.⁵⁵ Canada's 'disappearance' was tied to what had happened to the Spirit of western Christendom. And for Grant, this Spirit had been most comprehensively expressed in Hegel's philosophy of history.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Hegel, History and the 'Mistake' of Modernity

Grant praised Hegel as the greatest of philosophers in the original 1959 edition of Philosophy in the Mass Age. He saw in Hegel the thinker who had synthesised classical reason, Christian theology and modern freedom. He concluded that on the basis of this synthesis a new age of reason was about to begin in North America. Hegel, according to Grant, had tried to reconcile the concept of modern man as an autonomous, history-making being with the pre-modern account of man as dwelling under the dispensation of divinely-given natural law. With this synthesis Grant could accept the liberal identification of human freedom with a progressive history, as opposed to the classical notion of human freedom as attunement with a natural order.

Yet he remained ambivalent. He saw a difficulty in bringing together classical natural law, with its conception of time as the 'moving image of an unmoving eternity' and man as living under an eternal order, and the modern notion of time as the history created by men free to make of themselves what they will. Seven years later, Grant had undergone an intellectual conversion:

I came to the conclusion that Hegel was not correct in his claim to have taken the truth of antique thought and synthesised it with the modern to produce a higher (and perhaps highest) truth; that on many of the most important political matters Plato's teaching is truer than Hegel's. Particularly, I have come to the conclusion that Plato's account of what constitutes human excellence and the

possibility of its realization in the world is more valid than that of Hegel.⁵⁶

Joan O'Donovan describes Grant's thought in the 1950s as "reluctant Hegelianism." She says that between the time of the publication of the first edition of Philosophy in the Mass Age in 1959 and the publication of a second edition in 1966, Grant shifted "from a cautious and qualified acceptance of Hegel's understanding of history to a radical and seemingly unqualified rejection of it." Nevertheless, she argues that because Grant once proclaimed Hegel as the greatest of all philosophers, attributing to him the reconciliation of classical philosophy, the Christian tradition and Enlightenment thought, his repudiation of Hegel presents a crucial interpretative problem in trying to comprehend Grant's political philosophy. Despite Grant's rejection of the Hegelian synthesis, Hegel continued to have an abiding influence on his thought.⁵⁷

William Christian likewise says that throughout the 1950s "Grant was deeply engaged with the thinker who had brought the concept of time as history into western thought, G.W.F. Hegel."⁵⁸ Hegel, according to Christian, provided Grant with a powerful set of theoretical tools that could account for the character of the modern technological world, and that even after repudiating the German, Hegel's "indirect influence" remained considerable.⁵⁹ Grant implied as much when, in his 1966 repudiation of the Hegelian synthesis, he said it is difficult for anyone who ascribes to "the Western Christian doctrine of providence to avoid reaching the conclusion that Hegel has understood the implications of that doctrine better than any other thinker."⁶⁰

Grant did not say what exactly he means by the "Western Christian doctrine of providence," or what it is about this doctrine that Hegel saw better than others. But three years later, in a 1969 collection of essays, Technology and Empire, Grant makes an oblique reference to his early Hegelianism when he criticises his 1963 essay, "Religion and the State." He says he continued to regard Hegel as the greatest of all philosophers for the longest time simply because he himself "could not face the fact that we are living at the end of western Christianity."⁶¹ This suggests that Grant continued to regard Hegel as the truest expression of the modern project, and that even in rejecting Hegel he was compelled to speak as a Hegelian.⁶²

This implies a shift in consciousness akin to the psychology of Hegel's concept of *Aufheben*: that is, a conversion of consciousness that incorporates and sublates a previous mode of consciousness. Grant's turn from a 'progressive conservative' — that is, a traditionalist who still believed in the future — to one who sees technological progress as ultimately destructive of human excellence, implies that in repudiating Hegel, Grant was also attempting to repudiate the modern ontology, the modern understanding of 'what is.' As a result, he was led, as Cooper states, "to reassess the account of things that sustained his earlier and now rejected opinion."⁶³

Grant's 'turn' from Hegel and liberal progressivism has been referred to as his era of retractions.⁶⁴ Scholars have attributed this 'rejection' of Hegel to that time in his career when, under the influence of such thinkers as Leo Strauss,

Jacques Ellul, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and Simone Weil, he began to reconsider his attachments to modernity. In this regard, given that Grant considered Hegel the most modern of philosophers, it is reasonable to assert that Grant's mature thinking constitutes a response to Hegel in the wake of what he saw as the inability of North American society to deliver the reconciliation of freedom and community that Hegel's philosophy projects. And that, of course, begs the question: What was it about Hegel's thought that Grant could not abide even when he recognised that it provided the truest of account of the modern project? Responding to this question will take us to the heart of Grant's claim about the 'impossibility' of Canada.

With this in mind, let me turn more directly to Grant's confrontation with Hegel, particularly as exemplified in Philosophy of the Mass Age, which Cooper refers to as Grant's "Hegelian livre de circonstance."⁶⁵ Grant begins Philosophy in the Mass Age by asking why history is a problem, and for whom. History, he replies, is a problem for the moral philosopher who seeks to know which actions are right and which are wrong. With this argument Grant makes the concept of history the superstructure on which many of his other concerns and themes, including that of Canada's fate, hang. At the core of Grant's thought is the Hegelian idea of history, and how this idea displaced the ancient concept of nature as the overarching concept within which man understands himself and his world. Historicism posits a temporal view of the world. As an epistemological doctrine, it maintains that an adequate understanding of anything and an

adequate assessment of the value of anything can be gained by considering it "in terms of the place it occupied and the role it played within a process of development."⁶⁶ Historicism, thus, establishes a paradigm within which man's knowledge and experience of the world is to be understood only in and through historical movement.

Grant addresses the issue of historicism throughout his writings. In Philosophy in the Mass Age, he contrasts modern historical consciousness with ancient consciousness. The former regards the world as an unending flow of unique and irreversible events that have to be dominated and controlled through creative will. The latter, however, considers time "as the moving image of an unmoving eternity and in which the passing events of life only have meaning as they lead men to the unchanging reality of God."⁶⁷ Ancient consciousness, according to Grant, provided a doctrine of natural law by which man sought his perfectibility in a union of temporal and divine reason. Grant rejects "history" as the arbitrator of man's purposes, arguing, as he wrote in Lament, that to make history "the final court of appeal" for man's meanings is tantamount to "worshipping force."⁶⁸

Grant argues in a similar vein in Technology and Empire. "The dominant tendency of the western world has been to divide history from nature and to consider history as dynamic and nature controllable as externality."⁶⁹ Again, in English-Speaking Justice, Grant links liberal notions of justice with the historicist denial of classical natural justice that claimed man was directed to a highest

good under which all goods were known in a hierarchy of subordination and superordination. The modern lowering of standards of justice to the convenience of the social contract is the result of man's radical abstractedness from nature and his acceptance of historical and moral relativism, Grant argues.⁷⁰ Likewise, in Technology and Justice, Grant identifies historicism with a scientific positivism that produced a technological civilisation which denies all meanings beyond those man creates for himself through his mastery and domination of nature, including human nature.⁷¹

Grant's most comprehensive effort to understand the concept of history is Time as History. In this 1969 lecture series he contrasts the modern notion of time as history against the pre-modern idea of time as a reflection of eternity. Grant writes that not only does the word history refer to the study of the past, it is "also used to denote a certain kind of reality — human existing." Both meanings — the study of the past and as an ascribed reality — are interconnected: The past is scrutinised in the belief that "man is essentially an historical being and that ... the riddle of what he is may be unfolded in those studies."⁷² Modern man believes he is understandable in terms of his historical development in time. Grant rejects this view. For him, man is not knowable as an historical being.

History, then, for Grant is not one concept among many others that shapes the modern world. Rather, history is "*the* idea, the central theoretical and practical idea of our age."⁷³ To understand "history" is to penetrate to the heart of modernity. Or, as Grant states:

"History" is one of the key words in which English- speaking people now express what they think they are and what they think the world to be ... [I]f we desire to understand our own understanding of ourselves, it is well to think about this word which has come to have such a unique connotation amongst us.⁷⁴

Grant's effort to understand history is, I argue, a product of his encounter with and subsequent 'turn' from Hegel, who epitomised for him the modern, historicist consciousness.

What turned Grant from his initial acceptance of Hegel's notion of historical development was his recognition that it carried too much of the positivist idea of progress as the ultimate aim of man and, worse, made even evil a purposive good. Such a claim, according to Grant, ignores the idea of man's existence having a given highest purpose or good that transcends history. Grant could not accept Hegel's identification of necessity with goodness because it implies that history is the judgement of those possessed with the power to impose their will; in other words, a world whose moral touchstone would be, ultimately, that might makes right. It was this Hegelian identity of history and progress, of necessity and goodness, that Grant detected at the heart of the modern project.

Grant's rejection of historicism and progressivism is stated clearly in Lament for a Nation. It is a statement worth quoting at length because it opens up a fuller understanding of his lapsed Hegelianism and his 'lament' for Canada.

... I must dissociate myself from a common philosophic assumption. I do not identify necessity and goodness. This identification is widely assumed during an age of progress. Those who worship "evolution" or "history" consider that what must come in the future

will be "higher," "more developed," "better," "freer" than what has been in the past. This identification is also common among those who worship God according to Moses or the Gospels. They identify necessity and good within the rubric of providence. From the assumption that God's purposes are unfolded in historical events, one may be led to view history as an ever fuller manifestation of good.⁷⁵

Grant goes on to argue that this conflation of necessity and goodness by Christian theologians into the doctrine of providence was given its fullest expression by Hegel and his notion of world history as the unfolding of Reason: "*Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*," or "World History is the world's judgement." Here, Grant argues, the ideas of progress and providence are welded together. But for Grant such a notion is anathema: "Hegel makes God's providence scrutable, and that is a teaching that offended me then and now at the deepest level."⁷⁶

Grant, thus, links the modern project to a mode of thought that calls evil good and good evil. In his turn from Hegel, Grant had come to see the concept of progress and the ideology of liberalism as containing a destructive element that militates against their worth. No longer could he share his forefathers' view of human development. No longer could he accept the Watsonian melding of Christian ethics and liberal Hegelianism and its optimism regarding human perfectibility. What was it that changed his mind? How was his mind changed? These two questions, and what they imply, are examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Hegel's 'theology of glory'

According to Plato's Republic, no worthy city can be built without the sanction of the gods. Indeed, the first brick Socrates lays in constructing his city in speech is to show his piety to the goddess. Then, as Socrates and Adeimantus build their city in speech, they agree such a city requires that all talk about the gods — theology, in other words — must have a certain *imprimatur*. That is, all speech about the gods, all theology, must submit to the laws of the city in order for the city to maintain justice.⁷⁷

But what if the city becomes corrupted? What if society turns away from the eternal and the divine? Must theology then bow to a regime that creates unholy orders or advocates non-theological principles? Not necessarily. In such a corrupted state, speaking about the gods will become negative theology. In other words, theology will become speech about what God is not.⁷⁸ Negative theology, or, as it is sometimes called, *via negativa*, offers a darkling world glimpses of the transcendent light that illuminates a temporal world signified by its lack of astonishment and wonder at the mystery of existence.

In the Protestant tradition, negative theology is not the dominant form of Christian speech about God. Christianity has been dominated by Biblical theology; that is, by reflection on God as manifested in revelation. Negative

theology, while acknowledging biblical theology, and speaking from within the Christian tradition, focuses on the limitations of temporal existence in an effort to disassociate those limitations from men's claims to possess knowledge of the eternal and make use of it to justify their own temporal desires. This effort is reflected in negative theology's attempt to place limits on man's doing and making. Negative theology functions to point up the tension between the temporal and the transcendent, between time and eternity, in order through its critique to vouchsafe the possibility of an ascent to the divine.⁷⁹

This, I argue, is the purpose behind much of Grant's rejection of the modern project, and his 'turn' from Hegel as the exemplar of that project. Throughout his post-Lament writings Grant is engaged in one way or another in negative theology. He does not always address directly about what are to him the most important things. And about those things he initially appears to speak directly, he often speaks more indirectly than expected. In a world described by Martin Heidegger as 'unthinking' and by Jacques Ellul as 'loveless,' Grant attempts in his critiques of technology to reawaken a communication between thought and love, between faith and charity. As he once said: "Those who care about charity must care about communication, and to communicate requires systematic thought."⁸⁰

The heart of Grant's *via negativa* is the need to comprehend technology because, as he argues, to know technology is to know ourselves. But to know ourselves requires knowledge of the tension that abides at the core of the

western theological tradition. Grant defines this tension as the consequence of the two distinct theological languages that have dominated western civilisation: "theology of glory," as reflected in rationalist interpretations of Biblical revelation, and "theology of the Cross," which holds that the divine is not ultimately scrutable to reason.⁸¹

The scattered nature of Grant's writings make it easy to ignore the centrality of theology in his thinking. Nonetheless, there are certain aspects of the theological tradition that served to orient and even structure Grant's thinking, particularly in his confrontation with Hegel.⁸² To be sure, it is beyond the scope of this paper to offer a full consideration of Protestant theology or, for that matter, Grant's understanding of theological traditions. What I wish to sketch is how, in Grant's view, certain Christian theological traditions, particularly the "theology of glory," were instrumental in shaping modernity. One of Grant's most comprehensive statements on this issue is given in Technology and Justice:

... it seems true that western Christianity simplified the divine love by identifying it too closely with immanent power in the world. Both Protestants and Catholics became triumphalist by failing to recognise the distance between the order of good and the order of necessity. So they became exclusivist and imperialist, arrogant and dynamic. They now face the results of that failure.

Modern scientists, by placing before us their seamless web of necessity and chance, which excludes the loveable, may help to reteach us the truth about the distance which separates the orders of good and necessity ... Christianity had prepared the soil of rationalism from which modern science came, and its discoveries showed that the Christian God was dead. That formula gets close to the truth of western history, but is nevertheless not true. The web of necessity which the modern paradigm of knowledge lays before us does not tell us that God is dead, but reminds us of what

western Christianity seemed to forget in its moment of pride: how powerful is the necessity which love must cross.⁸³

In short, he argued that moderns have replaced the "theology of the cross" with a secular "theology of glory" that has taken the form of faith in historical progress.

Grant was well aware of the ontological tensions in western philosophical and religious traditions. Throughout his career he repeatedly referred to the need to re-think the tensions between fundamental concepts — reason and revelation, charity and contemplation, nature and history, for example. Yet, it was Martin Luther's distinction between the "theology of the Cross" and the "theology of glory" that provided a touchstone to much of Grant's thinking in both his early and late writings. Grant heard in Luther's words — "The theologian of glory says that evil is good and good evil; the theologian of the Cross says the thing is as it is." — a primal tension in the modern Hegelian project.⁸⁴

In a 1947 article, "Two Theological Languages," Grant sides with the theology of the Cross, criticising "rational theology" — or the theology of glory — for its too easy identification of necessity and goodness. Such thinking implicitly affirms "good is evil and evil is good — rather than the very different affirmation that the thing is as it is."⁸⁵ Nearly forty years later, in Technology and Justice, he repeats in almost identical wording his objection to the sort of theological thinking that, in its claim to knowledge of providence, leads one to assert that "evil is good and good is evil, and so lose what is essential to any love of truth — namely the continual recognition that the world is as it is."⁸⁶

Implicit in Grant's distinction between the two theologies is the claim that

man simply cannot know God's purpose. There is an infinite distance between man and God, and, as such, necessity and goodness are infinitely distanced from each other. The modern historicist project, with its doctrine of progress, is essentially a secularised form of Christianity's theology of glory. Modernity and technology attempt to collapse necessity and the good by conceiving the good as immanent within the realm of historical progress. For Grant, this modern theology of glory was given its most profound philosophical expression by Hegel. To regard history as the progressive unfolding of goodness under the rubric of the cunning of reason amounts to the secularisation of divine providence. But to bring together providence and progress, says Grant, is tantamount to the worship of force since, as history shows, force is the principal means of historical change.⁸⁷

For Grant, though, the contemporary world made it increasingly difficult to perceive a rational purpose in history. What remains, he says, borrowing from Nietzsche, is the "finality of becoming."⁸⁸ This view, however, reveals the onset of a destructive nihilism that destroys even the weak transcendence of a future historical good. Moreover, nihilism breaks down any clearly definable moral limit to human action. Everything, including nation-states, is open to technological manipulation. Even the tendency to worship force implicit in the doctrine of progress is no longer subject to any theoretical restraints. The result, as Grant states, is that "the nihilists are everywhere."⁸⁹

The destructiveness of nihilism is the focus of much of Grant's negative

theology. In bringing out the corrosion of nihilism on traditional principles of thought and action, Grant seeks to bring the darkness of modernity into the light as a darkness that has obscured and corrupted the Christian revelation. This strategy echoes that of Blaise Pascal whose apology for Christianity assumed that only in revealing the inadequacy of traditional Christian thought could people be open to its saving truths. Grant attempts something similar in his analysis of modernity. Embedded in Grant's destructive critique of technological society is a positive, if silent, affirmation of an alternative to nihilism and Hegelian rationalism. Grant's negative theology, his rejection of a theology of glory, both contains and embodies his metaphysical alternative, as well as his epistemological and pedagogical challenges, to modernity.

In attempting to penetrate to the core of modern thought, Grant seeks to bring to consciousness the recollection of those animating experiences of eternity by which men once defined their purposes and meanings and by which they knew the limits of their acts. He seeks to remind men of the deprivations of modernity in the hope of reawakening a consciousness of the divine. In this regard, Grant's thought should be regarded as embodying the world of God-space, of Time as Eternity, as against the modern historicist — and Hegelian — understanding which, in Grant's view, reflects the world of man-space, or Time as History. Grant seeks to bring to consciousness the recollection of those animating experiences of eternity by which men once defined their purposes and meanings and by which they knew the limits of their acts. In thinking through the

deprivals and dispossessions of modernity, Grant articulates what God is not. That is, his negative theology asserts the great distance between necessity and the good.

This idea of 'the distance between necessity and the good' is one to which Grant returns repeatedly.⁹⁰ Indeed, the phrase might be considered the standard against which he judges modernity. Grant claims no originality in adopting this standard. His guide was Simone Weil. It was she who best articulated the experiential ground of his negative theology. Her thought was "the great teaching concerning the eternal in this era." She showed him "what it is to hold Christ and Plato together."⁹¹ Which is to say, Weil offered Grant a way to hold classical philosophy and Biblical revelation together as a unity. It is beyond the scope of this essay to discuss Weil's influence on Grant with any comprehensiveness.⁹² It is, perhaps, sufficient to note some parallels between Grant and Weil, particularly those that offer some insight into his criticism of Hegelian progressivism and his own theology of the Cross. Perhaps the most striking parallel between Weil and Grant is their respective conversionary experiences. In 1942, after contracting tuberculosis, 24-year-old George Grant "deserted" from the Merchant Marine and went into the English countryside to work on a farm. One day, he relates

I went to work at five o'clock in the morning on a bicycle. I got off the bicycle to open a gate and when I got back on I accepted God.⁹³

With that last sentence, describing the simple act of getting off and on a bicycle, an act that took at most a few seconds, Grant provides his only public account of

an experience that saints and mystics recount as the ultimate human experience. For one brief moment Grant was graced with the knowledge that beyond time and space, beyond the temporal realm, there is an eternal order. It was an experience that he acknowledges as the most important in his life, and the truth of which he never doubted. Perhaps it was this experience that enabled Grant to accept Weil's experience of Christ: "When she says Christ visited her, came down to her, I have to believe her. I have to know that it did happen."⁹⁴

Grant offers only the vaguest statement on what his own experience meant to him in spiritual terms: "If I try to put it into words, I would say it is the recognition that I am not my own."⁹⁵ However, he was more forthcoming in what the experience meant philosophically and politically. For Grant, his conversionary experience would come to signify a rejection of the foundational concepts of the modern project. As Grant put it, "if modern liberalism is the affirmation that our essence is our freedom, then this experience was the denial of that definition, before the fact that we are not our own."⁹⁶ Indeed, for Grant, the modern notion of individualism is deeply flawed because it diminishes or even denies the sovereignty of the divine, resulting in a distorted understanding of reality.

The person who opened him to this understanding — and, hence, his rejection of Hegelian thought — was Weil, whom he apparently first encountered in 1950. (In the late 1950s, Grant's reading of Leo Strauss provided him with much of the theoretical undergirding for the insights into the modern condition that he had received from Weil, a topic I shall address later.) What Weil taught

Grant can be boiled down to one fundamental idea — the idea of a limit to human freedom, individuality and willing. Grant encapsulates this idea in a line from Philosophy in the Mass Age: "Is there anything that we should never do under any circumstances to another human being?"⁹⁷

Following Weil, Grant accepted the idea of limit as the idea of God. More importantly, though, he regarded the idea of limit, the notion that there are things humans are not free to will and cannot know, as implying the essential unknowability or inscrutability of God or providence. Which, in turn, implies the distinctly anti-modern notion that there is a limit to human freedom. Such a thought is, of course, contrary to the thrust of modernity, which posits freedom as its most essential principle and denies limits to human willing. In this regard, it is reasonable to consider Weil's influence on Grant as tantamount to discovering how he attempts to think outside the Hegelian circle. Thus, the essential clue to Grant's 'escape' from Hegel and modernity is his conversionary experience, which, like that of Weil's, showed him the infinite distance between man's will and God. On his own man cannot ascend to God; God must, as it were, come down to man and, in the act of grace, take man up to Himself.⁹⁸

This points up another parallel between Weil and Grant. Both hold that necessity and goodness are infinitely distanced from each other. Both reject interpretations of divine providence that link or identify necessity and goodness. Necessity is distinctly other than good and, thus, is devoid of purpose and meaning without the good. To see God as intervening in the realm of necessity

for some particular end is to identify God and eternity with time and history and, in the modern context, to link progress and providence. Both reject such a notion as false. "As a believer," says Grant,

I must ... reject these Western interpretations of providence. Belief is blasphemy if it rests on any easy identification of necessity and good ... It must be possible within the doctrine of providence to distinguish between the necessity of certain happenings and their goodness.⁹⁹

Likewise, Weil says:

The ridiculous conception of Providence as being a personal and particular intervention on the part of God for certain particular ends is incompatible with true faith.¹⁰⁰

For Grant and Weil, then, God is not in history. In creating the world God has, to quote Weil, "withdrawn Himself, permitting a part of Being to be other than God."¹⁰¹

How then is one to link Being and being, eternity and time? How does one experience the perfect in the realm of the imperfect? For Weil and, following her, Grant, one way is in loving contemplation of the beauty of the world. Since the world is the result of a "divine renunciation"¹⁰² in which God set limits and, thereby, created necessity, then what connects eternity and time is the act of love and the beauty which was the product of that act of love. That is, love and beauty are mediations and remembrances that unite the realm of necessity and the realm of the good without in anyway mixing them. To be sensible to the beauty of the realm of necessity, to love what is as it is, is to partake in some measure of the Good.¹⁰³

Weil's vision of the good was consistent with Grant's own religious experience, and helped him comprehend the existence of evil and affliction. It especially enabled Grant to come to grips with the concept of the theology of the cross in a way "that brought Plato and Christ, philosophy and faith, together."¹⁰⁴ Which is to say, Weil allowed Grant to ground his philosophy in theology rather than Hegelian historicism. This emerges most explicitly in Grant's comparison of the theology of the cross and the theology of glory. The importance of these two concepts for Grant's thinking about modernity is evident in an essay originally rewritten in 1947 and later revised in 1953, "Two Theological Languages." Theology, Grant argues, is born of the encounter between time and eternity, between the finite and the infinite. As such, theology is an attempt to work out in a particular time and place the truths of faith. To do this intelligibly, theology must consider the distinction between the language of rational theology and biblical theology.

According to Grant, the thought of Plato and Aristotle reflects rational theology, with reason and desire being its central concepts. Our truest desire is that to which we are turned by our natures; reason gives us the idea of human fulfilment in the concept of the Good, although it can become a slave to the passions. Human freedom, according to rational theology, refers to the acceptance of human limitation in the recognition of reality as it is; that is, the height of human reason is the attunement with the natural order. As Grant puts it, "Freedom is recognition, affirmation and acceptance of necessity."¹⁰⁵

The language of biblical theology is expressed in ethical terms — "guilt," "sin," "responsibility," "remorse," "disobedience" and "rebellion" — and points to the idea of the individual's responsibility for his conduct within the given order of reality. In this language, "freedom" does not refer to reason's attunement to the truth, but something that is given to humans regardless of their capacity for reason. Biblical theology posits freedom as given apart from reason and, as such, has nothing to do with the intelligible recognition and acceptance of necessity. Rather, biblical freedom is unknowable, or, in Grant's words, "the unfathomable and irrational — an abyss into which our reasons are swallowed up."¹⁰⁶

This distinction has significant implications, both philosophical and political, for Grant. As Sheila Grant observes, Grant's attempt to grapple with the seemingly unreconcilable tensions between rational and biblical theology marked "the beginning of his distrust of rational philosophies of history"¹⁰⁷ — or, in other words, Hegelian philosophy. In rational theology, freedom or self-perfection is attained through our own efforts, our own intellectual ability. In the language of biblical theology, freedom is experienced, if at all, as a fathomless mystery, and is, thus, dependent upon that which is unexplainable or irrational.

Certainly, Grant criticises the language of biblical theology for its rejection of reason, objecting to the idea of an experiential faith that does not attempt to give a rational account of itself. At the same time, though, he says only biblical theology is able to demonstrate the mystery of man's "primary freedom" of

responsibility or charity. Only biblical theology comprehends why without reason humans act with moral regard toward each other or, if they do not, why against any rational argument they feel guilt and remorse.

Grant's dilemma is that of attempting to speak or reconcile the two languages into an "authentic theology." How is he to reconcile the requirement of his intellect for rational comprehension with his experiential awareness of the "primary freedom" of morality? Each theological language has its particular weaknesses. Rational theology tends to "disregard the problem of evil or trivialize it,"¹⁰⁸ Grant says. He argues that in confronting the question of evil it is best to refer to mysteries and abysses simply because the problem is not one about which anything intelligibly comprehensive can be said. Rational theology demonstrates a kind of purblind shallowness in its inability to confront or understand the more confounding elements of existence, particularly the ultimate metaphysical questions of why anything rather than nothing, why a being of infinite mind would create finite minds. Rational theology, in other words, implies some kind of continuity between the finite and the infinite.

In contrast, biblical theology posits a mysterious disconnection between man and God, some great distance between necessity and goodness. Grant suggests this disconnection itself points to the fundamental mystery of human responsibility and morality and, as such, requires a necessary agnosticism in our attempts to understand evil. Without that agnosticism, he says, without an acknowledgement of the distance between necessity and the good, we are in

danger in our confrontations with evil of asserting that "good is evil and evil is good — rather than the very different that the thing is as it is."¹⁰⁹ Thus, while biblical theology may tilt toward irrationalism, rational theology tends to side-step the reality of evil.

Like Hegel (and, it should be noted, like Watson), Grant wanted to reconcile the two languages — reason and revelation — or at least ensure that they do not detach themselves from each other. Such a reconciliation would not only respond to the deepest problems of reason, but confront the dilemmas of contemporary technological society. It would also reconcile the individual and the community in the most profound sense of satisfying the desire for freedom while, at the same time, assuaging the need to belong to something that transcends the limitations of the self. Yet, nearly four decades later, Grant was no closer to such a reconciliation; the languages of reason and revelation remained far apart for him. In a 1988 addendum to "Two Theological Languages," Grant writes that the central task of thought still requires an awareness of the "tension between what comes to us from Athens and what from Jerusalem," or, as he prefers, "what comes to us from Socrates and from Christ."¹¹⁰

The significance of this tension is encapsulated in Grant's contrasting of the theology of the cross and the theology of glory. It is in the essay "Two Theological Languages" that Grant makes one of his earliest references to these concepts in referring to Martin Luther's twenty-first thesis of the Heidelberg disputation, a reference that might be seen as his first serious confrontation with

Hegelian thought.¹¹¹ Indeed, Grant's notebooks from the mid- to late 1950s demonstrate his preoccupation with and ambivalence toward Hegel. Notebook Four, in particular, contains numerous references either to Hegel himself or to Hegelian scholars, including Alexandre Kojève, Jean Hyppolite, Walter Kaufman and Herbert Marcuse. The notes allude to Grant's concern about the relationship, if any, between Hegel's "cunning of reason" and the mystery of Biblical faith. At one point, Grant says Hegel "could grasp the mystical world, but he did not grasp it anymore than negative theology had been able to do."¹¹² Elsewhere, Grant discusses the relationship of reason and the problem of evil, saying that "Hegel is simply brilliant on good and evil (and) freedom and reason in the old metaphysics."¹¹³ Perhaps, though, the penultimate statement is one in which Grant refers to his colleague from Dalhousie University, the Hegelian scholar James Doull:

Though I would agree with James that Hegel is right to say that the philosopher is only concerned with reconciliation in thought, he must, — *qua* philosopher, take into his thought, and not forget, that he is not in truth reconciled.¹¹⁴

At the time he was making these notes, Grant was apparently working on a book on acceptance and evil. In a section discussing Isaiah Berlin's remarks about the dangers of philosophies of history, he writes, in an obvious reference to Hegel, that philosophies of history "prevent those who believe them from seeing the facts as they have been." The result is "a blurring of the evident facts of cruelty, pain and oppression" until, gradually, good and evil actions are not longer seen distinctly for what they are, but "both must be interpreted as leading to

some good." In this way, Grant concluded, "evil is gradually turned into good."¹¹⁵ He also challenged himself never to accept such a philosophy of history, writing in Notebook Four: "The great question is history and you, G.P.G., have been continually right to refuse to interpret history in rational terms as so many do — see this and don't give it up."¹¹⁶ Twenty-five years later, Grant reiterated the concerns of his younger self:

What was always the thorn which kept me from accepting Hegel was those remarks in the philosophy of history, about wars being the winds which stir up the stagnant pools. That is the idea that good can come out of bad in a way that we can understand. To put it in Christian terms, it has always seemed to me that Hegel makes God's providence scrutable, and that is a teaching which offended me then and now at the deepest level.¹¹⁷

In other words, Grant sees Hegelian philosophy as expressing a theology of glory — or rational theology — that effectively trivialises evil and makes God identical to the aims and purposes of human history. Hegel asserted rational theology's claim to make providence scrutable, to know the mind of God. For Hegel, it is in history that the truth realises itself in the absolute system; that is to say, the subjective and objective truths are reconciled. Hegel posits an immanent eschatology in which Spirit is made concrete in Time, the result of which is history's actualisation of Spirit as freedom. Hegel's philosophy attempts to unify freedom, necessity and the good "through progressive reflection on the rational 'wholes' of history."¹¹⁸

For Grant, though, such a philosophy reflects the modern reworking and secularisation of the original Christian idea of history as the working out of the

providential process of salvation leading to the Kingdom of God into the immanent idea of history as progress in which man creates his own utopian kingdom on Earth. Grant rejects this recasting of the Christian doctrine of providence, seeing it as tantamount to identifying not only freedom and necessity, but also good and evil. It is worth quoting Grant at length on this essential point of how, in his view, Christianity contained the seeds of modernity.:

It may appear that the spirit of the modern world is the very antithesis of the religious, rooted as it is in the idea of progress rather than the idea of law, and emphasizing man's trust in his own ability to make the world rather than his trust in God. But what must be insisted is that the very spirit of progress takes its form and depends for its origin on the Judeo-Christian idea of history ... [I]n its moral connotations there is nothing more important to its (the modern spirit) understanding than to recognize how the Christian idea of history as the divinely ordained process of salvation, culminating in the Kingdom of God, passes over into the idea of history as progress, culminating in the Kingdom of Man; how Christianity's orienting of time to a future made by the will of God becomes the futuristic spirit of progress in which events are shaped by the will of man.¹¹⁹

Nonetheless, Grant recognises that the mediating concept between providential and progressivist history is the Reformation idea of freedom. This idea, he says, is central to Hegel's thought in that it was the German philosopher who most comprehensively understood how the modern experience of freedom emerged first in the Reformation's religious thinking. This is a subtle point and needs elaboration because it highlights Grant's understanding of the 'mistake' of Christianity that is so central to his 'turn' from Hegel.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The 'Mistake' of Christianity

Reformation thinkers such as Martin Luther maintained that man could not ultimately know either himself or God even though our essential desire is to have such knowledge. We cannot accept our own fragility and mortality — our fallenness, as it were — and seek to save ourselves through our thoughts and actions rather than surrender to the reality of our finitude and embeddedness in the evils of this world. In short, we want to be God in God's place. But this is to refuse to let God be God; instead, we create God in our image and assume our will is His. Or, to put it differently, we mistake historical freedom for biblical freedom. For Luther, though, and Grant following him, we cannot know God through any of the "finite images of thought and ritual" and to attempt to do so is to proclaim a theology of glory. As Grant writes in Philosophy in the Mass Age, appropriating Luther: "no man should find his proper rest in any natural images."¹²⁰

According to Grant, this theology of glory was embedded in the thought of the pre-Reformation Scholastics. The theology that emerged from St. Thomas Aquinas's synthesis of Aristotelian natural law and the Christian conception of the God of history was of a moral God who punished sinners and rewarded the faithful. Such a theology asserted that with their capacity for reason humans

possessed the ability to better themselves. Man could move in some measure toward the good and earn God's grace. Human will and human reason had a role in human salvation. If man is capable of some 'movement toward the good' through his own efforts, then, presumably, God's will, according to Aquinas, could be manifested in the "finite images" created by man's thoughts and actions in the world. God's will and man's will could to some extent be unified in the perfecting of individual and collective life in history.¹²¹

However, in Grant's view, to link God's will and man's will is to obscure the distance between necessity and goodness, to assert that knowledge of providence was within human possibility. And that, in essence, is the essential attribute of Hegel's philosophy of history, and why it amounts to a theology of glory. But if Hegel recognises that the modern idea of freedom arises first with Luther in the Reformation, how was Luther's theology of the cross, and its insistence on the unknowableness of God's will, transformed into a theology of glory? Grant answers the question this way: The Reformation's denial of reason's capacity to 'know' God, its rejection of any mediating 'finite images of thought and ritual' opened up the idea of infinite freedom by arguing that there is no mediation between the individual and God. Luther's religious negation of any 'finite images' standing between man and God is, dialectically, an assertion of unlimited freedom. As Grant writes in Philosophy in the Mass Age, Luther's theology of the cross

is more than simply protest, because it asserts that the principle of freedom must be regulative of any future theory of practice. It is

more than negative in that the idea of freedom is the affirmation that the human spirit cannot be limited by any determinations.¹²²

In other words, while the Reformers may have initially intended only to assert freedom within the religious sphere, such an idea could not be confined to that sphere.

Harris Athanasiadis criticises Grant's interpretation of Luther's theology of the cross as being too simplistic in associating Luther's rejection of natural theology with his rejection of philosophy and rationality. Such an interpretation, Athanasiadis says, prevents Grant from being able to link a theology of the cross to a more Platonic and mystical philosophy.¹²³ It is beyond the scope of this essay to adjudicate such matters and I will let Athanasiadis's point stand unquestioned, except to note that it does not seem to account for Grant's consideration of how Luther's Protestantism, in its rejection of Aristotelian scholasticism, "led too many Protestants to a false denigration of reason."¹²⁴ Indeed, according to Grant, Luther's theology of the cross was somehow transformed into the secular theology of glory that we refer to as technology.

However, the point I want to emphasize is how, for Grant, biblical religion has a causal connection to the emergence of modern historical consciousness. Indeed, Grant traces this historicist mindset to the prophetic religion of the Old Testament in which events in time were regarded as manifestations of God's will, pointing to some final redemptive act of God to which all events in time were leading, such that to participate in these events was to partake of God's overarching purpose. The culmination of this vision of time was the Incarnation,

the singular event that for Christians made "history," or time, the realm in which man's eternal salvation was worked out, the realm in which good ultimately overcomes evil.

Grant regarded this Christian teleology as biblical theology's most radical departure from the ancient religion of natural law — and its most difficult obstacle in any attempt to reconcile Greek rational theology and Christian biblical theology. The medieval synthesis of the two theologies culminated in Thomism, but that was breaking down by the fifteenth century. Besides, the medieval attempt to reconcile these two traditions and unify them around the doctrine of the Trinity was, according to Grant, never a successful synthesis. Against this background, the Reformation marked the revitalisation of the biblical religion of history, albeit with a corollary diminishment of the natural law tradition of Greek philosophy. The last half-millennia has seen Christianity's salvational history succumb to the secular religion of progress in which man's salvation is worked out in time by means of modern science or technology. Thus, Grant concludes, "the moment of technical mastery comes out of the same science which gives us the historical sense."¹²⁵

Such an articulation of the 'idea of freedom' is a pale shadow of the Reformation's theologically- and morally-grounded understanding of spiritual, or inner, freedom. Nonetheless, Grant recognises a causal chain linking Luther's theology of the cross and the secularised theology of glory manifested in the external freedom of contemporary technological society. The spiritual freedom of

Reformation theology was extended by the Enlightenment thinkers into worldly freedom. As Hegel explained, "the essence of the Reformation (is that) Man is in his very nature destined to be free."¹²⁶ Luther posited an inner freedom that rejected the ostensibly oppressive mediations of Catholicism's 'finite images' in defining the individual's relationship to God. But, according to Grant, in doing so Luther effectively undermined the moral and spiritual foundations of the medieval institutions that had traditionally mediated Time and Eternity.¹²⁷

Obviously, Luther did not intend the destruction of all institutional supports for man's spiritual life. Yet, as Grant acknowledges, adopting Hegelian principles, the conscious intentions of our actions often acquire a significance different from the meaning of those acts as events in history: "To accept the difference between intended action and the meaning of events is to have insisted that historical explanation only completes itself within philosophy."¹²⁸ So, today, the *meaning* of Luther's actions is a vision of freedom utterly cut off from the infinite, a worldly freedom that aims at the complete satisfaction of subjective desire, a freedom that, paradoxically, requires greater and greater control and manipulation of nature, including human nature.¹²⁹

In these arguments, Grant's appropriation of Hegel's philosophy of history is readily evident. But so, too, is his discomfort with that philosophy and its doctrine of the cunning of reason. While Grant follows Hegel's understanding of the Reformation and the subjectivization of the idea of freedom in the Enlightenment, he is uncertain about the consequences of this dialectic of

freedom. He articulates this uncertainty in a key passage in Philosophy in the Mass Age:

The question thoughtful people must ask themselves is whether the progressive spirit is going to hold within itself any conception of spiritual law and freedom; or whether our history-making spirit will degenerate into a rudderless desire for domination on the part of our elites, and aimless pleasure seeking among the masses. Can the achievements of the age of progress be placed at the service of a human freedom that finds itself completed and not denied by a spiritual order?¹³⁰

Previously, I noted that it was Weil who taught Grant the idea of limit. Weil also informs the questions Grant asks in the above passage. Grant is asking whether moderns, in their claim to freedom, have forgotten eternity. Do we any longer acknowledge "the necessity of limits" in our history-making and nature-dominating actions? Is there anything that "we should never do under any circumstances"?

In both Philosophy in the Mass Age and Time as History, Grant endeavours to respond to these kinds of questions by comparing the consciousness of modern mass society with that of the ancient world. His purpose is to highlight more clearly the often unquestioned assumptions of modern consciousness. For example, drawing on Mircea Eliade, he speaks of ancient mythic consciousness as the archetypal ordering of meaning. For the ancients, events in time had significance only as a repetition of and participation in an overarching and unchanging cosmos. Temporal events were merely an image of the eternal order. According to this pre-modern consciousness, human meaningfulness was not to be found in the making of history, but rather in the

capacity of humans to comprehend and thereby participate in divinely given archetypal patterns. Even justice was grounded in a perception of divine order and laws were mirrors of eternal law. It is this conception of transcendent order that informs the western natural law tradition. Grant finds the theoretical justification of this consciousness in Plato, who, he says, perceived time "as the moving image of eternity" and passing events as meaningful only "as they lead men to the unchanging reality of God."¹³¹ In this ancient consciousness, man experiences his freedom by means of his rational comprehension of and participation in the cosmos and the natural limits it imposed.

Modern historical consciousness conceives a different understanding of freedom based on its rejection of the ancient cosmology. Where the ancients believed man achieved his greatest fulfilment, and, hence, his freedom through his reasoned comprehension of and obedience to the cosmic order, moderns have come to see freedom as a reflection of their ability to impose their will on an essentially meaningless world. Sustaining this modern understanding of freedom is a consciousness that sees history as a series of unique and irreversible events. Human freedom is dependent upon man's ability to shape those events according to his subjective desires. As Grant puts it, our historical consciousness requires us to regard the world as the arena of "limitless possibilities ... for action in space and time."¹³² Where ancient man saw himself as a participant in the cosmos and at home in the world despite its sufferings, modern man sees himself as an alien who must master the world if it is to be a home.

One of the insights that most troubled Grant was the recognition that Christianity was at least partly responsibly for shattering the ancient mythic consciousness and giving birth to modern alienated consciousness.¹³³ The seeds of modernity and the 'age of progress' are embedded in the Judeo-Christian tradition. I have touched on this topic previously, but it bears closer consideration in working through Grant's relationship to Hegel and modern philosophy. Hegel attempted to reconcile the divergent ideas of man as the maker of history and the perceiver of an order to which he is subject in his doctrine of the 'cunning of reason.' While Grant does not explicitly object to Hegel's attempted reconciliation in Philosophy in the Mass Age, his ambivalence amounts to a tacit rejection of the Hegelian concept of *Aufheben* — or preservation and transcendence — at the centre of Hegel's system. In this way, Grant detaches himself from the dominant Hegelian tradition in Canadian philosophy, particularly that of John Watson, whose appropriation of Hegel's thought had, as I discussed in Part Two, enabled him to maintain a reconciliation between Christian morality and the liberal project and its embodiment in the British Empire.¹³⁴

Nevertheless, Grant accepts the Hegelian argument that 'time as history' emerged out of Judaism's incorporation into early Christianity. Theologians from Augustine to Thomas Aquinas continually attempted to synthesise biblical theology and Greek transcendent rationality, combining Judaism's notions of a personal God who intervenes in human events with the Greek notion of a timeless God to produce the God of project and reform.¹³⁵ The Incarnation made

historical events absolutely important, lending weight to the sense that history can be the arena for man's redemption and salvation.

However, to think this is to think implicitly that time cannot be seen as 'the moving image of eternity,' but rather as the realm in which good overcomes evil. From this perspective, particular events can be interpreted as manifestations of divine will, setting up the idea that each event is unique and irreversible because its meaning is derived from God's will. This, in turn, tends to exalt human will and implies that human action must be future-directed in that actions have their fulfilment not in the present but in the future. As Grant writes in Time as History, "time was raised up by redemption of time, and the future by the exaltation of the *eschaton*."¹³⁶ And this, Grant writes in his essay "Faith and the Multiversity," was the essential 'mistake' of western Christianity: it "simplified divine love by identifying it too closely with immanent power in the world."¹³⁷

Protestantism and Catholicism became "triumphalist" — theologies of glory, in other words — because the prevailing paradigm of knowledge within which they functioned denied the infinite distance between necessity and good. The Reformation thus contained the seed of its own destruction in that the idea of infinite freedom opened the door for this unending criticism of religious traditions and the immanentization of redemption and salvation. Hence, in the same vein, the scientific-rationalist critique of Christian traditions undermined the doctrines of natural law and divine providence, replacing those traditions with immanent secularised versions. That is to say, modernity transforms natural law and

providence into rights and a faith in progress, while Christianity becomes liberalism.¹³⁸

How did this happen? How could Christianity espouse "an eternal order that men did not measure and define but by which we were measured and defined,"¹³⁹ while, at the same time, be responsible for an age that denies eternity? Grant regards Augustine as one of the key sources for the "errors" that promoted the decay of western Christianity and its secularisation in technological society.¹⁴⁰ However, William Christian and Harris Athanasiadis point out that Grant was able to address these questions through his reading of Philip Sherrard's 1959 book The Greek East and the Latin West.¹⁴¹ If so, it is necessary to consider Sherrard's thought in some detail if I am to clarify Grant's thinking on the 'mistake' of western Christianity.

At the core of Sherrard's book is the attempt to explain the "rationalising spirit (that) led to the break-up of the medieval Christian ethos and the formation of modern Western society and culture."¹⁴² Sherrard traces this phenomenon to the schism between eastern and western Christianity as reflected in the conflict over the doctrinal addition to the Creed of the *Filioque* clause on the nature of God, which received papal approval in 1014. But behind this conflict was a clash in metaphysical views that Sherrard roots in the split in Greek thought between Plato and Aristotle.

According to Sherrard, Aristotle's thought was effectively an "exteriorisation" and "rationalisation" of Plato's thought. Plato's metaphysics

conceived of the whole in dualistic terms; that is, form and matter stood in contrast to each other, although not absolutely. In the Platonic perspective, sensible existence is the result of the interdependence and interaction of form and formless matter. While it may seem these two principles are opposite, they are not because, first, "form" — Plato's Demiurge — is not the overarching reality; it is a determination of that reality, the Good, which transcends all formal characteristics, and, second, "formless matter" is not the substance out of which things are made; it is something that precedes the sensible thing that comes to be because it participates in that 'undetermined' reality from which form itself emerges. Thus, both form and matter possess a meaningfulness that does not ultimately depend on their relationship to each other or on whether one is subordinate to the other. Each has its value because each has its origins "in that supreme reality in which their apparent opposition or duality is transcended and absorbed."¹⁴³ Even Plato's "Ideas" are not merely transcended and 'ideal' in relation to the world of sensible objects that they determine; rather, they are immanent within those objects. "The creature possesses its own intelligible nature through actual participation in the creative cause which brought it into being."¹⁴⁴

Aristotle exteriorised Plato's metaphysics by denying the reality of the creative Principle and asserting the absolute distinction between form and matter. Where Plato had maintained a relative dualism between form and matter, Aristotle's exteriorisation asserted an absolute dualism. And this, according to

Sherrard, amounted to a failure to recognise any principle superior to that which embraced both form and matter. This difference between Plato and Aristotle has profound implications. Plato asserts that man's highest purpose is contemplating and participating in the transcendent realities of the cosmos. This is possible through philosophy, conceived of, in Sherrard's words, as "an initiatory process likened by Plato to a kind of dying and spiritual rebirth"¹⁴⁵ that surpasses all individual and natural limitations. But behind this philosophic experience is another experience of a transcendent order in which man may participate. It also acknowledges that man possesses certain faculties that allow him to participate in this supernatural order. One faculty is reason, which achieves its knowledge through observing the sensible world, while the other is the 'divine intellect' that can gain knowledge of transcendent realities through initiation and illumination.¹⁴⁶

Aristotle, however, denied the existence of any objective reality apart from the existence of the world of sensible objects. To assert this, though, is by implication, to make the mind of man the highest order and the life of reason his highest purpose. And that is to make man his own highest purpose. Moreover, this strictly worldly purpose is conceived within a worldview that sees the "external" world in terms of an absolute dualism between the rational and the irrational, the formal and the formless, mind and matter. In such a worldview, the method of reasoning shifts to a deductive and analytic practice from the Platonic method of inductive and intuitive. Sherrard argues that this Aristotelian mode of thought was taken over by the Romans and employed to master nature and

organise their society to satisfy human purposes. "Rome was to succeed, where Greece had failed, in extending the rational order over the whole imperial world."¹⁴⁷

But it also was extended into the Christian church. While the early Church fathers had been influenced by a Platonic and mystical contemplative sensibility, the advent of Constantine and the imposition of Christianity as the official religion of the empire forced the greatest exteriorisation of the faith, effectively turning Christianity into an "imperial religion."¹⁴⁸ The Church was now called on to involve itself in the running of the world. The Platonic mode of thought was not well-suited to secular affairs. Instead, the Church had to focus more on shaping and ordering events: Everybody within the imperial state had to be made Christian. This required applying the more 'exterior' approach of Mosaic law and Aristotelian empiricism to the world rather than the 'interior' or metaphysical approach of the early Church fathers.¹⁴⁹

Sherrard describes how these different modes of thought played out in the *Filioque* schism over the doctrine of God and how this schism shaped the future of the West. Influenced by Plato, the Greek east maintained the transcendence of God in a way the Latin west, influenced by Aristotle, did not. In essence, as Grant perceived, the eastern church remained closer to the Gospels, or biblical theology, and Platonic contemplative philosophy by claiming that both the Son and the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father alone. According to the Easterners,

[T]he Christian Revelation makes it quite clear what is the single divine principle. It is the Father. The Father is the unique, all-embracing source and fount of all divinity and of everything that is. As such, He alone is the principle of His own being, which He determines, not according to his Essence, but according to His powers that are 'indivisibly divided' from His Essence; and it is these same powers that determine, each in its own particular mode, the being and existence of the two other Persons of the Trinity ... Thus, there is one God, not because there is one Essence, or one power, but because there is one Father; and it is the infinity of the Father which 'contains' both Essence and power, but in the sense that — and this is the limit of explanation — both Essence and power are also of the Father.¹⁵⁰

For the eastern Church, then, the essence of God transcended all human thought and understanding; only God's 'being' in the Persons of the Trinity could be known to the human mind. This element of unknowability effectively kept the divine from the claims of human reason without denying that God was immanent in the world and the ground of being. God was both immanent (the Trinity) and transcendent (the Essence). Thus, there remained a final mystery beyond man's rationalisations even though the minds of men could be opened to the divine through experience of the beauty of the world and the deification of Christ. The western Church, however, sought to overcome the paradox of God's immanence-transcendence by blurring the distinction between God's essence and being and identifying God with Being itself. As Sherrard states, "what Western theologians tended increasingly to stress was the idea of the *Summum Ens*, of the absolute One in whom no distinctions of any kind may be admitted."¹⁵¹

This universalist homogeneity finds a strong echo in Grant's interpretation of Hegel's philosophy of history, and, I would argue, reveals a much deeper

understanding of his ultimate rejection of Hegel and the modern project. As William Christian observes, what was at stake for Grant in the *Filioque* controversy was "nothing less than the nature of God and the question of how far reason could go in understanding the divine."¹⁵² Likewise, Harris Athanasiadis points out that Sherrard's arguments regarding eastern Christianity's more Platonic and transcendent mindset, with its notion of an ultimately unknowable God, was, for Grant, closer to a theology of the cross that sees God's absence in the world as safely beyond human reason.¹⁵³

What Sherrard makes clear (or as clear as the issue can be) is that for the Latin West the identification of God and Being meant that while the western theologians could still speak of God's unknowability, the substance of that claim was much more shallow. The insertion of the *Filioque* clause — that is, the claim that the Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* the Son — symbolised an attempt to further circumscribe the divine mystery. God is rationalised a bit more, increasingly subjected to man's control and purposes.¹⁵⁴

This had consequences in the development of the Church's understanding of its role in the world, turning it to a greater concern for worldly influence. It also contributed to "the growth and spread of ... a rational spirit in the West" that linked thinkers such as Augustine and Aquinas to Descartes to Hegel. Sherrard finds a link between the Latin West's emphasis on man's reason and will in the shaping of historical events, particularly after the rediscovery of Aristotle's thought in the twelfth century, and the rise of modern science and technology.¹⁵⁵

While the *Filioque* was consistent with Augustine's thought, it encouraged later theologians, particularly Aquinas, to claim greater powers for reason in knowing God's will. Similarly, while Luther and Calvin rejected the mediations and impositions of Catholicism, they, too, accepted the proposition of God's intelligibility and the idea that nature was subject to human will. Francis Bacon and René Descartes took the 'rationalising spirit' even further, although in doing so they effectively reduced reason to being an instrument by which man shapes the world to suit his desires. No longer is reason the means by which man contemplates divine order and perceives the Good of the whole. Thus, between the rationalising spirit of western theology and the influence of a world-focused Aristotelian thought, western Christianity was provided with an increasingly powerful method of rationally knowing and shaping the world to suit man's will.¹⁵⁶

Nowhere, Grant argues in Philosophy in the Mass Age, has this progressivist consciousness manifested itself more vigorously than in North America. It is because North Americans have no history before the age of progress that the modern project holds dominion over them. Yet, Grant also links this faith in progress to Protestant Christianity. There is something within Protestant theology that contributed to the Christianity's and provided the seedbed for technological society. Thus Grant detects a deep paradox in modernity as manifested in North America: Protestant theology contributed to the modern secular spirit not because it reflected more of a "biblical" theology than Catholicism, but because it was less reliant on rational theology.

So, the question become what is the connection between Protestantism — or North American morality, as Grant puts it — and an age of progress that seems bent of producing an aimless, hedonistic society? And how is it that the age of progress holds within it particular notions of Christian morality, notably charity and natural law that seem to clash with the triumphalism of its history-making spirit? These questions entail a closer look at Grant's thinking about North American society.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The 'Fate' of North America

For Grant, North American society epitomised modernity's history-making consciousness and its idea of freedom. North America is "the most complete political incarnation of the modern consciousness of freedom ... the true heir of the Reformation spirit."¹⁵⁷ Thus, the history of North America is somehow tied to the problematic of the modern project. North America is the only society that has "no history of its own before the age of progress, and we have built here the society that incarnates more than any other the values and principles of the age of progress."¹⁵⁸

I previously noted that Grant begins Philosophy in the Mass Age by observing how history is a problem for the moral philosopher who seeks to know which actions are right and which are wrong. Since philosophy is concerned with the principles by which we should direct our lives, and since North America reflects "a society of mass production and its techniques, of standardised consumption and standardised education, of wholesale entertainment and almost wholesale medicine,"¹⁵⁹ then the question to be asked is whether North American mass society reflects the way men ought to live.

Grant identifies two fundamental characteristics that define mass society: First, a scientific-technological epistemology and the attempt by humans to apply

that theory of knowledge to the domination of nature, including human nature; and second, the use by economic and political elites of various institutions and structures, including corporations, to extend this domination over all others such that even the elites are themselves subjected to technology's dominance. In an argument that points back to his own earlier ascription to the optimism of his forefathers, Grant asserts that it is an illusion of liberalism to think that individuals have any substantive freedom against the forces of dominance. In this way, genuine freedom — the inner freedom espoused by Protestantism — is compromised and placed in the service of the subjective goals of mass society. In such a situation, Grant says, we are forced to ask the meaning of these new forces.

We ask what it is that man has created in this new society. And as we try to see what we are, there arises an ultimate question about human nature and destiny. And such questions are what philosophy is. What I mean by philosophy arises out of such a situation is that so totally new is our situation in history, that we are driven to try and redefine the meaning of human history itself — the meaning of our own lives and of all lives in general.¹⁶⁰

Yet, Grant recognises that in the prevailing epistemology of modernity even reason itself has come to be an instrument employed to satisfy subjective purposes. In effect, man's capacity for reason becomes part of mass society's apparatus for enclosing man in an ever tightening circle, making it of questionable value in trying to break out of the circle. "Every instrument of mass culture is a pressure alienating the individual from himself as a free being."¹⁶¹

But can we not in thought transcend the forces of dominance and

instrumentality that seemingly delimit our ability to see the world as it is? On this question, Grant resorts to Hegel's famous dictum: "The Owl of Minerva only takes its flight at twilight;" that is, man turns to philosophy to rethink the meaning of his experience when the prevailing systems of meaning no longer provide an adequate account of that experience.¹⁶² Protestantism, with its reliance on biblical theology as its ground of meaning, may once have accorded with the experience of North America's pioneering communities, but is now no longer able to hold the minds of men in mass society. However, a new comprehension can only emerge from genuine insight into the novelty of our situation, and this requires an understanding of those systems of meaning that preceded ours. Which is to say, inner freedom is only possible through serious reflection on where and what we have been.

Grant sees the western tradition rooted in two primals: reason and love, thought and charity, or, if you will, reason and revelation. Grant, of course, gives the primacy to "the magistry of revelation."¹⁶³ Philosophy is the means by which love — the obedient giving away of oneself, the attention to otherness, as Grant puts it — comprehends itself. Nonetheless, contemplation remains subservient to charity. Grants sees this hierarchy of activities reflected in modern society with its emphasis on equality and human dignity. Behind modern ethical ideals is a morality rooted in the universalism of Christian love. Grant, thus, posits a connection between technology — understood as that attempt to overcome chance (or nature) — intended to improve the human condition and Christian

notions of love and charity. Technology is not simply oriented to freeing humans from nature, an expression of will and hubristic dominance; it is also an expression of charity. The technological enterprise "was undertaken partly in the name of that charity which was held as the height in one of those ancient systems of meaning."¹⁶⁴ Yet, Grant also links certain destructive elements of modernity — its theology of glory — to certain aspects of Christianity. In effect, the secularisation of the modernity, whether for positive or negative reasons, is inherently derived from Christianity. This sounds very close to Hegel's concepts of negation and sublation, or *Negativität* and *Aufheben*, in which something and its other engage in a dialectical process that sees "something" negated by its "other" without that which differentiates the two being lost. The "other" contains or sublates the idea of what it negates. Protestantism negates Catholicism, but Protestantism is not simply non-Catholic; it contains elements of the tradition it negated. Similarly, modern North American society contains or sublates elements of the pre-modern traditions, including Protestantism, that it negated in coming to be what it is.

According to Grant, it is the biblical focus on historical events and the formations of the world that established the connection between Protestantism and empirical science. Historically, Protestantism and science are bound together by their mutual rejection of Greek natural theology and Aristotelianism. Puritanism reflects an assertion of the primacy of human willing. This doctrine of will served to compensate for the absence of natural theology — the consolations

of philosophy, if you will — and the comforts of Catholicism's 'finite images.' Left alone to face the unknowable will of God, the Puritans sought reassurance of divine favour in mastering nature and solving the practical problems of life. "This will had to be sought and served not through our contemplations but directly through our practice. From the solitude and uncertainty of that position came the responsibility which could find no rest."¹⁶⁵ The result, though, is that the Puritan self-righteous wilfulness, its restlessness to do God's will, has produced in North America a society with little sense of inwardness or regard for reflection, and even less awareness of the presence of the infinite. As far as Grant was concerned, the Puritans' mix of wilful self-righteousness and pioneering practicality produced a society of administrators and technicians such that "technique is ourselves."¹⁶⁶

Grant was much influenced in his judgement by Max Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.¹⁶⁷ Weber likewise emphasised the Calvinist effort to find assurance of salvation through practical endeavour. The Puritans held that knowledge of God was ultimately hidden in mystery even though the fate of each individual was laid up in eternity. According to Weber, this combination of God's absolute transcendence and the sense of the individual's distance from God prompted an intense effort to look for signs of God's favour in worldly achievement. Individual success embodied God's glory. The work in the world took the form of capitalist free enterprise. Through the self-disciplined accumulation of capital — what Weber called "worldly asceticism"¹⁶⁸

— the individual was able through hard work to ensure his own salvation. Wealth and success became the hallmark of divine favour.

However, Grant asks how this worldly asceticism, this attempt to manifest the kingdom of God in earthly good works, was reduced to secularised hedonism. How did obedience to God's will and self-disciplined practicality give way to narcissistic self-indulgence? Or, to ask the question in another way, how were the principles of inward freedom and individuality that came to North America with the Puritans reduced to a hedonistic egocentrism that largely regards freedom as merely the desire to satisfy material desires?

In coming to North America, European settlers were confronted with an seemingly indomitable land. To survive required intense will, an abiding pragmatism and a strong focus on the practical. The early North American settlers had little time for contemplation. At the same time, North America's early Puritan settlers espoused a biblical faith that posits a God who acts in history and calls upon human beings to act in such a way as to manifest His will. Where Greek thought emphasised contemplative reason, biblical thought focused on acting in the world, reforming it to suit God's purpose. Or, to put it differently, where the Greeks posited a natural theology that saw the finite as participating in the infinite, biblical theology gave greater independence to the finite in relation to the infinite. And it was this worldview that Protestantism emulated. With its emphasis on the biblical, Protestantism "brought into the western world a fresh interest in action through its intense desire to shape the world to God's purpose."

In terms of North America's 'fate' this meant that the early Calvinist Puritan settlers felt called upon "to act so as to bring in God's kingdom on earth."¹⁶⁹

Given this backdrop, Grant concludes that the hedonism of contemporary North American society is not solely a product of liberal progressivism, but rather "originates in the reformist Protestant spirit." In a dialectical dynamic, hedonism and materialism was embedded in the Christian emphasis on charity. But the contemporary spirit, cut off from any sense of transcendence, has come to regard the world and its self-satisfaction as a end in itself. Hedonism is its own purpose. As Grant puts it:

The idea of freedom as the ability to change the world, exists in our minds as dependent in part upon an attenuated altruism — the last remnant of the Protestant vision of the Kingdom of God on earth — and in part upon a growing self-centred hedonism.¹⁷⁰

But Grant also sees in Calvinist Puritanism a deeper connection between Protestant theology and modern instrumental science. In negative terms, this connection is related to the rejection by both Protestantism and science of the medieval scholasticism rooted in Greek natural theology. Modern science denies the intelligibility of this natural theology and its teleological comprehension of the cosmos. Similarly, Protestant theology rejects the Greek reliance on contemplative reason in favour of biblical revelation.

According to Grant, the Protestant rejection of scholastic teleological doctrine was based on the notion that it encouraged men to think they could avoid the irrational mystery of evil "by claiming that final purpose could be argued from the world."¹⁷¹ In other words, scholasticism followed the Greeks in believing

that human reason could comprehend transcendent reality or the truth of the whole. Harking back to Luther's turn from Catholicism, Grant argues that for Protestant theology, scholasticism led men away from biblical revelation; that is, away from "the only true illumination of that mystery, the crucifixion apprehended in faith as divine humiliation."¹⁷²

Grant also detects a linkage between Protestantism, empirical science and utilitarianism. On this point, he cites Ernst Troeltsch's account of this connection to explain how Calvinism, with its recasting of the goodness and rationality of divine activity into acts of will unconnected by inner necessity or substantive unity, tends to emphasise the individual and the empirical, rejecting Aristotelian concepts of absolute causality and unity in favour of the individual's utilitarian judgements regarding all things. "The influence of this spirit is quite unmistakably the most important cause of the empirical and positivist tendencies of the Anglo-Saxon spirit," Grant writes, quoting Troeltsch.¹⁷³

Grant, however, notes that Troeltsch was writing in 1914, when these Anglo-Saxon tendencies were still rooted in a religious sensibility and an ethical self-discipline. But in the wake of the twentieth century's disasters, the Calvinist obedience to and faith in God's loving will on which North American society was founded has given way to the denial of God's existence. And with that loss of faith the traditional restraints on human thought and action have also given way. As a society we have transferred our loyalties from the transcendent to the immanent, transferred our faith from the promise of the beyond to a faith in

technology and our ability to transform the world according to our will. Thus, Grant traces North America's primal experience to the Protestant theology's denial of the classical tradition of contemplative reason. This left North Americans susceptible to the world-mastering tendencies of modern science and an instrumental notion of human reason embodied in technology.

How did Grant see this narrow rationalisation of the world manifesting itself in the political and social realities of North American society, including in Canada? This is a crucial question in that it helps highlight Grant's understanding of the 'necessity' of Canada's disappearance and how, at the theoretical level at least, that disappearance is related to Grant's confrontation with Hegel. To answer the question entails a consideration — a case study, if you will — of what Grant meant by the 'rationalisation of the world' and in what forms he saw it manifested.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Trudeau and the Betrayals of the Bureaucrats

In Philosophy of Right, Hegel proffers the notion of a state's civil servants being a "universal" class dedicated to the service of whole. For Hegel, the civil service is able to integrate the particular and the universal, thus providing the basis of a workable constitutional state and the configuration of a proper relationship between the individual and the community. For Grant, though, (and Taylor, as I shall discuss later), the bureaucracy is more problematic. Grant sees the Hegelian idea of an omniscient bureaucracy as neither possible nor desirable. Behind his critique of bureaucracy is his critique of technology.

Hegel's civil servants obviously echo Plato's philosophical guardian class and even harken to Aristotle's image of the magnanimous man as the epitome of the proper relationship between the individual and the community. But for Grant, the ideal of a "universal" class capable of transcending its own self-interest and functioning for the good of the state as a whole fails in the face of reality. For Grant, Hegel's universal class leads to the iron-cage bureaucracy envisioned by Max Weber.

Philosophy of Right, as I argued in Part One, casts the modern state as the embodiment of Spirit or the idea of freedom. Weber, on the other hand, describes the state as an iron cage. The question that emerges from such a

contrast is whether the iron cage of the modern state can be unlocked so as to allow the kind of reconciliation of the individual and the community put forward by Hegel's *Sittlichkeit*. Grant writings as whole suggest the improbability of such a reconciliation. Grant's evidence for this claim emerges in his critique of Canada bureaucratic and corporate elites. Among the villains in Grant's tale of Canada's disappearance are its bureaucratic and corporate leaders.

To be sure, Grant acknowledges that no modern state can function without considerable authority being placed in the hands of the civil service. Ideally, the bureaucracy can serve as a countervail to those forces that threaten political and social disintegration. Indeed, in "uncertain nations" such as Canada, with its regional, political and economic cleavages, "the civil service is perhaps the essential instrument by which nationhood is preserved." To the degree Canadian politicians use the civil service skilfully, it can balance the "anti-national forces" of the corporate elites.¹⁷⁴ But that is not what happened with Diefenbaker's government, according to Grant. Diefenbaker failed to gain the respect of the federal bureaucracy, thus neutralising its efficacy as a countervail to the forces arrayed against the preservation of Canadian sovereignty. In the Defence Crisis of 1963, the Diefenbaker government did not receive loyalty from the civil service.

Grant, as I argued in Chapter Fifteen, attributes the betrayal of the bureaucrats to the waning of British traditions in Canadian life. "The best civil servants were devoted to the British account of their function and the conception

of a sovereign Canadian nation."¹⁷⁵ But among the Canada's liberal elites it was this British connection that was seen as retarding genuine Canadian sovereignty. And if the Defence Crisis revealed anything it was how tenuous this connection had become among these elites. Where Diefenbaker continued to accept the British connection as substantive, much of the English-speaking ruling class no longer felt such a tie. Instead, they welcomed the growing influence of the United States, an influence that was expanding continent-wide through the growth of corporate capitalism. Expansion brought wealth, and thus it was in the interests of Canada's ruling classes, in the private or public spheres, to attach themselves to the forces of homogenisation, that is, continentalism. In the Canadian context, continentalism is a catch phrase "that signifies the loss of identity, sovereignty and distinctness."¹⁷⁶

Why was the potential countervailing attributes of Canada's civil servants effectively neutralised? It is easy to understand why for the sake of profit and wealth Canada's corporatists and capitalists were so willing to forego the country's independence. As Grant sardonically states, "No small country can depend for its existence on the loyalty of its capitalists." But why the bureaucrats? Why, as he puts it, did they so willingly "become more and more representative of a western empire rather than civil servants of a particular nation state?" Grant acknowledges that the betrayals of the bureaucrats — or, in his words, their "confused strivings" (along with those of the politicians and businessmen) — cannot alone account for Canada's collapse. This, he says in

Lament for a Nation, is rooted in the character of the modern age in which "the aspirations of progress have made Canada redundant" and "the universal and homogeneous state is the pinnacle of political striving."¹⁷⁷

Behind Grant's critique of the federal bureaucracy is his understanding of how modern rationality has largely replaced genuine politics with politics-as-administration. In Philosophy in the Mass Age, Grant points out that modern rationality is grounded in a conception of 'knowing' and 'making' radically different from that of pre-modern traditions. Modern technological society possesses a variety of ways for dominating human and non-human nature: the technical manipulation of things, the rationalisation of economic activity, the bureaucratic objectification of labour, the pacification of people by means of entertainment and the management of people through the application of behavioural techniques. Each of these modes of domination inhibits people from assessing their lives in moral terms; that is, people are unable to examine their lives in terms of a transcendent standard of the good.¹⁷⁸

In evoking the Platonic concept of the good, Grant argues in support of "that rational reassessment of life which I call moral philosophy."¹⁷⁹ Modern western society has lost this pre-modern tradition of transcendent rationality. In this tradition, reason and rationality are a "way" of approaching the truth of reality as a whole, not an instrument for the control and manipulation of reality according to human desires. Transcendent rationality is the way we discover the meaning of our lives and make that meaning our own. The world is not of man's

making or willing, but one in which he must abide harmoniously in order to know his proper ends.¹⁸⁰

By contrast, modern rationality is a tool for the control of nature, including human nature. As far as Grant is concerned instrumental rationality and the mass technological society are both the products of and producers of each other. This concept of instrumental rationality arose out of a certain paradigm of knowledge which, according to Grant, reflects the modern experience of man as an historical being. Out of this conception of historical self-consciousness has come the belief that the world's meaningfulness, and our knowledge of that meaning, depends on man's will. But for Grant, knowing and making are in their modern form a species of willing, and it is this coming together of knowing and making, of reasoning and will, that is the fundamental characteristic of modern rationality. Modern rationality is grounded in the notion that the world is "a field of objects which can be known in their workings through the 'creative' acts of reasoning and experimenting by the thinking subject who stands over them." And such a stance, Grant argues, is "a stance of will."¹⁸¹

Grant describes this 'stance of will,' this unification of knowing and making, in Time as History. Historical man gives meaning to the world through the wilful imposition of a worldview that is brought forth to fulfil a pre-determined conception of what is good for all. But this good is defined only in terms of what man is more and more able to control. That is, modern good is defined by wilful mastery. Thus, the meaning that modern man finds in the world by mastering the

world is not the same meaning that pre-modern man found in the world through contemplation of the world as it appeared to him. The modern actualisation of meaning is to set forth a world according the self-determinations of a will to power. Meaning and purpose in the modern consciousness are dependent on controlling existence so that good can be created out of the manipulation of things. To know the *use* of things is to know their *value*. Thus, modern knowing, in Grant's terms, is the instrumental ordering of objects as means to ends that reside solely in our creative willing. Meaning is created through the *making* what it is that we *know*.¹⁸²

Modernity, then, for Grant, is a project of reason-as-will, of instrumental rationality, in which man summons nature-as-object before him and forces from it its reasons for being what it is as an object. And modern man believes, in principle at least, that everything can be or should be controlled (and, hence, known) through rational calculation. Grant contrasts this with pre-modern traditions in which nature was the paradigm within which all standards of morality and justice, good and evil, purpose and meaning, were thought and acted. There was a perceived order to the universe. And it was because this order appeared to be beyond complete human understanding that it could be used as the standard against which man could judge his knowledge and actions. But in the world of historicism, man has traded the external standard of nature for an internal standard of his own willed creation. Man no longer accepts the natural definitions of reality; rather he defines what is real in terms of his own will and freedom.

The belief in the mastering of knowledge of human and non-human beings arose together in the very way we conceive our humanity as an Archimedean freedom outside nature, so that we can creatively will to shape the world to our values.¹⁸³

Modern liberal society reflects this form of rationality, according to Grant.

While liberalism promotes equality and progress and happiness for all, at its core is the ascription to the instrumental rationality of science and technology, both of which have made plain, in Grant's view, that "reason is only an instrument and cannot teach us how it is best to live."¹⁸⁴ Indeed, Grant argues that liberal politics has become largely instrumental in that its goal is a conception of happiness that has been shrunk to fit a consumer society. Modern liberalism, penetrated by the instrumental rationality of science and technology, reduces freedom to the satisfaction of desire. The consequence of this is the reduction of politics to the administration of desire.¹⁸⁵

Grant's understanding of politics-as-administration owes a great deal to Max Weber.¹⁸⁶ Not only did Weber show Grant how deeply Calvinist Protestantism had influenced North American society, but he also helped him to understand the influence of modern rationalism on liberal society. In this regard, it is necessary to at least sketch Weber's conception of modern rationality before returning to Grant's analysis of administrative politics.

According to one scholar, there are at least sixteen meanings of "rational" to be found in Weber's various writings on the consciousness of capitalism and ascetic Protestantism.¹⁸⁷ Nevertheless, Weber holds that there is a form of rationalism specific to the western capitalist consciousness. What is especially

peculiar about western rationalisation is its systematic organisation of beliefs and behaviour according to some unifying central criterion. With the systemisation of belief comes the elimination of logical inconsistencies, the undermining of irrational faiths and fancies, the rejection of magical or gnostic techniques and the reduction of heterogeneous traditions. Similarly, the rationalisation of behaviour or action is the reduction or elimination of decisions which cannot be justified in accordance with their forecasted ends, which themselves are decided upon by rationally determined ends. These ends, in turn, are determined through a predictive calculation based on what are taken to be empirical laws.¹⁸⁸

Rationalisation, then, is the coherent ordering of actions and beliefs aimed at the achievement of a predetermined end, whether by an individual or a group of individuals in some organisation. And what is special and peculiar about western rationality is its conception of rationality as a mode of consciousness for the calculation of means and ends. Under this means-ends formulation what is rational is the calculation of the best available means to achieve a particular end, which itself has already been determined to be rational. Thus, rationality amounts to consistency in creating the logical order of premise to conclusion, of achieving the efficient ordering of means and ends. By this definition any other mode of thinking that does not follow the logic of the means-ends equation, that does not logically bind premise and conclusion, would be, as it were, irrational.

The particular area where Weber saw the western world's special peculiarity for expanding rationalisation throughout modern life was in the

increasing prominence of *formal* rationality over *substantive* rationality. The latter is a matter of value, of norms or ends that cannot in themselves be judged for logical consistency and efficiency. The former is considered to refer to matters of fact, to the calculation of means and procedures and rules of conduct. According to Weber, the social structures of western society — its political institutions, its legal and bureaucratic administrations — are, in the main, formally rational because of their ascription to the concepts of trans-personal objectivity, their reliance on formalised rules and procedures for determining norms of conduct, their consistent reliance on calculative techniques, their need for specialised knowledge of those techniques and their promotion of technical rational control over nature, including human nature.¹⁸⁹

Weber argues that what occurs with the modernist domination of formal rationality is the conflation of means and ends. Under formal rationality, the *end* in terms of which modern life is rationalised — maximum calculability and efficiency, for example — is transformed into a generalised means that effectively determines or shapes the substantive ends being pursued. Where traditional societies once restricted the possibilities of rational means by given substantive norms or ends — Plato's Good or the Christian faith in God's revelation, for instance — modern western society determines or judges its norms or ends on the basis of the means for achieving self-chosen goals. And these goals are themselves legitimated in terms of how they fit the rationalist norm of calculation and efficiency. Thus, under formal rationality, the means become the ends; and

the ends become the means. The traditional restrictions of substantive rationality are, in effect, neutralised by formal rationality.

Weber saw the extremes of formal rationality reflected in the increasing bureaucratisation of modern industrial society and the emergence of rigid, rule-bound social structures dominated by an instrumental approach to human relationships. Despite his support of capitalism, Weber raised the spectre that as capitalism advanced it would place an increasing emphasis on the imperatives of efficiency as the way to bring means and ends into some final conjunction. The result would be that the greater part of social relationships would be determined as to their value and worth and meaningfulness in terms of their alignment with instrumental purposes. That is, the end of any social action would be justified as worthy by the availability of rational means to achieve that end. Weber feared this conflation of means and ends beneath the weight of formal rationality would result in a "new iron cage of serfdom" that would see all notions of value-oriented action "suffocated by the almighty bureaucratic structures and by the tightly knit networks of formal-rational laws and regulations, against which the individual would no longer stand any chance at all."¹⁹⁰

Weber's judgement is echoed by Grant. Modern liberalism, penetrated by the instrumental rationality of science and technology, reduces freedom to the satisfaction of egoistic desires. The result, says Grant, is politics being "increasingly replaced by administration."¹⁹¹ A demonstration of rationalised politics or politics-as-administration can be found in Grant's consideration of the

political thought and practices of Pierre Trudeau, whom Grant saw as the quintessential Hegelian liberal.

Writing in the early 1970s, Ramsay Cook remarked that "the two most important Canadian intellectuals of the past twenty years" were Pierre Trudeau and George Grant.¹⁹² Both raised questions about the predominant traditions of their country within the context of a modern technological society. From their respective liberal and conservative perspectives, they asked what Canada's role in the world should be. According to Cook, Trudeau, in opting for the liberal progressivist vision, believed that the proper use of technological rationality was the key to preserving Canada's independence, and that through rational planning Canada, as a federalist state, would provide a model for the rest of the world to emulate. For Trudeau, federalism, as a rationally-chosen political structure, could serve as a model for the rest of the world, particularly the emerging Third World nations, of the efficacy of liberal democratisation.

Grant, on the other hand, argued that the increasing penetration of technological thinking, as a product of and producer of the prevailing liberal, positivist world-view, threatened the political and cultural institutions that ensured Canada's independence as a sovereign state. Technology and the type of thinking it reflects was driving Canada towards a world-state that would be essentially tyrannical. Cook sums up these differing views this way:

Trudeau, the liberal, believes that technology can be controlled for man's benefit; Grant, the conservative, believes that technique already controls man.¹⁹³

What we have, then, is two distinct world-views. Now, it is beyond the parameters of this essay to examine Trudeau's thought in detail, particularly the importance he placed on 'rational' decision-making. For my purposes it is sufficient to note that others have made this claim. Harald von Riekhoff, for example, observes that

There is no evidence ... that the concepts of rationality and equilibrium — the former relating to the decision-making process and the latter to political structure — which occupy a central place in Trudeau's thinking on national politics are treated any differently, or assume less significance, when applied to international relations.¹⁹⁴

Trudeau's concern for rationalist decision-making processes is also reflected in the considerable changes he instituted to the bureaucratic structure of foreign-policy planning and the decision-making process, particularly in terms of cabinet proceedings and staff operations in the Prime Minister's Office and the Privy Council Office. Trudeau "brought to his office a personal ideology and an advisory staff which also seem imbued with rationalist aspirations."¹⁹⁵

Trudeau's well-known anti-nationalism, and his support for the concept of federalism, also reflected his view that politics should be 'rational.'¹⁹⁶ Nationalistic governments, he wrote in a 1962 essay "New Treason of the Intellectuals," tend by nature to be "intolerant, discriminatory, and, when all is said and done, totalitarian;" that is, nationalism is irrational. In its determination to retain its sovereignty Canada must not be narrowly nationalistic, according to Trudeau. As a democratic federal state, Canada should "serve as a mentor" to those other nations in the world wracked by the plague of nationalist disturbances. He refers

in this regard to his travels to Indonesia in 1955 and Ghana two years later where, he says, the oppression of the people and the promotion of war was justified by the leaders as necessary to protect national sovereignty. Canada's co-operative federalism "could become a brilliant prototype for the moulding of tomorrow's civilisation."¹⁹⁷

This civilisation, according to Trudeau, would be eminently rational. Trudeau equates, federalism with rationalism. As he states in his 1965 essay "Federalism, Nationalism and Reason," a federal system is "a product of reason in politics." For Trudeau reason and rationality are the main principles of governance and policy-making. As he puts it:

... there is some hope that in advanced societies, the glue of nationalism will become as obsolete as the divine right of kings; the title of the state to govern and the extent of its authority will be conditional upon rational justification; a people's consensus based on reason will supply the cohesive force that societies require; and politics both within and without the state will follow a much more functional approach to the problems of government. If politicians must bring emotions into the act, let them get emotional about functionalism.¹⁹⁸

Tacked on to this faith in reason and rationality is a faith in science and technology as the means to perfect the world. For Trudeau, as one observer comments, "reason is associated with science, automation, cybernetics, technology and international economics while emotionalism is associated with Trudeau's great ideological enemy — nationalism."¹⁹⁹

To the extent these statements reveal the underpinnings of Trudeau's political philosophy, what they reflect is Trudeau's essential ascription to the

principles of Enlightenment rationality. Trudeau holds to the idea of individual freedom as the pre-eminent good for personal self-fulfilment. He conceives of the state and, by extension, the international system of states, as a servant to its citizens. And he asserts the progressivist belief that it is only by way of reason that improvements to the human condition can be achieved. In short, freedom is reason, according to Trudeau. As George Radwanski states:

In singling out freedom as the distinctively human quality, Trudeau equates it with reason: Man is free because he has the power of reason, the ability to make considered choices, and the only free — and, hence, truly human — actions are those which are rational and intelligent.²⁰⁰

What we seem to have then is the following Trudeauvian formula:

Freedom equates to rationality; federalism is the political order best suited to providing a harmony of reason and freedom. To be sure, Trudeau's concern is with the individual and the individual's relationship with his society: The function of the state is to provide the conditions what will best allow the individual the freedom to satisfy his needs and desires and aspirations. These desires and aspirations are, in turn, the products of the individual's capacity for reason and rationality. For Trudeau, then, the purpose of this rational world is freedom; a freedom that is to be attained through the wilful overcoming of all that is not rational, including 'irrational' nationalism. What else can Trudeau be promoting when he insists on "cold, unemotional rationality" in politics, or that politics must be "a pure product of reason."²⁰¹

Such a world-view is essentially Hegelian,²⁰² although, bearing in mind my

discussion of Weberian rationalism, it is questionable whether Trudeau's understanding of reason is the same as Hegel's, much less Plato's or Grant's or even Watson's. Unlike Hegel, I would argue, Trudeau's formulations, taken to their logical extreme, leave no room in politics for such 'irrationalisms' as love of country, loyalty to one's own or even faith in something that transcends the satisfaction of egocentric desires.

Trudeau also reveals his instrumentalist approach to reason in his belief that the will of man could bestride technology and engineer it to useful ends, including that of preserving Canadian federalism. That is to say, Trudeau believed that problems in satisfying rational desires are to be solved by the application of instrumental reason and by the techniques of what Trudeau called the "cybernetic revolution." Under the logic of instrumental reason, what is right is what is most efficient, including, it seems, national independence. As he stated in 1964:

In the world of tomorrow, the expression 'banana republic' will not refer to independent, fruit-growing nations but to countries where formal independence has been given priority over the cybernetic revolution ... of advanced technology and scientific investigation, as applied to the fields of law, economics, social psychology, international affairs and other areas of human relations.²⁰³

The unstated assumption in all of this is that there is no limit to what man can do in shaping the world to satisfy his desires. But Grant, I suggest, would argue that the inevitable result of identifying rationalism and freedom is a theology of glory that humans can create a perfect world through the creation of a technologically efficient world. With this in mind, I turn back to Grant to consider

his theoretical counterweight to Trudeau's identification of rationality, technology and freedom.

Grant, I argue, would see Trudeau's political philosophy as essentially a 'theology of glory.' Scattered throughout his writings are a few direct critiques of Trudeau, both as a politician and as a political thinker. For example, in Lament for a Nation, Grant points out the self-contradiction — and the fundamental Hegelianism — of an essay, "An Appeal for Realism in Politics," that Trudeau, among others, published in May of 1964. The manifesto appeals for a new and revitalised federalism in terms of certain universal values. It identifies Canada's survival as a sovereign state with that of the future international world order, declaring "the idea of a 'national state' [to be] obsolete." While ostensibly not wanting Canada to be integrated into "another geographical entity," the manifesto acknowledges such an eventuality might "conform to the natural course of the world's evolution." More important, though, Canada, as a federalist state, can be at the forefront of the movement towards a universal world-state system. To quote:

The most valid trends today are toward a more enlightened humanism, toward various forms of political, social and economic universalism. Canada is a reproduction on a smaller and simpler scale of this universal phenomenon. The challenge is for a number of ethnic groups to learn to live together. It is a modern challenge, meaningful and indicative of what can be expected from man. If Canadians cannot make a success of a country such as theirs, how can they contribute in any way to the elaboration of humanism, to the formulation of the international structures of tomorrow? To confess one's inability to make Canadian Confederation work is, at this stage of history, to admit one's unworthiness to contribute to the universal order.²⁰⁴

What Grant questions is how Trudeau can logically assert his faith in Hegelian universalism while, at the same time, put forward an argument for Canada's continued existence.²⁰⁵

The faith in universalism makes it accurate to call the authors liberal. But how can a faith in universalism go with a desire for the continuance of Canada? The belief in Canada's continued existence has always appealed against universalism. It appealed to particularity against the wider loyalty of the continent. If universalism is the most 'valid modern trend,' then is it not right for Canadians to welcome our integration into the [American] empire?²⁰⁶

In other words, if one is a universalist, why try to maintain any particularity? If Canadian nationalism impedes liberal progressive principles, then surely such nationalism is obsolete.

Grant found another contradiction in the manifesto. Its authors deplore the "victimisation" of Indians, Metis, Doukhobors, Orientals, Hutterites and other dissidents from the norm, and demand protection for their cultures. But, Grant asks, how can they espouse the idea of universal values to which all must accede, while, at the same time, arguing for the protection of particular cultures against universal principles? Whatever universal values may be, they can only be universal if everybody accepts them; that is, if everybody has the same world-view.

One reason why people see things differently is because they reside in different cultures and partake of different traditions. But universal values imply a homogeneous culture in which everyone ascribes to the same values. Did the manifesto's authors not recognise this, Grant asks? Did they not see that

"liberalism in its most equivocal form (that is, untainted by memories of past traditions) includes not only the idea of universalism but also that of homogeneity?" Noting that it was a Liberal prime minister who spoke the high rhetoric of democratic values when the RCMP were sent against the Doukhobors, Grant argues that liberalism, far from maintaining or protecting cultural diversity, turns almost instinctually to violence when cultural differences become acute; which is to say, when cultural diversity turns political.²⁰⁷

Grant made a similar argument about Trudeau's liberalism in 1971 in the wake of the October Crisis and the federal government's imposition of the War Measures Act. Such a political action was, for Grant, another example of how modern liberalism was prepared to use force to overcome any particularist or nationalist resistance to Hegelian universalism. In his opposition to Quebec nationalism Trudeau was undermining the basis of Canadian nationalism, leaving Canada even more open to integration with the United States.²⁰⁸

Trudeau's invocation of 'rationality' and his dislike of nationalism reflect his basic universalist outlook. His talk of cybernetic politics, his internationalist outlook, and even his alterations to administrative structures in the name of rational planning; all partake of a world-view that identifies liberalism (or freedom) with technology (or efficiency). In the Canadian context, says Grant, such talk implies policies that further efforts to integrate Canada into the continental socio-economic system. In terms of changes to Canada's traditional parliamentary system, Trudeau's restructuring of the bureaucracy reflects the rising influence of

a technocracy that sees administrative rule as the most efficient means of shaping society to fit the liberal mould and, hence, make Canadians' integration into the continental system an administrative success. As Grant states, employing Weberian language:

Mr. Trudeau combines plebiscitary appeal with acceptance of the assumptions of state capitalist "rationality." ... Throughout his career he appeals have been to universalism, and universalism in a Canadian setting, means integration into a smoothly functioning continental system.²⁰⁹

Grant picked up this theme following a 1976 speech Trudeau gave before the U.S. Congress on Canada's constitutional crisis in which he said that the break-up of Canada would be "a crime against the history of humanity?"²¹⁰ Such a statement, says Grant, seems attractive and worthy of any Canadian's support. But he reads a deeper meaning out of Trudeau's words. The phrase "history of humanity" implies something bigger than the political unit of Canada and sets up the notion that any step back from the bigness of humanity is a retrograde step. But if that is true then why should the end of Canada be a "crime" if the 'history of humanity' demands bigger and bigger political units? Why, in other words, should Canada not welcome membership in the American empire? Trudeau's speech betrays that he has inherited that liberal impulse which has gradually seen Canada fall more and more under the sway of American capitalism.

As in the past with Pearson and King, the leader of the Liberal party talks about larger units in the attractive language of internationalism, but in fact what is implied are policies leading to imperial continental integration. This kind of language should make us hesitant about accepting Mr. Trudeau as the champion of our nationalism. We should doubt this plea not only because Mr.

Trudeau is the leader of the party which has been the chief political instrument of continental integration for this country; ... but also because Mr. Trudeau has always scorned nationalism as a retrograde force.²¹¹

This scorn of nationalism, which is basic to Trudeau's political ideology, is necessary, says Grant, because his emphasis on rationality and cybernetic politics inevitably works against the retention of a Canadian national identity distinct from that of the United States.

I have already discussed Grant's 'conservative' concern regarding the Canadian national identity — or Canada's 'fate' — in Chapter Fifteen. My comparison of Grant and Trudeau in this chapter should have brought out even more clearly why Grant saw someone like Trudeau contributing to the "impossibility" of Canada. Essentially, in Trudeau we have the identification of liberalism and the techniques of rational management, the consequence of which is the reduction of politics to administrative rule and elections that are little more than plebiscites over which set of technocrats will exercise power. And this, in Grant's view, makes Trudeau an exemplar of Hegelian rationalism. With his ascription to freedom as man's essence, his reliance on cybernetics and politics-as-engineering, and his identification of the Canadian national interest with that of a universalist world order, he effectively functioned as a solvent to dilute the traditions that sustained Canadian sovereignty. For these reasons, Trudeau was an unwitting agent of the coming-to-be of what Grant, borrowing from Alexandre Kojève, referred to as the universal and homogeneous state.

But Grant makes an even more subtle point about Trudeau and the

'impossibility' of Canada. In an apparent borrowing of both Weber's notion of rationalisation as the "fate of our times"²¹² and his concept of the charismatic leader, Grant links Trudeau's 'fate' and that of Canada's. Fate, as the Greeks knew, is that which can never be overcome, and the fate of the classical hero was tragic in that he could never overcome contingency. However, in the modern world it is exactly this contingency that we try to overcome through the rationalisation of the world by the application of instrumental reason. As Grant argues, this has been the essence of the modern project — to free man from contingency through rational science. "The building of the universal and homogeneous state by mastery [of the world] was the chief ideal of western liberal theory."²¹³ But in a world where contingency has been banished by bureaucratic rule and routine, it is the ironic fate of the modern hero, the charismatic leader, to himself be rationalised and bureaucratised. This, it could be argued, at least from Grant's perspective, was Trudeau's fate.

Grant also seems to have had Weber's thought in mind when, in the wake of the October crisis, he described Trudeau as plebiscitarian leader whose restructuring of the Canadian political system would "fulfil the needs of a society in which administrative rule is bolstered by plebiscites about personnel."²¹⁴ For all his belief in individual freedom, Trudeau was caught in the thick mesh of the rationalised world that threatens the very freedom it espouses. In terms of Canada's fate, Trudeau could do little to further Canada's independence since the thinking behind his policies was predicated on concepts that ultimately denied

the worth of maintaining Canadian sovereignty. To quote one of Grant's more well-known judgements: "Our culture floundered on the aspirations of the age of progress."²¹⁵ Grant made much the same argument in later years about free trade between Canada and the United States. This, too, was another move toward Canada's integration into the American empire under the imperative of technology. Grant recognised that such an integrative process was the fate of any particularity in the age of technology and there was little to stop it.²¹⁶

Liberal politics in North America is, according to Grant, largely concerned with administration. Despite the rhetoric of dispute between interest groups and political parties, there is little substantive disagreement about the ends or purposes of politics. There is also no question of the good of politics. Indeed, the good is unthought, the consequence of which is the reduction of politics to administration. As he wrote in a 1973 essay, "Ideology in Modern Empires":

There is almost no conflict in the western world as to what is the political good. The highest political good is thought by the vast majority to be the building of the technical society by the overcoming of chance, through the application of the natural and social sciences. The political only arises in disagreement about means.²¹⁷

But for Grant the loss of politics as a practical activity, its reduction to technique, is also the loss of Canada. As he stated in a 1985 interview, his "lament" for Canada's passing "was as much a lament for the loss of politics" since they go hand in hand.²¹⁸

To be sure, Grant acknowledges that his thought is informed by his "being part of a class which is disappearing."²¹⁹ Yet, he also insists that only "simple

people" would settle for interpreting Lament (or any of his writings for that matter) as mere nostalgia for "the passing of the British dream of Canada."²²⁰ I hope the validity of this statement has been substantiated in this chapter. I believe I have offered considerable evidence to support the claim that Grant's thinking about Canada's 'impossibility' cannot be adequately understood from psychological or sociological perspectives, and that to do so is to miss the philosophic dimension of his 'lament.'

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Philosophy, Tyranny and the 'End' of Canada

For Grant, then, the impossibility of a meaningful conservative philosophy in the modern age was intimately linked to the impossibility of Canada. With no common intention beyond the promise of limitless freedom and material benefit, Canadians had given themselves over to the imperatives of technology. The price, though, of this faith in technology was to surrender to "the process of universalization and homogenisation."²²¹

The thinkers who, I would argue, brought Grant to see the linkage between technology and Canada's failure as a "nation" were Leo Strauss and Alexandre Kojève. Grant's encounter with Strauss (and through him, Kojève) finally released him from the grip of Hegelian liberalism and, indeed, convinced him that an Hegelian future would be a tyranny. As Joan O'Donovan states, Grant's study of Strauss "caused him to abandon altogether his historical grounds for hope."²²² Some consideration of Strauss's thought is needed because it help brings out how, in Grant's mind, Canada's fate reflected, at the deepest level, the political consequences of the modern Hegelian project.

Philosophy, Strauss asserts, is the nothing more and nothing less than search for wisdom; that is, knowledge of the whole — God, man and the world. The emphasis is on the seeking, not the knowing. Strauss accepts the ancient

understanding that man's reason can gain knowledge of the whole and that it is this knowledge that constitutes human freedom. That is to say, philosophy has always supposed that by means of unaided reason man was capable of going beyond the given and perceiving, in Allan Bloom's words, "a non-arbitrary standard against which to measure it, and that this possibility constitutes the essence of human freedom."²²³

This understanding of philosophy is in sharp contrast to the modern post-Kantian assumption that reason is limited to empirical knowledge. It is from this reduction of reason that the modern devaluation of metaphysical knowledge has proceeded. This can be seen in the modern distinction between fact and value. For moderns, knowledge of the world, if it is to be legitimate, must be grounded in empirical evidence. Claims of morality cannot be verified on this basis and are therefore beyond the purview of this delimited knowledge. That is to say, modern knowledge is value free or morally neutral.²²⁴

Strauss, however, asserts that there can be no such neutral knowledge in that all assertions of morality are grounded in assumptions or truth-claims about the whole, about what is that is. Strauss summarises his arguments about modern claims regarding knowledge in "What is Political Philosophy?" First, we cannot consider political phenomena without making value claims because it is impossible to know something without subjecting it to some evaluation. Second, the denial of value judgements assumes that values are not amenable to reason. Third, the claim that scientific, empirical knowledge is the highest form

of knowledge implies the depreciation of classical knowledge. Finally, such "positivist" assumptions effectively translate into a historicist claim about knowledge, political or otherwise." Historical understanding becomes the basis of a truly empirical science of society."²²⁵

Strauss locates the beginnings of the modern rejection of classical philosophy with Machiavelli's The Prince and Hobbes's Leviathan. With them began a conscious turn from the firm morality demanded by the Bible and the excellence demanded by classical ethics. Such a break resulted in a lowering of standards to the degree that man posits the satisfaction of his own desires in the here-and-now as his most worthy end. Gone is the notion that man's truer or best end is in the contemplation of and attunement with a natural and eternal order. What Hobbes and Machiavelli did, in effect, was to reject the need for a transcendent order as the standard to which man's ordering of the temporal world must conform.²²⁶ Modern thought proclaimed man as his own standard-setter. Thus, as Stanley Rosen remarks: "Modernity arises as a 'project,' namely, as the conscious rejection (by a few remarkable individuals) of antiquity."²²⁷

The most important result of this, as far as Strauss was concerned, was the new understanding of philosophy, or, more accurately, the new understanding of the relationship between philosopher and politics. The ancients maintained there was a permanent tension between the philosophy and his society, as symbolised by Socrates' death at the hands of the Athenians. This tension is embedded in the nature of the world. For classical thinkers, the best

possible regime is given over to chance; that is, "the actualisation of the best regime depends on the coming together, on the coincidence of things which tend to move away from each other (e.g., on the coincidence of philosophy and political power.)"²²⁸ Man is so easily enslaved that it is something of a miracle when an individual attains high virtue; how much more difficult for a society to do so. Furthermore, being a good citizen is not necessarily identical with being a virtuous man: "whereas (the) good citizen is relative to the regime, (the) good man does not have such a relativity (because the) good man is always and everywhere the same."²²⁹ Indeed, unless the regime is good, the good man, whose love of the good is the highest virtue, will inevitable find himself in conflict with his less-than-good regime.

Does this not imply that love of the good must transcend the love of one's own? If so, the good must be beyond the regime, beyond politics. Hence, for the ancients, no political order, including democracy, could be identical to the good. This, in turn, suggests that the highest purpose of man is virtue, not freedom, or at least not freedom as understood by moderns as the satisfaction of desire. Virtue requires education aimed at the formation of character through habituation. This, however, requires leisure, and in pre-modern times leisure was available only to a few. Which means philosophy was the preserve of the few and not available for the many. This implies, of course, that if democracy is the rule of the many and the many are unable to be educated because of a lack of leisure, then democracy is the rule of the ignorant — those who have not had their

characters habituated to the good. Of course, no good man would feel at ease in such a regime.²³⁰

Even if it were possible to provide the many with the leisure to acquire an education, the ancients knew that the limitations of human nature still precluded all but a few from attaining wisdom. Only in modern times have we come to think differently, and only then thanks to technology. As Strauss remarks, the education of the many, or universal education, "presupposes that the economy of scarcity has given way to an economy of plenty," which, in turn, presupposes "the emancipation of technology from moral and political control." He argues that the ancient philosophers were aware of this possibility, at least in theory. But they were suspicious that mastering nature, including human nature, through technical inventions would produce evils worse than anything nature could conjure. Thus, they rejected technology, believing that placing powerful instruments and techniques in the hands of the uneducated would lead not to virtue and the good, but to tyranny and the dehumanisation of man. As Strauss writes,

The difference between the classics and us with regard to democracy consists exclusively in a different estimate of the virtues of technology ... Their implicit prophecy that the emancipation of technology, of the arts, from moral and political control, would lead to disaster or to the dehumanisation of man has not yet been refuted.²³¹

Modern philosophy is the deliberate rejection of the classical position. The first wave of modernity began with Machiavelli, Hobbes and Locke, the philosophers who sought to "lower our goals" regarding the best regime in order to realise a regime that could preserve society and promote freedom. To do this

entailed denying the idea that man was directed primarily toward the good, and recognising, instead, that man is driven by the desire for self-preservation. The successful regime, in other words, was one that preserved society by substituting stern virtue as the highest ideal with fear of violent death, the desire for glory for even mere vanity and the comfort of property. Thus, the first wave of modernity replaced Christian charity as the height of social behaviour with calculation and utilitarianism, and Greek contemplation with manipulation and technique, which Strauss refers to as a "stupendous contraction of the horizon."²³²

The second wave of modernity comprised Rousseau and the German Idealists, Kant and Hegel. In a sense, argues Strauss, Rousseau marked a return to pre-modern thought in that he reinstated virtue as the height of purpose. However, it was a virtue that was innate to man and corrupted by society. While Rousseau accepts the Hobbesian imperative of self-preservation, unlike Hobbes, he regards the city as the arena of brutality; man in the state of nature is naturally good. Only after accidentally becoming an historical and reasoning creature does man become corrupted. In short, man is born free because his natural conscience is virtuous. Only in society does he become unfree as his conscience is corrupted.

This natural goodness can be restored, man can be forced to be free, through the establishment of a civil society properly constructed in accordance with natural law. The individual will be free because the general will of the community expresses the freedom and virtue of natural conscience. The freedom

of the individual fosters the good of all, and vice versa. However, as Strauss notes, this suggests that society or the regime as a whole is to be the standard by which virtue is defined. That is to say, there is no freedom beyond the regime, no transcendent good outside the political.²³³

Hegel, according to Strauss, furthered this idea by introducing the notion of the historical progress of freedom, which culminates in a universal and homogeneous state where all are equal because each recognises the other as free. And this freedom is possible because all men as men are measured by their need for recognition, not by any transcendent standard. Hegel, Strauss says, constructs a society that starts "from the untrue assumptions that man as man is thinkable as a being that lacks awareness of sacred restraints or as a being that is guided by nothing but a desire for recognition."²³⁴ Freedom through recognition is also possible because natural science has made it increasingly possible to overcome nature and free men from external necessity. "The brain which can transform the political matter soon learns to think of the transformation of every matter or of the conquest of nature."²³⁵

In this process of conquest, however, philosophers become legislators and reformers — Trudeau, for example — and cease to direct men to take their bearings from transcendent ends. Instead, they make virtue relative to the common good, or what with Hegel becomes the end of history. With the modern thinkers we see a lowering of standards, a concern with how men live and not with the best life. This makes more possible the reconciliation of philosophy and

politics or, to put it in Hegelian terms, the making of the rational the real and the real the rational. Modern philosophy, then, is the rationalisation of politics, the attempt to make the seeker of wisdom a reformer of society or even its ruler.

For Strauss, though, this was the flaw in modernity: the wilful bringing together of thought and action by means of technique, the insistent application of instrumental reason to political realities that were not necessarily amenable to rationality. Philosophy is dangerous in that it calls everything into question, whereas in politics not everything can or even should be called into question — if violence is to be avoided. Rousseau cannot be blamed for the Terror. Nor can Hegel and Nietzsche be seen as promoting Prussianism or Nazism. Nonetheless, their thought is open to being perverted by less prudent souls. And for Strauss, "the particular horror of modern tyranny has been its alliance with perverted philosophy."²³⁶ The search for wisdom has led to and even promoted the exercise of totalitarian power.

Grant certainly shared Strauss's concern on this score, and nowhere does this concern come through more clearly than in the one essay in which Grant directly discusses Strauss's thought. While Grant's turn from Hegel was made explicit in the second edition of Philosophy in the Mass Age, his reconsideration of Hegel was first articulated in a 1963 essay, "Tyranny and Wisdom."²³⁷ In this essay, Grant offers an exposition of and commentary on a debate between Strauss and Alexandre Kojève. The subject of this debate was raised in Strauss's book On Tyranny — An Interpretation of Xenophon, in which Strauss argues that

Xenophon, in his dialogue Hiero, showed a better understanding of the relationship between tyrants and philosophers, or between politics and philosophy, than modern thinkers. The book contains Kojève's response to Strauss' argument and a rejoinder from Strauss to Kojève. Grant described this debate as "the most important controversy in contemporary political philosophy."²³⁸

This is a large claim. Indeed, for Grant, what is at stake is the validity of the modern project and what Grant perceives as its ultimate end — the tyranny of a Hegelian universal and homogeneous state. As he would later describe the issue in Lament:

"Universal" implies a world-wide state, which would eliminate the cause of war among nations; "homogeneous" means that all men would be equal, and war among classes would be eliminated. The masses and the philosophers have both agreed that this universal and egalitarian society is the goal of historical striving.²³⁹

Such a world-state, if realised, requires the effective extinguishing of Canada's political independence. Implicit in the possibility — or necessity — of Canada's political demise is the question whether the loss of such a particularity in the coming-to-be of a new world order is good for man.

If the best social order is the universal and homogeneous state, then the disappearance of Canada can be understood as a step towards that order. If the universal and homogeneous state would be a tyranny, then the disappearance of even this indigenous culture can be seen as the removal of a minor barrier on the road to that tyranny.²⁴⁰

What Grant is saying, in effect, is that as a potential political regime, the universal and homogeneous state is the embodiment of a particular metaphysical claim.

And, for Grant, the actualisation of such a claim will lead to the disappearance of the particularity that is Canada. In other words, modern philosophy requires the disappearance of Canada.

To be sure, Grant does not say this explicitly in "Tyranny and Wisdom." In this essay, the implications of the universal and homogeneous state, and the claim that it is "the best social order," are focused on the question as to whether classical or modern philosophy provides the most adequate account of the relationship between politics and philosophy. At issue is whether the philosopher can claim a knowledge that transcends particular historical circumstances, or whether philosophical knowledge and political order, is dependent on and determined by the historical process. In short, do we dwell under the dispensation of Eternity or the aegis of Time?

Grant opts for Eternity and rejects Time. He does this by accepting Strauss's refutation of Kojève's argument. Strauss held that the actualisation of the universal and homogeneous state would be a tyranny and not the culmination of man's historical struggle, as Kojève claimed. Grant offers no empirical evidence to substantiate what amounts to a metaphysical claim regarding an eternal dispensation. Rather, even in rejecting it he accepts the Hegelian claim, as interpreted by Kojève, regarding the modern project.²⁴¹ What does this mean philosophically, and what does it entail politically in regard to Canada's fate?

Strauss, Grant argues in the essay, claims that philosophy can know truths that are independent of historical change, and, therefore, these truths exist

outside the historical process. By contrast, Kojève's argument is that the truth of the best social order is contingent on the historical process and cannot be known prior to an interpretation of the process at a particular point in history. And this truth is only achieved by a dialectic which interprets the sum of historical epochs in their totality, which, as Grant notes, constitutes eternity for Hegel.²⁴² In short, history is the horizon of all truths, including philosophic truth.

The debate, then, is between two opposing philosophic camps: the moderns, as exemplified by 'Kojève-Hegel', and the ancients, as epitomised by 'Strauss-Grant'. Each sees the object of philosophy from different assumptions. For the moderns, philosophy is philosophy of history; for the ancients, philosophy is a philosophy of nature. Since I have already considered Strauss's position, I now turn briefly to Kojève.

Kojève presents a "violent"²⁴³ interpretation of Hegel that sees the German Idealist as the first thinker to recognise the goal of human history as a striving for freedom by all autonomous individuals; a freedom in which one's desire for recognition by other equally free and similarly desiring individuals was satisfied. For Hegel, human history is not a senseless slaughter and savagery, but the unfolding of reason, or spirit-in-the-world, in time. The culmination of reason's unfolding is accomplished through action and labour until it is completely actualised and man-as-freedom is self-consciously recognised. With this self-conscious recognition of the aim of history, the end of history is, in theory, accomplished and man-as-freedom can be actualised in the coming-to-be

of the universal and homogeneous state in which all speak the same complete discourse of freedom and equality.

However, philosophy also comes to an end because Wisdom, or, complete knowledge and satisfaction of desire, or, more abstractly, full self-consciousness, has been achieved; that is, man at the end of history, dwelling in the Endstate, has complete knowledge of what is, was and will be to the degree he knows the goal of history, and, in addition, he is completely satisfied in that he is recognised as a free, unique and equal citizen by all others in the state who are also free, unique and equal.

Man can only be truly "satisfied," history can only end, in and through the formation of a Society, of a State, in which the strictly particular, personal, individual value of each is recognised as such ... by *all*.²⁴⁴

The genesis of Hegel's world-state — and the motor of history's movement towards this arcadian state — is, according to Kojève, the dynamic of the master-slave dialectic. Hegel saw the beginnings of human society, the first stirring of self-consciousness — history, in other words — when proto-man was willing to risk the death of his "animal" body in a fight for something born in the mind, the abstract notion of "pure prestige," or the desire for recognition from another who also desires recognition. This fight for domination to decide who is master and who is slave sets history going. Without this fight about freedom "there would never have been human beings on earth."²⁴⁵ History begins then "as the presence *and* absence of freedom in the world. The master possesses his freedom, while the slave lacks his freedom. History constitutes the dynamics

of this confrontation and the attempt to resolve the conflict one way or another. And the 'cunning of reason' involves the driving force that propels man's actions in the world as he attempts to actualise universally his individual freedom. Man's true being, says Kojève, "is this historical action, which mediates his natural given-being through the universalising negation of his particularity."²⁴⁶

Hegel's master/slave dialectic, then, is a code by which Hegel can comprehend the whole of man's history: First comes Bloody Battle; next comes the domination of the Master and the fearful subservience of the Slave; and, in the end, after millennia of struggle and labour to transform the World, the slave's triumph over his slavery at the end of history. The end of history amounts to the actualisation of universal recognition of all by all as free and equal, the synthesis of masters and slaves in a universal and homogeneous state.²⁴⁷ Such a world-state implies the diminishment or even elimination of meaningful distinctions and particularities. If all are free and equal, there can be no substantial 'other.' Men in the universal and homogeneous state will be rational and self-aware, able to distinguish what is and is not necessary for their freedom. They will recognise that the state is the objective embodiment of their subjective freedom. The universal and homogeneous state will manifest the "union of universality and particularity."²⁴⁸ The purpose of politics will be the solely practical activity of actualising this world-state, while the task of post-historical thought or philosophy is merely the further elaboration of Hegelian principles. In short, both politics and philosophy, as traditionally conceived, come to an end. In a sense, there is

nothing more to think or to do. And in that regard, man as we understood him in the midst of the historical process comes to an end, too. Kojève refers to this as the "definitive annihilation of man" because

man himself no longer changes essentially (and) there is (no) reason to change the true principles, which are at the basis of his understanding of the world and himself. But all the rest can be preserved indefinitely; art, love, play, etc.; in short everything that makes man happy.²⁴⁹

In terms of Grant's concerns, what is most germane about Kojève's interpretation is the fundamental historicist assumptions of Hegel's symbol of meaning. If the master-slave story is the ground of Hegel's philosophy, then it seems clear that the realisation of human Being is accomplished only through history. That is Kojève's point: There is nothing outside history that defines and gives meaning to man as man; there is no "truth" that transcends man-as-historical being, no "beyond" to which man can look for truth. In other words, Hegel denies the existence of an external order to which man is subordinate and by which he is judged. Kojève states this unequivocally in an essay that was not included in the 1969 English translation of his Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, although it was included in the original French version of 1947:

Hegel does not accept the Judeo-Christian anthropological tradition except in a radically secularised or atheistic form. The Spirit-Absolute of the Subject-Substance, of which Hegel speaks, is not God. The Hegelian Spirit is the spatio-temporal totality of the natural World and implies human Discourse revealing this World and itself. Or better, and what is the same thing, Spirit is Man-in-the-World: the mortal Man who lives in a World without God and who speaks of all that exists in it and of all that he creates in it, including himself.²⁵⁰

Put simply, Hegel held that man's meanings and purposes in history are all self-created responses to his sense of time. Time is identified as History.

In effect, Hegel's philosophy of history abolishes the transcendent dualist world-view of Platonized Christianity, positing a philosophy that turns away from the search for truth in the attunement to some realm beyond this world, and, instead, seeks the truth within this life. Hegel achieves this collapse of the traditional dualist world-view by incorporating all of its essential elements into a unified whole that both contains and is constituted by human self-consciousness. In doing so Hegel effectively destroys that notion of some objective beyond that can provide absolute references or standards for determining conduct in this world. Hegel brings God, or eternity, down to earth, while raising man, or time, to God. But this, as Strauss remarks, was Hegel's intention: "In the case of Hegel, we are indeed compelled to say that the essence of modernity is secularised Christianity."²⁵¹

Grant does not necessarily accept Kojève's interpretation of Hegel's philosophy as correct, but he does say it is "incomparably nearer the original" than that offered by the British idealists.²⁵² Nevertheless, in "Tyranny and Wisdom," he points out that Hegel's account of the western tale hinges on the establishment of the universal and homogeneous state through the appropriation of elements of Greek and Christian thought. He encapsulates Kojève's summary of the West's three-stage dialectical development: The first stage, the establishment in principle of a universal state, was initiated by Alexander the

Great. Alexander created an empire in which membership depended not on common ethnic or geographic backgrounds, but on the common "essence" of members of a particular civilisation, which, in this case, was the Greek culture of reason. But this universal state cannot be homogeneous in the sense that it did not do away with class distinctions, with the fight between masters and slaves. The Greeks accepted the idea of a universal state because they understood men as having the same inherent nature. To the degree that men were members of civilisation they shared this inherent nature and, thus, could be accorded citizenship in the empire.

However, some men did not share this inherent nature — the slaves and the barbarians. There was for the Greeks an essential and necessary differentiation of human beings into masters and slaves whose very natures shared little in common. Therefore, the slaves and the barbarians could not be granted equal status and, as a result, the empire could not be homogeneous. This differentiation of masters and slaves was overcome in the second stage of western history under the influence of Semitic religions, particularly Christianity in the west, which, according to Kojève, provided the idea of homogeneity.

Grant gives considerable space in "Tyranny and Wisdom" to Kojève's idea of homogeneity. This homogeneity, Grant states, is "the idea of the fundamental equality of all who believe in a single God."²⁵³ For Kojève's Christians there is no *essential* difference between humans in that they are all equal; that is, they are all the same, to the extent that they all share the same faith in the same God.

The Christian faith provided the means — the unity of faith — by which all natural or socially-created distinctions between human beings could be overcome.

Through faith the Christians negated the natural or essential differences that divide human beings and, in the act of negation, synthesised their differing qualities into a homogeneous unity not innate or given but (freely) created by 'conversion. The stage is thus set for the modern secular world.

In this third stage of history the ideas of universality and homogeneity are brought together. And it is here, on this interpretation and the consequences of this coming together of the universal and homogeneous state, that Grant turns from his early acceptance of Hegelian philosophy. Through his encounter with Kojève, Grant saw the fracturing of Nature and History and the subsequent domination of the historicist discourse. Following Kojève, he saw that the establishment of the universal and homogeneous state, as a political reality in this world, necessitated the de-divinization or dethronement of God. The universal and homogeneous state could only be established by the secularisation of the Christian ideal, the negation of Christian theism — the negation of a negation, as Kojève puts it — in favour of an anthropomorphic historicism that reinterprets Christian eschatological hopes for a perfected human community in a transcendent beyond into a goal to be realised in the here-and-now.

But this can only be done, Grant argues, if philosophy takes its ground not from "an ahistorical eternal order," but from an eternity that is "the totality of all historical epochs."²⁵⁴ Which is to say, Hegel's philosophy only succeeds, and the

principle of the universal and homogeneous state only succeeds, if philosophy is grounded in History and not Eternity. But for Grant, such a goal was not what man was best fitted for as it would lead to the tyranny of technique. He points out that the secularisation of Christianity undertaken by modern philosophy was done under the principle of the equality of all men that was taken from the Christian doctrine of the equality of all creatures under God. In an act of Hegelian sublation, modern philosophy took over the 'ideal' at the core of Christianity even as it negated Christian theism. That is to say, modern philosophers accepted an essential truth of Christianity "even as its content empties into little more than the pursuit of technical expansion."²⁵⁵

Grant, however, cannot accept what amounts to a hubristic 'theology of glory.' First, he saw it as tantamount to making the emancipation of human desire the ultimate goal of human endeavour; that is, freedom constitutes an escape or release from all limitations, moral or otherwise. Second, Grant accepts the reality of a transcendent, eternal order that is beyond any historical struggle. Finally, he assumes that Being is eternally identical with itself and thus independent of historical change.

On these points, Grant drew support from Strauss, although he does not fully accept the Straussian position either. In his "Restatement on Xenophon's Hiero," Strauss argues against Hegel's universal and homogeneous state, observing that it is the product of historicist assumptions. Such a state is predicated on the emancipation of passions which recognise no restraints,

particularly a sacred or divine restraint, and, as such, cannot claim to be a synthesis of Athens and Jerusalem. Hegelian philosophy has taken Greek universality and Judeo-Christian homogeneity, but it has denied the concept of an eternal and unchanging order, dismissed the idea that human existence has given highest purpose, the knowledge of which provides guidance in for the proper ordering of human activity. Hegel's state is a product of that modernist rejection of an eternal whole.

For Strauss, though, historicism is ultimately self-defeating. Historicism even has to abandon the fact-value distinction because every understanding, however theoretical, implies specific evaluations. It must also jettison scientific knowledge claims as merely another form among many of man's reasoning about the world. Consequently, historicism must also reject the view of history as progressive, rational or even evolutionary because these are also value-laden theories. In the first place, historicism subordinates the world of nature to the world of human action, thus ignoring a universal *a priori* of human existence in nature. The natural ground, says Strauss, is the source of any effort to understand what human existence is and, hence, the source of all thinking regarding universal principles such as right and justice. This is to say that lacking a teleological philosophy of nature, history has no knowable order.²⁵⁶

Following this, Strauss argues that there is a philosophy of nature implicit in Kojève's interpretation of Hegel. Kojève's differentiation of the human — or historical — and the natural presupposes a concept of nature in which this

distinction can be made. It is this conception of nature that allows Kojève's Hegel to provide a paradigm for the historical process. In other words, nature remains the horizon of history, Strauss argues. Hegel's notion that desire begins history and its satisfaction ends history is for all intents a philosophy of nature despite Kojève's arguments to make the theory of desire distinct from nature.²⁵⁷ As Strauss remarks:

To the extent to which the historical process is accidental, it cannot supply man with a standard, and ... if that process has a hidden purpose, its purposefulness cannot be recognised except if there are transhistorical standards. The historical process cannot be recognised as progressive without previous knowledge of the end or purpose of the process.²⁵⁸

For Strauss, then, historicism, the historical consciousness, is itself an arbitrary and abstract interpretation imposed on nature. Accordingly, concepts of right and justice are regarded as mutable, belonging to the historical world rather than the natural world.

Grant argues similarly, saying that historicism assumes all thought to be historically bounded and therefore unable to grasp anything eternal.²⁵⁹ But the consequence of such thinking, according to Grant, is historicism's inability to uphold any objective standards by which men can govern their actions and give meaning to their lives. The rejection of natural right, with its doctrine that men have a natural end that determines what is good for them, leads to a nihilistic historicism in which all principles become mere preferences, all horizons merely the opinion or *doxa* of the age. No truth has validity beyond its historical context, and no individual thinker can provide a truth that is universally true for all time.²⁶⁰

As a result, morality and ethics are whatever the dominant opinions or ideologies of the day determine them to be. And even these, following the logic of historical relativism, are ultimately unsupportable, since historical man recognises that all his truths are inherently subjective. Again, Grant makes this point:

... once we know that horizons are relative and man-made, their power to sustain us is blighted. Once we know them to be relative, they no longer horizon us. We cannot live in an horizon when we know it to be one. When the historical sense teaches us that our values are not sustained in the nature of things, impotence descends.²⁶¹

But it is here that Grant, following Strauss, detects the worm at the heart of historicism. If historicism denies the possibility of any knowledge of the absolute, if it asserts the relativism of all standards, then, is it not itself subject to its own claims?

Historicism asserts that all human thoughts or beliefs are historical; and hence deservedly destined to perish; but historicism itself is a human thought; hence historicism can be of only temporary validity, or it cannot be simply true. To assert the historicist thesis means to doubt it and thus to transcend it ... Historicism thrives on the fact that it inconsistently exempts itself from its own verdict about all human thought.²⁶²

Historicism, then, is guilty of that which it accuses philosophy; that is, it is guilty of dogmatism and arbitrariness.

This critique, obviously, assumes a set of presuppositions contrary to those assumed by Kojève-Hegel — that is, the assumptions of classical political philosophy, which "stands or falls by its ability to *transcend* history" — against those of Hegelian philosophy, which assumes political philosophy "stands or falls

on its ability to *comprehend* all of history."²⁶³ In this regard, Strauss sees that the universal and homogeneous state, far from being the best social order, will, if actualised, result in a tyrannical order that would be destructive of man, as conceived by classical philosophy. Grant echoes that view, summarising Strauss's criticism of Kojève this way: "modern philosophy, which has substituted freedom for virtue, has as its chief ideal ... a social order which is destructive of humanity."²⁶⁴

But for both Grant and Strauss such an ideal would, if realised, also would mean the end of philosophy, or, what is the same thing, the end of human excellence. For Kojève-Hegel, human satisfaction is grounded in recognition, or freedom and equality. For Grant-Strauss, it is the notion of human struggle, the idea of remaking the world to satisfy our desires, that delimits human excellence. Human satisfaction is rooted in thought, in the contemplation of that which is unchanging: "Philosophy is the excellence of the soul. There cannot be philosophy unless there is an eternal and unchangeable order." To think that man can dominate nature is to deny an eternal order on which the possibility of excellence depends: "the desire to dominate necessity (that is, technology) leads to the denial of the possibility of human excellence." It is in rational contemplation, rather than recognition that human purposes are fulfilled.²⁶⁵

Thus, technology means the end of philosophy because the lowering of horizons that leads to the universal and homogenous state disallows thinking that continues to maintain distinctions and differences among people, including the

classical notion that only a few are fitted for philosophy. And that would be a tyranny. The 'end' of the search for wisdom and its replacement with Hegel's historical consciousness produces perversions of philosophy such as ideology and historical relativism that lead to the tyranny of a universal and homogeneous — and the disappearance of Canada as a sovereign nation.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Conclusion — Grant's Lament for Hegel

In their historical survey of Canadian philosophy, The Faces of Reason, Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott observe that while philosophies are not necessarily "mirrors of a national mind," they are often a response to "some felt need," "to what one thinks the world needs rather than reflections of the way in which it is."²⁶⁶ Applying this view to Grant, and considering my foregoing discussion, what might be concluded regarding Grant's 'felt need'? If his thought as a whole — and the experiences that gave birth to it — can be boiled down to one statement, it is, perhaps, this: Grant's 'lament' is grounded in his experience of Canada's 'disappearance' in the fulfilment of the modern project.

Grant's fundamental contention is that while man is the creator of the modern project, it is not a project for which man is best fitted. For Grant, we are in a situation in which we have diagnosed the discontents of modernity and become aware of its deprivals, yet are unable to articulate a coherent alternative. We are, as it were, trapped in the magic circle of modernity. As he writes in the essay "A Platitude,"

The drive to planetary technical future is in any case inevitable; but those who try to divert, to limit, or even simply stand in fear before some of its applications find themselves defenceless, because of the *disappearance of any speech* by which the continual changes involved in that drive could ever be thought of as deprivals.²⁶⁷

I have tried to show in Part Three how, for Grant, the nature of the modern world is deeply connected to the 'disappearance of Canada.' If there is no alternative to modernity, no way of thinking other than that offered by the modern discourse, there is no future for Canada. Grant, of course, says there is another discourse, another way of thinking. As he says in Lament, "ancient philosophy gives alternative answers to modern man."²⁶⁸ But Grant is also aware that such an assertion no longer carries much weight with moderns. His 'alternative' points to an eternal order that is no longer believed in because of the essential historicism that resides at the core of the modern project. So, to return to a previous point in this context, this is what Grant means by the phrase "time as history." As moderns, we no longer accept the alternative phrase of 'time as the moving image of an unmoving eternity.'

Put in less metaphorical terms, what this means is that in the modern era the human subject has replaced God as the focus of meaning and purpose. The modern project is the transfer of all God's attributes to man. As Kojève put it: "everything said by Christian theology is absolutely true, provided it is applied not to an imaginary transcendent God, but to real Man, living in the World."²⁶⁹ Grant came to echo this, accepting that Kojève's Hegel provided a more comprehensive, if unattractive, understanding of modernity. There could be no synthesis of Greek and Christian thought and biblical religion with modern science; and Christianity itself was implicated in the coming-to-be of the modern technological world. In effect, technology provides the condition for the freedoms

proffered by the Enlightenment, while secularised Christianity provides the content for those freedoms.

Modern philosophy, then, is utterly subjective, turning nature, including human nature, into an object at the disposal of the subject. Modern thought, or modern subjectivity, seeks mastery over reality. Will to power is but another label for this mastering subject, and the subject's freedom is the absolute control of the world. It is this understanding of freedom as control, or, what is the same time, freedom as release from all restraints, that Grant found in Hegel, who, while relating the spirituality of the Reformation to the political project of the Enlightenment, saw modernity originating in Christianity itself, not in the excesses of either the Reformation or the Enlightenment. Modern freedom seeks the elimination of all external limitations. One consequence of this effort to master everything — the unfolding of modern freedom, as it were — is the overcoming of all alternatives or differences.

For Grant, of course, the exemplar of modernity was the United States, or, more precisely perhaps, Americanisation. The removal of all that makes Canada 'different' from the United States is but one example of the erasure of alternatives resulting from the fulfilment of the modern project. This is not anti-American nationalism on Grant's part. He simply recognises that Americanisation is the way modernisation is unfolding. Americans are merely the first members of the planet to be fully modernised whether they or anyone else likes it or not. Canadians, perhaps, are second in line on the project's agenda. So, we can say

that Canadians now dwell in a post-Canadian world; while the formal trappings of nationhood linger, little remains of a 'national' substance.²⁷⁰ This is what Grant means when he declares the 'impossibility' of Canada.

There is no prospect of 'creating' a valid national identity because, as Grant learned from Nietzsche, anything that is merely *created* is no longer true and authentic. Indeed, our modern historical sensibility shows us that "all horizons are simply the creations of men" and that these horizons "are not true statements about actuality." Rather they are "man-made perspectives by which the charismatic impose their will to power," expressions of "the values which our tortured instincts will to create."²⁷¹ Even nationhood is ultimately unworkable because our historicist consciousness tells us that it is a fiction, an invention. And as soon as we are aware that our nationalism is an invention, how deep or genuine can our loyalty be?

As a Christian Platonist, Grant's love of Canada is rooted in his affection for the particular, or "loving one's own," as he put it. But Grant also recognises that the modern project is itself rooted in a particular understanding of biblical theology that had been secularised in the modern period by Hegel's identification of divine providence with world history, and that the imperatives of this project undermine the particular. This also implies, as I have shown, that Canada's disappearance has its roots in Christianity itself. Since, for Grant, Hegel was the avatar of modernity, the thinker who most comprehensively understood the sources, assumptions and implications of modern philosophy, then, Grant's

thought as a whole constitutes a response to Hegelian philosophy. His analysis of technology, his judgements on liberalism as a theology of glory, his interpretation of Christianity's 'mistake', his lament for Canada; they all constitute variations on a fundamental confrontation with Hegel.

Some interpretative caution is necessary on this point. It bears repeating that it would be a mistake to think that Grant's turn from Hegel means that he was able to excise Hegel's influence, that he could, as it were, step outside the magic circle of modernity. Grant is simply unable to reject Hegel in any absolute sense because he retains throughout his work the 'truth' of the Hegelian account of modernity vouchsafed him through Kojève's interpretation of Hegel. Even Grant's mature thought continued to reflect his response to Hegel in that he viewed the modern world as essentially manifesting Hegelian principles. As Michael Allen Gillespie writes, Grant's "more mature thought was characterized by a deepening reassessment of Hegel in light of what he saw as the failure of North American society to produce the human excellence that Hegel had predicted."²⁷² Indeed, evidence that Grant's understanding of modernity continued to reflect his appropriation of the Hegelian dialectic can be seen in his statement describing the Enlightenment as secular Christianity "penetrated by an acceptance of certain aspects of that which was being criticised."²⁷³ Thus, throughout his writings, Grant followed Hegel's historicism in attempting to pinpoint the moments of secularisation, those historical event or circumstances that gave birth to the negation of the whole within which it had its existence. For

example, as I described in Chapters Eighteen and Nineteen, Grant, located one key 'moment of secularisation' in the early Christian church. He also saw the break with Christianity repeated within North American Protestantism.

What was it about Hegel — and, hence, about modernity — that Grant could not accept? The closing pages of Lament make it clear: Modern philosophy is nihilistic. To make 'history' or 'necessity' the judge of the 'goodness' of world events is, ultimately, to worship force. Which is say that the liberal faith is grounded in the possession of power. This might be pleasant for those who have the preponderance of power on their side, but not for those who lack such power. As Grant wrote with scathing bitterness: "The screams of the child can be justified by the achievements of history. How pleasant for the achievers, but how meaningless for the child."²⁷⁴

By these remarks it should be clear that the question of Grant's so-called Hegelian phase, of where it began and when, or if, it ended, was not my central concern in Part Three. Grant used Hegel's thought to help him interpret the modern project; he was not primarily interested in Hegel as a historical philosopher. Indeed, the accuracy of his interpretation of Hegel is not of particular importance. In this light, Grant's ostensible rejection of Hegel is not what it seems. Grant could not have rejected Hegel even if he wanted. He could not "reject" Hegel because it is Hegel's account of the modern world that he accepts as the most comprehensive account, and hence the fullest expression of modern self-consciousness. Grant, thus, remained an Hegelian whether he wanted to or

not. His confrontation with Hegel, his understanding of what Hegel 'meant,' helps him understand what Hegel 'means' in relation to Canada's fate. Hegel may have been, as one critic puts it, "the true voice of all that Grant opposes."²⁷⁵ The result, though, was that Grant could not help but speak as an Hegelian.

ENDNOTES TO PART THREE

1. See, for example, Dennis Lee, "Cadence, Country, Silence: Writing in Colonial Space," Boundary, 2, 3, (1974), p. 151-78; Mel Hurtig, "One Last Chance: The Legacy of Lament for a Nation," By Loving Our Own: George Grant and the Legacy of Lament for a Nation, (Ottawa, 1989), p. 44; Geoffrey R. Martin, "Justice in the Thought of George Grant," Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, XIII, no. 1-2, (1989), p. 145; Clifford Orwin, "Review of Grant's English-Speaking Justice," University of Toronto Law Journal, 30, (1980), p. 106. Orwin goes so far as to declare Grant "as a father of Canadian nationalism."
2. George Grant, Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism, (Ottawa, 1989 [1965]), p. viii-ix. It should be noted that the quotation comes from an introduction Grant wrote for the 1970 Carleton University Press edition of the book. The introduction has been retained in subsequent editions.
3. Larry Schmidt, "An Interview with George Grant," Grail, Issue One, (March, 1985), p. 36. Cited in William Christian, "George Grant's Lament," Queen's Quarterly, 100, 1, (Spring, 1993), p. 211.
4. Grant, Lament, p. 53.
5. Quoted by Gad Horowitz, "Horowitz and Grant Talk," Canadian Dimension, 6, (December/January, 1969/70), p. 20.
6. Joan O'Donovan, for example, refers to Grant's attachment to Hegel as a "central hermeneutical problem" in his thought, and suggests that even Grant's eventual repudiation of Hegel "suggests the pervasiveness of Hegel's thought at critical points." George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, (Toronto, 1984), p. 29.
7. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, ed. William Christian, (Toronto, 1995 [1959]), p. 120.
8. Arthur Kroker, Technology and the Canadian Mind, (Montreal, 1984), p. 50-51. Two other examples of this kind of shallow criticism are: R.K. Crook, "Modernization and Nostalgia: A Note on the Sociology of Pessimism," Queen's Quarterly, 73, (1966), p. 269-284; and Robert Blumstock, "Anglo-

Saxon Lament," Canadian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology, 3, (1966), p. 98-105. All three take a sociological approach to Grant and miss the philosophy. They approach him without questioning the 'modernist' assumptions behind their own views.

9. Kroker, Technology and the Canadian Mind, p. 25.
10. Abraham Rotstein, "Running from Paradise," The Canadian Forum, (May, 1969), p. 26.
11. For instance, Larry Schmidt remarks that despite Grant's acute analysis of historicism, the reader is left asking "What is a suitable conception of history? Grant does not give us an answer." Schmidt, "George Grant and the Problem of History," George Grant in Process, ed., Larry Schmidt, (Toronto, 1978), p. 136. Likewise, Ian Box says of Grant that "no constructive alternatives to our present disorder are put forward for consideration." Box, "George Grant and the Embrace of Technology," Canadian Journal of Political Science, XV: 3, (September, 1982), p. 504. Larry Lampert states that "in the face of Grant's analysis and hopes one cannot escape a sense of dissatisfaction ... What does he stand for? What is his program?" Grant's writings "lack a direct statement of those positive teachings which he alludes to as his own means of survival, and which may seem to be presupposed as the ground of his critique of the modern. Grant gives only the most fragmentary intimations of their content." Lampert, "The Uses of Philosophy in Grant," George Grant in Process, p. 190-192.
12. Quoted by Charles Taylor, Radical Tories, (Toronto, 1982), p. 132.
13. Dennis Lee, "Grant's Impasse," By Loving Our Own, p. 19.
14. Grant, Technology and Empire, (Toronto, 1969), p. 72.
15. Plato, Seventh Letter, 340.
16. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 73. See also, the essay "In Defence of North America," p. 36.
17. Ibid, p. 68-69, 139.
18. Ibid, p. 69.
19. Ian Angus, A Border Within: National Identity, Cultural Plurality and Wilderness, (Montreal and Kingston, 1997), p. 78.

20. Grant, Lament, p. 25. Moreover, in an Oct. 10, 1973 interview on CBC's This Country in the Morning, Grant explains writing Lament after the fall of the Diefenbaker government, saying "my motive for writing that book was rage, just rage, that they'd brought atomic weapons into Canada." However, in an interview with CBC, on June 27, 1965, Grant insisted his book was "not a defence of Mr. Diefenbaker" and that before the defence crisis he "saw nothing in his favour, just nothing." Cited by Christian, "George Grant's Lament," Queen's Quarterly, 100, 1, (Spring, 1993), p. 205, 207-208.
21. Peter Emberley, in the 1995 Carleton Library edition of Lament, writes: "The face of Canada was a microcosm of the confrontation of all peoples with the powerfully transforming forces of the West." (Ottawa: Carleton University Library, 1995), p. 19.
22. Grant, "Introduction," Lament, p. ix.
23. See William Christian, George Grant: A Biography, (Toronto, 1993), for a description of Grant's intellectual heritage and the influence, direct and indirect, of John Watson's influence on Grant. See also Christian's more recent essay, "Canada's Fate: Principal Grant, Sir George Parkin and George Grant," Journal of Canadian Studies, 34, 4, (Winter 1999/2000), p. 88-104.
24. In Lament, Grant writes: "Those who criticize our age must at the same time contemplate pain, infant mortality, crop failures in isolated areas, and the sixteen-hour day." p. 94.
25. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, (#260), T. M. Knox translation, (London, 1952), p. 160.
26. Grant, Lament, p. 68. Or, as Grant writes elsewhere in the book: "Memory is never enough to guarantee that a nation can articulate itself in the present. There must be a thrust of intention into the future." p. 12.
27. H.D. Forbes, "The Political Thought of George Grant," Journal of Canadian Studies, 26, 2, (Summer, 1991), p. 47. See also Barry Cooper, "A Imperio usque ad Imperium: The Political Thought of George Grant," in Schmidt, p. 23-39.
28. Grant, Lament, p. 70.
29. Ibid, p. 21.

30. Ibid, p. 3. See also, p. 21-23, 40. Anthony Parel comments on Grant's focus on the French-English relationship, remarking how, for Grant, "the principle of Canadian nationalism is the duality and equality of the English and French, and not the concept of the conquest." A.J.Parel, "Multiculturalism and the Future of Canada," in Yusuf Umar, ed., George Grant and the Future of Canada, (Calgary, 1992), p. 143.
31. Grant, "Have We a Canadian Nation?", Institute of Public Affairs, (Dalhousie University, 1945), 8, p. 161-166. Hereafter referred to as "Canadian Nation."
32. Grant, The Empire, Yes or No?, (Toronto, 1945). Hereafter referred to as "Empire."
33. Grant, "Canadian Nation," p. 162, 165.
34. Ibid, p. 162.
35. Ibid, p. 164-166.
36. Ibid, p. 163.
37. I have found no references in the literature, including Grant's notebooks, that Grant had read Hegel as of 1945. In his biography, William Christian seems to suggest that Grant did not seriously study Hegel until he joined the Hegelian scholar James Doull at Dalhousie University in September 1947, although he knew Doull in Oxford in late 1945. Presumably, the publication of Grant's notebooks will clarify this matter. See Christian, George Grant: A Biography, p. 130.
38. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, p. 160, (Par. 260).
39. Grant, "Canadian Nation," p. 166.
40. For background on the intellectual links between Grant and his forefathers I refer the reader to Christian's essay, "Canada's Fate," cited in Endnote #23.
41. Brian McKillop, "The Idealist Legacy," in Contours of Canadian Thought, (Toronto, 1987), p. 104.
42. Christian, George Grant, p. 38.
43. McKillop writes in "The Idealist Legacy" that "the Queen's spirit' of the

1890s, led by the contemplative Watson and the active Grant, inspired numerous individuals to engage in different forms of social service and to strive in their secular pursuits to bring about the Kingdom of God on Earth." p. 104. Leslie Armour and Elizabeth Trott observe that a generation after people such as Watson and Wilfrid Keirstead, "a Platonized Hegelianism is to be found in the writings of George Grant." See The Faces of Reason, p. 392.

44. David Cayley, George Grant in Conversation, (Toronto, 1995), p. 46. Elsewhere, in an obviously heartfelt comment, Grant describes himself as having grown up in "the great sane liberalism" and how his experiences of the Second World War "just broke that for me." Grant, The Moving Image of Eternity, (CBC transcript, 1986), p. 4.
45. McKillop has noted how Grant's intellectual heritage can, in part, be traced to his years studying history at Queen's University, where, as I have noted in Part Two, John Watson and Hegelian Idealism had such a profound influence. See McKillop, Contours of Canadian Political Thought, (Toronto, 1987), p. 96-110.
46. Grant, Empire, p. 9.
47. Ibid, p. 7.
48. Ibid, p. 17.
49. Ibid, p. 31.
50. Grant, Selected Letters, William Christian, ed., (Toronto, 1996), p. 114.
51. Grant, Lament, p. 20, 50.
52. Ibid, p. 34, 68.
53. Grant, English-Speaking Justice, (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1985), p. 2-3. This book was originally published in 1974.
54. Angus, A Border Within, p. 31. Angus observes that Grant saw concrete political events in symbolic terms; they were not isolated events meaningful only unto themselves, but rather they were condensed signifiers of a significance beyond themselves, reflecting "the meaning of larger turning points in the way of life of a people." I would also suggest that given Grant's Christian faith, he also saw worldly events as partaking of the eternal connection between the city of God and the city of man. As Joan

O'Donovan comments, "Grant as a thinker (and not as a man of faith) is impaled on the point of this question concerning the anchoring of politics or history in eternity." See "The Battleground of Liberalism: Politics of Eternity and Politics of Time," The Chesterton Review, XI, 2, (May, 1985), p. 132.

55. Barry Cooper makes this point in his essay, "Did George Grant's Canada ever exist?" in Umar, George Grant and the Future of Canada, p. 158.
56. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, (Toronto, 1995), p. 121-122.
57. See Joan O'Donovan, George Grant and The Twilight of Justice, (Toronto, 1984), p. 8-29, for what she calls Grant's "Liberal-synthesizing phase." She remarks that Grant held out hope "for future reconciliation of 'history' and 'eternity' [because of] his faith in [Hegel's] dialectical progression of reason in time."
58. William Christian, ed., "Introduction," Time as History, (Toronto, 1995 [1969]), p. xi.
59. Christian, "Introduction," Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. xxi-xxii. In contrast to this view, H.D. Forbes argues that as strong as Grant's attraction to Hegel may have been at one time, it ended with Grant's discovery of Leo Strauss' writings. See Forbes, "George Grant and Leo Strauss," in Arthur Davis, ed., George Grant and the Subversion of Modernity, (Toronto, 1996), p. 190.
60. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 120.
61. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 44.
62. On this point of Grant's many "voices," see Zdravko Planinc, "Paradox and Polyphony in Grant's Critique of Modernity," in Umar, George Grant and the Future of Canada, p. 31.
63. Barry Cooper, "George Grant and The Revival of Political Philosophy," in By Loving our Own, p. 109-110. In a footnote to this essay Cooper suggests that Grant's statement about "living at the end of western Christianity" provides a key to understanding Grant's thought. In some ways, the substance the Grant section is rooted in Cooper's remark, for which I am indebted to him. See footnote #50, p. 120.
64. Frank Flinn, "Bibliographical Introduction," in George Grant in Process, p. 197.

65. Cooper, "George Grant and The Revival of Political Philosophy," p. 109.
66. Paul Edwards, chief ed., "Historicism," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 4, (New York, 1967), pp. 22-25.
67. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 19.
68. Grant, Lament, p. 89.
69. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 72.
70. Grant, English-Speaking Justice, p. 17-21, 78-80.
71. Grant, Technology and Justice, (Toronto, 1986), p. 79-95.
72. Grant, Time as History, p. 9-10.
73. O'Donovan, George Grant and The Twilight of Justice, p. 5.
74. Grant, Time as History, p. 6.
75. Grant, Lament, p. 88-89.
76. Grant, "Conversation," quoted by Schmidt, George Grant in Process, p. 64.
77. Plato, The Republic of Plato, trans. Allan Bloom, (New York, 1968), 327a, 376c-383a, 419a-427c.
78. The word theology comes from the Greek word theos, or God, and legein, meaning "to speak," "to gather together" or, to more loosely, "the study of." Negative theology, which is sometimes called via negativa, asserts that God's nature cannot be known in any real sense. In this regard, negative theology maintains that we can only speak about God or know anything about God by knowing — and speaking — what he is not. See, Peter Angeles, ed., Dictionary of Philosophy (New York, 1981), p. 292. Grant's appropriation of the concept of the via negativa was influenced by Simone Weil, and should be understood in this light.
79. Grant's most extensive accounts of Protestantism occur in Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 77-85, and Technology and Empire, p. 19-25.
80. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 94.
81. On this point see Edwin and David Heaven, "Some Influences of Simone

Weil on George Grant's Silence," George Grant in Process, p. 68-78. As their article points out, no interpretation of Grant's theological thinking can ignore Simone Weil's influence — a subject I shall address later in this essay. While the term "theology of the Cross" may be Martin Luther's, Grant's comprehension of the phrase echoes that of Weil's. Or, so I shall argue.

82. Harris Athanasiadis, George Grant and the Theology of the Cross, Ph.D. thesis (Montreal, 1997), p. 70. This dissertation provides the most comprehensive study of Grant's religious thinking of which I am aware, and I have relied on it a great deal in discussing the linkage between Grant's theology and his political philosophy. It was published under the same title in 2001 by the University of Toronto Press. But since I had written my Grant section before the book's publication I have continued to refer to the thesis whenever I cite Athanasiadis.
83. Grant, Technology and Justice, p. 76-77.
84. Quoted in Joan O'Donovan, George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, p. 93ff. For a more comprehensive discussion of this matter see Athanasiadis' study. p. 47-78. He writes, "The theology of the cross was a great discovery for Grant, a discovery that would shape his thought for the rest of his life." p. 47. However, Athanasiadis points out that Grant was probably first introduced to the concept as he worked on his Ph.D. thesis, The Concept of Nature and Supernature in the Theology of John Oman. It is beyond the scope of my essay to trace the linkages in Grant's Ph.D. to his later thought. It is sufficient to summarize Athanasiadis's argument that, essentially, Oman attempted to articulate Christian theology in philosophical terms, or, to put it differently, to reconcile reason and revelation. At the core of his thought, according to Grant, is the view that all the circumstances and occurrences in life serve God's providence, but this does not mean that Oman sees God as the author of evil. Oman maintains a theology of the cross by retaining the ultimate mystery and hiddenness of God's purposes in the world. For Grant, however, Oman does not sufficiently grasp the limits of human freedom and the necessity and mystery of God's grace and, thus, fails to adequately comprehend the theology of the cross. As Athanasiadis concludes, Grant thought that Oman remained too much the "liberal optimist" and a believer in "historical progress" to truly grasp the concept of the theology of the cross. p. 38-42. I would merely add Grant's criticism that Oman too closely identified the Christian doctrine of providence with the secular or modern doctrine of progress and, thereby, trivialized the evil in the world, finds a close parallel in Grant's subsequent critique of Hegel's philosophy of history. It would be

a worthwhile scholarly project to closely analyze Grant's dissertation for the roots of his political philosophy.

85. Ibid, p. 17. O'Donovan asserts that "Two Theological Languages" is "a microcosm of his [Grant's] working, gathering up the permanent impulses of his thought that will weave themselves into a complete fabric over three decades." Similarly, Athanasiadis writes that Grant's understanding of Martin Luther, particularly theses 19-21 of the Heidelberg disputation "serves to orient, structure and guide Grant's thought in its critical, as well as constructive, dimensions." p. 70. Finally, see Sheila Grant, "Grant and the Theology of the Cross," in George Grant and the Subversion of Modernity, p. 243-262. She writes that Grant's Ph.D. dissertation on John Oman and his subsequent study of Luther "marked the beginning of his distrust of rational philosophies of history," including, presumably, Hegelian philosophy, p. 249.
86. Grant, Technology and Justice, p. 44.
87. Grant, Lament, p. 89.
88. Grant, Time as History, p. 37.
89. Ibid, p. 46.
90. See, for example, English-Speaking Justice, pp. 92-93. The phrase itself comes from Plato's Republic, 493c.
91. Grant, "Conversation: Intellectual Background," in George Grant in Process, p. 65-66.
92. See, in particular, Athanasiadis, p. 123-150, 349-360; Lawrence Schmidt, "George Grant on Simone Weil as a Saint and Thinker, in George Grant and the Subversion of Modernity, p. 263-281; John Kirby and Louis Greenspan, "Grant, Natural Law and Simone Weil," in By Loving Our Own, p. 153-161; Joan O'Donovan, George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, p. 80-84, 176-177; and her essay "Love, Law and the Common Good," in By Loving Our Own, p. 135-151; Wayne Sheppard, "The Suffering of Love: George Grant and Simone Weil," in George Grant, Two Theological Languages, ed. Wayne Whillier, (Lewiston, N.Y., 1990), p. 20-62; and Edwin and David Heavens, in Schmidt, p. 68-78.
93. Grant, "Conversation: Intellectual Background," George Grant in Process, p. 62.

94. Quoted by Taylor, Radical Tories, p. 132.
95. Grant, "Conversation: Intellectual Background," p. 63.
96. Ibid, p. 63.
97. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 71-72.
98. John Dunaway, Simone Weil, (Boston, 1984), p. 38-40.
99. Grant, Lament, p. 89.
100. Simone Weil, The Need for Roots, trans. Arthur Wills, (New York, 1952), p. 282.
101. Weil, Intimations of Christianity, ed. and tr. Elisabeth Geissbuhler, (London, 1957), p. 193.
102. Ibid, p. 193.
103. O'Donovan, George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, p. 81-82.
104. Athanasiadis, p. 131. He also points out, however, that Grant was suspicious of Weil's language of love of and consent to necessity "as somehow reducing evil and suffering to divine providence, and collapsing the distance between necessity and the good." Nevertheless, he continued to admire her understanding of evil and suffering and how these are embedded in modern technological society. p. 152.
105. Grant, "Two Theological Languages," p. 8.
106. Ibid, p. 9. It must be acknowledged that thirty-five years after writing this Grant effectively repudiated his own argument about biblical theology, saying that he had basically misunderstood the concept. While such "egregious confusion vitiates the substance of the paper," as he says, it does not undermine the point I am trying to draw out regarding Grant's ambivalent Hegelianism and how he attempted to confront it. See Grant's "Addendum" to the essay, p. 16-19.
107. Sheila Grant, "George Grant and the Theology of the Cross, George Grant and the Subversion of Modernity, p. 249.
108. Grant, "Two Theological Languages," p. 13.

109. Ibid, p. 13-14.
110. Ibid, p. 18.
111. Sheila Grant makes this point: "Hegel is not mentioned in the 1953 address, but the battle lines are already drawn." "George Grant and the Theology of the Cross," p. 251. See also Athanasiadis, who argues that Grant's translation of the twenty-first thesis — "the thing is as it is" is a variation on Martin Luther's statement, "What it actually is," but means the same thing. p. 75.
112. Grant, Notebook 4, (1958), p. 23. I am indebted to William Christian for making several of Grant's notebooks available to me.
113. Ibid, p. 46.
114. Ibid, n.p.
115. Quoted in Sheila Grant, "George Grant and the Theology of the Cross," p. 251-252.
116. Grant, Notebook 4, p. 18.
117. Schmidt, George Grant in Process, p. 64.
118. O'Donovan, George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, p. 45.
119. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 44.
120. Ibid, p. 45.
121. In Philosophy in the Mass Age, Grant refers to Thomas Aquinas's "remarkable synthesis" of Aristotelian natural law and the Christian conception of the God of history. p. 43.
122. Ibid, p. 45.
123. See Athanasiadis, p. 76. His criticism is worth quoting in full. He says Grant's "simplistic characterization of neo-orthodox theology and his lumping of all Protestant theology more or less in this camp, prevents him from appreciating the serious attempts at rational thought by a number of Protestant theologians. Moreover, in emphasizing the importance of freedom in neo-orthodox theology he fails to emphasize the equally primary importance of grace which is, finally, the only hope for human salvation."

124. Grant, "The Uses of Freedom," Queen's Quarterly, 62, 4, (1956), p. 519.
125. Grant, "Revolution and Tradition," in Tradition and Revolution, ed. Lionel Rubinoff, (Toronto, 1971), p. 93.
126. See Hegel, The Philosophy of History, trans. J. Sibree, (New York, 1956), p. 417.
127. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 39-40.
128. Ibid, p. 39.
129. Grant, "Revolution and Tradition," p. 92-93; "The Uses of Freedom," p. 517-518; Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 63-64.
130. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 69.
131. Ibid, p. 19.
132. Ibid, p. 24.
133. On this point, it is worth repeating Grant's statement that he "could not face the fact that we were living at the end of western Christianity." Technology and Empire, p. 44. And even a few months before his death in 1988, Grant was still questioning whether the Christian revelation was true or false. By implication, if the latter, then Western Christian was, indeed, a mistake. Grant rejects this, yet his uncertainties remain: "either Christ is what He claims to be or is misguided to the point of lunacy." Such a possibility raises a disturbing question: Is it possible that at the root of western civilization is delusion and madness? Now there is a dissertation topic for some brave scholar.
134. I owe this insight to Ian Angus, A Border Within, p. 86.
135. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 46.
136. Grant, Time as History, p. 29.
137. Grant, Technology and Justice, p. 76.
138. Ibid, p. 76-77.
139. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 119.

140. Grant, "The Moving Image of Eternity," The George Grant Reader, ed. William Christian and Sheila Grant, (Toronto, 1998), p. 218.
141. Christian, Biography, p. 232-235. See also Athanasiadis, p. 202-207.
142. Philip Sherrard, The Greek East and the Latin West: A Study in the Christian Tradition, (London, 1959), p. 164.
143. Ibid, p. 6.
144. Ibid, p. 6.
145. Ibid, p. 8.
146. Ibid, p. 8.
147. Ibid, p. 13.
148. Ibid, p. 47.
149. Ibid, p. 30-31.
150. Ibid, p. 66-67.
151. Ibid, p. 67.
152. Christian, Biography, p. 234.
153. Athanasiadis, p. 206-207.
154. Sherrard, p. 60.
155. Ibid, p. 164.
156. Ibid, p. 166.
157. O'Donovan, George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, p. 45.
158. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 4.
159. Ibid, p. 4-5.
160. Ibid, p. 6-7. Nearly three decades later, in his 1986 book, Technology and Justice, Grant would say something similar, describing science as the "dominating paradigm of knowledge" in the modern world, and defining

paradigms as those epistemological frameworks that "shape every part of the society." p. 36.

161. Ibid, p. 8.
162. Ibid, p. 7.
163. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 35. Grant, of course, did not claim the two primals that shaped the West are completely distinct. Biblical religion was not without thought, nor was Greek rationality without its 'irrational' dimensions. That is, we should not think that source of western rationalism is solely Greek philosophy or that our 'religion' has its only source in Judeo-Christianity. As Grant states, "both among the Greeks and in the Bible thought and reverence are sustained together." See Time as History, p. 29.
164. Ibid, p. 138.
165. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 23.
166. Ibid, p. 137.
167. William Christian writes that Grant "readily acknowledged that the German sociologist Max Weber had taught him much about the Puritanism that was part of his inheritance from his ancestors." Biography, p. 273. See also Technology and Empire, p. 20.
168. Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. Talcott Parsons, (New York, 1958), p. 120.
169. Grant, "The Uses of Freedom," p. 519.
170. Ibid, p. 520.
171. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 20.
172. Ibid, p. 20.
173. Ibid, p. 21. The quotation is from Ernst Troeltsch, Protestantism and Progress: A Historical Study of the Relation of Protestantism to the Modern World, trans. W. Montgomery (Boston, 1912), p. 162-163.
174. Grant, Lament, p. 18. See also Yusuf Umar, "George Grant's Political Philosophy," George Grant and the Future of Canada, p. 14-15.

175. Ibid, p. 18-19.
176. Umar, George Grant's Political Philosophy," p. 14.
177. Grant, Lament, p. 69, 51-52, 53.
178. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 7-11.
179. Ibid, p. 10.
180. Ibid, p. 32-37.
181. Grant, Time as History, p. 25-26.
182. Ibid, p. 21-27. See also, "Knowing and Making," p. 59-61; "The computer does not impose on us the ways it should be used," in Abraham Rotstein, ed., Beyond Industrial Growth, (Toronto, 1974), p. 117-131.
183. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 32.
184. Grant, Time as History, p. 44.
185. Grant, "Nationalism and Rationalism," Power Corrupted: The October Crisis and the Repression of Quebec, ed. Abraham Rotstein, (Toronto, 1971), p. 51-56.
186. Joan O'Donovan touches on Weber's influence on Grant in her study, George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, p. 45-46. Likewise, William Christian points out that Weber showed Grant how Calvinist Protestantism had influence North American society. Christian, George Grant: A Biography, p. 273-74, 280-281. Louis Greenspan makes the same point in his essay, "The Unraveling of Liberalism," George Grant and the Subversin of Modernity, p. 207-208.
187. Roger Brubaker, The Limits of Rationality: An Essay on the Social and Moral Thought of Max Weber, (London, 1984), p. 2. Brubaker's list of 'rational' meaning includes: deliberate, systematic, calculable, impersonal, instrumental, exact, quantitative, rule-governed, predictable, methodical, purposeful, sober, scrupulous, efficacious, intelligible and consistent.
188. On this topic see Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, "Introduction," From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, (New York, 1946), p. 48-52. Also, Gunther Roth and Wolfgang Schluchter, Max Weber's Vision of History: Ethics and Methods, (Berkeley, 1979), p. 14-15.

189. Brubaker, p. 35-38. See also Wolfgang Mommsen, The Age of Bureaucracy: Perspectives on the Political Sociology of Max Weber, (New York, 1974), p. 56-57, 68-69.
190. Mommsen, p. 37.
191. Grant, "Nationalism and Rationalism," p. 51.
192. Ramsay Cook, The Maple Leaf Forever: Essays on Nationalism and Politics in Canada, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 1977), p. 10.
193. Ibid, p. 11.
194. Harald von Riekhoff, "The Impact of Prime Minister Trudeau on Foreign Policy," International Journal, 33, 2, (1978), p. 268.
195. Peter Aucoin, "Organizational Change in the Machinery of Canadian Government: From Rational Management to Brokerage Politics," Canadian Journal of Political Science, XIX, 1, (March, 1986), p. 3-27.
196. For a lucid commentary on Trudeau's dislike of nationalism and his belief in federalism, see Cook's essay "Federalism, Nationalism and the Canadian Nation State," in The Maple Leaf Forever, p. 22-44.
197. Pierre Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, (New York, 1968), p. 154 169, 179. 197. It is interesting to note Trudeau's prediction in Federalism and the French Canadians that like some newly-independent Third World country a sovereign "State of Quebec, "unable to improve social conditions for her people," will turn militaristic and try to "win 'her islands' in Hudson Bay." p. 175-176.
198. Ibid, p. 195-196.
199. James and Robert Laxer, The Liberal Idea of Canada: Pierre Trudeau and the Question of Canada's Survival, (Toronto, 1977), p. 92.
200. George Radwanski, Trudeau, (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1978), p. 121.
201. Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, p. 203.
202. See Cook's article on this point, p. 11. Also, Larry Zolf's comment that as a philosopher Trudeau "was a Hegelian." Dance of the Dialectic, (Toronto: James Lewis and Samuels Pub., 1973), p. 4.

203. Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, p. 189.
204. Trudeau, *et al.*, "An Appeal for Realism in Politics," The Canadian Forum, (May, 1964), p. 32-33.
205. I am indebted in my discussion of Grant's comments on Trudeau's manifesto to Barry Cooper. See his essay "The Political Thought of George Grant," George Grant in Process, p. 24-27.
206. Grant, Lament, p. 85.
207. Ibid, p. 85-86.
208. Grant, "Nationalism and Rationality," p. 52. See also, Christian, Biography, p. 288-289.
209. Ibid, p. 52.
210. Quoted by Grant, "Forward," in Laxer, p. 9-12.
211. Ibid, p. 10-11.
212. Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in Gerth and Mills, p. 155. The full quotation is: "The fate of our times is characterized by rationalisation and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world.'"
213. Grant, "Remarks at the 35th Couchiching Conference, 1966," in Great Societies and Quiet Revolutions, ed. John Lewin, (Toronto, 1967), p. 74.
214. Grant, "Nationalism and rationalism," p. 52.
215. Grant, Lament, p. 54.
216. Grant, "Lament for a Nation Revisited: An Interview with George Grant," with Monica Halil, International Insights: A Dalhousie Journal on International Affairs, 4, 1, (1988), p. 7. See also Tim Thomas, "George Grant, the Free Trade Agreement and Contemporary Quebec," Journal of Canadian Studies, 27, 4, (Winter, 1992-93), p. 180-196.
217. Grant, "Ideology in Modern Empires," Perspectives of Empire: Essays Presented to Gerald S. Graham, ed. John E. Flint and Glyndwr Williams, (London, 1973), p. 190-191.
218. See David Cayley, George Grant in Conversation, p. 101-102. Grant was

asked: "So you're saying that your lament was as much a lament for the loss of politics as a practical activity as it was for the loss of Canada — or perhaps that the two are the same?" He replied: "The same, yes. The possibility of building in the northern half of this continent something different from the great empire we share it with is gone."

219. Grant, "Conversation," George Grant in Process, p. 63.
220. Grant, "Introduction to the Carleton Library Edition, Lament for a Nation, p. xi.
221. Ibid, p. ix.
222. O'Donovan, "The Battle Ground of Liberalism: Politics of Eternity and Time," The Chesterton Review, XI, 2, (May, 1985), p. 143. See also William Christian, who argues that Grant's reading of Strauss showed him "that he had been wrong in holding out any hope that the tensions of modernity might be resolved as freedom become more fully developed in the world." Christian, "Editor's Introduction," Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. xxi.
223. Allan Bloom, Giants and Dwarfs, (New York, 1991), p. 241.
224. It is, perhaps, worth quoting one of Strauss's more ascerbic aphorisms: "Modern man as little as pre-modern man can escape imitating nature as he understands nature. Imitating an expanding universe, modern man has ever more expanded and thus become evermore shallow." Thoughts on Machiavelli, (Chicago, 1958), p. 298.
225. Leo Strauss, What is Political Philosophy?, (Chicago, 1959), p. 25.
226. Strauss, "The Three Waves of Modernity," An Introduction to Political Philosophy: Ten Essays by Leo Straus, edited by Hilail Gildin, (Detroit, 1989), p. 81-98.
227. Stanley Rosen, "Post-modernism and the End of Philosophy," Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, Vol. IX, No. 3, (Fall, 1985), p. 92.
228. Strauss, What is Political Philosophy?, p. 34.
229. Ibid, p. 35.
230. Ibid, p. 27-39.
231. Ibid, p. 37.

232. Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli, (Chicago, 1958), p. 295. See also, H.D. Forbes, "George Grant and Leo Strauss," in George Grant and the Subversion of Modernity, p. 177-178 and Athansiadis, p. 192-193.
233. Ibid, p. 50-52.
234. Strauss, On Tyranny, rev. ed, (Ithaca, N.Y., 1963), 205.
235. Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli, p. 297.
236. Bloom, Giants and Dwarfs, p. 251.
237. This essay is included in Grant's Technology and Empire, p. 81-109.
238. Ibid, p. 81.
239. Grant, Lament, p. 53.
240. Ibid, p. 96.
241. On this point, see Umar, George Grant and the Future of Canada, p. 5.
242. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 90.
243. Michael S. Roth, Knowing and History: Appropriations of Hegel in Twentieth-Century France, (Ithaca and London, 1988), p. 96.
244. Quoted by Patrick Riley, "Introduction to the Reading of Alexandre Kojève," Political Theory, vol. 9, no. 1, (Feb., 1981), p. 8. Riley is quoting Kojève's 1947 book, Introduction a la lecture divine Hegel: Leçons sur la Phenomenologie divine l'Esprit, p. 184-185.
245. Alexandre Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, edited by Allan Bloom, trans. by James Nichols, (New York, 1969), p. 7.
246. Kojève, "Hegel, Marx and Christianity," Interpretation, I, (1970), p. 30.
247. Ibid, pp. 29-30. See also Roth, Knowing and History, p. 102; and Riley, p. 6-9.
248. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, para. 260-261.
249. Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, p. 158-159.
250. Kojève, "The Idea of Death in the Philosophy of Hegel," interpretation: a

journal of political philosophy, vol. 8, (Winter, 1973), p. 123.

251. Strauss, An Introduction to Political Philosophy: Ten Essays, p. 95.
252. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 84. In a footnote on p. 104, Grant suggests his "few words" on the Strauss-Kojeve debate should be read together with Kojève's Introduction on Hegel and Hegel's Phenomenology.
253. Ibid, p. 87.
254. Ibid, p. 90.
255. Ibid, p. 89. On this point, see Umar's discussion, George Grant and the Future of Canada, p. 11.
256. Strauss, What is Political Philosophy?, p. 26.
257. See Roth, p. 126-127, for an exegesis of Strauss's argument on this issue. Roth carries his analysis much further than I do in regard to the debate between Kojève and Strauss on whether the knowledge of the end of the historical process can be known and constitutes the criteria for that knowledge.
258. Strauss, Natural Right and History, (Chicago, 1950), p. 274.
259. Grant, Time as History, p. 8-15.
260. O'Donovan in her book makes this point, too. p. 54.
261. Grant, Time as History, p. 40.
262. Strauss, Natural Right and History, p. 25
263. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 91. My emphasis.
264. Ibid, p. 92-93.
265. Ibid, p. 98. My parenthesis.
266. Armour and Trott, The Faces of Reason, p. 14-15.
267. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 139.
268. Grant, Lament, p. 96.

269. Kojève, "The Idea of Death in the Philosophy of Hegel," Interpretation 3, (Winter, 1973), p. 154. It is worth quoting Kojève more fully on this topic: "Christianity is nothing but the universal and homogeneous state projected into an imaginary realm; modernity is the City of God on Earth. The historical development of modernity, or the technological society, is thus nothing but a simple, though painful, process of giving up all illusions" (cf. Grail, p. 47).
270. I would suggest this mostly applies to English-speaking Canada. Quebec still retains some aspects of genuine nationalism, but that too is rapidly fading. Grant, of course, would also see the efforts to foster Canadian nationalism by means of arts funding and government propaganda as partaking of Nietzsche's notion of art as the modern response to nihilism. See Hans Hauge, "George Grant's Critique of Modernity: Canadian Refractions of Continental Ideas," Canadian Issues, vol. xii, 1990, p. 109-123.
271. Grant, Time as History, p. 40.
272. Gillespie, "George Grant and The Tradition of Political Philosophy," p. 125.
273. Grant, Time as History, p. 30.
274. Grant, Lament, p. 89.
275. Zdravko Planinc, "Paradox and Polyphony in Grant's Critique of Modernity," in Umar, George Grant and the Future of Canada, p. 31.

PART FOUR

Charles Taylor and the Spirit of Community

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Introduction — The 'Saving' of Modernity

In the two previous sections I examined how John Watson and George Grant employ Hegel to address what they see as the 'problem' of Canada. In Part Two, I showed that, for Watson, Hegel directs Canada into a greater political unit — the British Empire — as a means of addressing the fundamental political question of the proper relationship between the individual and the state. In Part Three, I argued that Grant's Hegel exemplifies the impossibility of a Canadian community, and, consequently, shows the impossibility of a properly directed relationship between the individual and the community. In this section, I intend to demonstrate how Charles Taylor appropriates Hegelian insights as a means to address the tensions between the individual and the community, and, in so doing, also offers an answer to the 'crisis' of Canada. In the subsequent summary and conclusion, I shall compare these interpretations of Hegel as to their adequacy in responding to the essential question with which this essay is concerned; that is, whether Hegel has meaning for the 'problem' of Canada today. Meanwhile, I shall use this section to draw out the Hegelian elements of Taylor's thought and how those elements are applied to his concerns.

In his philosophic career, Taylor's work has straddled several fields and disciplines: political theory, epistemology, ethics, cultural history and philosophy,

to name a few. He is widely recognised as a "communitarian" political philosopher. His studies on Hegel and the generally Hegelian critique he employs in regard to a rights-based, procedural liberalism are also well known. Borrowing from Hegel, he promotes a kind of *Sittlichkeit*, a thick, organic, historically-grounded communal ethic against a thin, abstracted and atomising *Moralität*, to use Hegel's term for the Kantian conception of morality. From this perspective he has offered a variety of critiques of the various manifestations of the atomist worldview, including behaviourist psychology, positivist philosophy, scientist or naturalist epistemology and what he calls the malaises of extreme liberalism.

Such a philosophic stance obviously places Taylor in the communitarian camp of the liberal/communitarian debate. At the heart of this debate is the concern, at least on the part of the communitarians, with the ostensible erosion of social and political existence, the decline of "community." According to the communitarians, our sense of community is threatened by individuals who relate to others on an overly exclusive basis of egoistic calculation. Contemporary communitarians, regardless of their differences, perceive that the seventeenth-century project of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke of liberating individuals from the thralldom of hierarchical and theocratic systems has been too successful. People have become overly concerned with their personal self-satisfaction, their rights, or their claims of power against others, and insufficiently concerned with duties towards others, our need for a sense of belonging, or what is needed to be fully integrated social and political beings.

Taylor shares this communitarian concern in that he, too, discerns in the excesses of liberal individualism a focus on the self and a concomitant lack of awareness, of the greater issues or concerns that transcend the individual, be they religious, political, historical. However, unlike some other communitarians, Taylor does not reject or completely oppose modern liberalism, or, for that matter, modernity itself. While he agrees in the main with the communitarian critique of liberalism and modernity, he argues, contrary to Grant, that the chances of reforming or mitigating the excesses of modernity are better sought, even if only for practical reasons, within modern forms of self-interpretation and understanding than in any return to pre-modern or classical humanism. At the core of Taylor's project, as exemplified by his 1989 *magnum opus*, Sources of the Self, is the notion that modernity and modernism itself offer moral grounds, or sources, that can provide reasonable responses to the reification of individualism and its attendant self-absorbed subjectivism. "The intention of this work was one of retrieval, an attempt to uncover buried goods through re-articulation — and thereby to make these sources again empower, to bring the air back again into the half-collapsed lungs of the spirit."¹

Taylor's effort to find sources within the modern hermeneutic that can compensate for the excesses of modernity without destroying it demonstrates considerable similarities with Hegel's notion of *Aufheben* in which concepts are preserved even as they are overcome. In this regard, his thinking constitutes an attempt to uncover — or, perhaps more accurately, to recover — a forgotten and

immanent potential for community or "belongingness" within modernity. In attempting to recover community, Taylor has recourse to certain antecedent thinkers, including Hegel, Herder and Rousseau. From these 'sources' of modernity, Taylor draws out the claim that the modern ideal of freedom is bound up with and dependent upon the achievement of a proper or authentic relationship between the self and the other, between the individual and the community. This ideal relationship is most comprehensively articulated in Taylor's concept of recognition and his expressivist theory of authentic identity. In his view, an authentic identity reconciles the individual and the community in the form of a kind of 'recognition' that results in satisfying both the individual's need to belong and his concomitant desire for freedom.

Taylor's concept of recognition, and the expressivist theory of human agency that goes with it, finds its way into various strands of his political thought with which I am particularly concerned: his understanding of the nature of community; his affirmation of everyday life; his critique of procedural liberalism; his notion of the dialogical nature of society; and, finally, the concrete 'problem' of Canada and Quebec nationalism. Bearing this in mind, it is necessary in the remainder of this section to examine the historical sources of morality that Taylor sees embedded within modernity, particularly the thought of Hegel, Herder and Rousseau. In retrieving these sources he attempts to overcome or sublimate some of the malaises of the modern world — excessive individualism, instrumental reason and consequent loss of genuine freedom — against which he speaks.

My discursive strategy is threefold: first, I consider the philosophical sources of Taylor's concept of recognition and the ideas of authenticity and identity he draws from the concept; second, I look at Taylor's philosophical project, focusing on the antecedents to his theory of recognition; third, I examine the hermeneutical ontology that underlies Taylor's critique of modernity, paying particular attention to his theory of expressivism as derived from Rousseau, Herder and Hegel. Finally, specifically referring to the Hegelian elements of Taylor's concept of recognition, I attempt to frame an overall understanding of Taylor's thought in its concrete application to the 'problem' of Canada, and whether his effort at theoretical reconciliation is ultimately coherent. This argumentative structure is informed by several concerns on my part. First, there is Taylor's historicist and quasi-Hegelian confidence in finding within modernity the historical sources that can serve as a countervail to the excesses of modernity intellectually even though he does not accept the metaphysical assumptions of Hegel's historicism. As John Dunn notes, "in the face of distressing choices he (Taylor) is apt to cling tenaciously to both horns of the dilemma, refusing ... to let either of them go." Taylor, says Dunn, seems simultaneously attached to "the modern post-Romantic project of self-exploration" and the pre-modern project of situating individuals within an "objective order of natural and social value."²

Dunn pinpoints a conflict within Taylor's thought between his hermeneutical ontology. This ontology rests, on one hand, on his historicist

approach to 'saving' modern individuality, and, on the other hand, on his intimation of a larger moral order that would provide objective standards of judgement for determining the 'good' of community. Considering Taylor's explicit rejection of the central thesis of Hegelian metaphysics, this suggests, at the very least, a tension within Taylor's thought as a whole. Taylor seems to endorse Hegel's efforts to reconcile the individual and the community; indeed, his promotion of multiculturalism is rooted in the precepts of Hegelian idealism.³ Yet, in the absence of an acceptance of Hegel's philosophical adherence to an overarching rational order and the historical embodiments of that order, there remains an abiding conundrum in Taylor's thinking that casts doubt on his efforts to find a basis for the reconciliation of the individual and the community. To be sure, Taylor is careful to note that his critique of the impersonal society of contemporary liberalism should not be construed as advocating a family-like community. Yet — and this raises my second concern — considering the emphasis given to language and cultural identity within his expressivist theory, I question whether Taylor adequately avoids slipping even deeper into the subjectivism and relativism that he himself regards one of the dangers of post-modern society. After considering Taylor's thought more closely, we may find that his desire to salvage the community from the ostensible excesses of atomistic liberalism has the latent potential for engendering far greater dangers for both the individual and the community, including the Canadian community, than those he fears.

Bearing these concerns in mind, I ask several questions. 1) What does Taylor mean by recognition? 2) Concomitantly, what is his understanding of the "recognised" individual within the context of a community? 3) Precisely how is the reconciliation of the individual and the community achieved, and in what political form does Taylor see this reconciliation taking place? And 4), is Taylor's reconciliation intelligible? Or, put differently, does Taylor's employment of Hegelian thought in his romantic quest for substantive community satisfy the individual's desire for belonging while, at the same time, side-stepping the tendencies toward the kind of illiberal, often irrational and instinct-grounded communality that can lead to authoritarian and even totalitarian political orders? As a number of commentators have observed, it is "not always easy to see how substantive liberalism in Taylor's schema differs from the illiberal, closed regime."⁴

In responding to these questions and concerns I need to address two key ideas on which much of Taylor's thought turns. The first idea is what Taylor regards as the need for recognition. The second is Taylor's expressivist notion that the authentic human life possesses an essentially dialogical character. These two ideas are central to Taylor's thinking, providing the essential hermeneutical ontology for his concrete political claims, including his responses to the 'crisis' of Canada. To comprehend the thrust of Taylor's philosophical argument, then, necessitates understanding each of these ideas in turn. I begin with Taylor's concept of recognition.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Recognition and Taylor's Philosophical Project

The concept of identity in the form of issues ranging from ethnic strife and religious fundamentalism to resurgent nationalism and regional secessionist movements dominates the post-Cold War era. Commenting on these phenomena, some scholars have argued that "the 'struggle for recognition' is fast becoming the paradigmatic form of political conflict"⁵ in the contemporary world. The term 'struggle for recognition' is, of course, taken from Hegel, who gave it its most comprehensive treatment. However, as I noted in my discussion of his thought in Part One, Hegel regarded the concept of recognition as, first and foremost, ontological, and not as an immediate concrete political matter. Recalling my previous argument, I noted how his most famous discussion of recognition — the confrontation between two proto-self-consciousnesses in the Phenomenology of Spirit, in which each seeks to win the recognition of the other — allegorically expresses the essential intersubjective structure of the human condition. For Hegel, the agglomeration of such encounters provides the essential foundation of social practices, political institutions, individual identities and even epistemological claims. The issue of recognition is not solely a question of concrete political concerns, but the ground of political and social life.

On this account, Taylor employs Hegel's idea of recognition as a

conceptual tool for dealing with contemporary debates surrounding issues of identity and difference in pluralist, multicultural societies. First, Hegel's concept demonstrates for Taylor how individual identity is partially shaped by the views of that individual held by others. Hegel's thinking on intersubjectivity brings to light the harm that can be done to an individual by the perceptions and characterisations of others, and, thus, encourages us to acknowledge that certain kinds of moral injury can occur almost unnoticed. As Taylor puts it in a penultimate statement:

The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being.⁶

Thus, he concludes that due recognition is not simply a matter of courtesy and respect, but a vital human need.

Second, Hegel's paradigmatic allegory of the master-slave relationship implies a normative principle that has considerable political import. For Hegel, according to Taylor, "the struggle for recognition can find only one satisfactory solution, and that is a regime of reciprocal recognition among equals."⁷ Applying Hegel's thought to the contemporary world, Taylor argues that if modern societies are to satisfy the principle of recognition, they must accord public recognition in one form or another to all citizens because each is the bearer of a certain cultural identity. As examples of the consequences of misrecognition, Taylor refers to a

range of contemporary social and political conflicts — feminism, the status of formerly colonised peoples and even debates in Canada on Quebec as a distinct society — that have as a theoretical background the demand that the distinctive characteristics of a particular group be 'recognised'.

This demand is often in conflict with older traditions of liberalism that base their notion of justice on what is common among human beings. Taylor attempts to reconstruct a "substantive" liberalism that can, in his view, more adequately respond to this demand than can older traditions. For example, he cites feminist concerns regarding the negative self-understanding women have of themselves in a male-dominated society. This internalised misrecognition affects a woman's self-understanding, undermining her sense of self and, hence, her freedom even when some of the supposedly external social and legal barriers to emancipation are removed. Taylor sees similar concerns about misrecognition in relations between whites and blacks. White society, he suggests, has projected a demeaning image on to blacks that blacks are now seeking to overcome. Likewise, he says European civilisation has failed to properly recognise aboriginals and, by the power of its presence, ensured that even some aboriginals accept a degrading view of themselves as savages. Thus, Taylor concludes, misrecognition is not simply a matter of a lack of respect: "It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with crippling self-hatred."⁸

This argument raises the question of exactly what is meant by the term "recognition," particularly in the context of debates about cultural or social

identity. Terence Cave, in his 1990 book Recognition: A Study in Poetics, argues that generally speaking, "recognition" refers to a certain kind of public acknowledgement of the particular social or cultural identities of a person or group. Because this conceptual dimension of identity is connected to the idea of recognition, the idea of recognition is regarded as a thicker or more substantive good than more common notions of tolerance and respect. Toleration can be only reluctantly given, and need not involve any real knowledge of the other. Respect can be granted despite animosity toward or dislike of another's cultural or social identity. However, recognition instantiates a certain kind of respect; that is, a respect rooted in awareness and knowledge of the identity of the other. Cave makes the further point that at a deeper level, recognition involves an element of reflectiveness or self-consciousness. This emphasis on reflectiveness opens up the common understand of the word "recognition" to suggest a dimension of "re-cognition, or re-thinking, and, hence, of the recovery of something once known but forgotten. Hence, as one scholar puts it, recognition involves a particular kind of respect — "respect grounded in the knowledge or understanding of someone's identity in all its particularity."⁹

Anthony Appiah captures this thick sense of recognition when he asserts that the politics of recognition holds that people have a right not to be simply respected or tolerated as regards their essential humanity, but "to be acknowledged publicly as what they already really are."¹⁰ Taylor's concept of recognition reflects this understanding of the concept of recognition. As such, his

employment of the concept is essentially Hegelian in that it reflects an attempt to reconcile the universalism of the Greek notion of honour due equals with the homogeneous Christian notion of the equality of all men before God. This 'thick' understanding of "recognition," with its emphasis on knowledge or reflection, is associated with a particular view of the character of identity. Taylor refers to this linkage between recognition and identity as "authenticity." According to Taylor, every man is the carrier of a unique identity, an identity that distinguishes him from others and provides him with his own original way of being. However, Taylor also extends this notion of authenticity, of being true to your own originality, to groups, making them the bearers of a collective or cultural identity. In each case, authenticity of identity is linked to recognition in that each is the object of the acknowledgement of recognition. Thus, the politics of recognition demands that we all acknowledge the unique identity of every individual and every group in their respective distinctiveness.

This view of authentic identity implies that the identity of an individual or group is somehow independent of the views and judgements of others. Taylor says this is because the idea of authenticity has its historical roots in the subjective turn of modern cultures; that is, the idea of individuals possessing an "inner voice" or an inner moral sense to which they must be true to be authentic. What this seems to imply, though, is that it is only to the extent our inward (and, presumably, authentic) identity remains independent of the impositions of others that identity provides a reliable, if subjective, standard for judging the

occurrences of misrecognition. But does this way of understanding recognition and identity not make it difficult to justify the argument that misrecognition constitutes, as Taylor says, a "grievous wound?" If our sense of identity is so "inward," why should the judgements of others affect us so severely? Yet, for Taylor, misrecognition is in itself harmful, constituting a kind of oppression in which an individual or a group is forced into "a false, distorted and reduced mode of being."¹¹

Such an understanding of recognition suggests that if an individual can be harmed by the misrecognitions of others, then it is because his identity is somehow related to the conduct and attitude of others. The notion harkens to my earlier point about "recognition" as a kind of public knowing or self-conscious awareness of the particular social or cultural identities of a person or group. But does this not suggest that authentic identities are social constructs? How does this jibe with Taylor's claim that the authentic identity requires individuals to discover their inner self, an original way of being that cannot be derived socially, but needs to be generated inwardly? How can this inner self be independent of others, yet, at the same time, require the proper recognition of others? On one hand, Taylor seems to be suggesting that modern individuals cannot claim an identity that is entirely socially derived; on the other hand, he also seems to be saying that neither can they seek an identity that is derived purely autonomously. Caught between the horns of this dilemma, Taylor responds by asserting that there is no such thing as an inwardly generated inner self, at least in terms of

being monologically generated. Our sense of inwardness, of possessing inner depths to which we must be true, is itself a dialogical construction. To understand the close connection between identity and recognition we need to understand that the crucial feature of human existence is its fundamentally dialogical character.

According to Taylor, individuals acquire agency and the capacity to comprehend each other through the acquisition of languages of expression, by which he means not only words but also the languages of art, love and what he calls "gesture." However, these languages are not something we acquire in isolation. Rather we acquire the languages of expression through interaction with those whom Taylor refers to as "significant others." The languages this interaction provide are essential not only for self-understand, but also for the genesis of consciousness itself. This identity-generating dialogue, along with the growth in consciousness and self-understanding, continues throughout the individual's life. Indeed, our significant others include our parents, who are always with us, even if only in memory, our relationship partners, our children and all those others who form the matrix of our social and political existence. We are constantly interacting with others and, hence, the process of our identity formation in and through others is not, as Taylor puts it, subject to some "monological ideal" in which we finally free ourselves from the influences of others, particularly our parents, and attain our true identities. We do not engender an identity by ourselves, but rather "negotiate it, through dialogue,

partly overt, partly internal, with others." Individual identity is not something that precedes recognition, but is the consequence of continuous interaction with others.¹²

It is this reality of human agency that makes the concept of recognition so crucial in human affairs, especially when it is attached to the idea of authenticity. Our individual identity is exposed to the conduct of others, and, in fact, is made by others. Who we are is intimately related to what others think of us. Our identity requires the recognition of and by others. People, Taylor argues, understand this in the private or intimate sphere, especially in their dealings with their significant others. But we are also seeing this concern with recognition played out in the public sphere in which our political culture is increasingly under pressure to practice a politics of equal recognition.

Taylor's main concern is with the rise of the modern demand for recognition in the public arena, which he argues is at the root of contemporary demands for the protection and elevation of minority groups and cultures in majoritarian societies. In his view, the politics of equal recognition has come to mean two different things that are connected, respectively, with two fundamental shifts that characterise the modern world: what he calls the politics of equal dignity and the politics of difference. In modern democratic societies, we want equal recognition and equal dignity, both of which are associated with the desire for individual identity and the ideal of authenticity. The first shift, the politics of equal dignity, Taylor connects to the collapse of pre-modern social hierarchies

even as the desire for honour that such hierarchies once satisfied persists in the modern world. The second shift, the politics of difference, emerges from the politics of dignity because a new understanding of the human social condition imparts a radically new meaning to the egalitarian principles of the Enlightenment. To explain what Taylor means by this requires a recapitulation of his philosophical antecedents.

In examining Taylor's philosophic sources it can readily be seen that, for Taylor, the most prominent feature of the modern identity — and the bedrock of modern concerns about recognition and authenticity — is its inwardness. According to Taylor, while "inwardness" was also a feature of the thought of both Plato and Augustine, the modern identity, particularly as articulated by Descartes and Locke, is characterised by a radical turn inward for moral sources. No longer is our morality or ethical conduct grounded in a Good or a God that is beyond us. Rather, we find, or attempt to find, our morality within. The modern idea of the individual, and, indeed, our whole notion of individualism, derives from the collapse of external horizons of meaning that helped pre-modern individuals make sense of their place within the larger whole and gave coherence to their lives. Taylor links this collapse of external horizons of meaning to modern natural science's eroding of the foundations of cosmological and theological orders. The collapse of these horizons undermined the legitimacy of traditional social hierarchies according to which individuals were recognised as being placed within a particular 'chain of being' by nature or God. In brief, under the

pre-modern dispensation, everyone knew his or her place, and there was a place for everyone. The loss of these horizons of meaning has forced 'the individual' to turn inward in order to find meaning and purpose, as well as a place in life.

The major division for Taylor is that between ancient and medieval thought and modern thought. Between these two periods the sources of moral order shift from a cosmic order that is external to the individual and the modern period in which the sources of morality are found within the self. But there is also a divide within the modern period that sees the idea of the self as the fount of morality increasingly radicalised until, with the Enlightenment, it attains the idea of the autonomous, atomised individual. Then, with the Romantic reaction to the Enlightenment, the idea of the self is deepened by "the massive subjective turn of modern culture (and) a new form of inwardness."¹³

Taylor's starting point for the historical development of this 'new form of inwardness' is Plato. It is with Plato that reason and reflection — the ideal of rational contemplation — first gains ascendancy over the ethics of action and glory. Homeric Greece, according to Taylor, does not provide the idea of a unique and unitary self because, in not seeing the individual as the locus of identity, it could not begin the process of internalisation that has come to be the hallmark of the modern self. But with Plato, though, human consciousness became a unitary space, an arena in which the order of the cosmos could be known through reason. Taylor is careful to point out, however, that Plato's conception of reason was not that of moderns. Plato did not conceive of reason

as instrumental or calculative, a means of deciding proper actions on the basis of the best evidence and available arguments. For Plato, rational contemplation was an attempt to attune human consciousness to the proper order of the cosmos, and, in this attunement to cosmic truth, perceive ethical truth. The moral order is embedded in the external order of the cosmos as a whole, and the proper function of a man is to attune himself to that external order. The knowledge of the Forms includes the comprehension of both metaphysical and ethical truth. The Delphic injunction of Know Thyself is not an injunction to explore the inner depths of the self but rather an admonishment to attune oneself to and locate human purpose in the larger cosmic order. As Taylor puts it, "Rationality is tied to the perception of order; and so to realise our capacity for reason is to see the order as it is."¹⁴

However, tied to Plato's notion of reason-as-attunement is another crucial step in the development of modern inwardness: the idea that the individual, as a sensorium of a given cosmic order, is responsible for his own life and, as such, should act with rational self-mastery to control the conflicting desires of the psyche and so harmonise himself with the cosmic order. In Taylor's view, it was Plato's call to self-mastery, to the control of one's appetites and desires, one's life as a human being, that provided the first inward shift and, hence, the first opening for a move away from a morality grounded in external sources. With Plato, the gods no longer form part of human consciousness as they do in the Homeric epics; individuals are self-identical and, therefore, self-responsible.

For Taylor, Augustine is the pivotal transitional thinker between the ancient and modern worlds. With Augustine comes the move away from a morality infused by external sources and a move toward a morality sustained by the individual's inner resources. Augustine takes the Platonic dualities of spirit and matter, eternal and temporal, and recasts them in terms of inner and outer, producing a new Christian interiority. Essentially, Augustine identifies the Platonic Forms with the idea of a God who creates the world *ex nihilo*. This created world receives its form through God, through its participation in the manifestations of His thought. Everything has being insofar as it participates in God. But for Taylor the Augustinian synthesis is not simply the transference of the classical external cosmic order to an external Christian cosmos. Augustine's claim was that our knowledge of the divine comes not through some attunement to the external objects of the created order — although they are expressions of His mind — but rather through our love of Him. We have our being in our participation in and knowledge of God's manifested order. This implies that the individual's relationship to the other, whether God or community, is a matter of knowing that which has created him.¹⁵

Obviously, such a notion implies that Taylor's communitarianism, his reconciliation of the individual and the community, is essentially Augustinian. For Taylor, Augustine's notion of a personal God, whose love both created and redeemed the self, demonstrates an intimacy between self and other — or soul and God — far deeper than anything Plato contemplated with his erotic union of

the psyche and the Forms. Indeed, the relationship runs so deep that it suggests our only knowledge of truth is through our inward access to the divine mind. But this means that knowledge of the truth is somehow related to "loving" that which is within ourselves. Taylor quotes Augustine's passage from De Vera Religione to this effect: "Do not go outward; return within yourself. In the inward man dwells truth." It is in knowing and loving ourselves — seeing the 'inner light,' the 'light in the soul,' as it were — that we may find God and, hence, moral truth. But this also suggests that the truth of the self is ultimately tied to the first-person perspective since God created that self. Taylor calls this "radical reflexivity," arguing that it was Augustine who "bequeathed it to the Western tradition of thought" and, in doing so, "inaugurated a new line of development in our understanding of moral sources, one which has been formative for our entire Western culture."¹⁶

Taylor is careful to note that this radical reflexivity means more than the reified and self-obsessed forms of modern subjectivism. Augustine's inward turn did not mean 'taking care of yourself' — that is, making yourself the essential object of your attention. Rather, it meant knowing the Truth of the world (which is God) through your first-person experiential relationship to it. In other words, radical reflexivity refers to a self-conscious experiencing of the world, understanding the world not merely as an external object but as something there for us. According to Taylor, this perspective is the source of modern Cartesian epistemology. Hence, Augustine can be regarded as the source of the Cartesian

cogito. And so Taylor argues. It was Augustine who prefigured the Reformation; the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be regarded as a development of Augustinian spirituality, one which carried on in its own fashion into the Enlightenment.¹⁷

For Taylor, then, modernity begins with Descartes' recasting of Augustine. "Descartes is in many ways profoundly Augustinian,"¹⁸ both in his reflexivity and in the emphasis he places on the *cogito*. Yet, Descartes' new mechanistic perspective on the world, as provided by modern natural science, undermined the older teleological view of the world, and dissolved the Augustinian (and Platonic) linkage between the cosmos and human conduct and self-understanding. Even if the natural world was no longer a source of morality, Descartes, in keeping with his Augustinian roots, retained and even enhanced the self as the source of morality. In effect, Descartes reworked Augustine by centring the moral sources within man rather than in the Augustinian God that could be apprehended through and was the ultimate object of inward reflection.¹⁹

This transmutation of Augustine was the product of modern science's representative epistemology. Where Plato and Augustine understood knowledge as the union of the individual mind to a cosmic order that assured the intelligibility of the world, modern epistemology understands knowing as dependent on the mind's determining which representations best correspond to the external objects of the world. Reason is no longer a matter of the rational contemplation of the cosmic order, an attunement to the nature of the world, but a capacity to

construct orders that meet certain epistemological standards or understandings. Or, to put it another way, rationality is procedural, a correct adherence to evidentiary rules. For Descartes, following the correct procedures of gathering evidence would lead to a knowledge of reality. The problem with this approach, though, from the perspective of the ancients, was that it engendered a conceptual gap between reason and truth, a gap between the knowing mind and the object of the mind's knowing. There is now a detachment or disengagement of the mind from the world.

Augustine understood reason as the means for obtaining clearer insight into our souls; to be fully rational was to have a direct and experiential knowledge of God's Truth. Similarly, for Plato, to be rational was to be right about the order of the cosmos. For Descartes, however, reason is the instrument by which we construct arguments from which we infer the truth about objects external to us. The mind is no longer a sensorium of direct engagement in and with the world, but is, as Taylor says, "disenchanted, a mere mechanism ... devoid of any spiritual essence or expressive dimension."²⁰ While Descartes retains Augustine's and Plato's emphasis on rationality and inwardness, he reorients the source of morality and ethics away from the constitutive sources of the Good or God into a subjective, self-certifying procedural rationalism. He reconstructs the first-person experience as the product of external forces affecting internal capabilities. Rationality became an internal property of subjective thinking, rather than an attribute of reasoning pertaining to a vision of reality.

Obviously, this constitutes a fundamental shift in the Augustinian understanding of the human relationship to God. No longer is God the basis and the object of knowledge. Now, with Descartes, our rational access to the divine as the source of our conduct is effectively diverted to the autonomous inner activity of the individual self. Reason is no longer the means by which the individual properly orients himself to that which is other than himself, whether nature or God. Where Augustine saw the divine at work in every aspect of the life of the self, including rational activity, and regarded the failures of the self to access the divine source as a matter of sinful perversity, Descartes' shift opens up the possibility that the failures of reason to uncover the moral sources of the self is because there is no source to discover. In this way, non-belief in the essential divinity of life becomes a distinct possibility. With Descartes, rational inquiry, coupled to modern natural science, opens the door to a rejection of religious faith.

Taylor devotes much of his philosophical project to tracking the modern consequences of this Cartesian shift. One path leads to Locke and what Taylor refers to as the "radical Enlightenment," with its ultimate notion of the individual as an ahistorical atom. The other path leads to the Protestant "affirmation of everyday life" and the Romanticism of Rousseau and Herder and their idea of an expanded, expressive self with inner depths nourished if not by God, then by nature and membership in the community.²¹ Taylor, as I have previously noted, opts for the Romantic view of modernity, arguing that seeing ourselves as

autonomous individuals or atomised selves undermines moral existence.

Taylor's main target in his critique of the atomised self is John Locke. Locke, according to Taylor, extends Descartes' disengaged self into a radically autonomous self by rejecting any form of innate ideas and the notion that humans have an inherent inclination toward reason, both of which Descartes continued to maintain. Additionally, Locke rejected any teleological understanding of human nature, whether in terms of epistemology or morality. For Locke, humans simply have no natural inclination to or attunement with the truth, whether in the ancient cosmological sense or in the more modern notion of innate rationality. Furthermore, the Lockean self, in lacking innate ideas, is no longer even a bearer of truth in any substantive fashion, and thus must become an object of disengaged inquiry. These two rejections on Locke's part form the basis of his notion of the "punctual self." The punctual self is even more self-contained and self-sufficient than that of the Cartesian disengaged self. The punctual self has pulled back from any substantive assumptions. In essence, the punctual self is merely a consciousness examining its experience, whether sensory or cognitive. In effect, reason begins by clearing the cognitive foundation of all that might retard the grasping of truth.

To be sure, every philosopher from Plato to Descartes has had a similar intention. But what sets Locke apart, says Taylor, is the extent of his disengagement of the self from any intrinsic embeddedness in the world. Not only does Locke's rational inquiry question all external authorities, but also all

internal assumptions. How, though, does Locke avoid a self-destructive skepticism? Only, according to Taylor, by asserting that the inquiring mind achieves the idea that experience, sensation and reflection are not the product of human activity at all. For Locke, understanding is passive and what it grasps is outside its own power. While the ideas of experience, sensation and reflection are basic, they are not the products of action but merely the beginning of rational analysis. On this basis, reason asserts procedural rules; that is, logical deduction and probable evidence allow the construction of the truth about the world. In

Taylor's words:

In effecting this double movement of suspension and examination, we wrest the control of our thinking and outlook away from passion or custom or authority and assume responsibility for it ourselves. Locke's theory generates and also reflects an ideal of independence and self-responsibility, a notion of reason as free from established custom and local dominant authority.²²

In Locke, Taylor sees the philosophical beginning of the radically modern notion of the disengaged, autonomous self. For Locke, such an understanding of the self was necessary because it was in line with the anti-teleological perspective of modern natural science. To be sure, like Descartes, Locke believed the scientific foundations of his epistemology did not detract from the moral sources of Christianity. Procedural rationality, he maintained, would take the individual from the ideas of the punctual self to God, or Natural Law, and, hence, to morality. Obviously, this view of the self has political implications. For one thing, it is deeply anti-authoritarian in that it devalues the received "knowledge" of community customs and teachings because knowledge is

experiential and rooted in self-understanding. This alone implies an ideal of independence and self-responsibility. The Lockean individual is not only free from the domination of others to the degree that he is able to reason for himself, he is also free to remake himself. The individual can examine himself as an object and can recast himself accordingly.

This, of course, is a radical transformation of the idea of rational self-control dating back to Plato. But unlike the ancient notion of the individual as being embedded in a community (or cosmos) and deriving his essential meaningfulness from his attunement to and establishment of a proper relationship to that community (or cosmos), the modern individual finds himself, as it were, not in the familiar features of the community or the cosmos but in his ability to remake himself independently of that which is not self. In Taylor's words, "Radical disengagement opens the prospect of self-remaking."²³

Yet, Taylor sees a paradox here. Locke links an ideal of individual freedom or independence with a conception of disengagement and procedural reason that casts the individual as an object who is subject of detached rational inquiry. In short, we are objects to ourselves. Put another way, we experience our freedom in the first person, but understand the entity that enjoys that freedom in the third person. Or, in Taylor's words, "Radical objectivity is only intelligible and accessible through radical subjectivity."²⁴ Thus, for Taylor, there is a deep and abiding tension at the heart of modern self-understanding. Cartesian epistemology calls for a radical disengagement from the 'engagements' of

ordinary experience; at the same time, the demands for self-responsible freedom and self-exploration, in awakening notions of dignity and authenticity, require a deeper engagement with our 'ordinary' individual particularities. On this point, it is worth recalling that for both Plato and Aristotle there was a distinction between "life" and the "good life," with the former a necessary if insufficient condition of the latter. With the advent of modernity, however, ordinary life, the particular conditions of the individual, become a fundamental moral value. Work and family, production and reproduction, are no longer "lower" than achievements of public honour or philosophic contemplation; rather, they are even higher ideals.

Taylor, like Hegel, traces this affirmation of ordinary life to the Protestant Reformation. But he also points out how the emphasis on ordinary life was supported by modern science. While Baconian science may have originated in experimentation, it culminated in the technological impulse to improve the human condition. Science, rather than being an activity of rational contemplation, became a pursuit dedicated to the betterment of ordinary life. Citing Bacon, Taylor writes in the modern age "science is not a higher activity which ordinary life should subserve; on the contrary, science shall benefit ordinary life."²⁵ In a similar fashion, the Protestant rejection of the idea of a priestly elite that has renounced profane or ordinary life in order to better mediate the divine presence reflects this notion that "ordinary life" gives equal access to the sources of moral order to everyone. Indeed, Taylor observes that the Protestant denial of Catholic hierarchies leads to a rejection of distinctions between sacred and profane, and,

hence, to a heightened affirmation of ordinary life as hallowed. At the same time, the Protestant emphasis on work and ordinary life also provided a hospitable environment for science and its efforts to improve the human condition. In an argument that recalls Grant's critique of Protestantism, Taylor says this turn to science means that "the instrumental stance towards the world has been given a new and important spiritual meaning ... Instrumentalizing things is the spiritually essential step."²⁶ In other words, control of the world is next to godliness.

But is there not a danger that this emphasis on instrumental reason leads to a narrowing of 'ordinary life' into the attempt to master both nature and human nature? And might this effort at mastering the world lead to attempts to transcend 'ordinary life' by means of technological intervention? Taylor argues that this elision has, in fact, taken place because modern instrumental science denies its own spiritual sources and its original moral purposes. Part of his attempt to recover the positive or life-affirming aspects of modernity — the ethic of benevolence, as he calls it — is to find those sources that have, as it were, been subordinated to the dominance of instrumentalist rationality. For Taylor, those sources include the Romantics such as Rousseau and Herder. It is with them and their expressivist notions of freedom and authenticity that we can recover a moral ontology to address the problems between the individual and the community.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Taylor's Expressivism and the Ethic of Authenticity

For Taylor, the notion of authenticity, and the various dimensions of recognition that arise out of it, is the latest development in the history of 'the individual.' He roots this development in nineteenth-century Romanticism, which built upon and in some ways sublimated the previous forms of individualism articulated by Descartes and Locke — the "disengaged reasoner" and the "punctual self," respectively. According to Taylor, these two notions of individualism reflected an instrumental stance toward the world. But this instrumental attitude is centred on the notion that the individual, as a rational agent, must bring the external world under control in order to be sufficiently free to choose his self-chosen purposes and realise them most efficiently. Much of Taylor's thought is a critique of this instrumentalist notion of the individual.

At the same time, though, he also recognises that to early moderns it offered a moral ideal that valorised the freedom and dignity of the individual against what was perceived to be a repressive hierarchical order. The political ideal that emerged from this instrumentalist vision was, of course, contractarianism and procedural liberalism. Nonetheless, it was out of these moral and political ideals that the ethic of authenticity emerged as a response to the individualism of disengaged rationality. In this regard, it can be argued that in

defending his notion of authenticity Taylor is attempting to find a middle way between the "boosters" and the "knockers" of modernity. The boosters include those deconstructionists and neo-Nietzschean feminists, as well as the technologists and scientific managers, who favour individual authenticity and freedom precisely because there are no absolute horizons or moral standards for human conduct. The knockers include those who see the boosters' notion of authenticity and freedom as little more than a promotion of a culture of narcissism, hedonism and nihilism, a society utterly devoid of moral ideals.²⁷

Despite these differences, what both sides share, according to Taylor, is a "debased" understanding of authenticity. As he notes, even relativism is powered by a moral claim: the view that everyone has the right to develop their own way of life based on their particular understanding of what is of value. Taylor's aim is to recover authenticity as a valid moral ideal since, in his view, it cannot be rejected by moderns. We may not like the idea of authenticity, but it is at the core of our modern self-understanding and we had best come to terms with it. And it is Taylor's task to show why both the boosters and the knockers are mistaken about authenticity and why we should appreciate it. Indeed, Taylor seems to imply that a persuasive understanding of authenticity would be the source for the reconciliation of the individual and the community. As he puts it:

What we ought to be doing is fighting over the meaning of authenticity, and from the standing developed here, we ought to be trying to persuade people that self-fulfilment, so far from excluding unconditional relationships and moral demands beyond the self, actually requires these in some form. The struggle ought not to be over authenticity, for or against, but about it, defining its proper

meaning. We ought to be trying to lift the culture back up, closer to its motivating ideal.²⁸

Taylor believes the authentic individual is one who is open to that which transcends himself and unconditional moral relationships — communal belongingness, in other words — that are not merely instrumental means of satisfying egocentric desires.

Such a claim, however, begs the question: How can individual identities be authentic and unique and yet, at the same time, dialogical and socially constructed? The best way to approach this question is by elucidating Taylor's theory of expressivism and the thinkers he draws on — Hegel, Herder and Rousseau — to articulate his ethic of authenticity. Taylor argues that collectively these thinkers put forth an expressivist understanding of the individual that both deepens and subverts the radical Enlightenment's mechanistic and instrumental understandings of 'the individual' and, in doing so, provides the theoretical means for the reconciliation of the individual and the community. In theoretical terms, Taylor basically tries to reconcile Rousseau's substantive community with Kant's radical freedom by drawing on Herder's expressivist theory and Hegel's concept of recognition. In Herder and Hegel, Taylor finds the theoretical means to reconcile the tension between the theories of human freedom and autonomy articulated by Rousseau and Kant.

In a subsequent chapter, I shall consider the political implications of Taylor's thinking, showing how he sees the Quebec crisis and the 'problem' of Canada as a concrete expression of the tension between Kant and Rousseau,

and how Hegel and Herder provide the means to reconcile that tension (and, by corollary, the problem of Canada). Indeed, Taylor's understanding of the idea of recognition — that of having one's self or a particular culture acknowledged as distinctive — seems mostly drawn from the question of Quebec's "distinctiveness" within Canada. The question is whether Taylor's solution to the 'crisis' of Canada is ultimately coherent.

Central to Taylor's hermeneutical ontology is the notion of human agency; that is, humans as "self-interpreting animals." For Taylor, this expressivist interpretation of human beings provides a corrective to the mechanistic understanding of nature, including human nature, which emerged out of the scientific revolution and the radical Enlightenment.²⁹ In effect, Taylor rejects the naturalist notion that values are not an aspect of reality but a projection of subjective desire. He holds that humans are endowed with a moral sensibility that runs deeper than an instrumentalist calculation of consequences. To be in touch with human passions and desires — the moral sentiments — is a requirement for realising our humanity. The individual is most himself when he feels himself to be part of a 'we', part of a community. The political ideal that follows from this expressivist theory is, obviously, communitarian. In this way, Taylor asserts that an expressivist understanding of the individual and the community is embedded within modernity, or at least within the Romantic version of modernity.

Taylor attributes to Rousseau the origins of this expressivist

understanding of the individual's relationship to the community, the 'I' that is a 'we.' Rousseau, he argues, deepened the inwardness already established in modernity by accentuating the autonomy of the individual. He did this not by following Locke's "punctual self" but by arguing for a natural capacity for virtuous self-identity that needed to be cultivated if it was to be authentic. This is the significance of Rousseau's claim that conscience speaks in the language of nature, although too few hear it. Our ability to hear this inner "voice of nature" is hindered by the passions and desires induced by our dependence on others. Moral salvation requires recovering authentic contact with our inner self. This subject-related quality cannot be gained from some objective, third-person perspective as required by the natural sciences, but can only be accessed through personal experience.

However, Rousseau does not propose a return to some pre-social state of nature, but rather the cultivation of the capacity to attend to our inner natures by means of our socially endowed abilities of language and reason. That individual authenticity — the capacity to attend to and articulate the inner voice — entails entering a dialogue with others. On this point, Taylor emphasises how Rousseau's recovery of our inner, authentic nature does not amount to any return to a primitive state of nature, but is an attempt to realign reason and nature in harmonious unity. "Conscience is the voice of nature as it emerges in a being who has entered society and is endowed with language and hence with reason."³⁰

Rousseau's general will reflects the demands of nature — or the inner voice — that is free from the distortions of other-opinion, or *amour propre*. In effect, Rousseau defines freedom and morality, the individual and the community, in terms of each other. While Rousseau maintains a hierarchy of goods, he does not see a hiatus between the life of the individual citizen and the pursuit of the means of life. For Rousseau, "the good political community is bound together by a sentiment which is an extension of the joy that humans feel in each other's company ..." ³¹ And that sentiment is, as Taylor observes, the general will, understood not as the aggregate of all wills but as the will. By means of the general will, Rousseau aims to reconcile individual freedom and communal belongingness. The general will is manifested in a social unity whose source is to be discovered within the individual, between the self and nature, and between the self and other selves. Moreover, this reconciliation must be grounded on freedom and recognition of authentic identity through attention to nature's inner voice.

What Rousseau has done, then, according to Taylor, is further the collapse of those pre-modern, cosmologically-based social hierarchies that sustained a concept of honour in which recognition is granted only to a few. Rousseau promoted instead a system based on the quintessentially democratic value of equal dignity in which everyone, in theory, is recognised. And it is this Rousseauian requirement for equal recognition that underpins the modern demand for authenticity — that is, the moral injunction to be true to that which

sets the individual apart from others — not only in relation to the individual but in relation to the group.

It is worthwhile to compare Rousseau's modern democratic view with the pre-modern concept of honour. Honour, by Rousseau's account, fosters pride and the striving after preferences. This, in turn, leads to social and political divisions and, hence, dependence on others' opinions that mute the inner voice of nature. In a society where individuals determine their own goals and purposes in isolation from others, the result is social hierarchies that engender oppressive self-definitions; those with power impose their purposes on others with less power. The concept of equal dignity, however, reconstitutes the human need for self-esteem and turns it toward equality, reciprocity and unity of purpose. This is reflected in Rousseau's view of the general will. Behind the idea of the general will is the notion that personal autonomy should not be oppressed by social hierarchy. If each individual has in his deepest self the same unity of purpose, then it does not matter where that individual resides socially since that person is free to fulfil his purposes. Since these purposes are ultimately identical to that of everyone else, then, with everyone participating willingly in a common purpose, the inner voice of all individuals is esteemed equally and, thus, all are recognised and feel themselves as belonging to the community: the 'I' becomes a 'we.'

Taylor's appropriation of Rousseau plays out in his arguments regarding the 'problem' of Canada, particularly in his distinction between what he calls "first-level diversity" and "deep diversity." Taylor argues that, at the level of deep

diversity, Canadian society should accommodate various forms of government within itself to satisfy the particular recognition requirements of different groups. In contrast to this notion of deep diversity, Taylor attacks the idea of first-level diversity, which he sees as a weak acceptance of cultural diversity within a state in which all groups are treated equally. For Taylor, this later form of diversity is ultimately a form of potentially harmful misrecognition in that it does not regard different cultures with equal dignity. The result is that certain groups remain alienated from Canadian society as a whole; that is to say, their inner voice, their sense of authenticity, finds no articulation and recognition in the greater community.

While Taylor may see Rousseau as the originator of the age of dignity — the reconciliation of the individual and the community by means of a self-determining general will — his appropriation of Rousseau is not unproblematic. Hegel, as I previously noted, questioned the seeming tilt toward subjectivism, seeing in Rousseau's general will the absence of any reference to concrete laws and institutions. The general will fails to adequately account for the inner reason of the social and political arrangements of the community and, as such, is open to potentially destructive tendencies. Taylor is certainly aware of this, and follows Hegel in objecting to a system of equal esteem that "requires a tight unity of purpose that seems incompatible with any differentiation."³²

Taylor's doubts about this central aspect of Rousseau's political philosophy raises the question as to whether his own 'politics of recognition'

might likewise possess some inherent tensions. To address this requires a brief consideration of Taylor's distinction between the politics of equal dignity and the politics of difference. If, as Taylor argues, the politics of dignity and the politics of difference are doctrinal substitutes for the pre-modern concept of honour, they seem to veer in different directions in terms of providing equal recognition. The politics of dignity posits a universalist understanding of equality that ostensibly extinguishes differences between people and makes them equal before the law. Everyone is equal in dignity by the fact of their personhood and, thus, is entitled to the same protection and opportunities for self-expression regardless of any differences in sex, religion, race or ethnicity. While this does not exclude the development or retention of characteristics that distinguish one group from another, it does seem to preclude recasting the existing systems of legal egalitarianism and liberal constitutionalism in ways that privilege one group over another. Differences between groups are allowed only if those differences can be sustained in a way that is compatible with the neutral application of the law.

Such a formulation is, of course, the essential bedrock of procedural liberalism. Citing Ronald Dworkin, Taylor defines a liberal society as one that neither holds nor adopts a particular substantive view about the ends or purposes of life. What does unite the liberal society is its procedural commitment to treat people with equal respect. Sustaining this society is the Kantian notion that individuals are autonomous and free by the fact of their possessing a natural rationality that allows them to transcend their particular circumstances and

engage principles which are transhistorical and universal. Such a view regards human dignity as bound up with autonomy; that is, the capacity of each individual to determine his own notion of the good life. But Taylor argues that this universalist legal egalitarianism threatens those cultural differences that provide the kind of deep-level authenticity now being demanded by individuals. On this point, Taylor's communitarianism emerges, effectively denying the autonomy of the individual.

For Taylor, the individual is situated in and thus constituted by a complex matrix of influences — tradition, culture and relationships. Such a contrast begs the question: Are we bounded selves who should create societies based on autonomy and individualism, and that which distinguishes one from another? Or, if we are essentially connected selves, should we strive for societies that recognise our basic communality? Liberalism emphasises the autonomous society, with its reliance on procedures and mechanisms to provide bridges between individuals. Communitarians, on the other hand, focus on the communal good or purpose, claiming that the liberal reliance on procedures is in itself grounded in an underlying notion of the good life. Like most communitarians, Taylor criticises liberalism for its focus on procedural rights, arguing that an individual's sense of belongingness or community is contingent upon a relaxation of the universal application of atomistic liberalism. This is Taylor's "politics of difference." What this politics seeks is the recognition of the unique identity of individuals and group, their distinctiveness from all others. But can there be a

reconciliation between the communitarian 'connected self' and the liberal 'bounded self'? Why is the politics of difference dissatisfied with the politics of equal dignity? Precisely because it ignores what makes each person or group distinctive, assimilating them to a dominant or majoritarian identity. And, for Taylor, assimilation is contrary to the ideal of authenticity.³³

To be sure, Taylor is careful to hedge his critique of liberalism. He takes pains to situate himself within the liberal tradition, asserting that he is a firm believer in traditional liberal civil liberties. His objection is to the ontological foundations of liberalism — that is, its grounding in atomistic individualism at the expense of the individual's communal situatedness. Thus, Taylor attempts to go beyond traditional liberalism to argue that it must be open to a collective sensibility. In this regard, Taylor seeks not merely the maintenance of the neutral laws of procedural liberalism that protect individual liberties, but also the positive affirmation of the distinctive features of particular culture groups that enhance the individual's sense of community. Can you have both? This is certainly the claim Taylor makes in addressing the 'problem' of Quebec. However, before proceeding on that issue, it is necessary to delve a little further into Taylor's philosophical antecedents.

With his notion of the general will, Rousseau tried to find a way in which the recognition of the individual could be achieved without invoking societal features that tend to differentiate individuals. Taylor rejects this aspect of Rousseau's thought. While he accepts Rousseau's anti-individualism, he cannot

accept Rousseau's disregard for cultural differentiation. This suggests that Taylor wants a version of liberalism that can reconcile conflicting demands: It must embody a moral code that reflects universal values of individual equality and freedom and the juridical capacity to uphold those values, but, at the same time, cannot override collective needs. In effect, Taylor tries to conceptualise a form of liberalism that will resolve Hegel's essential political concern: How to reconcile freedom or autonomy with community or collectivity. Or, to put it another way, Taylor seeks the reconciliation of Rousseau's substantive democracy and Kant's procedural liberalism. Indeed, in his essay "The Politics of Recognition," Taylor casts the Quebec crisis and the 'problem' of Canada as a conflict between two theories of autonomy, namely Rousseau's and Kant's.³⁴ Taylor attempts to reconcile these seemingly conflicting ideals through his appropriation, first, of Herder and then of Hegel. With these two thinkers Taylor articulates his ethic of authenticity. For this reason it is necessary to consider Herder's influence on Taylor's thought.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Herder and the 'Measure' of Expressivism

Taylor credits Johann Gottfried Herder with the first comprehensive articulation of a new way of expressing the modern identity, both for individuals and groups. Herder, he writes, offered the idea that each person has "an original way of being human: each person has his or her own 'measure.'"³⁵ But this individual measure, this autonomous human being, was, in turn, embedded in a cultural framework essential for his development. This does not imply some sort of conformity to the general will, as Rousseau would have it. Instead, Taylor argues, it points to the capacity of individuals to use reason to attain their autonomy even as they realise that they are bound to a culture and its particular horizon of meaning for the development of a rational conception of the world. But how, or by what means, does Taylor reconcile Rousseau's concern for hearing that inner voice, with the presence of so many other external voices? Essentially, Taylor transposes Rousseau's concept of authenticity to Herder's concept of language.³⁶ The discovery of one's authentic self is manifested within language rather than in the isolation of one's conscience. Thus, in Herder's concept of language, Taylor finds the means to reconcile autonomy and heteronomy, self and other, the individual and the community. In doing so, he lays out his notion of authenticity.

The concept of authenticity implies that identity, whether that of an individual or a group, is somehow independent of the views of others. This understanding would certainly fit associating the concept with the historical development of the idea of an inner moral sense — inaugurated by Augustine and culminating in Rousseau's notion of the "voice of nature within us" — that is at odds with other-dependence. By this view, our identities remain authentic so long as they are invulnerable at some deep level to the impositions that result from our being enmeshed in society. But this way of conceiving of authenticity also seems to suggest that our sense of ourselves is always threatened by others, by their misrecognition, as it were. Indeed, Taylor, says "nonrecognition or misrecognition" can be "a form of oppression."³⁷

But how can misrecognition be oppressive if you possess an inner self that is independent of the views of others? Taylor answers this question by asserting that our sense of authenticity is vulnerable to others because it is, in part, shaped by the recognition (or misrecognition) coming to us from others. But how exactly can a person's identity can be "authentic" while, at the same time, shaped by others? One of the paradoxes of modernity is our confusion regarding the nature of the self and its moral obligations, if any. The promise of modernity is the idea of freedom. Yet, freedom seems to require a high degree of personal interdependence. Even in asserting our freedom, we are dependent on others. Alan Wolfe suggests there is "a sense that something is missing" in this paradox.

(People) are confused when it comes to recognising the social obligation that makes their freedom possible in the first place. They

are, in a word, unclear about the moral codes by which they ought to live ... When capitalism and liberal democracy combine, people are given the potential to determine for themselves what their obligations to others ought to be, but are then given few satisfactory guidelines on how to fulfil them.³⁸

Taylor's 'ethic of authenticity' aims to provide a coherent response to this paradox, of working out that missing 'something' in the relationship between individual freedom and moral obligation.

In the essay "The Politics of Recognition," Taylor describes a contemporary form of inauthenticity that sees society's focus on selfhood as promoting inordinate self-absorption or self-centredness. The modern world has skewed the idea of individualism, flattening and narrowing it. Individuals focus on their own narrow selves, ignoring the multiple concerns and interests that constitute a wider life. But in focussing on the self, we lose sight of others and our responsibilities for recognising them and their concerns. For Taylor, then, the modern notion of individualism is a degradation of an authentic sense of self that brings with it a moral sensibility. Nevertheless, Taylor asserts that the modern self is able to find itself, as it were, in the reconciliation of freedom and morality, which he labels "authenticity." He defines authenticity as achieving a "potentiality that is properly my own."³⁹ This definition obviously brings with it the Rousseauian view that you have to be in touch with your inner nature and, thus, true to your own "nature." However, Taylor argues this nature is something you discover only by articulating it. The discovery of the self, the attainment of authenticity, is created. And it is in this process of creation that we come to

realise what Taylor calls the "fundamentally dialogical character" of the self. We recognise our lives as a relational process, and are able to mitigate the isolation and atomism of hyper-individualism, to use Taylor's term. He describes the dialogical nature of the self in this way:

There is no way we could be inducted into personhood except by being brought initiated into a language. We first learn our languages of moral and spiritual discernment by being brought into an ongoing conversation by those who bring us up.⁴⁰

Taylor uses the word 'language' in a broad sense, referring not only to words in speech but also other modes of expression, including the languages of art, symbolic gesture and love. We are inducted into these languages, he says, through our exchanges with others. We cannot acquire the languages necessary for an authentic self on our own. "The genesis of the human mind is in this sense not monological, not something each accomplishes on his or her own, but dialogical."⁴¹ For Taylor, then, recognition is a crucial moral concern in that our identities are formed in dialogue with others, whether in agreement or conflict with their recognition or misrecognition of us. Like Hegel, Taylor thinks we define ourselves not only through similarities and affirmations, but also through differences and negations. Hence, our identities are not some "reality" that precedes the act of recognition; rather, they are the product of repeated interactions with others. Language, thus, is not merely an instrument by which we have knowledge of our lives, but a medium that creates our lives. Through language we actualise our self-consciousness and reflectiveness.

Behind Taylor's promotion of expressivist language is his well-known

critique of the modern tendency to understand human life and behaviour in terms drawn from natural science.⁴² According to Taylor, the natural sciences are characterised by an attitude of disengagement toward its objects of inquiry. The world is investigated and "known" not as it is *for us*, but as it is in and for itself. Naturalism, Taylor argues, holds a certain understanding of human agency, in particular the idea of the individual's "ability to act on one's own, without outside interference or subordination to authority," and it links this capacity to the modern "ideals of efficacy, power, (and) unperturbability."⁴³ Hegel, says Taylor, recognised this epistemology and its interpenetration of the scientific and the moral in the Phenomenology of Spirit, where he speaks of a "fear of error that reveals itself rather as fear of truth." Hegel saw this stance "bound up with a certain aspiration to individuality and separateness, refusing what he sees as the 'truth' of the subject-object identity." In other words, the naturalist view offers a kind of knowledge that promotes the idea of individual freedom as an escape from existence, a lust to control and master the world rather than be a participant in it. According to Taylor, this naturalistic stance of detachment, when applied to human behaviour, promotes such philosophic postures as Cartesian dualism and utilitarianism, along with reductive notions of human psychology such as behaviourism and engineering models of social policy.⁴⁴

The naturalist stance also promotes a certain kind of politics, what Taylor labels as liberal "neutralism" and "proceduralism." Both, he says, are grounded in naturalist notions of disengagement that promote the idea of a disengaged

identity and an attendant notion of freedom that "generates an understanding of the individual as metaphysically independent of society."⁴⁵ Taylor, in referring to this idea of the metaphysically independent individual, employs the same term John Watson used to describe the modern notion of the self-sufficient individual — "atomism." And like Watson, he regards "atomism" as the basis for many features of modern liberalism, including contractarianism, the idea of the state as neutral on conceptions of the good, the insistence on the priority of the right to the good and liberalism's reliance of procedural legal systems.⁴⁶

In opposition to atomistic politics, Taylor, like Watson, wants to establish the holistic idea of individuals as being constituted by a language (in its broadest sense) and culture that can only be maintained in the communities with which the individual feels a sense of identity. One of the ways Taylor attempts this anti-atomistic recasting is through an attack on the naturalist-inspired designative theory of language and meaning, against which he sets the expressive theory of language. For Taylor, these contrasting theories reflect the tension between the Enlightenment's atomistic understanding of the individual and Romanticism's more holistic view of the interrelations of self with society and nature. Designative language, he argues, follows Enlightenment epistemology and modern scientific thought. In the same manner that science aimed to free individuals from religious thought by claiming that knowledge obtained by means of empirical observation was truer knowledge, so, too, did early modern linguistic theories seek to free language from its theological framework and give it over to instrumental reason.⁴⁷

Under the designative theory of language, words obtain their meaning from being used to "designate objects." That is, we obtain the meaning of an object or, more precisely, give it the meaning of a sign or a word by pointing to those things or relations that they can be used to refer to or talk about. While designation is a useful aspect of word function, Taylor argues that it makes the correlation between a word and an object or thing into the most essential aspect of language and, thus, the source and essence of meaningfulness. Yet, such a close correspondence between the word and that which it describes is predicated on an observed external relationship that is ultimately indifferent to the subjective or first-person perspective of language users. And, according to Taylor, this mode of language usage effectively reduces meaningfulness and comprehension to the efficacy of one's production of and response to language signals. In effect, meaningfulness is reduced to issues of behaviour.⁴⁸

Against this designative use of language, Taylor sets the idea of expressive language. He argues that human language is distinct from mere signalling by its sense of "rightness." This sensibility is not to be understood in terms of its task-oriented efficacy, but in terms of its subjective meaningfulness to its user. That is to say, we do not merely match signs and objects, but respond to signs in light of their sense of truthfulness, descriptive rightness, or power to evoke or express moods and emotions. To dwell in the "linguistic dimension," as Taylor puts it, is to experience "irreducible issues of rightness." Language reveals that our acts of thinking, speaking and understanding are manifested in terms of

"subjective understanding." We do not think and then speak, but rather our expressiveness constitutes our thinking and, hence, the understanding that informs our identity.⁴⁹

Taylor uses Christian symbolism as an example of expressive language. For Christians, language was a system of symbols representing the word of God, a grand metaphor by which they expressed their experience of the divine. This language, or symbol system, developed through a dialectical process involving the whole of the Christian community. In effect, language for the Christian community expressed the cosmic order and reflected the individual speaker's perception of that order, and, thus, gave him a sense of the meaning of the cosmos and his place in it. In other words, in pre-modern times "human communication was held to embody what we are essentially, the expression of which is the making manifest of these embodiments."⁵⁰

With the Enlightenment, however, this participatory understanding of language was altered so that language came to be viewed as a symbol of things, detached from any communal sense of connection between the observer and what was being observed. This linguistic separation of self and world was reinforced by the idea that language was an individual creation, a discovery independent of others or the community. In effect, following the established methodology of science in its approach to the natural world, Enlightenment thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke and Condillac tried to break language down into its constituent elements and give it an objective order separate from its

communal experience. As scientists of language, they asserted that since our knowledge of the world is informed by language, then language must be mastered by reason if we are to know the world as it is in itself.⁵¹

According to Taylor, this designative understanding of language serves to buttress the modern view of the individual as a free and independent agent capable of mastering the world. For early modern thinkers, language

is an assemblage of separable words, instruments of thought that lie, as it were, transparently to hand and can be used to marshal ideas ... Ideally we should aspire fully to control and oversee its use, taking care of our definitions, and not losing them from sign in inconsiderate speech, whereby we become "entangled in words, as a bird in lime twigs."⁵²

Taylor, however, argues against regarding language as an instrument of control, insisting that it can never achieve the desired level of security. This is because as language-users we are always embedded in a wider matrix of language that we, as individuals, did not create because it proceeded us and, thus, is ultimately beyond our control. Language, then, "is rather something in the nature of a web," and "to speak is to touch part of the web, and this makes the whole resonate."⁵³ Moreover, because the words we employ are sensible only in and through their place in the web, we can never, even in principle, claim an overarching comprehension of the consequences of what we say at any given moment. Language extends behind and beyond us and, as such, is always being recreated, extended and reshaped. It is an endless activity and not a completed work, and, therefore, ultimately uncontrollable.

For Taylor, this means that language must be seen as "a pattern of activity by which we express/realise a certain way of being in the world."⁵⁴ By this expressive theory of language, there first appears the subject, the agent of perception, who has a thought about or emotional response to an object. The agent's reflective response, and, hence, the meaningfulness of the experience, is manifested in some form of language such as words, painting, music or even bodily action. Thus, language expresses our awareness of and participation in the world. Taylor sums up this expressivist understanding of language this way:

Language is no longer an assemblage of words, but the capacity to speak (express/realise) the reflective awareness implicit in using words to say something. Learning to use any single word presupposes this general capacity as background. But to have the general capacity is to possess a language. So that it seems that we need the whole of language as the background for the introduction of any of its parts, that is, individual words.⁵⁵

According to Taylor, then, language, broadly understood, informs our comprehension of the world, which, in turn, is made manifest by our reflective expression of it.⁵⁶ By this means we are able to influence our social world, but are never completely in control of it as the theorists of designative language would like. That is to say, we can never be as completely independent as these early modern thinkers desired. If this is the case, then it follows that there must be a greater significance given to how our identities are informed by the language community in which we, as individuals, exist. "The language I speak, the web which I can never fully dominate and oversee, can never be just *my* language, it is always largely *our* language."⁵⁷

This communal notion of language brings me to the wider social and political implications Taylor sees in Herder's language theory. If language is essential to thought, as Taylor argues in his explication of Herder, and if the activity of thinking can only be expressed in and through some form of language, then it follows that different languages express "the uniquely characteristic way in which a people realises the human essence" and expresses its understanding of its humanity.⁵⁸ This view, in turn, suggests that the development of an authentic identity is linked to our identification with and articulation of the culture in which we find ourselves embedded. Such a dialogical notion of the community as an individual's horizon of meaning stands in contrast to the atomistic idea of the self as achieving its freedom through its capacity to transcend the community. As Taylor says: "We become full human agent, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining an identity through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression."⁵⁹

He insists, however, that this does not mean individuals are subordinate to the community; rather, the community and its horizon of meaning provide the means for achieving a more genuine freedom than that offered by atomistic theories. Where the Enlightenment view of freedom is that of the individual as a self-defining subject able to act and think independently of external control, expressivist theory offers a "new freedom" that consists of "authentic self-expression."⁶⁰ That is to say, a freedom which overcomes external pressures, as well as those internal pressures on the self that, while originating in externalities,

colonise and distort the self and hamper its capacity for authentic selfhood.

Taylor argues, following Herder, that it is the community's ethical which provides individuals with a context in which they are able to attain the self-awareness by which they can achieve genuine freedom. We define ourselves against the background of our culture, history, society and the natural world. To bracket out these horizons is to eliminate all context of meaning and, therefore, all possibility of genuine freedom. Only to the degree that we live in a world in which history, the necessities of nature, our relations with others and the obligations of community matter, are we able to achieve an identity that is more than the mere satisfaction of random appetite and incoherent desire. For Taylor, then, authenticity is not an escape from external demands; rather, it presupposes such demands.

In this way, Taylor believes Herder's expressivist theory of language grounds human reason and human freedom in a larger order, thereby opening the door to communitarian politics. Such a notion of politics obviously stands in contrast to the Enlightenment's atomistic ideas of the "unencumbered self" and the "disengaged subject." In Taylor's expressivist community individuals employ their capacity for reason to attain an authentic freedom even as they become aware that they are tied to a particular culture's horizon of meaning by which they develop their understanding of the world. In sum, Herder's concept of language provides Taylor with the means to reconcile autonomy and heteronomy, the individual and the community.

Nonetheless, a question I previously asked still needs to be considered. Does Taylor's expressivist notion of authenticity leave individual identity and freedom vulnerable to the impositions of the community? This question needs to be addressed if only because, as some scholars suggest, Taylor's expressivist reconciliation of the individual and the community resides at the core of his communitarian politics.⁶¹ The expressivist argument, as I have argued, makes language the basis for community, with Taylor arguing that our sense of self is rooted in both a particular language and the unique community in which that language is articulated. From this position, Taylor argues that modern nation-states are the overarching community in the modern era and, as such, their constitutional orders, if they are to be authentic, have "to be expressive of distinct identities without jeopardising some fundamental rights."⁶² Language, whether in the form of art, song, architecture or history, is the basis of this nationhood because it articulates the unique character of a specific group of people. For Taylor, a nation is not a contractual agglomeration of atomised individuals or even an artificial invention of powerful elites; rather, it expresses "something constitutive of the people's autonomous humanity, something essential to being human."⁶³

Taylor, of course, derives his notion of the nation from Herder. The German philosopher believed that each people had its own peculiar guiding theme or manner of expression, unique and irreplaceable, which should never be suppressed, and which could never simply be replaced by any attempt to ape the

manners of others.⁶⁴ He acknowledges that this identity of culture and nation, when combined with chauvinistic appeals to national characteristics or will and claims to power, can reveal the darker side of nationalism.⁶⁵ But he maintains that Herderian nationalism reflects the belief that only by identifying with their 'language' are individuals able to achieve the authenticity in which their freedom and their need to belong are reconciled.

By seeing language as an activity expressive of a certain consciousness, Herder situates it in the life-form of the subject, and hence develops the notion of different languages as expressive each of a vision peculiar to the community which speaks it.⁶⁶

In other words, a communal language allows the individual to authenticate himself, while, at the same time, allowing him to negotiate the expression of that authenticity into a form acceptable to the community. Thus, under the Herderian concept of *volk*, language, understood in its widest sense, is the basis of authentic individuality *and* community, freedom *and* belonging.

For Taylor, the overarching community is the nation, and language must be the foundation of nationhood because it provides the means by which people are able to achieve an identity that carries them beyond being merely an agglomeration of atomistic individuals or an invented contractual arrangement between competing interests. Language reflects and embodies a particular understanding of and way of being in the world. It is worth quoting Taylor at length on this point:

Language is the obvious basis for a theory of nationalism founded on the expressivist notion of the special character of each people, language conceived in Herderian fashion, that is, in terms of an

"expressive" theory. It is a concept which roots the plurality of states in the nature of things, but not in a natural order conceived in the old hierarchical mode. It claims to find the principle of a people's identity — what makes it more than an aggregation — as something already given, not arbitrarily determined, but rooted in its being and past; while at the same time this principle is no external allegiance but something constitutive of the people's autonomous humanity, something essential to being human. Language is obviously a prime candidate for this constitutive, essence-defining role, especially in a Herderian perspective.⁶⁷

Taylor makes this point repeatedly in his political writings, particularly in regard to his defence of Quebec nationalism. Indeed, he refers to Quebec as a language-nation. I shall discuss the implications of this idea momentarily, but before I do I need to look at some of the ramifications of Taylor's Herderian-inspired communitarian politics and his language-grounded appropriation of Hegel's concept of recognition.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Freedom, Community, State: Hegel contra Taylor

Taylor places Hegel in the civic humanist tradition.⁶⁸ That is to say, while Hegel acknowledged the modern liberal assumption of the operation of an invisible-hand mechanism at a certain level of society, he did not see this as adequate for reconciling individual freedom and the good of the community. For Taylor, a humanist society is one founded on a common understanding among its individual members about the good life and their shared communal enterprise that creates a particular bond around a society, its traditions and its history. Such a society, Taylor argues, runs up against the kind of liberal society that makes the rights of the individual pre-eminent over the good. Hegel's political theory, with its concepts of *Sittlichkeit* and *Moralität*,⁶⁹ attempts to hold the good and the right together, thereby grounding what is otherwise hopelessly abstract.

With Hegel, then, says Taylor, we have the intersection of two kinds of distinctions: one between those goods that are sought solely by individuals as against those collectively desired by the community, and the other between a morality of universal principles and a morality tied to the duties and obligations required by the community. With these two distinctions, Hegel defines how a free society defined in civic humanist terms differs from a liberal society based on the priority of right. In this way, Hegel formulates "the mainline humanist argument

that a free society cannot remain a free society without these elements of bonding."⁷⁰

Taylor locates Hegel's fundamental understanding of the relationship between individual freedom and communal bondedness in his master-slave dialectic, in which, according to Taylor, Hegel works out the connections between self-consciousness and recognition. From this dialectic, Taylor extracts the lesson that to 'count' as an individual is intrinsic to having a sense of worth as individual, and that this worthiness is intimately linked to and dependent upon others. In Taylor's words, "persons exist only in a certain space of evaluation," and this space "is intrinsically and inseparably a public space."⁷¹ What links the space of evaluation for which individuals exist and the public space in which this evaluation takes place is language. There can be no evaluation of an individual and no place for that evaluation to occur without a language to articulate or express that evaluation. However, language pre-supposes a community that precedes the individual in the sense that it already exists before the existence of the individual; that is, there is a "we" before there is an "I." We only become individuals by "entering the space of value" that is a community, which is elaborated through language. Our sense of worth as individuals is lessened if this "space of value is so laid out as to negate or denigrate me."⁷²

It is this dynamic of recognition on which Hegel's master-slave dialectic is centred, according to Taylor. Yet, he also finds the Hegelian dynamic problematic. As he explains, to be an individual, I seek recognition and am ready

to fight for it. But the fighting over recognition is in itself "a contradictory action" because both the admission that I need recognition and the language that sustains the community in which this recognition can take place must be "constituted by conversation" between myself and others. Hence, Taylor suggests, the struggle to attain recognition that drives the master-slave dialectic is "fated to self-frustration" because it can not be attained until there is an identity of self and other, or, as he puts it, "the I is a we and the we is an I."⁷³ Thus, Taylor argues that Hegel grounds his civic humanism, and its insistence on the mutual recognition of self and other, in a philosophical anthropology that attaches individuality to the nature of language itself. And this leads Taylor to ask: Does this not mean that language is the necessary, if insufficient, condition for recognition and, hence, for the possibility of a reconciliation of the individual and the community? In other words, is there not a "conversation" — a community of shared language or some sort — that precedes the struggle for recognition? Or, to put it differently, is there not some kind of condition of *pre-recognition* that precedes the dialectic of recognition? Do we not already have a community of sorts before we engage in those dialectic acts that constitute or negate individual identity?

As I noted in Part One, Taylor regards Hegel's civic humanist model as flawed because it does not go back far enough to this "pre-recognition" condition of the dialectic of recognition. Hegel's concept of recognition rests on a philosophical anthropology that is rooted in the idea of subject-object identity. As

a result, Hegel's social philosophy offers a "very difficult legacy." The Hegelian model for reconciling the individual and the community, for attaining an identity of self and other, "is a model for a kind of unity of society which, in the end, gives no place to the *agon*, to competition, to unresolvable differences." Hegel, he says,

had this completely unrealistic view about how representative institutions could work simply in a one-way direction to bring people in and create a consensus, rather than to be the arena in which deep dissensions can be worked out in a way that nevertheless helps to bond to a common allegiance.⁷⁴

To be sure, Hegel offers a penetrating analysis of the nature of a free society and how such a society cannot be entirely structured around the classical liberal notions of invisible-hand mechanisms. Hegel pictures a society that defines individual freedom in terms of a citizen's capacity to identify with and participate in his society — "a vision of embodied subjectivity,"⁷⁵ as Taylor writes in Hegel. Yet, says Taylor, Hegel suffers a "great inadequacy" in that his social theory is informed by "a conception of subject/object identity." Taylor echoes Aristotle's criticism of Plato: Hegel wants too much unity. On this score, "the whole Hegelian model is flawed."⁷⁶ Is this the case? Has Taylor, with his Herderian reading of Hegel, read the master-slave dialectic adequately? In his essay "The Politics of Recognition," Taylor observes that in pre-modern Europe the issue of identity and individual authenticity was not an issue.

In pre-modern times people did not speak of 'identity' and 'recognition' — not because people didn't have (what we call) identities, or because these didn't depend on recognition, but rather because these were then too unproblematic to be thematized as such.⁷⁷

Only in the modern age, in which traditional hierarchies of social order have been undermined, has the inwardly generated ideal of authenticity arisen and, thus, become problematic. With modernity has come the potential of conflict between the individual's sense of selfhood and various forms of socially imposed roles and categories of conduct. As Taylor explains, "what has come about with the modern age is not the need for recognition but the condition in which the attempt to be recognised can fail."⁷⁸ With the arrival of the modern age, the question of individual identity and the recognition involved in that identity becomes of matter of the quality and degree of interaction between the individual's 'inner voice,' as it were, and the external impositions of a collective or community identity.

Taylor's account of this tension between self and other is at the core of his politics of recognition. Like Hegel, he seeks a reconciliation of the dislocations and diremptions generated by modernity's destruction of the pre-modern hierarchical social order. He acknowledges there can be no return to these older orders. Echoing Hegel's concept of sublation, he recognises that there can only be an incorporation of the modern sensibility into a more complex, reflexive totality. But how is this reconciliation of self and other to be achieved? Essentially, Taylor invokes the Hegelian concept of *Sittlichkeit*, or ethical life, as the means by which the individual's desire for authentic identity and freedom and the concomitant longing for community can be brought together by means of various intermediary institutions. As one scholar states, "Taylor tries to restore

Herder's idea of *Volk* not as a primordial essence but as an ongoing exploration of a horizon of meanings embedded in language and culture."⁷⁹

The political implications of Taylor's expressivist vision are readily apparent. By his view, the institutions of modern liberal society need to be reworked to reflect not so much the liberal principles of abstract freedom and rights but the desire of individuals to belong to a specific community. But this, I would argue, gives primacy to community over individual freedom. Or, more accurately perhaps, Taylor sees freedom as an element or product of communal identity. But is there not a danger of the desire for community undermining the principle of freedom? There are many examples of nationalist sentiment being used to justify individual repression and promote social conformity. Nationalism is also prone to the abuse of power politics in which one group justifies its oppression of another in the name of national interest. Taylor is certainly aware of these dangers, but does his assertion of the priority of community not open the door to totalitarian impulses? Taylor may argue that communal identities are always dialogically contested and negotiated in politics and historical development. But what happens to the principles of individual freedom in a society that, for whatever reason, deems some aspects of its communal identity too important for negotiation? Indeed, what if a particular people prefer a political order that is hierarchical and authoritarian over one emphasising the principles of universal equality?

Obviously, there is a connection between Hegel's understanding that

freedom is not only as a matter of procedural or abstract rights, but also involves a moral dimension embodied in family, civil society and the state, and Taylor's expressivist view that individuals are intrinsically embedded in a particular community and culture and attain their freedom in their identification with that culture. However, I would argue that Taylor's expressivist reconciliation of the individual and the community differs from the German philosopher's. In brief, Hegel grounds the 'spirit of a people' in their attunement to 'absolute freedom;' Taylor considers the 'spirit of a nation' as it reflects a people's sense of identity, their authentic way of being. Where Hegel avoids the question of recognising particular nations and cultures in terms of their self-conscious awareness of freedom, Taylor asserts that a people's attainment of modern ethical life — that is, their freedom — is related to their ability to maintain an authentic identity.

This difference between Taylor and Hegel can be more fully understood by recalling my discussion in Part One regarding Hegel's definition of freedom. To repeat myself: Hegel defines freedom in terms of self-direction, and the two main ingredients of freedom are achieving one's ends and acting on the basis of self-volition. This "positive" definition of freedom contrasts, I suggest, with Taylor's expressivist identity of freedom and 'authenticity' rooted in communal attachment. As such, the question I asked earlier regarding Taylor's desire to salvage the community from the ostensible excesses of atomistic liberalism becomes most salient.

Hegel's idea of freedom is, of course, influenced by the Kantian idea of

autonomy. But it also derived from the Fichte's notion of absolute self-sufficiency. On this point, as I have noted, Taylor argues that the Fichtean influence leaves Hegel's social philosophy flawed because it rests on Fichte's assumption of subject/object identity,⁸⁰ resulting in a 'reconciliation' of the individual and the community that requires excessive unity. Taylor, I argue, misconstrues this influence and ignores the fact that Hegel himself was critical of Kant's and Fichte's notions of freedom. This is evident in Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit*, or ethical life, in which the "ought" has been sublated in conformity to Hegel's concept of *Aufheben* and, therefore, freedom and duty are identified. While he bases his concept of freedom on Kant's notion of autonomy and Fichte's conception of self-sufficiency, he argues against their flawed view of the relationship between the self and the other. To be sure, as I have noted, *Sittlichkeit* has been interpreted to posit the reduction of the other to the same. It is this critique of Hegel that accounts for Taylor's ambivalence about Hegel's legacy for liberalism. He worries that Hegel's identification of Spirit and ethical life serves as "a very bad model for a political society"⁸¹ because it makes no allowances for differences that cannot be resolved.

However, as I argued in Part One, Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit* is more nuanced than Taylor allows. For Hegel, freedom *is* ethical life, or, as he states in Philosophy of Right, freedom consists in "being with oneself *in* an other."⁸² Distinguishing yourself from an other does not limit you, but rather expresses your self. In other words, the other does not restrict your freedom but makes that

freedom possible. Self-consciousness — and, therefore, freedom — is attained through those opportunities for recognition provided by the various forms of *Sittlichkeit*: the family, civil society and, finally, the rational state, in which self-consciousness and freedom attain the height of political actualisation. Hence, Hegel posits community *within* freedom. *Sittlichkeit* shows that freedom is not a matter of abstract rights or an absence of restraint; it is about "belonging" to the community by means of those mediations and institutions you choose for yourself because they reflect your deepest (or best) will.

By contrast, Taylor's interpretation of ethical life reflects his greater concern with maintaining cultural identity and the individual's sense of communal belongingness. This is readily apparent in Taylor's reading of Hegel's master-slave dialectic. He argues that Hegel's interpretation of this relationship as rooted in some hierarchical notion of honour is "crucially flawed" because it does not answer the question of why people seek recognition at all. The self-consciousness that fails to win honour remains unrecognised, but even the self-consciousness that does win is, in a sense, frustrated because he attains recognition from an inferior. Such recognition is simply not satisfying since it comes from an unequal and unfree being. "The struggle for recognition can find only one satisfactory solution, and that is a regime of reciprocal recognition among equals."⁸³

Such a reading of the master-slave dialectic implies that the moment of recognition must be a balanced exchange in which both self-consciousnesses

recognise and respect each other's dignity and worth. From this perspective, Hegel's set piece suggests a breakdown in the dialectical relationship, a psychological slippage in which one self-consciousness fails to give the other its due; as Taylor puts it, the "slave is forced to recognise the master, but not vice versa."⁸⁴ Hegel's master-slave dialectic, as the motor of man's historical development, amounts to the claim that our inability to get along, the source of all woes, is that we fail to properly acknowledge or respect each other's dignity and freedom. And that, in turn, implies that if we are all to be satisfied or fully authenticated we need each other. In short, freedom is *dependent* on community, and our failure to be free is the consequence of having inadequate means for recognition that can create community.

Thus, Taylor may accept Hegel's understanding of freedom as self-consciousness, but he maintains that the actualisation of freedom necessitates a community in which individuals see themselves and their deepest desires objectified in the community's institutional order. Hegel's political philosophy, he contends

can be seen as an attempt to realise a synthesis that the Romantic generation was grasping towards: to combine the rational, self-legislating freedom of the Kantian subject with the expressive unity within man and with nature for which the age longed.⁸⁵

For Taylor, Hegel sought to reconcile the abstractions of Kantian freedom with the Herderian and Rousseauian romantic view of community. He argues, however, that as a consequence of its emphasis on the individual, contemporary society has failed to achieve the Hegelian reconciliation. In effect, the struggle for

recognition continues because the myriad self-consciousness that make up society continue "to wrest recognition from one another without reciprocating."⁸⁶

By Taylor's account, then, the struggle for recognition is characteristically social and political, as distinct from Hegel's more ontologically-oriented account.⁸⁷ To be sure, Hegel's political philosophy, particularly in regard to ethical life, provides a response to the conflicts inherent in the struggle for recognition. Hegel conceives of social and political institutions by which the individual and the community can be reconciled, institutions through which, ideally, each individual gives and receives recognition. It is this dimension of Hegel's thought that Taylor utilises to promote his communitarian discourse of recognition. In ideal terms, the communitarian discourse assumes that the giving and receiving of recognition issues from particular groups or people within a particular state, and that the state provides the means by which competing claims for recognition can be satisfied in ways that would not be possible without it. However, as David Duquette observes, the institution of the state has a more "metaphysical" function for Hegel as the means of reconciliation and for bringing the individual (or individual group) into proper relationship with the rest of the community. "It is the ethical life of the modern state which purportedly provides a solution to human conflict arising from the struggle for recognition."⁸⁸ The state and its institutions, in serving as a kind of mediating conduit for exchanges between self-consciousnesses, become the highest expression of Objective Spirit and the final reconciliation between self and other. As Duquette states:

"What distinguishes the mediation of self and otherness provided in the state is the ultimate harmonization of social life in which the struggle for recognition is finally overcome."⁸⁹

Taylor, to recall, worries that the Hegelian resolution to the struggle for recognition provides a "very bad model" for political society in that it demands too much unity. But I would argue that Hegel is careful to delineate the interdependence of freedom and belongingness. I am not sure Taylor is equally careful. Where Hegel emphasises freedom, Taylor focuses on authentic identity and its communal grounding. That is to say, Taylor sees the actualisation of the individual through the expressive community. Does this not imply giving priority to the community over the individual? Or, put differently, does Taylor not claim an independent character for the community? If so, it might be argued that in employing his theory of the expressive self to defend the community against excessive individualism, Taylor opens the door to elements that have the potential for totalitarian expression. To make the community independent of the individuals who compose it can be regarded as establishing a hierarchical — as distinct from dialectical — relationship between citizens and their community.

Thus, the question has to be asked: In seeking to safeguard the community from the apparent corrosion of atomistic individualism with his conception of the expressive self, does Taylor upset Hegel's carefully balanced *Sittlichkeit*? This question frames my consideration of Taylor's response to the endless 'crisis' of Canada; that is, the question of Quebec.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

The Conflicts of Liberalism

In The Politics of Recognition, Taylor argues that the mistreatment of others is often a matter of a failure in recognition or even misrecognition. On the basis of his notion of the expressive self (as contrasted with liberalism's atomistic self), Taylor suggests that failing to properly recognise individuals or minority groups as possessing a distinct and valuable identity is damaging to that person or group because negative perceptions from others affect our sense of self-worth. Taylor's main focus, as I pointed out earlier in this section, is with the demand for recognition in the public arena. He maintains this demand is at the root of movements to protect and even elevate minority groups and cultures in majoritarian societies. However, he argues that the politics of equal recognition mean two different, if interconnected, things that reflect two fundamental shifts in modern politics: what he calls the politics of equal dignity and the politics of difference. In modern democratic societies, we want equal recognition and equal dignity, both of which are associated with the desire to attain an individual identity and the ideal of authenticity.

Taylor connects the first movement, the politics of equal dignity, to the waning of pre-modern social hierarchies with their concepts of honour even though psychological desire for honour that such hierarchies once satisfied has

not disappeared. This movement, which is also referred to as the politics of universalism, emphasises the equal dignity of all citizens and can be seen in the promotion of equal rights and entitlements. The second shift, the politics of difference, comes out of the politics of dignity. In this movement, which is also universalist in its claims, we are expected to recognise the supposedly unique identities of every individual or group that sets them apart from every other individual or group. "The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity."⁹⁰ And that, it seems, is the cardinal sin against the ideal of authenticity.

Avoiding this sin can be a little tricky. The argument is as follows: Although everyone has an equal right to their cultural identity, minorities within a culture are often under pressure to conform to the majoritarian culture and conduct themselves accordingly. However, if the means can be found to recognise these minority identities, that assimilationist pressure can be eased and members of these minorities will be able to attain the equality of the majority. In effect, as Taylor argues, acknowledgement is given to what is universally accepted — that everyone has an identity of equal value — by recognising what is distinctive about everyone. Thus, as Taylor remarks, the politics of difference emerge out of the politics of universal dignity as the consequence of "a new understanding of the human social condition (that) imparts a radically new meaning to an old principle."⁹¹

In making this point, Taylor underscores the challenge the concept of

recognition poses for the traditional understanding of liberal society. As he remarks, charges have been levelled against procedural liberalism and its purported "difference-blindness," that is, its claim to provide a neutral ground that allows people of all cultures to coexist. He points out that Western liberalism is not the secular, post-religious culture that liberal elites like to claim, but rather a product of Christianity. The division of church and state, for example, reflect a view separating the sacred and the profane that dates to early Christianity. The fact is, liberalism is not a meeting ground for all cultures because it is itself "the political expression of one range of cultures, and quite incompatible with other ranges."⁹²

Taylor employs these references to the cultural specificity of liberalism to promote a different kind of liberalism, one that, in his view, would both acknowledge collective or community aspirations while, at the same time, safeguard the fundamental rights of those who do not share those aspirations. Taylor seeks to articulate a form of liberalism that he thinks would make it possible for Quebec to achieve its nationalistic goals and continue to coexist with the rest of Canada. Which is to say, he wants to articulate a relationship between a particular culture and the state within which that culture exists, and how the competing requirements of different cultures can be recognised and authenticated within a single state.⁹³

The case of recognition with which Taylor is most concerned is that of Quebec. From his Hegelian-Herderian perspective, the problem of Quebec

nationalism — the "crisis of Canada" — reflects an ongoing struggle between Enlightenment rationality, and the atomistic individualism it ostensibly promotes, and the longed-for expressive unity of the Romantics that finds its contemporary expression in communitarianism.⁹⁴ The case of Quebec is a manifestation of the Hegelian struggle for recognition. At the concrete level, Taylor holds that in cases like that of francophone Quebec, where a minority culture is supposedly threatened by absorption into a larger culture, there is a need for special rights and privileges that acknowledge the culture's distinct history and group identity. Substantive equality requires that you break with uniformity, even if doing so seems contrary to the basic assumptions of procedural liberalism.

In arguing Quebec's case, Taylor puts forward the idea of "deep diversity," in which various cultures and societies could be accommodated and fully accepted within a single Canadian state in such a way as to satisfy a "plurality of ways of belonging."⁹⁵ Canada, along with much of the rest of the world, needs models other than that of the identity-neutral liberal state if other less constraining modes of political existence are to be possible. The point of deep diversity is to recognise the worth of different cultures regardless of their history and traditions and to avoid imposing a single overarching cultural system on them. Taylor distinguishes deep diversity from what he calls "first-level diversity," in which culture differences are accepted or merely tolerated within a single political state but are not treated differently from any other group or given special recognition accorded that of any other group.

For Taylor, though, this type of cultural equality results in the unequal treatment of different cultures. Such, he says, is the case for both Quebecers and aboriginals within Canada, which is dominated by an English-speaking majority that generally ascribes to the traditional liberal political model of a value-neutral, procedurally-oriented state. For Quebecers, though, their "way of being Canadian" is to belong to *la nation québécoise*; likewise, for aboriginals and their sense of communal identity. Neither way of 'being Canadian' can be accommodated by first-level diversity. Only by allowing for second-level or deep diversity in which "a plurality of ways of belonging" is acknowledged can these and other ways of being Canadian be accomplished.⁹⁶

Taylor is vague on exactly how this deep diversity is to be accomplished, except to say it means an individual's sense of belonging to Canada would "pass through" some other community before attaching itself to the Canadian nation-state. He insists that while this means accepting "more than one formula for citizenship," it does not mean the fragmentation of the country. He also rejects the idea that adopting different ways of being a citizen is a threat to Canadian unity or would undermine the principles of equal rights for all citizens. Indeed, he maintains that only to the degree that other cultures are fully recognised and able to develop substantive societal structures and identities will Canada remain politically united. As he puts it, "The root cause of our impending fracture can be put in one word: recognition."⁹⁷

Taylor's response to this would-be break, his formula for recognition and

reconciliation, is to argue for an interpretation of liberalism that he believes is supportive of cultural rights. He is, of course, not the first to promote group rights in seeming contradiction to familiar liberal postulates about individual autonomy and the neutrality of the state in regard to communal goods,⁹⁸ but he makes group survival a key rationale for these rights. As I have previously noted, his objection to liberalism is focused on its ontological foundations in atomistic individualism, not necessarily its concrete prescriptions regarding, say, freedom of speech or *habeas corpus*. In effect, Taylor objects to the traditional liberal notion of a self that can be abstracted from a pre-existing societal condition. Taylor's self is a holistic one; that is, a self that is defined by his attachment to communal 'goods' and rejects, or at least resists, the classical liberal idea of the individual as an anonymous or socially-detached choosing agent.

I have already addressed Taylor's thinking on this matter in my earlier discussion of his distinction between "dialogical" and "monological" relationships and, presumably, need not elaborate any further. However, it is necessary to reiterate why Taylor rejects the rational choice concept of individuals as autonomous preference-maximizers. He prefers instead the notion of individuals as "strong evaluators," who make decisions affecting their lives within a 'language' that has pre-shaped their moral understandings and, hence, their choices. From this position, Taylor argues that the abstract rules of procedural liberalism, with their claim to formally treating everyone the same, are insufficient in expressing the 'language' of a particular cultural entity that would satisfy the

individual's need to attach himself to a community in order to fully express himself. The integrity of our unchosen cultural and social attachments may require exemptions from a strict adherence to abstract laws and formal political orders. In the modern world, individuals need some way to affirm their sense of self. And, according to Taylor, this can only be achieved through a group identity that is not reducible to individualistic, monological liberalism.

Behind this communal longing and the recognition it brings is a shift in the modern world away from the pre-modern concept of honour. In pre-modern hierarchical societies, an individual could be distinguished from others, and rewarded accordingly with greater social status than that given to others, when his conduct met some pre-existing and usually unquestioned standard of excellence. The implications are obvious: Only a few could be so honoured; if everyone was honoured the same way there would be no honour for anyone. Not everyone could be honoured if the concept was to have any meaningfulness. In other words, most people had to go unrecognised to a greater or lesser extent. This means that honour is "intrinsically linked to inequalities. For some to have honour in this sense, it is essential that not everyone have it."⁹⁹ In the modern non-hierarchical world, this is no longer acceptable. Since the Enlightenment, the accepted notion of human nature presumes the inherent (and thus abstract) equality of individuals. It is this notion that has undermined not only the old social hierarchies, but also the concept of honour itself. In theory, every individual should be equally recognised in his innate dignity as a human person.

However, just because the concept of honour has faded, does not mean the individual desire for recognition has waned. Indeed, the concept of honour has its modern surrogate in the Romantic gloss on the Enlightenment concept of human equality in which not only the equality of individuals is acknowledged, but also the uniqueness of each individual. Taylor states:

There is a certain way of being human that is my way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's life. But this notion gives a new importance to being true to myself. If I am not, I miss the point of my life; I miss what being human is for *me*.¹⁰⁰

According to Taylor, it is the intermingling of these two ideas about human nature — one emphasising the abstract equality of everyone, and the other the uniqueness of the individual — that account for the deep longing that moderns bring both to their personal relationships, but also to their public relationships. As Taylor puts it,

On the intimate level, we can see how much an original identity needs and is vulnerable to the recognition given or withheld by significant others. It is not surprising that in the culture of authenticity, relationships are seen as the key *loci* of self-discovery and self-affirmation. Love relationships are not just important because of the general emphasis in modern culture on the fulfilment of ordinary needs. They are also crucial because they are the crucibles of inwardly generated identity.¹⁰¹

However, this need to assert one's uniqueness, to maintain some modern version of honour, also plays out of the social plane. It is on this plane that Taylor considers the distinctions and tensions between "the politics of dignity" and the "politics of difference." On the surface, the two types of politics seem to point in opposite directions. The first posits a universalist understanding of equality that

denies differences between people and makes everyone 'equal before the law.' As persons, all are equal in dignity and, thus, entitled to being treated the same as everyone else regardless of differences of sex, race, religion and nationality. This egalitarianism does not preclude retaining particular cultural characteristics that emerged organically from societal interaction. But it does exclude the kind of constitutional rearrangements and alterations to legal systems that would privilege one group or culture over another.¹⁰² According to Taylor, though, this universalist application of the principle of equality can threaten the survival of particular cultures. In this regard, he argues for an alternative doctrine, the politics of difference, that identifies people by those cultural characteristics that differentiate groups and would require the suspension of universalist principles if they would result in one group dominating others or, at the very least, distorting their cultural integrity. As Taylor writes,

With the politics of equal dignity, what is established is meant to be universally the same, an identical basket of rights and immunities; with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognise is the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everything else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity. And this assimilation is the cardinal sin against the ideal of authenticity.¹⁰³

Are there not some difficulties with this? What Taylor ideally seeks is inherently irresolvable or, at the very least, fraught with tension. He is asking political society to provide two mutually contradictory supports to every individual: one support is grounded in what is perceived to be a fundamental, if abstract, humanity that the individual shares with all other persons, which makes him

equal to everyone else. The other support is rooted in the individual's or the group's supposedly unique particularity that sets him or them apart from all other individuals and groups. On the one hand, the politics of equal dignity requires that everyone to be treated in a difference-blind manner. On the other hand, the politics of difference require that everyone's uniqueness be recognised and even fostered. To be sure, both those who promote equal dignity and those to push the recognition of difference are concerned with equality. But those who promote the equal-dignity claim that the difference-promoters violate the principle of non-discrimination, while the difference-promoters argue that the equal-dignity crowd push people into some homogeneous mould that denies their capacity for individual authenticity.

This tension is evident in debates over multiculturalism. The advocates of multiculturalism argue western societies promoted the ideal of difference-blind liberalism only because until recently their populations were largely homogeneous with regard to many of their substantive practices and policies — everything from who gets their portrait on the national currency to the language of instruction in schools, for example — about which their governments needed to decide. However, the emergence of more heterogeneous societies in the West as a result of globalisation and mass migration policies exposes the extent to which policy-making cannot be entirely procedural or neutral, but reflects substantive culturally-influenced ends.¹⁰⁴

Taylor acknowledges this claim against the idea of difference-blind

liberalism. Supposedly, in a multicultural society differences between people and cultures are accepted and need not be suppressed. In reality, however, the ostensible ideals of multiculturalism conflict with other principles of liberal society, particularly those of majoritarian rule and popular sovereignty. Majoritarian groups, like minoritarian groups, tend to regard the "other" according to their own standards and values, and to find them wanting if they do not meet those values. Taylor sums up the multicultural perspective in his comments on neutralist liberalism:

The claim is that the supposedly neutral set of difference-based principles of the politics of equal dignity is in fact a reflection of one hegemonic culture. As it turns out, then, only minority or suppressed cultures are being forced to take alien form. Consequently, the supposedly fair and difference-blind society is not only inhuman (because suppressing identities) but also, in a subtle and unconscious way, itself highly discriminatory.¹⁰⁵

Taylor discusses this issue in The Politics of Recognition where he considers Rousseau's "new discourse about honour and dignity." His consideration, I suggest, reveals the dilemma of his own position. Rousseau, as Taylor observes, tried to solve the puzzle of how individuals could be recognised without the need to invoke differences of culture. In doing so, Rousseau put forward an ideal of civic republicanism in which citizens, caring a great deal about what others thought of them, would accept living highly public or community-oriented lives.¹⁰⁶ Rousseau was particularly concerned about the kind of vanity, or *amour propre*, that is produced by economic competition. Rousseau saw the economic competition that is rooted in pride engendering a

form of subservience or dependence on others that could only be surmounted by an unqualified attachment to the community, of which everyone is an equal member. Vanity, of course, is a reflection of our desire for recognition. But it is also a feature of human psychology that creates the kind of differentiation to which Rousseau's General Will is an effort to overcome. That is to say, Rousseau's General Will is the means to avoid having everyone's desire for recognition produce alienation and conflict in society because everyone would recognise themselves as mutually interdependent. Individuals would enjoy a mutual reciprocity of recognition that would remove any element of hierarchical or superior (including economic) judgement from others.

Taylor questions what he sees as the three inseparable elements of Rousseau's political philosophy: "freedom (non-domination), the absence of differentiated roles and a very tight common purpose"¹⁰⁷ — all of which he recognises as having totalitarian potential. The General Will, while satisfying the communitarian concern for belonging, eliminates the kinds of cultural and psychological differences that give their sense of identity. Thus, while Taylor accepts Rousseau's anti-individualism (particularly in its economic consequences), as well as his egalitarian and democratic impulses, Rousseau's lack of concern for cultural difference is not acceptable. Taylor's critique of Rousseau echoes that of Hegel's. For Hegel, Rousseau neglected of the objective side of right in that is still grounded in a contractarian mode that leaves it subject to arbitrary will. The General Will does not comprehend the immanent

reason of a society's laws and constitutional arrangements and, as a consequence, is prone to totalitarian impulses, to a subjective will that tends to assert itself in an unthinking manner and produce the Terror of the French Revolution.¹⁰⁸

Does Taylor's appeal for civic humanism echo Rousseau's appeal to the General Will? If so, can Hegel's concerns regarding Rousseau also be raised in regards to Taylor's appeal to community? I shall return to this question in my concluding remarks, but, in the meantime, the point I wish to make is that Taylor seeks a form of liberalism that satisfies competing and often conflicting demands. The politics of equal dignity that is vouchsafed in a system of liberal rights is, he says, inhospitable to the politics of difference because it requires the uniform application of the rules defining those rights and is sceptical of collective goals. While he does not accuse liberalism of denying or even trying abolish cultural differences, he argues that "it can't accommodate what the members of distinct societies really aspire to, which is survival."¹⁰⁹

This aspiration, if it is to be satisfied, requires variations in the standard liberal rules of politics. Taylor wants moral standards that reflect universal rights regarding human dignity, including rights to life, freedom of expression and association, and the judicial protection of those rights. At the same time, he insists these universal rights cannot undermine collective identities. Hence, Taylor seeks alternative forms of liberalism that "call for the invariant defence of *certain* rights;" that is, forms of liberalism that distinguish these fundamental

rights from others that are able to take into account the importance of cultural survival and, when necessary, favour them. Given the way more and more societies are becoming multicultural, in the sense of including more than one cultural community that seeks its own survival, then, Taylor argues, "the rigidities of procedural liberalism may rapidly become impractical in tomorrow's world."¹¹⁰ Clearly, then, Taylor, unlike difference-blind liberals, wants a kind of liberalism that makes central the need for recognition, the need to be accepted on one's own terms.

This brings me back, finally, to the case of recognition with which Taylor is most concerned. Taylor all but states that we can understand Quebec's desire to preserve its language and culture as an attempt to embody the Hegelian concept of recognition.¹¹¹ Indeed, the case of Quebec and its relationship to the rest of Canada reads almost like some endless master-slave conflict. As Taylor observes, the great historical stumbling block has been the failure of both French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians to understand each others' motives and, in this failing, attempt to impose their respective views on the other. "Each side would require the other to be something it is not in order to fit the formula within which it can itself be comfortable."¹¹²

Taylor's consideration of the 'problem of Quebec' is offered as an illustration of the 'alternative' liberalism that can provide Quebec the recognition it seeks while protecting the fundamental rights dear to English-speaking Canadians. Or, put differently, Taylor sees in the 'crisis of Canada' the possibility

of resolving the Hegelian dilemma of trying to reconcile expressive unity with radical autonomy through a form of liberalism that takes into account the Rousseauian search for a substantive democracy and the Kantian claim of radical freedom that underlies procedural liberalism.¹¹³

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

Taylor, Trudeau and 'Crisis' of Canada

What sets Quebec apart from the rest of Canada, Taylor argues, is its concern with preserving its language and, hence, its culture. Francophone Quebecers, unlike English-speaking Canadians, recognise the intrinsic importance of language as the bedrock of cultural preservation. Indeed, for francophones, language defines their community; a point Taylor emphasises in a 1992 essay: "The real point here is that (a country) makes the survival and flourishing of (its) nation/language one of the prime goals of political society."¹¹⁴

Thus, Taylor seeks to articulate Quebec's search for recognition in a way that is comprehensible to non-Quebecers, while, at the same time, offering Quebecers a form of liberalism that would not be alien to them. In effect, as Arthur Ripstein points out, Taylor attempts to apply the Gadamerian idea of the "fusion of horizons." He wants to see Quebec's efforts to protect its culture and ensure its survival understood as a part of a broader form of liberalism that while not committed to neutrality about the good life, protects the fundamental rights that have always been part of the liberal tradition, even as it accepts the central need of recognition.¹¹⁵

Is this possible? One way to address that question is to compare Taylor's views on the Meech Lake Accord with those of some critics of the would-be

constitutional deal. According to these critics, the failure of the Meech Lake Accord in 1990 and, in 1992, the Charlottetown Accord, showed irrevocably that the "two-nations" idea on which Quebec based its desire to be recognised as a state *equal* to the Canadian state was untenable. Thus, they argue, English-speaking Canada's refusal to give constitutional recognition to Quebec as a distinct society showed that Quebec's ultimate political aspirations can never be accommodated as long as Quebec is a province of Canada.¹¹⁶

Whether the Meech Lake Accord would have solved the 'crisis of Canada' is, of course, debatable. But there is no doubt that if it had come into effect it would have radically altered Canada's political structure. For example, its main provision was the constitutional recognition of Quebec as a distinct society and the Quebec government as alone having the authority to "promote and preserve" this distinctiveness. This certainly would have fit Taylor's prescription for the Quebec government:

It is axiomatic for Quebec governments that the survival and flourishing of French culture in Quebec is a good ... Political society ... involves making sure there is a community of people here in the future that will want to avail itself of the opportunity to use the French language.¹¹⁷

One major consequence of this provision would have been to require the courts to interpret the Charter of Rights in such a way as to recognise the overriding principle of Quebec's existence as a distinct society. Critics, however, charged that the Accord would lead to a highly decentralised Canada, the enfeeblement of the federal government in terms of formulating national policies, and

undermine the protection of the rights of individuals and minorities. As Barry Cooper and David Bercuson put it, "The Meech Lake Accord would have been the penultimate blow to Canada as a nation."¹¹⁸

Critics of the Accord also argued that the authority given to Quebec to preserve and promote its distinctiveness would have allowed the Quebec government to extend its legislative powers into areas not available to other provinces. Legally speaking, it was claimed, Canadians would be divided into two groups: those who lived in Quebec and those who lived elsewhere. Moreover, constitutional recognition of Quebec as a distinct society would allow the Quebec government to use special restrictions on individual rights and freedoms for the sake of the overriding good of protecting the cultural identity of francophone Quebecers. This, critics said, was a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in that it effectively set the notion of distinct society status — or francophone Quebec's collective rights — against the principle of individual rights and the equality of all citizens that prevailed in the rest of Canada.

Former prime minister Pierre Trudeau was recognised as the Accord's fiercest critic. Now, Trudeau always maintained that his political actions were based on his political philosophy. Given the results of his intervention against the Meech Lake Accord, it is necessary to consider that thought. A detailed examination of Trudeau's thought would take me too far afield, so I am restricting my commentary to those aspects of Trudeau's political philosophy that have a ready application to the matter at hand, namely the opposition to the Meech Lake

Accord. This is justified by the fact that Taylor's support for the Accord was also derived from his own political philosophy. Moreover, a brief comparison of Trudeau's thought to that of Taylor's on the question of Quebec will cast into higher relief those aspects of Taylor's philosophic position with which I am most concerned.

The question is where to start. Trudeau and Taylor could be profitably compared on the different their views on multiculturalism and nationalism or their contrasting positions on federalism: Trudeau as a centralist and Taylor as a decentralist, for example.¹¹⁹ Another approach would be to compare Trudeau's "civic" view of Canada with Taylor's "dualist" vision.¹²⁰ For my purposes, though, the best point of comparison is their contrasting positions in the liberal-communitarian debate. Trudeau clearly plants his flag in the liberal camp while Taylor bivouacs with the communitarians. That, of course, is too simplistic. There are communitarian elements in Trudeau's liberalism — after all, Trudeau's Charter makes provisions for the collective rights of francophones and aboriginals — just as there is an abiding regard for certain forms of liberalism in Taylor's communitarianism. Taylor, in fact, insists that "a society with strong collective goals can be liberal."¹²¹ Nevertheless, it is reasonable to approach Trudeau and Taylor from within the liberal-communitarian debate, and compare them on that basis, because their different views on individual rights versus collective rights were so strikingly manifested in the Meech Lake debate.¹²² By this I mean that Trudeau's "liberalism" was given concrete expression in his

warnings that ratifying Meech Lake would undermine the Charter of Rights and Freedom, while Taylor's support for Quebec's 'distinct society' and his support for the Accord reveal his communitarian-collectivist concerns.

For Trudeau, the Charter was intended to serve two fundamental purposes that he thought, rightly or wrongly, would foster Canadian unity. Trudeau believed the Charter would foster a Canadian identity based on the possession of rights and would establish the sovereignty of Canadian citizens. The problem, according to some critics, is that these two dimensions of the charter are rooted in differing moral and political principles, assume different conceptions of unity, and diverge widely in their implications for the Canadian federal system. Such a diagnosis may not fit the popular image of the charter in English-speaking Canada where it has a considerable following. For many English-speaking Canadians, the charter is regarded as the cornerstone of a nation-state where all provinces are equal and individual rights reign supreme.¹²³

That vision is essentially Trudeau's. "With the charter in place," Trudeau wrote in his 1993 memoirs, "we can now say that Canada is a society where all people are equal and where they share some fundamental values based upon freedom." For Trudeau, the essential purpose of the charter was to foster this unifying or nation-building element. He thought it would counterbalance the decentralising leanings of the provincial governments, particularly Quebec's, by giving all citizens a symbolic and a practical expression of national identity independent of their regional loyalties. As he put it, sounding distinctly Hegelian

(via T.H. Green), "I saw the charter as an expression of my long-held view that the subject of law must be the individual human being; the law must permit the individual to fulfil himself or herself to the utmost."¹²⁴

On this point, it is worth recalling that the "basic philosophy" on which Trudeau based his vision of the charter was rooted in his appropriation of the thought of T.H. Green. The British Hegelian, Trudeau once said, taught him that in politics "the focal point was not the state but the individual — the individual seen as a person integrated into society, which is to say endowed with fundamental rights and essential liberties, but also with responsibilities."¹²⁵ That certainly sounds Hegelian. Can I then make the claim that Canada's Charter of Rights has an Hegelian pedigree? Indeed, should the charter be seen as a manifestation of Objective Spirit?

Such questions may seem fanciful, but there is nothing in Trudeau's statement with which John Watson would quarrel. Trudeau even seems to share Watson's fundamental political concern. To recall, Watson defined the fundamental political problem to be one of establishing the proper relationship between the individual and the state (or public authority). Trudeau asserts something similar. In a 1958 article, "Approaches to Politics," Trudeau examines what he describes as the "only question" in political philosophy: "How does it happen that one man has authority over his fellows?"¹²⁶ Change the phrase 'one man' to 'the state' or 'the community' and you have Watson's question. Thus, given the sources of Trudeau's philosophical thought, and the way that thought

was translated in political action, it is reasonable to acknowledge Hegel's indirect influence on Canada's new 'founding' document. An equally pertinent observation — and one that would require more examination than I can offer here — is how the philosophical differences between Trudeau and Taylor seem to come down to their contrasting appropriations of Hegel.

Given Trudeau's emphasis on the rights of the individual, there is little question that Constitution of 1982, and its accompanying charter, is grounded in procedural liberalism. Procedural liberalism holds that equality and individual autonomy are the ideal. Individual rights and non-discrimination among citizens takes precedent over any collective goals members of a society might assign themselves. This notion of liberalism, strictly applied, restricts the state from promoting and even protecting a public concept of the common good. According to Taylor, though, as I shall discuss momentarily, such a view of liberalism ill-serves Quebec, which stresses the importance of collective goals (without neglecting individual rights), and which sees the survival of its 'distinct' society as imperative.

In an argument that has parallels to Grant's criticism of the 'Americanising' consequences of Trudeau's rationalist politics, Taylor says that despite Trudeau's hopes that the charter would foster Canadian unity, it actually "makes us more like the United States." The Charter reflects "the growing force of procedural liberalism" in North America. Likewise, the defeat of the Meech Lake accord — thanks in large measure to Trudeau's intervention — only reiterated the post-

charter spread of this form of liberalism in English Canada, a form of liberalism, Taylor asserts, that is alien to francophones and something Quebec could never accommodate without surrendering its collective identity.¹²⁷

Is Taylor right in criticising Trudeau for having no regard for a common good in his opposition to Quebec's claims of cultural distinctiveness? Does Trudeau ignore the need of people for a communal identity? It is true that Trudeau places the locus of the state on individual rights and the need to protect the individual from collective impositions. He regarded the charter as "in keeping with the purest form of liberalism," according to which individuals "enjoy certain fundamental, inalienable rights and cannot be deprived of them by any collectivity."¹²⁸ And his opposition to Meech Lake's dualist vision of Canada is certainly in accord with his liberal principles. Given this, there is little reason to expect that he would accept Taylor's arguments that Quebec society is based on another, more collectivist-oriented form of liberalism.

Nonetheless, it is not quite accurate to say Trudeau had no notion of the common good. Trudeau's notion of a just society requires not only individual freedom, but the opportunity to enjoy that freedom. As Trudeau wrote, "The common good (in a parliamentary democracy) may be more or less inclusive, and may be defined in different ways by different men. Yet it must in some way include equality of opportunity for everyone in all important fields of endeavour."¹²⁹ Max Nemni points out that Trudeau's economic and social policies, whatever their practical failings, were based on the idea that individual

freedom included freedom from want and fear. Trudeau, he says, "considers that economics must contribute to the common good, as must every important social field of endeavour."¹³⁰ In this regard, it cannot be said that Trudeau had no conception of the common good. Certainly, he did not define it in the proceduralist manner that Taylor suggests by asserting only the formal equality of citizens before the law.

Still, Trudeau's notion of the common good always redounds to the individual. As he wrote in a 1990 essay, "The Values of a Just Society," "only the individual is a possessor of rights. A collectivity can exercise only those rights it has received by delegation from its members."¹³¹ The important word here, I suggest, is 'delegation.' Trudeau's 'common good', with its focus on the freedom of the individual, is deeply Hegelian in that Trudeau, like Hegel, sees a society's 'good' emerging through the mediation of institutions in which men are free to participate. In this regard, Trudeau's notion of the relationship between the 'common good,' or the community, and individual freedom closely follows Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit*.

In Trudeau's view, Meech Lake and its notion of Quebec as a "distinct society" violated this institutionally-mediated freedom. As he put it .

Now the consequences of "distinct society" become clear. The Charter, whose essential purpose was to recognise the fundamental and inalienable rights of All Canadians equally, would recognise thenceforth that in the province of Quebec these rights could be overridden or modified by provincial laws whose purpose would be to promote a distinct society and more specifically to favour the "French-speaking majority" that has a "unique culture" and a "civil law tradition."¹³²

What might this mean, Trudeau asked, for those Quebecers of Irish, Jewish or Vietnamese origin? Would these minorities have trouble 'belonging' to this distinct society if they attempted to protect their Charter rights against discriminatory laws imposed by the francophone majority as it asserted its collective rights? Ultimately, Trudeau argued, the Meech Lake accord would undermine Canada as a bilingual and multicultural nation. As he wrote in a famous (or infamous, depending on your point of view) newspaper article, Meech Lake would destroy the dreams of Canadians who saw the Charter "as a new beginning for Canada, where everyone would be on an equal footing and where citizenship would finally be founded on a set of commonly shared values ..."¹³³

Trudeau's attack on the Accord is widely credited with galvanising opposition to it.¹³⁴ Newly-elected premiers in New Brunswick and Manitoba failed to go through with their predecessors' commitments to ratify the agreement in their legislatures. The Newfoundland premier even repealed his province's previous ratification. Thus, in June 1990, the Accord died. A similar fate awaited the Charlottetown Agreement two years later. This agreement closely resembled Meech Lake in that Quebec was to be recognised as a distinct society, requiring the courts to interpret the Charter in a manner consistent with Quebec's desire to preserve its distinctness. But there was also a "Canada Clause" informing Canadians who they were supposed to be as a people, the entrenchment of the right to aboriginal self-government, provisions for an elected Senate and a guarantee that Quebec would always have 25 per cent of the seats in the House

of Commons. Once again, though, the main question was whether the Agreement had given too much or too little to Quebec. English-speaking Canada believed the former; most Quebecers believed the latter. Locked into their respective visions of the country, both French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians overwhelmingly rejected the Agreement in a referendum in October 1992, albeit for opposing reasons.

If the failures of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords revealed anything, it was the deep dissonance between Quebec's desire for recognition as a distinct society and the rest of the country's adherence, reflective or not, to the rights-based society of traditional liberalism. While the rights-model society promoted by the Charter — and by its main promoter, Pierre Trudeau — may have had the support of a majority of English-speaking Canadians, it caused francophone Quebecers to question whether their collective interests, their desire for cultural survival, were compatible with those of the rest of the country. English-speaking Canadians generally see the individual as the ground of sovereignty, and majority rule as the basis of the federal government's legitimacy. Francophone Quebecers, however, do not necessarily regard the individual voter as the bedrock of sovereignty. They look, instead, to their community to provide the basis for sovereignty.

The francophone perspective comes through most clearly in the 1991 Report on the Political and Constitutional Future of Quebec, better known as the Belanger-Campeau Commission. The commission, to which Taylor made a

significant contribution,¹³⁵ was set up by the Quebec government following the defeat of the Meech Lake Accord. Promoting the "two-nations" vision of Canada in claiming that Canada was a "pact" between "two peoples," the commission essentially concluded that since the imposition of the Charter in 1982, Canada's constitutional order has reflected a political ideology that denies Canada's dualist nature and, hence, is at odds with Quebec's concerns for its cultural survival. The commission focused in particular on the Constitution's enshrinement of multiculturalism, with its assumption of the equality of all cultures and cultural origins. According to the commission, this was tantamount to denying French-speaking Canadians' historical claim to be one of Canada's two "equal" founding groups. Furthermore, the Constitution assumes the fundamental liberal principles of "the equality of all Canadians, from one ocean to the other, and the unity of the society in which they live." But in the commission's view, this model of liberal society does not provide the constitutional recognition of people with a particular culture they wish to preserve. The idea of Quebec as a distinct society is regarded as a source of inequality and as incompatible with the principle of the equality of all Canadians.

In many ways, this is Taylor's argument, too. In Reconciling the Solitudes, he argues that the debate over Meech Lake reflected a clash between two different forms of liberal society. For English-speaking Canadians, the distinct-society clause gave collective goals precedence over individual rights. Such a notion runs contrary to the Charter-inspired support in English-speaking Canada

for the kind of procedural liberalism that insists the state remain neutral about the "good" life and proclaims the universalizing principle of the equality of all citizens before the law.¹³⁶ Quebecers, on the other hand, because of their historical experience, hold to a model of society organised around the definition of a collective goal, which the powers of the Quebec government are used to promote. For a majority of Quebecers, the fundamental "good," and their collective goal, is the survival of their culture. Francophones saw English-speaking Canada's opposition to Meech Lake as reflecting a Charter-inspired view of society that sets individual rights or powers above collective or group powers. Such a society, Taylor says, is alien to Quebec, and is one "to which Quebec could never accommodate itself without surrendering its identity." Thus, Taylor concludes, each side in the endless Canadian 'crisis' "would require the other to be something it is not to fit the formula within which it can itself be comfortable."¹³⁷ Or, to put the matter in Hegelian terms, the "great historic misunderstanding," as Taylor defines it, that has shaped Canadian politics for the last century has been an exemplary example of the concept of recognition and its underlying master-slave dialectic.

Whether the 'crisis of Canada' is ever resolved depends, says Taylor, on whether two types of liberal society can co-exist. The traditional liberalism that has prevailed in English-speaking Canada recognises the individual as the locus of political value; the individual possesses inherent and equal dignity independent of group differences such as class, race, religion or sex. But Taylor

argues that there are also rights due to people as members of communities, and the vitality of these communities must be safeguarded because the survival of the community is crucial to the identity of the people who are its members. In brief, Canadians as a whole must reconcile the liberal tradition of individual rights with the communitarian emphasis on collective rights.

Taylor maintains that recognising Quebec's right to maintain its francophone culture, which is the basis for its constitutional claim of equality and its bid for distinct society status, need not infringe on traditional liberal principles such as freedom of speech, association and religions, so long as collective rights such as language protection are acknowledged and permitted to override other rights when legitimate collective aspirations require it. What English-speaking Canada fails to understand, he says, is that the supposed recognition of equal individuals rights provided by strict adherence to the Charter would undermine Quebec's cultural identity and lead ultimately to the disappearance of the French culture in North America.

A number of scholars have questioned Taylor's argument, particularly his attempt to formulate an alternative model of liberalism that would satisfy Quebec's collective aspirations without violating fundamental tenets of liberalism. Cooper and Bercuson, for example, argue that the principles on which English- and French-speaking Canadians base their constitutional claims cannot be reconciled within Canada's existing political order. The Meech Lake Accord, they point out, contained Quebec's *minimum* demands, the *least* it was prepared to

accept. But it still proved unacceptable to Canadians as a whole. And it was unacceptable because it effectively undermined the universal principle of equal rights and, thus,

posed a fundamental threat to the foundations of liberal democracy in this country by creating two classes of citizens and two classes of governments — those in Quebec and those outside of it. Whatever the implications for Canadian federalism, it (the Accord) served to undermine completely one of the fundamental pillars of liberal democracy: equality of citizens before the law.¹³⁸

Cooper and Bercuson conclude that "irreconcilable differences" exist between Quebec and Canada and a divorce is necessary. Regardless of the validity of their claims about the future of Canada, their argument suggests that Taylor's Hegelian prescription for satisfying Quebec's desire for recognition within the current Canadian political order is not necessarily coherent, at least at a theoretical level.

Taylor's promotion of Quebec's collective aspirations amounts to an attempt to find a middle way between liberalism and anti-liberal communitarianism.¹³⁹ That is to say, his prescription for ending the 'crisis' of Canada is to permit in Quebec a society that ostensibly surmounts the atomism and inequities of liberalism while at the same time maintaining the benefits of liberal democracy. Taylor refers to this as "substantive" liberalism," as distinct from procedural liberalism. The former is a form of liberalism under which a society will sacrifice *non-fundamental* rights for the sake of a collectively determined concept of the good life. The 'crisis of Canada,' according to Taylor, is rooted in the clash between these two conceptions of liberalism. His argument,

in a nutshell, is that since Quebec qualifies as a "differently" liberal society, the way to resolve the crisis is to recognise Quebec's version of liberalism as equally as valid as the procedural mode that prevails in the rest of Canada. Canadians, in short, must accept deep diversity.¹⁴⁰

Not everyone thinks it will work. The examples of Meech Lake and Charlottetown, along with the experience of three decades of would-be constitution making in Canada, suggest that Taylor's middle-way of "command liberalism," as Michael Lusztiig calls it, has produced considerable conflict and animosity between English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians, even to the point of bringing the country near to break up.¹⁴¹ Such a comment raises the question whether Taylor's appropriation of Hegel's concept of recognition and its application to the 'problem' of Canada is inadequate in some fashion.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Conclusion — The Illiberal Strand in Taylor's Thought

Taylor's arguments on behalf of Quebec's quest for recognition are instructive because they offer a concrete embodiment of his case for authenticity. But can he coherently meld features of liberalism, as he comprehends them, with the politics of recognition? This is essentially the question I asked at the beginning of Part Four: Does Taylor's employment of Hegelian thought in his quest for community satisfy both the individual's desire for belonging and avoid the often irrational and instinct-grounded communality that can lead to authoritarian and even totalitarian political orders? As the comments of both Ajzenstat and Cooper and Bercuson suggest, the answer must be no.

Liberalism unavoidably contains elements — individualism and egalitarianism, for example — that conflict, at least potentially, with collective or community aspirations, as the case of Quebec clearly demonstrates. Canada's successive efforts at constitutionalism show that a majority of Canadians are not willing to grant Quebec distinct society status. Likewise, it is questionable whether francophone Quebecers are willing to recognise the autonomy of cultural minorities within Quebec, at least not in the way that English-speaking Canadians are supposed to recognise the claims of French-speaking Quebecers. Does this mean that Cooper and Bercuson are correct, that Quebec must secede

from Confederation? Taylor, of course, does not go this route. He continues to hold out for a compromise between demands of liberalism that are grounded in the primacy of the individual and the claims of recognition that give priority to the community. Is such a compromise ultimately coherent, or does it open the door to illiberal possibilities?

To answer these questions I need to recapitulate some of my earlier arguments, particularly those touching on Taylor's communitarian politics. The place to begin, I suggest, is with Taylor's identification of the ontological tradition in communitarianism. Ontologically, Taylor seeks to demonstrate the importance of collective forces in accounting for social structures and individual identity. He criticises the social contract theories of traditional liberals such as Locke and Hobbes who, in his view, see society as an aggregate of individuals who both cooperate and compete under a kind of tacit contract between individuals.¹⁴² Regardless of the differences between Hobbes and Locke, one of the essential features they share is granting ontological priority to individuals. Both conjure a concept of human beings in a state of nature and conceptualise how humans would behave in such circumstances without a political community. From this premise they try to account for why individuals would freely and rationally consent to surrender some of the freedom and power they possess in the state of nature to form a government that curbs their freedom. The result, according to Taylor, is a view of politics that is explained only in terms of individual choices or motivations.¹⁴³

Against this liberal ontology, Taylor sets a communitarian perspective that affirms the collective aspects of life that make society possible and, indeed, engender the possibility of individuality. He insists that there are "irreducibly social goods" and that we need to "scrap" the notion that "all social goods are decomposable" into individual goods. Accordingly, he attacks the atomist view of politics that asserts

common institutional structures have to be understood as in the nature of collective instruments. Political societies in the understanding of Hobbes, Locke, Bentham, or the twentieth-century common sense they have helped to shape are established by collections of individuals to obtain benefits through common action they could not secure individually. The action is collective, but the point of it remains individual. The common good is constituted out of individual goods, without remainder.¹⁴⁴

For Taylor, then, community is the precondition for individuals to possess and exercise their individual rights. Even the concept of individualism is possible only within a particular culture, and culture is not a matter of individual choice but a collective enterprise. There is no way that a person could conceive of himself as an autonomous or free being or as a bearer of rights unless these goods are part of an pre-existing cultural context.

Thus, Taylor, like other communitarians, asserts that "the free individual or autonomous agent" who is the locus liberal political theory "is only what he is by virtue of the whole society and civilisation which brought him to be and which nourishes him." Indeed, he follows Rousseau (and Aristotle, too) in arguing that it is also wrong to assume individuals could even exist outside of the community since the prerequisite of any social contract is the capacity for reason and

language, both of which are attainable only in a social context.¹⁴⁵ The promotion of individual freedom, and the rights that have to be attached to this freedom, whether negative or positive, points beyond itself to the social and cultural conditions — the community, in other words — that make such a good possible. Hence, Taylor reaches the conclusion that the individual who identifies himself as a free being "*already* has an obligation to complete, restore, or sustain the society within which this identity is possible."¹⁴⁶ To claim something is good for myself as an individual entails an obligation to the wider community because without that community I would not be able to avail myself of that good. Politically, this means that my identity depends on the existence of a community. Before there can be an 'I' there has to be a 'we.'

This implies that the primacy of the individual espoused by liberalism gives way in Taylor's thought to the primacy of the community.¹⁴⁷ Such an argument — the affirmation of individual good entails the affirmation of the community that makes such a good possible — harkens to Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit*. Indeed, Taylor argues that Hegel's concept refers to the obligations that individuals have to their society: "What Hegel calls *Sittlichkeit* ... refers to the moral obligations I have to an ongoing community of which I am a part."¹⁴⁸ I certainly do not quarrel with Taylor on this interpretation, but I would suggest it does not go deep enough, and is insufficient for that reason. In Part One, I noted that for Hegel what makes a society and its institutions worthy of affirmation and obligation is its approximation to the Concept, that is, to the Idea of freedom and its necessary

working out in history and embodiment in society. However, as I have argued previously in this section, Taylor rejects Hegel's ontology — Reason manifesting itself in greater human freedom through the historical process — as unacceptable nowadays. Nevertheless, he follows the Hegelian dialectic in arguing that the crucial characteristic of ethical life is that "it enjoins us to bring about what already is"; that is, to recognise that the pre-existing community life is the basis for one's obligation. "It is by virtue of its being an ongoing affair that I have these obligations; and my fulfilment of these obligations is what sustains it and keeps it going."¹⁴⁹

Taylor is not suggesting anything as simplistic as my-country-right-or-wrong. Nor is he claiming that individuals are obliged to support their community regardless of its moral or ethical condition. And he is not suggesting that individuals must remain loyal to corrupt regimes.¹⁵⁰ Nonetheless, his argument does miss one salient aspect of Hegel's concept of *Sittlichkeit*; that is, the community's obligation to the individual. For Hegel, in contrast to Taylor, community is not primarily about individual *identity*, but about individual *freedom*. Hegel would probably agree with Taylor about the problems of atomistic individualism and the need for a sense of communal belonging, but his abiding concern was in promoting a politics of rights that enhance individual self-determination. Where Taylor focuses on the need for common conceptions of the good, Hegel seeks to strengthen those institutions and mediating associations that allow freedom to flourish. For Hegel, "the unencumbered self is countered

not by replacing a politics of rights with a politics of the common good but by restoring the immanent reason within the institutions that secure rights."¹⁵¹

Hegel resists Taylor's notions of cultural or linguistic embeddedness because his focus is on the metaphysical grounding of modern freedom in the will. For him, as Philosophy of Right makes clear, the will to freedom is embodied in both legal rights and political institutions. As rights-possessing beings, individuals find themselves living within a set of institutions — the family, the markets, civil society, a constitutional order, the state — that can be shown rationally to be 'right' in the sense of embodying the modern principle of self-determination. This differs from Taylor's communitarian understanding in which community, whether the family or the 'nation,' is regarded as providing the matrix of roles from which the individual derives his identity. Political community is important to Hegel because only through such a community can individuals extend their freedom. Language and culture do not necessarily enhance freedom. Hence, for Hegel, moderns must satisfy their desire to belong institutionally rather than culturally because what is ultimately at issue in relationship between the individual and the community is freedom, not identity.¹⁵²

It is this grounding of the reconciliation of the individual and the community in culture or language that reveals an illiberal element in Taylor's communitarian politics. Given his concern with maintaining cultural identities, it is clear that Taylor does not base his concerns for the centrality of community on the primacy of individual freedom. To the contrary, he is adamant in claiming the independent

character of the community. Hegel, however, tries to relate the reciprocity of freedom and obligation that makes the individual and the community dependent on each other to achieve their 'rational' moments. In making the fulfilment of the individual contingent on the existence of the community, Taylor opens up the possibility of communities taking precedence over the individual, which is what Hegel, with his knowledge of the Terror, was trying to avoid. Moreover, recalling my reference in Part One to Hegel's Socratic model, I would argue that Taylor, in asserting an independent function for the community, also implies a dependent relationship between the individual's capacity for achieving his purposes and the community in which he exists. Thus, he rejects the implications suggested by Hegel's interpretation of Socrates' trial and execution: That individuals can seek values outside the social context that alone provide meaning to their lives and the framework for self-understanding.

This slide away from the freedom of the individual can be seen in Taylor's defence of multiculturalism against majoritarian impositions, the welfare state against the "greed" of unbridled capitalism and "participatory democracy" against the bureaucratic machinations of institutional power. Yet, his communitarianism most evidently shows its illiberal strain in an article Taylor published in 1989 about the Iranian *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie over his novel The Satanic Verses.¹⁵³ While acknowledging that writers cannot be expected to avoid dealing with sensitive religious symbols without betraying their own understanding of the world, Taylor still argues that Rushdie, in adopting the essentially anti-religious

and secular perspective of western liberal society, has lost touch with the possibility that religious symbols and dogmas might mean a great deal to those who espouse them, and that to mock those symbols is to mock those supports that provide people with the very meaning of their lives. "Rushdie's book is comforting to the western liberal mind [because it confirms] the belief that there is nothing outside their worldview that needs deeper understanding." However, Taylor says that in a world in which international migration is making societies less culturally homogeneous, "the liberal mind will have to learn to reach out more."¹⁵⁴

But why is it the liberal mind that must reach out, as it were, violating the principles of freedom of speech and freedom of religion and association to accommodate a cultural mindset that denies these very principles? Why is the onus for tolerance so one-sided? I share Ronald Beiner's puzzlement about why Rushdie is required to be fully understanding and tolerant about how Muslim clerics see the world, but they are not obliged to understand his vision of the world.¹⁵⁵

I do not want to make too much of this single example, but I have used it because it points up the tension in Taylor's thought that I highlighted near the beginning of this section with John Dunn's remark — "In the face of distressing choices he is apt to cling tenaciously to both horns of the dilemma, refusing, for what are often humanly excellent motives, to let either of them go."¹⁵⁶ For Dunn, though, this is a perilous position. He summarises Taylor's dilemma this way:

Since [Taylor] is a Catholic he could scarcely fail to see some force to "demands that come from beyond our own desires or aspirations, be they from history, tradition, society, nature, or God." But, as well as being a Catholic, he is also very much a Romantic, [and therefore] he is strongly and personally committed to taking what comes from our own desires and aspirations at least equally seriously.

The resulting amalgam can readily offend most readers. His liberal critics among American philosophers do not care for the Catholicism, and believe that it leads him to espouse a potentially (or actually) oppressive relation between a society and its individual members. No doubt his Catholic critics are less enthusiastic about the Romantic elements, seeing these as licensing a *louche* and excessively aesthetic approach to the art of life, and a correspondingly enfeebled grasp of the requirements of God's Law. Either may well be partly right ... ¹⁵⁷

What does this theoretical tension suggest about Taylor's appropriation of Hegel's thought, and the theoretical strategy at work in that appropriation?

Taylor, like Hegel, is engaged in an attempt to make whole what is fragmented. He attempts in his various works to bring to our attention the deeper existential commitments that are inherent to the modern project, attachments that if properly understood offer, in his view, a kind of salvation. What we get in Taylor's thought is both a critique of modernity and, at the same time, a defence of modernity. Taylor shares the communitarian concern regarding the perceived excesses of liberal individualism: a centring on the self and a concomitant unawareness of the greater concerns — religious, political, historical — that transcend the self. However, he insists he is not completely opposed to modern liberalism, or, for that matter, to modernity. While he generally accepts the communitarian critique of modernity, he argues that there are forms of

self-interpretation and understanding within modernity that can mitigate its excesses. At the centre of Taylor's project, then, is the idea that modernity provides moral grounds, or sources, for overcoming the reification of individualism and its attendant self-absorbed subjectivism. To repeat Taylor's own explanation of his motives from Sources of the Self: "The intention of this work was one of retrieval, an attempt to uncover buried goods through re-articulation — and thereby to make these sources again empower, to bring the air back again into the half-collapsed lungs of the spirit."¹⁵⁸

What is crucial about Taylor's description of his philosophical motives is its historicist presumptions. That is to say, he holds that if we dig deep enough into why modernity has come to be what it is, why, for instance, the modern self is so needful of an authentic identity, we will discover the modern aspirations to be both reasonable and worthwhile. This makes Taylor's enterprise Hegelian in the sense that it regards the modern identity as having "unfolded as an intelligible story."¹⁵⁹ What Taylor has done, as Beiner observes, is to provide a narrative of the self-development of the modern identity such that, at the deepest level, the essential moral purposes of modernity can be seen as intelligible, coherent and worthy of aspiration. The problem, though, is that Taylor's quasi-Hegelian confidence in the immanent narrative structure of the modern project is difficult to maintain without Hegel's metaphysical foundation. The result is an abiding tension in Taylor's thought. To appropriate Beiner's view: Taylor's purpose is to try to do the utmost interpretative justice to the aspirations of people in modern society to both express their individuality *and* to

satisfy their longings for community. (In this sense he is a communitarian *and* a liberal.)¹⁶⁰

Can you be both a communitarian and a liberal without contradiction? Or, put differently, has Taylor's Hegelian appropriation allowed him to reconcile the individual and the community in a coherent fashion? I leave my response to these questions for my concluding remarks in the next section. It is sufficient here to note that at least in the Rushdie case Taylor urges a generosity toward religious communities that he does not accord non-religious individuals such as Rushdie. Similarly, while he insists on a sympathetic understanding of Quebec's aspirations, he does not require a reciprocal understanding of the concerns of the rest of Canada. In my book that makes Taylor's employment of Hegel to address the "crisis of Canada" rather problematic, to say the least.

ENDNOTES TO PART FOUR

1. Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, (Cambridge, Mass., 1991), p. 520.
2. John Dunn, Interpreting Political Responsibility, (Princeton, 1990), p. 186.
3. Amelie Rorty, "The Hidden Politics of Cultural Identification," Political Theory, vol. 22, no. 1, (February, 1994), p. 163.
4. Janet Ajzenstat, "Decline of Procedural Liberalism: The Slippery Slope to Succession," in Is Quebec Nationalism Just? Perspectives from Anglophone Canada, edited by Joseph H. Carens, (Montreal and Kingston, 1995), p. 122.
5. Nancy Fraser, Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist Condition", (New York, 1997), p. 11.
6. Taylor, Multiculturalism and 'The Politics of Recognition', (Princeton, N.J., 1992), p. 25.
7. Ibid, p. 50.
8. Ibid, p. 26.
9. Terence Cave, Recognitions: A Study in Poetics, (Oxford, 1988), p. 33-35. See also Patchen Markell, Bound by Recognition: The Politics of Identity after Hegel, Ph.D. Dissertation, (Cambridge, 1999), p. 15-16.
10. Anthony Appiah, "Identity, Authenticity, Survival," in Charles Taylor *et al.*, Multiculturalism: Examining 'The Politics of Recognition', ed. and intro. Amy Gutmann, (Princeton, N.J., 1994), p. 149.
11. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 25.
12. Ibid, p. 32-34.
13. Ibid, p. 29.
14. Taylor, Sources, p. 121.
15. Garry Gutting, "Charles Taylor: An Augustinian Modern, in Pragmatic

Liberalism and the Critique of Modernity, (Cambridge, MA, 1999), p. 115.
 Craig Calhoun, "Morality, Identity and Historical Explanation: Charles Taylor on the Sources of the Self," Sociological Theory, 9, 2, (Fall, 1991), p. 244.

16. Taylor, Sources, p. 129-132.
17. Calhoun, p. 244.
18. Taylor, Sources, p. 143.
19. Calhoun, p. 245, and Gutting, p. 116.
20. Taylor, Sources, p. 146.
21. Gutting makes this point, p. 118.
22. Taylor, Sources, p. 167.
23. Ibid, p. 171. See also Calhoun, p. 246, and Gutting, p. 119-120.
24. Ibid, p. 176.
25. Ibid, p. 213.
26. Ibid, p. 232. See also Gutting, p. 124.
27. Lawrence Vogel, "Critical Notices," International Journal of Philosophical Studies, 12, (September, 1993), p. 325-335.
28. Taylor, The Malaise of Modernity, (Toronto, 1991), p. 72-73.
29. For a summary of Taylor's understanding of "expressivism" see Hegel, (Cambridge, 1975), chp. 1 and Sources, chp. 21.
30. Taylor, Sources, p. 359.
31. Ibid, p. 360.
32. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 50.
33. Ibid, p. 38-50.
34. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 57-60. I am indebted to Robert Meynell, Idealism and Identity: George Grant and Charles Taylor Confront the Modern Dilemma, M.A. Thesis, (Halifax, 1999), p. 105.

35. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 30.
36. Vasanthi Srinivasan, Freedom, Community and Transcendence: A Comparison of Select Western and Indian Thinkers, Ph.D. dissertation, (Ottawa, 1997), p. 54-65.
37. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 25.
38. Alan Wolfe, Whose Keeper?: Social Science and Moral Obligation, (Berkeley, 1989), p. 2.
39. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 31.
40. Taylor, Sources, p. 35.
41. Ibid, p. 32.
42. Taylor, "Introduction," Philosophical Papers: Human Agency and Language, vol. 1, (Cambridge, 1985), p. 1.
43. Ibid, p. 4-5.
44. Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology," Philosophical Arguments, (Cambridge, 1995), p. 7-8.
45. Taylor, "Introduction," in Philosophical Papers, vol. 1, p. 8. See also "Overcoming Epistemology," as well "Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate," also in Philosophical Arguments.
46. In particular, see Taylor's essays "Irreducibly Social Goods" and "Cross-Purposes," both in Philosophical Arguments, p. 128-130 and p. 194-195, respectively.
47. Markell, Bound by Recognition, p. 25-27.
48. Taylor, "The Importance of Herder," in Philosophical Arguments , p. 83-86.
49. Ibid," p. 83-84. See also, Srinivasan, p. 55.
50. Richard Nutbrown, "The Self, Language and Community: Taylor's Hermeneutic Project," Eidos, V, I, (June, 1986), p. 19.
51. Taylor, "Language and Human Nature," Philosophical Papers, vol. 1, p. 223-226.

52. Taylor, "The Importance of Herder," p. 96. See also, "Language and Human Nature," p. 226. It is worth quoting Taylor more fully on this need to master language in order to control the world: "That is why theorists of this period constantly, almost obsessively, stress the importance of recurring to definitions, of checking to see that our words are well-defined, that we use them consistently. The alternative is to lose control, to slip into a kind of slavery; where it is no longer I who make my lexicon, by definitional fiat, but rather it takes shape independently and in doing this shapes my thought."
53. Ibid, p. 96.
54. Ibid, p. 97.
55. Taylor, "Language and Human Nature," p. 230.
56. As Taylor writes in Hegel and Modern Society, (Cambridge, 1979), p. 18: "Language is seen not just as a set of signs, but as the medium of expression of a certain way of seeing and experiencing; as such it is continuous with art Hence there can be no thought without language; and indeed the languages of different peoples reflect their different visions of things."
57. Ibid, p. 234. Taylor's emphasis.
58. Taylor, Hegel and Modern Society, p. 20.
59. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 32.
60. Taylor, Hegel and Modern Society, p. 24.
61. Srinivasan, p. 57.
62. Ibid, p. 57.
63. Taylor, Sources, p. 415.
64. Taylor, Hegel and Modern Society, p. 2.
65. Taylor, Sources, p. 415. Srinivasan also makes the point that, for Taylor, national identity is not something established once-and-for-all, but is continually renegotiated in the dialogical exchanges between members of the community, p. 59.

66. Taylor, Hegel, p. 568.
67. Taylor, Sources, p. 415.
68. Taylor, "Hegel's Ambiguous Legacy for Modern Liberalism," Hegel and Legal Theory, 1991, p. 70-71.
69. In Philosophy of Right, Hegel defines *Sittlichkeit*, or ethical life, as "the identity of the good with the subjective will," while *Moralität* refers to an abstract, formal notion of moral obligation. In effect, ethical life is the concrete morality of a rational social order as reflected in and embodied through the rational institutions of a society. See Para 141, p. 103-104. Or, as Taylor puts it in Hegel, *Sittlichkeit* refers to the moral obligations an individual has with a pre-existing and ongoing community of which he is a part. In short, morality becomes ethical life to the degree it has its completion in a community, p. 376-377.
70. Taylor, "Hegel's Ambiguous Legacy for Modern Liberalism," p. 71.
71. Ibid, p. 72.
72. Ibid, p. 72.
73. Ibid, p. 72-73.
74. Ibid, p. 75-76.
75. Taylor, Hegel, p. 571.
76. Taylor, "Hegel's Ambiguous Legacy for Modern Liberalism," p. 75.
77. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 35.
78. Ibid, p. 35.
79. Srinivasan, p. 184. However, she also observes that Taylor applies Hegel's *Sittlichkeit* so broadly that everything from constitutions and law to cultural practices and customs becomes relevant for politics. See footnote, p. 129.
80. Taylor, "Hegel's Ambiguous Legacy for Modern Liberalism," p. 75. He writes: "A Hegelian model, as a model of critical society, is flawed by its Fichtean roots. His argument was powered by a fundamental concept of subject/object identity, which he gets from Fichte ..."

81. Ibid, p. 76.
82. Cited by Allen Wood, p. 219.
83. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 50.
84. Taylor, Hegel, p. 154.
85. Ibid, p. 539.
86. Ibid, p. 153-154.
87. It is beyond the scope of my essay to delve into the various interpretations of Hegel's master-slave dialectic. But it is perhaps worth noting that Taylor's interpretation is rather narrow and does not take into account some of the deeper nuances of what is involved in the slave's ostensible submission to the master. In can be argued — and, indeed, Hegel's phenomenological descriptions suggest just such a reading — that the slave submits not because he sees the validity of master's claim to dominance, but rather because he himself has been transformed in the struggle by the realization of his own finitude. See the Phenomenology, para. 189, p. 115. Thus, the slave's submission is the consequences of the fear of death of its organic existence, and the subsequent awareness that life is as essential as self-consciousness, if not more so. In confronting the possibility of its own death, self-consciousness abdicates its own previous claim to absolute freedom. This interpretation is, I believe, closer to that of Kojève's, who emphasizes the nature of the slave's fear of death as the result of his awareness of his finitude. See Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, p. 47-48. On the other hand, Robert Williams argues that Kojève "fails to see that for Hegel recognition has an ontological structure capable of supporting a wider range of instantiations than master-slave, conflict and domination." See Williams, Hegel's Ethics of Recognition, p. 373. It is unnecessary for me to argue either side of the matter. However, I would note that both imply an interpretation of the concept of recognition that is more a psychological than an sociological interpretation of Taylor. And that, in turn, reinforces my notion that Hegel's emphasis lies more with individual freedom as distinct from Taylor's communitarian emphasis.
88. David Duquette, "The Political Significance of Hegel's Concept of Recognition in the Phenomenology," Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain, 29, (Spring-Summer, 1994), p. 41.
89. Ibid, p. 48.

90. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 38.
91. Ibid, p. 39.
92. Ibid, p. 62.
93. Linda Nicholson, "To Be or Not to Be: Charles Taylor and the Politics of Recognition," Constellations, Vol. 3, No. 1, (1996), p. 7-8.
94. One of Taylor's central claims regarding Hegel is that he sought to unite the irrational romanticism of community in a self-consciously rational state: "If we return to its basic intentions ... Hegel's philosophy can be seen as an attempt to realize a synthesis that the Romantic generation was grasping towards: to combine the rational, self-legislating freedom of the Kantian subject with the expressive unity within man and with nature for which the age longed." See Hegel, p. 539. Adam Krob addresses Taylor's application of philosophic theory to the 'crisis' of Quebec's. See Hegel's Community: Synthesizing the Romantic and the Liberal, Ph.D. Thesis, (Durham, 1997), p. 254-255
95. Taylor, Reconciling the Solitudes: Essays on Federalism and Nationalism, (Montreal & Kingston, 1993), p. 183.
96. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values," in Reconciling the Solitudes, p. 182-184.
97. Taylor, "Impediments to a Canadian Future," in Reconciling the Solitudes, p. 188.
98. For example, Will Kymlicka, argues that intermediary associations and special cultural rights can sustain individual freedom without undermining the traditional liberal principle of state neutrality in regard to the 'good' life. See Liberalism, Community and Culture, (Oxford, 1990), and "The Rights of Minority Cultures: Reply to Kukathos," Political Theory, vol. 20, no. 1, (February, 1992), p. 140-146. My thanks to Vasanthi Srinivasan for drawing the latter essay to my attention.
99. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 27.
100. Ibid, p. 30. Taylor's emphasis.
101. Ibid, p. 36.
102. The point is made by Norman Barry, "Charles Taylor on Multiculturalism

and the Politics of Recognition," Community and Tradition: Conservative Perspectives on the American Experience, ed. George W. Carey and Bruce Frohnen, (Lanham, Maryland, 1998), p. 108.

103. Ibid, p. 38.
104. Nancy Fraser, "Politics, Culture and the Public Sphere: Toward a Postmodern Conception," Social Postmodernism, ed., Linda Nicholson and Steven Seidman, (New York, 1995). Cited by Nicholson, "Charles Taylor and the Politics of Recognition," p. 8.
105. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 43. I should acknowledge that Taylor's argument goes beyond the matter with which I am concerned. Elsewhere in this essay he argues that debates about multiculturalism involve not just the recognition of different cultures, but also the recognition that all cultures are of equal worth. That aspect of the multicultural debate is beyond the scope of my essay. I would only argue that Taylor revealed the problematic nature of the equal-worth argument, no doubt inadvertently, when he defended the *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie. Taylor, "The Rushdie Controversy," Public Culture, 2, 1, (Fall, 1989), p. 118-122.
106. Ibid, p. 29, 34-35.
107. Ibid, p. 51.
108. On this point, see Hegel, Philosophy of Right, para. 258, p. 156-157. Hegel states: Rousseau "takes the will only in a determinate form as the individual will, and he regards the universal will not as the absolutely rational element the will, but only as a 'general' will which proceeds out of this individual will as out of a conscious will. The result is that he reduces the union of the individuals in the state to a contract and therefore to something based on their arbitrary wills, their opinion, and their capriciously given express consent; and abstract reasoning proceeds to draw the logical inferences which destroy the absolutely divine principle of the state ... The will of its responsibility founders was to give it what they alleged was a purely rational basis, but it was only abstractions that were being used; the Idea was lacking; and the experiment ended in the maximum of frightfulness and terror."
109. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 61.
110. Ibid, p. 61.

111. Ibid, p. 64. Of course, Taylor has in mind his "expressivist" Hegel.
112. Taylor, "Alternative Futures: Legitimacy, Identity and Alienation in Late-Twentieth-Century Canada," in Reconciling the Solitudes, p. 102.
113. Krob, p. 254-256, and Meynell, p. 93, 105. See also Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 57-61, and Hegel, p. 539.
114. Taylor, "Alternative Futures," p. 100-102, and "Can Canada Survive the Charter?" Alberta Law Review, xxx, 2, (1992), p. 432.
115. Arthur Ripstein, "Recognition and Cultural Membership," Dialogue, xxxiv, (1995), p. 353.
116. See, in particular, Barry Cooper and David Bercuson, Deconfederation: Canada Without Quebec, (Toronto, 1991)."
117. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 58.
118. Cooper and Bercuson, p. 100.
119. Hilliard Aronovitch delivered a paper on this topic at a Conference on Political Realism from Trudeau to Taylor at the University of Ottawa, June 1, 2001. At the same conference, H.D. Forbes presented a paper on Taylor's multicultural idealism.
120. Max Nemni, "Trudeau's Canada" in Cite Libre, XXVIII, 4, (Fall, 2000), p. 16-24.
121. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values," in Reconciling the Solitudes, p. 177.
122. It is worth noting that Taylor and Trudeau clashed on the political battlefield, too, not just in the philosophic arena. They ran against each other several times in the 1960s, seeking the same Montreal seat for Parliament. Trudeau was the Liberal candidate, naturally, while Taylor represented the socialist CCF, the forerunner of the New Democratic Party.
123. Samuel LaSelva, The Moral Foundations of Canadian Federalism, (Montreal, 1996), p. 82. He writes, "Not only do these two dimensions of the charter work against each other, but one of them is nation-destroying." See also Chapter Four for a succinct overview on the liberal-communitarian debate with the framework of debates about the charter. He argues — rightly, in my view — that contrary to the communitarian claim the charter

need not imply "an atomistic society" simply because, unlike the American Bill of Rights, it explicitly protects the collective rights of groups and disadvantaged minorities. In effect, the liberal Trudeau wanted both diversity and autonomy, which, I would argue, is a very Hegelian position to take. On the charter's popularity, see Alan Cairns' introduction to Disruptions: Constitutional Struggles from the Charter to Meech Lake, Douglas Williams, ed., (Toronto, 1991).

124. Pierre Trudeau, Memoirs, (Toronto, 1993), p. 322-323.
125. Ibid, p. 47. I would also refer the reader back to Endnote #5 in Part One for the reference Trudeau's attachment to Green.
126. Trudeau, Against the Current: Selected Writings of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1939-1996, (Toronto, 1996), p. 68. The essay was first published in 1958 in the magazine Vrai with the title "Les cheminements de la politique."
127. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values," p. 177-178.
128. Trudeau, The Essential Trudeau, ed. Ron Graham, (Toronto, 1998), p. 80.)
129. Quoted by Nemni, "Trudeau's Canada," p. 20.
130. Ibid, p. 22.
131. Quoted by Nemni, p. 22.
132. Trudeau, The Essential Trudeau, p. 165.
133. Pierre Trudeau, "Say Goodbye to the Dream of One Canada," in Donald Johnston, ed., With a Bang, Not a Whimper, (Toronto, 1988), p. 10. The article was originally published simultaneously in the Toronto Star and La Presse on May 27, 1987.)
134. Guy Laforest, Trudeau and the End of the Canadian Dream, trans. Paul Leduc Brown and Michelle Weinroth. Montreal, 1995), p. 107. Laforest says Trudeau took advantage of the weaknesses in the ratification process "and thereby played a key role in the dismantling of the accord ... Within the context of a study of Mr. Trudeau's political commitment, the Meech Lake saga takes on the form of a classic ancient tragedy." p. 109)
135. Taylor appeared before the committee on December 19, 1990. Interestingly, while he does not in his presentation, "The Stakes of Constitutional Reform," renounce his federalist outlook or that Quebec's

distinct-society desires should be accommodated *within* Canada, he demonstrates clearly in his use of language — he refers to "our" situation or "our" borders — that he identifies himself first as Quebecer and secondly as a Canadian. See Taylor's essay in Reconciling the Solitudes, p. 140-154. For an analysis of Taylor's role in Canada's constitutional debates see Guy LaForest, "Philosophy and political judgement in a multinational federation," in Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism, p. 194-209.

136. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 60.
137. Taylor, "Alternative Futures," p. 102.
138. Cooper and Bercuson, Deconfederation, p. 135
139. See Stephen Holmes, The Anatomy of Antiliberalism, (Cambridge, 1993). He traces the liberal tradition through such thinkers as John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill and John Rawls. The communitarian anti-liberal tradition, he says, has its roots in Jean-Jacques Rousseau Joseph de Maistre, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and Carl Schmitt.
140. For a succinct commentary on this issue see Barry Cooper, "Political Religions in Quebec and the Constitutional Politics of Identity," a paper presented to the joint CPSA/CHA panel on Constitutional Politics and Quebec, at the Learned Societies, St. John's, Newfoundland, June, 1997.
141. Michael Lusztig, "Canada's Long Road to Nowhere: Why the Circle of Command Liberalism Cannot Be Squared," Canadian Journal of Political Science, 32, 3, (September, 1999), p. 451-452, 462-463. Lusztig distinguishes command liberals from anti-liberal communitarians. The latter eschew liberalism, subordinating individual rights to a collectively derived conception of the good life. He refers to Taylor as the "quintessential command liberal."
142. For an interpretation of Locke that sees him as more concerned with community than Taylor allows, see John Dunn, "What is Living and What is Dead in the Political Theory of John Locke?", Interpreting Political Responsibility, p. 9-22, and James Tully, A Discourse on Property: John Locke and his Adversaries, (Cambridge, 1980).
143. Taylor, Sources, p. 193-194, and Philosophical Arguments, p. 181-203, 213-214.

144. Taylor, "Irreducibly Social Goods" and "Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate," in Philosophical Arguments, p. 145, 143, 188.
145. Taylor, Philosophical Papers II: Human Agency and Language, (Cambridge, 1985), p. 205-209, 275-276. It is worth noting that Will Kymlicka also argues that liberals often "neglect the extent to which individual freedom and well-being is only possible within the community. Stephan Mulhall and Adam Swift discuss Taylor's elaboration of this relationship between individuality and culture in Liberals and Communitarians, (Oxford, 1997).
146. Ibid, p. 209. Taylor's emphasis.
147. Ruth Abbey, Charles Taylor, (Princeton, 2000), p. 105.
148. Taylor, Hegel, p. 376 and Hegel and Modern Society, p. 83.
149. Ibid, p. 376.
150. Abbey, p. 106.
151. Srinivasan, p. 130-131.
152. Ibid, p. 131.
153. Taylor, "The Rushdie Controversy," Public Culture, vol. 2, no. 1, (Fall, 1989), p. 118-122.
154. Ibid, p. 122.
155. Ronald Beiner, "Hermeneutical Generosity and Social Criticism" in his book Philosophy in a Time of Lost Spirit: Essays on Contemporary Theory, (Toronto, 1997), p. 151-166.
156. Dunn, Interpreting Political Responsibility, p. 186.
157. Dunn, "Pursuing the Personal by Way of the Communal," Times Higher Education Supplement, January 22, 1993, p. 20.
158. Taylor, Sources of the Self, p. 520.
159. Beiner, p. 155.
160. Ibid, p. 156-157. Beiner's emphasis.

PART FIVE

Northern Spirits: Summary and Conclusion

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Situating Spirit

Canada, I argued in my introductory Preface, exists in the tension between those factors that promote disunity and those that foster unity. The underlying narrative of Canadian political and social history has been the effort to reconcile this tension. A moderately conservative social order, the prominence of the state in shaping society and a prevalent psychology of compromise have all worked to maintain Canadian political unity. Equally, though, "there has been throughout Canadian history a passion for identity," as David Taras puts it. "The desire to come to terms with oneself in place and time and in relation to others is itself a national instinct."¹ Put in Hegelian terms, the desire for reconciliation runs deep in the Canadian psyche. In their political and social arrangements Canadians have sought to reconcile themselves to their time and place both as individuals and as members of a larger community.

Hegel's philosophical project, as I argued in Part One, aimed at reconciling the seemingly contradictory tensions between the autonomous freedom posited by the liberal individualism of the Enlightenment thinkers and the individual's longing to overcome his alienation from the natural world and from others. According to some interpretations, Hegel believed this reconciliation was possible in the embodiment of Objective Spirit in the state. The state could bring

men to self-consciousness of their freedom. Concomitantly, individuals who seek to satisfy their desires further the development of the state and move forward the unfolding of freedom, thus fulfilling history's purpose. Hegel's political community, thus, reveals the process of history and dialectic as the working out of the reconciliation between individual or subjective freedom and an internally organised state. Broadly speaking, this essay explored how Hegel's thought has played out in the context of the Canadian political community. That is to say, the response of John Watson, George Grant and Charles Taylor to the tensions, conflicts and questions of Canada's political existence was informed by Hegel's philosophy. Thus, the question to which this essay was a response was essentially this: How has the Hegelian Spirit manifested itself in the thought of Watson, Grant and Taylor? Or, put more formally, what has been the movement of Spirit in the Canadian mind?

I would like to believe that I have provided something of an answer. In brief: Watson finds in Hegel support for urging Canadians into imperial citizenship; Grant, conversely, regards Hegelian rationalism as a formula for subsuming the 'idea' of Canada into the tyranny of a "universal and homogeneous state"; and Taylor finds a multiculturalist Spirit promoting a politics of recognition that can maintain Canada as a unified state and even serve as a model for the globalising world.

It is not that simple, of course. The thought of all three is much more complex. For example, both Watson and Grant, drawing on Hegel's thought,

oppose the idea of a world-state. But where Watson employs Hegelian principles to justify his imperial aspirations, Grant sees those same principles leading to tyranny. Similarly, where Watson's "Spirit" looks forward to Canada's future (as he would like to see it), Grant looks back and laments the passing of a particular "Spirit." Taylor, on the other hand, sees a Spirit that he thinks expresses a world-wide phenomenon of multicultural societies in formation. Then again, while all three share certain communitarian concerns, Watson leans more to the individual where Grant and Taylor incline toward the collective. And, I would argue that where Grant sees multiculturalism as a homogenising force, Taylor regards it as a means for preserving the Canadian community. Yet, Taylor, Grant and Watson are in accord on how extreme individualism both undermines community and destroys authentic human freedom. Indeed, they share a similar critique of the atomising features of modern liberalism, including its contractarian politics and the idea of the neutral state. And all three share concerns about the consequence of modernity's reduction of classical reason — that is, philosophy — to modern instrumental rationality.

I could go on, but the point is that there are numerous areas where my three Hegelians converge and others where they diverge — even as they draw on the same Hegelian concepts — which makes it difficult to claim some definitive commonality regarding their appropriations of Hegel. Nevertheless, as I argued in the Preface, if there is one philosophic question with which all three are concerned it is the question of the proper relationship between the individual and

the community or the state, or, more abstractly, between the self and the other. In this regard, their reliance on Hegel is understandable considering that Hegel is probably the paradigmatic thinker on this fundamental political question. As this essay has tried to make clear, regardless of their different interpretations of Hegel, the responses of Watson, Grant and Taylor to this question are very much tied to their respective readings of Hegel's master-slave dialectic and its struggle-for-recognition theme. In brief: Watson found in the master-slave dialectic a theory for a federalist empire; Grant saw in Hegel's fable the dark shadow of a tyrannical world-order; and Taylor found the theoretical justification for his expressivist politics.

That such different responses could come from the same source should not be surprising: What a philosopher *meant* is not necessarily what he comes to *mean*. Still, it is something of a conundrum that Hegel's central philosophic trope would produce so many contradictory "meanings." Given this, I want in this concluding section to summarise some of the "meanings" that have emerged from my Hegelians' appropriations. My remarks are intended more as suggestive summaries than as definitive compare-and-contrast conclusions. Still, I hope they provide a unifying thread to the complex movement of "Spirit" in Canada, and highlight what I take to be the most distinctive attributes in the thought of my three Hegelians. I would also hope my concluding remarks point toward further inquiries into the where-and-whither of Spirit, particularly in terms of Canada's future, such as it may be.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

Charles Taylor — The Myth of Multiculturalism

We suffer, according to Taylor, from the sense that things are falling apart, that the centre no longer holds and the world is increasingly anarchical. Of course, few of us fret about the decay of civilisation on a daily basis; we generally go about our everyday existence confident that whatever the future may conjure, things will get better. Yet, few would doubt that our faith in progress is being tested. We are increasingly confronted with the sense that the political and social order we trusted to shield us from despotism and violence is not as secure as we once believed. Portents of disorder appear everywhere, from the barbarous to the bathetic: terrorist attacks on civilian populations, threats of war, the seeming collapse of nation-states in the Third World. Closer to home, the weakening of traditional social and family structures, the atrophying of civic life, and the pervasive cynicism towards political elites and growing mistrust and hostility between groups within society appear to be a society-wide trend.

Of course, every age and society has its fears and anxieties. But it seems the anxieties of our age are somewhat unique, and even paradoxical. At least this is Charles Taylor's conclusion:

What is special about our case is that we see the breakdown coming about in a particular way. We see it coming through hypertrophy, through our becoming too much what we have been. This kind of fear is perhaps definitive of the modern age, the fear

that the very things that define our break with earlier traditional societies — our affirmation of freedom, equality, radical new beginnings, control over nature, democratic self-rule — will somehow be carried beyond feasible limits and will undo us.²

Put more crudely, what Taylor is getting at is the perception that the so-called crisis of western liberal democracy, including Canada's version, reflects a crisis of excess, the consequence of too much of a good thing. For Taylor, at the core of this crisis is the concept of individualism pushed to its extreme. The result is the idea that people are (or deserve to be) completely autonomous and, therefore, able to create their own values irrespective of historic or cultural circumstances. This attitude has eroded the loyalties, customs and attachments to that which is beyond the self, including the family and the wider political community. The result, says Taylor, is a legitimation crisis.

In Part Four, I offered Taylor's response to this crisis, particularly as it applies to the problem of Canada. In essence, he seeks to reconcile expressive unity and radical autonomy. Taylor views Hegel's philosophy as an effort to reconcile the cultural movements of the Enlightenment — with its emphasis on the objectification of nature (including human nature) and the corresponding claim that nature is to be understood in mechanistic and atomistic terms — and Romanticism, with its anti-dualist view of human existence and its denial of the dichotomy of body and soul, man and nature and the individual and the community. Hegel, according to Taylor, sought to transcend both movements in a synthesis inspired by what he calls the 'expressive' theory of man and his experience.

In Taylor's view, Hegel realised the depth of opposition between the demand for 'expressive' unity (the unity of man with himself, nature and others) and the Kantian demand for radical moral autonomy or freedom. But not only did Hegel realise the depth of this opposition, he saw it as necessary; that is, in the process of being overcome. On this claim, Taylor argues, we have the main theme of Hegel's mature philosophy: the idea of progress through necessary opposition and its reconciliation. All the fundamental concepts of Hegel's thought, including the identity and non-identity of the subject, freedom and self-consciousness, the nature of Spirit, the relationship between necessity and contingency, between the universal and the particular, reason and understanding — all, Taylor argues, involve attempts at reconciling the various oppositions. These oppositions are to be removed not by eliminating one or the other of each pair of opposites, but by the reconciliation of the members of each pair in a higher unity. Hence, Hegel's argument that history is the progressive achievement of human freedom, understood as the reconciliation of reason and nature. On the basis of this claim Taylor concludes that Hegel's contemporary relevance is due to his thought having been

an important step in the development of the modern notion of freedom. He helped to develop a conception of freedom as total self-creation, which indeed was attributable in his philosophy only to cosmic Spirit, but which only needed to be transposed onto man to push the conception of freedom as self dependence to its ultimate dilemma. He thus had an important part in the intensification of the conflict around the modern notion of freedom.³

For his part, Taylor offers a narrative that aims not at limiting (or

eliminating) modern values, but rather at finding a way to rescue their integrity against the distortions that have developed in the contemporary world. He seeks to lessen our despair over the moral condition of modernity in depicting the post-Hegelian world as still following the Hegelian agenda of making a transition from heteronomy to autonomy. Drawing on Hegel's concept of recognition, Herderian language theory and Rousseau's idea of authenticity, Taylor promotes a notion of modern freedom that takes into account the need for people establish an identity that reflects their "belonging" to a culture. He contrasts his claim for expressive freedom with the liberal notion of freedom as constituted by formal and abstract rights. And, from this perspective, Taylor concludes that the way to offset the consequences of hypertrophy, including atomism and the fragmentation of society, is to recognise community identities. That is to say, the preservation of modern liberalism requires recognising and maintaining cultural differences.

Before I follow this line of thought, it is well to recall that Taylor's attacks on atomism and extreme individualism follow Hegel's distinction between *Verstand* and *Vernunft*; that is, between the insights of a mathematised "understanding" that segregates and isolates its objects in the process of analysis, and the more fluid and holistic "reason" that grasps things whole and within their context. For Taylor, modernity and its atomistic manifestations largely reflect the practices of *Verstand*, or instrumental reason. A singular purpose throughout his work is to criticise those efforts to comprehend the conduct of human life in terms taken from a particular understanding of the natural sciences.

This "scientific" or "naturalist" understanding is characterised by a stance of detachment and disengagement toward the objects under observation. For Taylor, this naturalist perspective, when applied to human beings, inadequately interprets humans as "objects" or "things" that can be known for what they are when detached from the social and natural worlds in which they live.

Against this view Taylor offers his expressivist theory and its claim that humans are not "things," but self-interpreting agents whose actions are ordered by self-given meanings and purposes. Taylor asserts that the modern conceptions of individualism and freedom are tied to the scientific worldview that emerged during the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. At the core of the Enlightenment project was the aim of mastering the human world in the same way that the natural world was to be mastered, that is, through scientific observation and manipulation. This technological understanding would allow humans to remake themselves and their world to suit their desires. Such a worldview fostered the notion of the autonomous, self-responsible individual as the locus of value. This led, in turn, to the political ideal that the rights of the individual take precedence over the needs of the collective, and that the state's function was, in part, one of keeping order between self-seeking individuals.

Taylor by no means rejects all aspects of the Enlightenment project — greater respect for individual worth and the diminution of authoritarian political orders, for instance. But he argues that traditional liberalism's promotion of the atomistic, self-sufficient individual has created a society in which people are

alienated from the community in which they live. Traditional liberalism, according to this argument, downplays the reality that people gain meaning and purpose in life from and through their relationships and attachments to others. People are not self-created; rather, they are formed in and by communities. And they are free and authentic as individuals only when they know themselves as belonging to communities. In essence, then, Taylor promotes the idea that Kantian liberalism can work together with Rosseauean substantive democracy through the adoption of Herderian expressivism and Hegelian recognition.

Taylor offers the 'crisis' of Canada as a paradigmatic example of these clashing philosophical concepts. In the separatist aspirations of francophone Quebecers we see a fundamental contest between the principles of the radical Enlightenment and Romantic expressivism. Taylor's position is that of promoting a politics of "deep diversity" such that "a plurality of ways of belonging"⁴ would be acknowledged and accepted without having to 'pass through' some other more dominant community. In effect, Canadian society would accommodate diverse cultures within a single political order. Taylor distinguishes this idea from "first-level diversity" of traditional liberal societies in which the diversity of cultural groups is acknowledged, but all are treated equally by the state — "the politics of equal dignity," as he calls it. Taylor argues that such comprehensive equality cannot produce genuine recognition because it does not, in fact, provide equal dignity to different cultures.

In particular, francophone Quebecers (along with aboriginals) are under

pressure from English-speaking Canada to adopt forms of governance that conflict with their culture. But they fear the Kantian liberalism of English-speaking Canada will have homogenising consequences and undermine the culture that gives meaning and identity to their lives. Thus, imposing a blanket procedural liberalism on Quebecers, constitutes a form of oppression:

The claim is that the supposedly neutral set of difference-blind principles of equal dignity is in fact a reflection of one hegemonic culture. As it turns out, then, only the minority or suppressed cultures are being forced to take alien form. Consequently, the supposedly fair and difference-blind society is not only inhuman (because suppressing identities) but also, in a subtle and unconscious way, itself highly discriminatory.⁵

In terms of Quebec, this means acknowledging that measures to maintain Quebec's francophone culture need not infringe on traditional liberal principles such as freedom of speech, association and religions. There is room to allow collective rights such as language protection to take precedence over other rights when legitimate collective aspirations require it. English-speaking Canada fails to understand that the supposed recognition of equal individuals rights provided by strict adherence to the Charter would undermine Quebec's cultural identity and lead ultimately to the disappearance of the French culture in North America, which, of course, is something francophones cannot accept.

To be sure, Taylor is not advocating the fragmentation or balkanisation of Canada. But he warns that without such pluralistic recognition Canada will undoubtedly break apart. "Deep diversity is the only formula on which a united federal Canada can be rebuilt ..."⁶ To prevent this, he argues, there must be

more than one formula for citizenship, other models of liberal society that not only maintain the goods of procedural liberalism such as *habeas corpus* and other fundamental rights, but that also recognise communal or collective goods. Canadians must reconcile the liberal tradition of individual rights with the communitarian emphasis on collective rights.

Can this be done? In my concluding remarks in Part Four, I expressed some reservations regarding Taylor's reliance on cultural identity in the establishment of communal goods. Hegel, I noted, does support the communitarian position in regard to the importance of community the value of membership in, say, the family and the state, maintaining that the purpose of such membership cannot be reduced to the satisfaction of utilitarian desires or the protection of individual rights. However, Hegel's communitarianism is more nuanced. Hegel praises community membership (and the institutions that sustain it) for its capacity to extend individual freedom. Where Taylor's Herderian romantic approach highlights "belongingness" and cultural identity, Hegel makes freedom the primary purpose of the community.

Taylor may argue that the community is a substantive good because only by our being members of a community can we find a significant meaning and substance to our lives.⁷ But, equally, a community can only constitute itself as *good* to the degree it maximises the freedom of its individual members. In this sense, then, Hegel, contrary to Taylor's suggestion of his wanting too much unity, seeks a reconciliation between the individual and the community based on the

interdependence of *right* and *good*, morality and freedom. This is the function of *Sittlichkeit*, or ethical life, which is both the product and producer of freedom.

While Hegel also seeks some form of identity between the individual and the community — the "Spirit of the people," as he puts it — he is careful not to base such an identity on a substantive account of the good. Rather, he mediates the relationship of the individual and the community through various forms of subjective freedom, or *Sittlichkeit*, always aware of the potential of civil society for undermining freedom. Hegel, then, does not seek Taylor's expressivist community, but rather a cautious symbiosis between the individual and the community.

For Hegel, while there is a linkage between freedom and abstract rights, substantive freedom is embodied in family, civil society and the institutions of the state. This obviously finds an echo in Taylor's claim that we are always embedded in a particular cultural milieu. But Taylor, I would argue, inflates Hegel's *Sittlichkeit* so much that he not only includes constitutional and laws as relevant to political consideration, but most every other cultural practice, custom and tradition. Furthermore, where Hegel emphasises individual self-determination as the essential purpose of *Sittlichkeit*, Taylor tends to foreground communal identity by subsuming the mediations between the individual and the community under expressivism. Hegel would agree with Taylor on the dangerous excesses of individualism, but he would also insist that the way to recast the politics of rights is through a more 'ideal' understanding of human freedom.

What this suggests is that there may be an "illiberal strand"⁸ in Taylor's thought that makes his prescription for resolving the 'crisis' of Canada problematic. Indeed, it is not inconceivable that given the right circumstances, his notion of a culture-centred liberal order could be taken to its logical extreme to produce either anti-liberal communitarianism, or, in the opposite direction, extremist individualism. If, as Taylor argues, a national culture is the deepest level of diversity, then, presumably, most any political action could be justified in the way of preserving it, including, presumably, the oppression of those individuals or groups who are believed to pose a threat to the "national" culture.

On the other end of the scale is the danger of according special protection to internal minorities in the name of group rights and communal identity. Would the privileging of francophone rights in Quebec open the door for the suppression of other cultures within Quebec? And what about internal minorities within internal minorities? Would protecting the rights of a particular aboriginal band against a cultural majority leave individual aboriginal women vulnerable to oppression? But then if you protect these women, too, what about the danger of discrimination against aboriginal lesbians who live off the reservation? Obviously, such an iterative procedure can logically regress to the point of absurdity. But that is the point: As Michael Lusztig observes,

ultimately the only politically irreducible core is the individual. And once we begin to think of special rights for the individual, "special" rights becomes a meaningless concept. *We are back to liberal individualism.*⁹

Such a claim surely raises questions about whether there is anything

especially *liberal* about Taylor's "substantial liberalism," and, moreover, whether his expressivist solution to the crisis of Canada is coherent. This is Janet Ajzenstat's question in a 1995 essay: If the cultural differences between Quebec and the rest of Canada are disappearing, as Taylor suggests, and if both adhere to liberal values of "equality, non-discrimination, the rule of law, (and) the mores of representative democracy,' then why are the two political societies so far apart on constitutional issues?" She goes on to question whether a country like Canada can accommodate both first-level and deep diversity. "Procedural liberals," she concludes, "may have their doubts."¹⁰

Indeed, there is little doubt that nearly four decades of constitutional upheaval have undermined Canadians' confidence in their institutions and in constitutional formalities. The difficulty facing Canadians, one that leaves notions of substantive liberalism looking hollow, is that there is no substitute for procedural constitutionalism. The breakdown in procedural constitutionalism provoked immoderate opposition to Quebec's aspirations, which, in turn, fostered Quebecers' notions that the rest of Canada was against them and secession the only solution. "What we are seeing is not a battle between two forms of liberalism — substantive and procedural — but the breakdown of the procedural constitution." While Taylor may promote Quebec's collective aspirations through what he sees as a middle way between atomistic liberalism and anti-liberal communitarianism, "it is not always easy to see how substantive liberalism in Taylor's schema differs from the illiberal, closed regime."¹¹

Jurgen Habermas reinforces this concern in a essay written in response to Taylor's The Politics of Recognition. Arguing against Taylor's critique of value-neutral liberalism, Habermas maintains that liberal institutions in democratic countries are constantly subjected to ethical debate and reformulation. He defends the traditional discourse-based model of democracy, saying it does not need the imposition of collectivist-oriented language. Taking the example of women's rights, he notes how liberal regimes have tried to create equal opportunities for jobs, education, social status and political participation. However, feminist groups have claimed much of the legislation merely perpetuates stereotypes and imposes new forms of discrimination. They argue that equal recognition is possible only when those involved are able to define their needs themselves. As Habermas puts it: "Safeguarding the private autonomy of citizens with equal rights must go hand in hand with activating their autonomy as citizens of the nation."¹² Thus, Habermas adopts the essentially Hegelian position of a "symbiosis" between individual freedom and communal belongingness.

Taylor, on the other hand, in arguing that language is the foundation of community, claims the community provides the individual with the capacity for moral and spiritual discernment and, hence, the conditions of identity and freedom. In effect, even though he denies the metaphysical foundations of Hegel's thought, Taylor promotes a kind of secular metaphysic that would identify the individual's inward attainment of selfhood with the larger rational order of the

external community. In advocating a form of multiculturalism that positively affirms some, but not all, of certain cultures' characteristics, Taylor seeks a non-relative, yet, at the same, non-metaphysical, horizon from which particular cultures can be judged as to their worth, and the 'best' elements of them preserved. But to me, this amounts to a dangerous reification of culture, and raises questions how Taylor's ostensible support for economic and social liberalism can be squared with his philosophical critique of liberal individualism.

Taylor certainly extends this secular metaphysic into the political sphere, as in the case of Quebec: language allows francophone Quebecers to discover a common ground of moral deliberation and judgement, which, in turn, provides the basis for political bonds and political action. In this way, Taylor links the moral, spiritual and political spheres of an individual's life with his participation in community, effectively making that person's authenticity dependent upon his sense of identity with that community.¹³ The result, though, is that in trying to protect the community from the fragmentation of atomistic liberalism, Taylor is impelled "to include elements in his vision of society (the expressive community, in short) that could easily be brought into the service of a totalitarian community."¹⁴ Taylor's concern for community creates the potential for a return to unreflective community, a reinstatement of irrational romanticism in politics. If the individual is subservient to the will of the rational community, then the possibility exists for an irrationally-grounded community to take its place and engulf the individual.

But does this not suggest that Taylor's communitarianism may well be self-defeating in its effort to preserve pluralism? The lack of any evidence in Quebec that the French-speaking majority is willing to recognise the autonomy of cultural minorities within the province is sufficient to demonstrate this. Indeed, following the logic of Luszti's argument, recognising Quebec along the lines for which Taylor argues would, in all likelihood, lead to the imposition of values on Quebec's minorities that Taylor would find offensive if applied to francophones by Canada's English-speaking majority. Furthermore, it is hard to see how the deliberate imposition of francophone culture by coercive law is logically any different from the imposition of anglophone culture by means of supposedly universal liberal principles. This suggests that Taylor's aims are ultimately collectivist when taken to their logical end and, hence, undermine the liberal principle of individual freedom.¹⁵

It has also been argued Taylor that does not give sufficient attention to how liberalism itself provides the means by which his concerns for cultural survival can be met. For example, Brian Barry maintains that, in fact, liberalism does accommodate

precisely the kind of thing that Taylor says is inadequate: "having the French language available [in Quebec] for those who might choose it." Policies that make it illegal for the children of francophone parents to attend any except francophone public schools put the power of the state behind "those who value remaining true to the culture of our ancestors" while making it impossible for "those who might want to cut loose in the name of some individual goal of self-development" to pursue their aspirations.¹⁶

But Barry argues the idea of birth-as-fate, that in being born into a particular culture requires one to maintain that culture, betrays an ethnic nationalism "profoundly at odds with liberalism."¹⁷ Taylor's downgrading of personal freedom in the liberal creed in favour of collective identity undermines those institutional methods by which liberalism has traditionally been able to deal with problems of communal tension.

On the basis of his "politics of recognition," Taylor promotes multiculturalism in terms of demands for recognition of the other because "misrecognition has now graduated to the rank of a harm ..."¹⁸ He argues that what is at stake in debates about multiculturalism is the recognition of the equal value of different cultures. In other words, not only is there a demand for recognition but also a claim that what is sought is not only acknowledgement of the others' cultural identity but an acknowledgement of the worth of the others' culture. We are obliged to grant *equal* worth to all cultures. To be sure, while he argues for the recognition of the values of different cultures, Taylor does not say these values must be accepted as a good simply because they are attached to a particular culture. Society as a whole needs to deliberate on which cultural values and practices it can accept that do not undermine other overarching values.

But as Brian Barry and other commentators note, this argument is open to some practical questions: 1) How exactly is this debate about cultural values supposed to proceed without turning into a struggle for power? 2) Why does a bid for cultural survival require special rights? 3) Does having a majority in any

particular jurisdiction entitle a group to use the power of the state to impose their desires? 4) Is a majority culture entitled to preserve itself or the majority's understanding of that culture? For example, if Quebec separates would the francophone majority still have the right to protect its language and culture or would anglophones gain that right against the majority francophone population?

I concluded in Part Four that Taylor's promotion of multiculturalism, tied as it is to a language-oriented or culture-based notion of autonomy, has disturbing implications for individual freedom. But it also has implications for the Canadian nation-state. An increasingly multicultural society cannot, by definition, possess a meaningful national identity.¹⁹ In this regard, Taylor's notion of multicultural recognition presents something of a conundrum in that its consequences quite possibly lead to the opposite of what it purports to promote. Taylor's argument that westerners need to be more open to non-western cultures is, in fact, a western ideal. How then can Taylor's politics of recognition promote multiculturalism since it is "fundamentally a politics of integration, which does not increase but decreases diversity or pluralism."²⁰ In the end, might not Taylor's fusion of cultures foster the kind of centralised, authoritarian and homogeneous universal state that he claims to abhor? George Grant, who shares many of Taylor's communitarian concerns, certainly thought so.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

George Grant — The Conundrum of Canada

Grant certainly shares Taylor's concern for reconciling the tensions between the individual and the community. But more tellingly, they both see in philosophic history the sources of the modern malaise. For example, both Grant and Taylor see links between the West's emphasis on reason and will and the rise of modern science and technology. They both detect in Augustine's thought the seeds of modern instrumental reasoning and subjectivism. Likewise, they share the view that the source of the idea that nature, including human nature, could be subjected to human will can be found in the Reformation's rejection of the mediations of Catholicism. And they both see the rationalising tendencies of modernity expressed in early modern thinkers such as Bacon and Descartes.

With a similar critique of modernity, Grant and Taylor also share concerns about extreme individualism and the reliance on instrumental reason, seeing them as promoting social and political fragmentation. Grant shares both Taylor's sympathies regarding Quebec's nationalist aspirations and his antipathies toward Pierre Trudeau's centralised federalism. In fact, they both sound like John Watson in seeing Canada itself as a kind of commonwealth that encourages the local and particular without the imposition of a universalising and homogenising political order. In this, of course, all three reflect the distinctly Hegelian conflict between individual freedom and communal belongingness. All three fear the

expressive unity of community fragmenting under the pressure of a universalising individualism that leaves people isolated and alienated. In Grant's case, though, the "deprivals" that he perceived to be destroying Canada were also taking place at a civilisational level. On this point, though, a distinction can be detected between Grant's and Taylor's communitarianism.

Taylor, it will be recalled, believes we can still find sources within modernity that will enable us to overcome the conflicts of modernity. Grant, however, is much more sceptical. This can be seen in their differing views on multiculturalism. Taylor, as I argued in Part Four, sees multiculturalism as a means for reconciling the fragmentary tendencies of Canadian political life. Grant, however, seems to have seen multiculturalism in a more problematic light. This is evident in his insistence that "a society only articulates itself as a nation through some common intention among its people."²¹ On this point, as I argued in Part Three, Grant is following Hegel in holding the view that nations are to be understood by reference to their core purposes. Grant's political thought is grounded in the notion that a nation or a community is a partnership that can be understood primarily through the articulation of the purposes of the partners in establishing their union. In Grant's case the fundamental purpose of Canada was the maintenance of its French-and English-speaking partnership. The *modus vivendi* achieved in 1867 between the French- and English-speaking colonies of Canada was, for Grant, the unique and central feature of the Canadian nation-state. If Canada was to survive it had to be anchored in the reconciliation of

these two national communities. Without that ongoing arrangement, the idea of Canada would die, and with it the possibility of Canada.

Grant faults John Diefenbaker for ignoring this bedrock of Canadian unity. Diefenbaker, he writes in Lament for a Nation, effectively promoted a multicultural version of Canada in his appeal to "one united Canada, in which individuals would have equal rights irrespective of race and religion: there would be no first- and second-class citizens." While Grant does not quarrel with this idea as far as it applies to the civil rights of individuals, he argues that "the rights of individuals do not encompass the rights of nations." For Grant, Diefenbaker's multicultural vision smacked too much of the homogenising universalism of the United States. What distinguished Canada from the United States was the common purpose of 'two nations' — the French and the English — to unite into a single state so as to resist becoming American. Diefenbaker's notion of "the unity of all Canadians" was basically an Americanised interpretation of the Confederation partnership. In Grant's view, this 'multicultural unity' did not have the strength of purpose of the old two-nations partnership: "It could not encompass those who were concerned with being a nation, only those who wanted to preserve charming residual customs."²²

So, even though he shares many of Taylor's communitarian concerns, Grant's conservative vision of Canada precludes Taylor's multicultural prescription for the crisis of Canada. For Grant, multiculturalism is tantamount to a denial of cultural identity, not a protector of that identity. Taylor sees

multiculturalism decentralising political decision-making so that disparate groups can recover their loyalty to the whole by being an empowered part of the whole. Grant, however, sees multiculturalism reflecting the universalising and homogenising of modernity, another means by which liberalism subsumes different cultures into a kind of technological culture where authentic cultures become, as he puts it, charming residual cultures. Thus the multicultural agenda of Trudeau, according to Grant, further undermines any genuine Canadian political identity. Or, to put it differently, multiculturalism is yet another manifestation of the coming-to-be of the universal and homogeneous state and the "disappearance" of Canada, at least as it was defined by Grant.

In this regard, Part Three of this essay basically amounted to consideration of what Grant meant by the 'disappearance' of Canada in light of his response to and re-assessment of Hegelian thought. I examined the 'Canadian fate' that so concerned Grant and the philosophic dimensions Grant saw as contributing to that fate. In particular, I considered his response to and rejection of Hegel, illuminating this aspect of Grant's thought by touching on topics of concern that he shared with Hegel, such as the relationship between the individual and the community and the role of corporations and bureaucracy within in the nation-state. Such concrete comparisons allowed me to explicate the abiding Hegelianism of Grant's thought. I also considered Grant's Hegelianism through a discussion of several topics at the centre of Grant's thought, namely the problem of history, the question of technology, the 'mistake' of Christianity

and the nature of modern liberalism, at least as exemplified by Pierre Trudeau. On this latter topic, I showed how, for Grant, the identification of the goals of liberalism and techniques of rational management, produced a politics of "administrative rule" where elections were little more than plebiscites on which set of administrators and technocrats should be allowed to pull the levers of power.²³

Finally, I looked at how Grant's so-called return to Plato via such thinkers as Leo Strauss and Simone Weil, both of whom provided him with a coherent response to modernity and Hegel. Indeed, my examination of Grant's religious thought — his negative theology — was essential in that Grant, reacting against Hegel, located critical sources of the West's civilisational 'mistake' and, hence, the consequent disappearance of Canada, in Christianity itself. Unlike Taylor, who found 'sources' within modernity that would save it from itself, Grant detected the 'sources' of the modern 'crisis' within the pre-modern world.

Indeed, one of the main topics in Part Three was how, for Grant, biblical religion had a causal connection to the emergence of modern historical consciousness. Grant traced this historicist mindset to the prophetic religion of the Old Testament in which events in time were regarded as manifestations of God's will, pointing to some final redemptive act of God to which all events in time were leading, such that to participate in these events was to partake of God's overarching purpose. The culmination of this vision of time was the Incarnation, the singular event that for Christians made "history," or time, the

realm in which man's eternal salvation was worked out, the realm in which good ultimately overcomes evil. Grant regarded this Christian teleology as biblical theology's most radical departure from the ancient religion of natural law — and its most difficult obstacle in any attempt to reconcile Greek rational theology and Christian biblical theology.

It should be clear that Grant's understanding of the dispute between eastern and western Christianity provided him with a perspective that allowed him to better comprehend how the technological world emerged as a consequence, at least in part, of a particular version of Christianity and its doctrine of God. Western Christianity, Grant came to believe, had perpetrated a fundamental conceptual 'mistake' that eventually produced Hegel and the secular theology of glory of reflected in historicism and the idea of progress. The Reformation marked the revitalisation of the biblical religion of history, albeit with a corollary diminishment of the natural law tradition of Greek philosophy. This resulted in Christianity's salvational history succumbing to the secular religion of progress in which man's redemption is worked out in time by means of science and technology. As Grant concluded, "the moment of technical mastery comes out of the same science which gives us the historical sense."²⁴

With the Enlightenment, the Reformation idea of an infinite inner freedom was attached to the belief that man could shape events according to his will. Eventually, this idea of inner freedom gave way to the idea of external freedom, that is, freedom from all impositions, including even God. This spiritual freedom

combined with technology to reinforce the historicist belief that man could create his own heaven on earth, and, in this way, divine providence was transmuted into the Hegelian doctrine of historical progress. Thus, when Grant spoke of the 'impossibility' of Canada he was grappling with the full implications of Hegel's working out of the Reformation 'idea of freedom.' Which is to say, Grant was trying to comprehend how the progressive Spirit, stripped of the Greek tradition of contemplative reason, manifested itself in the modern technological world, especially in North America. Grant saw behind the 'fate' of North America the reshaping of biblical theology into a secular variant that regarded human freedom as the ability to 'rationalise' the world to satisfy egoistic desires and not as the rational contemplation of the whole. Where European civilisation was grounded in the traditions of Platonic and Aristotelian contemplation and Christian charity, North American society reflected a tradition, namely Calvinist Protestantism, that had relied on biblical theology or revelation to the exclusion of natural theology or rational contemplation. With the dwindling of religious faith, and in the absence of a contemplative tradition, North Americans were left with only the desire for mastery and an instrumental understanding of human reason as reflected in technology.

Grant's notion about the inevitability of Canada's 'disappearance' has been subjected to numerous shallow psychological and sociological critiques that, by and large, dismiss him for indulging a "metaphysical pathos (that) stems from a nostalgic longing for the past. Indeed, Lament for a Nation has been

dismissed has a mere "Anglo-Saxon lament," a product of nostalgia for some pre-war myth of Canada's Britishness.²⁵ Such criticism utterly misses the depths of Grant's thought regarding 'the rationalisation of the world.' Indeed, Grant detected this rationalist mindset even in contemporary liberal politics. While liberalism wants equality, moral progress, and happiness for all, it has at its core an ascription to the instrumental rationality of science and technology, both of which have made plain, in Grant's view, that "reason is only an instrument and cannot teach us how it is best to live."²⁶ Modern liberalism, penetrated by the instrumental rationality of science and technology, reduces freedom to the satisfaction of egocentric desires. And this, according to Grant, has resulted in politics being "increasingly replaced by administration" as exemplified under Trudeau.²⁷

Grant's criticism of modern bureaucracy should be considered with this broader philosophic background in mind. Contrary to Hegel's views on the 'universal class' and the role of corporations in sustaining a society, Grant saw the Canada's bureaucrats and its corporate leaders furthering the Hegelian universal and homogeneous state. In particular, Trudeau's linkage of national interests and universalist values, and his emphasis on techniques of cybernetic politics and rational administration, amounted to a denial of the worth of any local or particular culture, especially one living in such close proximity to the heartland of the technological world order. In other words, Canada's fate, its disappearance into the universal and homogeneous state, is part of the wider sweep of historical

forces.²⁸ The 'impossibility' of Canada's reflects the tyrannization of the globe under the aegis of technology.

With these comments I believe I have reasonably articulated Grant's views on Canada's fate and how it is linked to his 'turn' from Hegel. Nevertheless, there remains some puzzling nuances to his rejection of the Hegelian synthesis. In a 1957 letter to his wife, Grant acknowledged that Hegel possessed a "truer recognition of evil than other moderns," yet, at the same time, he seemed to accept the necessity of evil as something that served the ultimate good of freedom. While Christianity accepts suffering as part of the soul's journey to God, Grant thought Hegel too quick to accept evil in history, the price, as it were, of progress. Hegel identified his philosophy of history with the actions of divine providence in the world, and this, as far as Grant was concerned, was to call good evil and evil good.²⁹ But this, in turn, implies that if the essence of liberalism is the belief in freedom,³⁰ then liberal humanism, and the modern project as a whole, has too easily reconciled itself to evil and, as such, amounts to a theology of glory. "The whole movement of freedom from and rejection of transcendent standards above the human intellect or will, is simply the continuation of the theology of glory."³¹ But does this not imply that Grant sees modern philosophy as somehow complicit in evil? To consider this question is to penetrate to the very core of Grant's response to Hegel.

The best way to approach this core is to return to Strauss. In the concluding section of Part Three, I discussed how Strauss sees the possibility of

recovering a philosophic comprehension of the world by turning the historicist truth-claim on itself. He argues that the application of historicist premises to historicism itself results, ultimately, in a non-historicist recognition that the fundamental problems that require man's theoretical attention have remained unchanged throughout history.³² Rather than legitimising historicism, history seems to show that all human thought is concerned with the same fundamental themes and problems. For Strauss, this suggests the existence of an unchanging framework of theoretical concerns that persist despite changing historical conditions and epistemologies.³³ His philosophic project was aimed, by and large, at restoring classical ideas regarding the essential beneficence of nature and the primacy of the good.³⁴

Grant, likewise, finds in the persistence of fundamental concerns the possibility for a renewed philosophy of nature and, therefore, an adequate response to historicism.³⁵ But it is not to Strauss that Grant looks for such a possibility. In the last section of "Tyranny and Wisdom," Grant criticises Strauss for not giving due consideration to Jerusalem, or revelation. While he sides with Strauss in rejecting the historicist ontology of 'Kojève-Hegel', Grant also observes that Strauss shows a "remarkable reticence" in tackling the central core of the debate between the ancients and the moderns, namely "whether Machiavellian and Hobbesian politics are at least in part a result of the Biblical orientation of western society."³⁶

Similarly, while he shares Strauss's concern that modern liberal society is

largely determined by the technological imperatives of efficiency rather than the concept of universal freedom, Grant questions whether Strauss has shown due regard for the concept of universal justice and equality embedded in the liberal ideal. To deny the validity of this essentially Christian ideal, to reject the idea of technological change and development, one must consider the consequences for those less fortunate than oneself. The "poor, the diseased, the hungry and the tired can hardly be expected to contemplate any such limitation with the equanimity of the philosopher."³⁷

While acknowledging Strauss's distinction between esoteric and exoteric writing, Grant nevertheless questions why Strauss did not more adequately account for revelation — and, hence, the virtue of charity. How, Grant asks, is the Christian virtue of charity related to the Greek idea of contemplation. Which one takes primacy, charity or thought? Or is it possible that they are interrelated and interdependent?

Strauss showed Grant how modern philosophy had lowered the standards of human excellence to the desire for self-preservation, recognition and the liberation of the passions, effectively rejecting the self-restraint and discipline required by both Christianity and classical philosophy. But he left unanswered the question of the relationship between Christianity and philosophy, as well as the relationship between Christianity, technology and the coming-to-be of the universal and homogeneous state. For Grant, though, Christ's revelation meant the essential primacy of charity — a theology of the cross, as it were — and the

underlining notion of the essential equality of all men. And he saw that regardless of how secularised it has become, this concept still informs the ideals of modern egalitarian politics, globalisation and even the drive toward the universal and homogeneous state. Thought or reasoning that did not reflect charity — the theology of glory — was as deficient as a theology that did not respect man's capacity for reason (that is, philosophy).

Grant, as I have argued, rejects the Hegelian account of the relationship between philosophy and biblical religion as inadequate. In part, this is because he agrees with Strauss that Hegel's philosophy of nature is essentially Hobbesian and, therefore, irreconcilable to the Platonic understanding of a beneficent nature and the pursuit of the good. Yet, Grant questions why Strauss does not speak of the relationship between Hobbesian, or modern, political philosophy and biblical religion. Such reticence can only imply a particular position regarding Christian revelation.³⁸ What might that position be? And if that position can be discerned, what might a Grantian response to it be? Moreover, might there be a connection between Grant's criticism of Strauss and his own concerns regarding the 'disappearance' of Canada?" As one critic comments, Grant's interpretation of the debate between Strauss and Kojève constitutes "the intellectual or philosophical context within which his reflections on Canada and on its fate may best be understood."³⁹ These questions are also important in that while Strauss may have freed Grant from his admiration for Hegel, he failed, in Grant's view, to adequately account for the way in which the revolutionary appeal of modernity —

justice and equality for all and the scientific conquest of nature for the alleviation of hunger, disease and hardship — was historically derived from biblical religion and the primacy it gives to charity.

Grant observes that in the debate with Kojève, Strauss holds that the Hegelian claim to have synthesised the Greek ethic of honour-loving masters with the Christian morality of freedom-loving slaves is inadequate. But, at the same time, Strauss fails to account for the linkage between technological society and its emphasis on freedom from natural restraints and the self-restraint required of morality in biblical religion. Strauss, like Grant, recognises that the modern demand for freedom from necessity leaves man without any standard beyond himself to limit his attempts to satisfy his desires, and that this can lead to great evil. Both classical philosophy and Christianity maintain transcendent standards — the 'good' and God, respectively — to restrain these desires, and both understand that freedom detached from obedience to a transcendent standard can be destructive. Thus, both Grant and Strauss accept the necessity of limits as 'good' for man. Where they part is on the ultimate source of that limit.

While Strauss may have been reticent in criticising biblical theology in On Tyranny, as Grant observes, he shows no such reticence elsewhere in asserting the primacy of philosophy over religion. Accepting the necessity of limit, the question for Strauss is whether the source of that limit is embodied in classical natural law or the positive law of the Bible. "The Bible ... confronts us more clearly than any other book with this fundamental alternative: life in

obedience to revelation, life in obedience to human freedom, the latter being represented by the Greek philosophers."⁴⁰ Strauss clearly opts for the life of philosophy. Unassisted reason is sufficient for humans to have knowledge of the whole. In fact, Strauss argues that Christianity, in trying to reconcile reason and religion, sought to deprive philosophy of the "inner freedom from supervision" it had enjoyed under Judaism and Islam.⁴¹

Grant, of course, accepts the overarching authority of Christian revelation. His hope had been — as his admiration for Hegel implies — to bring reason and revelation together. He held that "rational theology must never detach itself from Biblical tradition."⁴² Strauss, however, denied the possibility of synthesising classical reason with biblical morality. Thus, the fundamental difference between Grant and Strauss comes down to their differences on the relationship between philosophy and biblical revelation. H.D. Forbes points out that this difference can be seen in their contrasting interpretations of Plato's account of the good in the Republic. Grant sees Plato referring to a Good that is "beyond being," or to God. Strauss holds there is nothing beyond being and that the idea of the good is simply the idea of the whole.⁴³ Be that as it may, this difference between Grant and Strauss on the relationship of reason and revelation explains why Grant questioned the comprehensiveness of Strauss's understanding of the linkage between modernity and Christianity. This is particularly important in light of Grant's insistence on a form of *knowing* distinct from that of modernity's instrumental reasoning. Christianity, he says, stands or falls with the assertion

that there is a knowledge beyond that available to human reason. He refers to this knowledge as faith, understood as the union of love and knowledge, or, put differently, the union of charity and reason. "Faith is the experience that the intellect is illuminated by love," he says, citing Simone Weil.⁴⁴

This suggests is that while Strauss denied the possibility of an Hegelian synthesis of philosophy and religion, of reason and revelation, Grant still held out hope for some kind of reconciliation. Long after his 'turn' from the Hegelian synthesis, Grant remained, at least in this sense, an Hegelian. This implies, I would argue, that for Grant we can only fully comprehend modernity by thinking reason and revelation, Plato and Christ, together. Which is what Hegel attempted to do.

It was Simone Weil who what taught him "what it is to hold Christ and Plato together."⁴⁵ In this sense, then, Weil provided Grant with the means to respond to the perceived inadequacies of Strauss's account of the modern project. From Grant's perspective, Strauss's assertion of the self-sufficiency of human reason resembles a continuation of the theology of glory tradition that sets human reason above other ways of knowing and, in effect, idolises human will or intellect. Weil was Grant's counterfoil to Strauss. Yet — and this to me is the abiding conundrum in Grant's thought — even though his commitment to Christian charity left him sympathetic to the ideas of 'Kojève-Hegel,' Grant accepted Strauss's judgement regarding the tyrannical tendency of modern philosophy and what it implied regarding the 'impossibility' of Canada. Indeed,

Grant's view about Canada's fate within the Hegelian project can be parsed to this statement: If modernity constitutes 'the end of philosophy' or, what is the same thing, 'the end of history', in favour of technology, then Canada is fated to disappear. That may seem an outlandish notion, but this is surely what Grant's diagnosis of modernity implies. If Hegel is right, if necessity and goodness are identical, and the universal and homogeneous state is the product of that identification, then Grant was correct to pronounce the impossibility of Canada.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

John Watson — The Resort to Empire?

Grant's concerns about the universal and homogeneous state are similar to those of John Watson's about world government.⁴⁶ Indeed, the arguments that Grant makes against the idea of the universal and homogeneous state being the best order closely resemble those put forward by Watson against the concept of a world-state. Where Grant speaks in defence of the 'love of one's own,' Watson speaks of the need to maintain "the ties of kindred and friendship, family and nation."⁴⁷ Watson also anticipates Grant's fear that a universal, homogeneous state would be a tyranny when he warns against a world-state that did not maintain differences between people and seek their highest good.

We can only have a true World-State when we have developed to their utmost the possibilities of each Nation-State, just as we cannot have a true Nation-State without the institution of the family and of private property, with the various industrial and commercial relations which they imply, and without that free play of individuality which gives rise to decentralised forms of association. *A World-State based upon the combination of variously differentiated Nation-States is a possible ideal; a World-State which abolishes all the differences of race and nationality and individuality is an empty ideal.*⁴⁸

Thus, while the logic of Watson's absolute idealism, like that of Hegel's, leads to a universal state, Watson saw such a state as unworkable if it did not allow internal differentiation. For Watson, such a world-state would be either too weak or, as Grant warned, too strong. If the latter, it would erase those 'differences of race and nationality and individuality' that provide men with the

basis for their consciousness of themselves as belonging to a community. If the former, it would be unable to provide individuals with the means for developing their awareness of themselves as spiritual beings; that is, their freedom.

The fundamental difference between Watson and Grant, then, is that Watson saw the World-State as an 'empty ideal' because any attempt to establish it would fail since people could not possibly surrender those particulars that made them different, whereas Grant, following Strauss, saw the universal and homogeneous state as all too possible because technology was gradually eliminating those differences, including the differences between philosophers and non-philosophers. In essence, Watson thought the world-state would be sabotaged because it would be contrary to human nature; Grant thought the world-state entirely possible because human nature was being transformed by technology. The application of the technological imperatives would promote tyranny and a lack of wisdom. The world-state would be tyrannical because only by means of tyranny could the state possibly eliminate *all* differences between people on a universal basis. And it would be unwise because the administrators of the world-state would have to forbid philosophy. Only a few are capable of being philosophers, of achieving the highest good, namely wisdom. But this means that philosophy accepts an ineradicable difference between men, between those who are capable of wisdom and those who are not. Obviously, in a completely egalitarian world such differences cannot be permitted. Ergo, philosophy would not be allowed. But if philosophic thought does not influence

the actions of politicians, then the unwise will rule, the result of which would be yet another tyranny that would seek the elimination of philosophy.

Watson's more positive view of a world-state is, of course, rooted in his acceptance of Hegel's notion of history as an intelligible realm of reality in which mankind is developing toward an end that reconciles the essential human aspiration to unite the spiritual and the material, the universal and the particular. Like Hegel, Watson saw human development logically progressing toward a universal state. However, unlike Grant, Watson still held out for the possibility of a world order that would achieve the reconciliation of universal and the particular. And, following Hegel, he applied the concept of reconciliation to explain the symbiotic nature of the relationship between universal and particular interests.

In Part Two I attempted to show how Watson applied the Hegelian concept of reconciliation to the realm of politics and society, including international relations. I discussed how Watson applied this concept, firstly, to the fundamental political problem of reconciling individual freedom and public authority and then, secondly, to the relation of individual nation-states to the Ideal world-state. I argued that for Watson the state exists for the establishment of those external conditions that enable the individual to attain his highest ends, which are the identity of the individual and the good of the community.

I began with a consideration of what Watson regarded as the fundamental political problem; namely, the reconciliation of freedom and authority. Watson, like Hegel, saw the individual as a product of social order, but unlike Taylor, he

was careful to avoid subsuming the being of the individual, his spiritual freedom, in the being of the community as a whole. Indeed, this was the thematic point to Watson's use of Socrates' trial and death as the paradigmatic model of the problem of the relationship between the individual and the community.

I tried to work out Watson's understanding of this relationship by following his philosophic history and his discussion of various thinkers from Plato and Aristotle through to Hegel and Nietzsche. Along the way I considered Watson's theories of individualism, freedom and the state, attempting to compare them to those of other philosophers, including Hegel. In an argument that closely resembles Taylor's, Watson attacked the idea of the atomistic individual and the social contract theory behind this idea as incoherent. Watson, like Taylor, argued that individuality apart from the community is impossible. However, as my consideration of Watson's theory of relative sovereignty suggests, Watson wants to maintain a balance between communal goods and individual freedom. Where Taylor's 'politics of recognition' can lead to illiberal results that can oppress the individual, Watson is careful to protect the fundamental reality of the individual. For Watson, then, while you cannot speak of the individual apart from the community, it is also true that western society has undergone a long historical process that has seen increasing individual differentiation. Thus, where idealists such as F.H. Bradley would dissolve the individual into the Absolute, Watson insisted on the distinctive reality of the individual. Nor did he follow Josiah Royce in substituting the Absolute with a community united by shared loyalties and

sentiments. Watson's theory of relative sovereignty asserts that both individuals and the community, the particular and the universal, possess reality.

Watson's theory of relative sovereignty demonstrates that he is somewhat less of a communitarian than either Taylor or Grant in that his support for community is focussed on his concern for the development of the individual's best or highest nature. Watson understood Hegel to be promoting a symbiotic relationship between the individual and the community, arguing that freedom and belonging reflect and reinforce each other. Or, to put it differently, neither can be achieved unless the other is also able to do so. While Watson maintained that the individual cannot exist as part from the community, he also asserted the development of the individual was the *end* of the community.

It seems to me, then, that Watson's Hegelianism stands neither exclusively in the communitarian nor the liberal camp. At the level of the individual-state relationship, Watson argues against both the liberal atomistic view that individuals take precedence over the state and, equally, against the notion that the state takes precedence over the individual. Watson's 'communitarianism' more easily accommodates individualism than that of Taylor's because Watson assumes that a man, in seeking his own personal good, is, in fact, "striving to attain to the perfection of his nature," that is, to achieve his "best mind." And, for Watson, this best mind is identical with the good of the community. Hence, genuine individualism satisfies both freedom and belonging since man's true nature, should he ever attain it, amounts to identifying his

personal good with the good of the community. Conversely, the community fulfils its true nature, as it were, to the degree it enables the individual to satisfy his personal good, which is his freedom. In a statement that recalls Watson's paradigmatic relationship of the individual and the community, namely Socrates and Athens, Watson writes,

The laws of the State may well be identical with his own real will; and if they are not, they are condemned as not realising their end. This at once explains the habit of obeying without question the ordinary laws of the State, and also the opposition to those laws, actual or opposed, which are not in harmony with man's ideal of himself.⁴⁹

Following Hegel, Watson argued that the state provides the arena where individual freedom is possible. That is, the individual experiences the freedom that is available to humans as humans in and through his communal relationships. At the same time, though, the state functions through its institutions to represent a community of interests that allows as best as possible each individual to maintain his freedom. For Watson, then, the state exists to establish those external conditions by which the highest human life may be achieved; that is, a life of freedom based on reason.

This desire for free individuals in a rational community emerges most clearly in Watson's major book on political theory, The State in War and Peace. In his book, Watson extended the Hegelian principle of reconciliation into politics, promoting a world government based on a type of multinational integration that constitutionally resembles the British North America Act. Nevertheless, Watson questioned the idea of a homogeneous, all-encompassing World State. On the

one hand, he argued that such a state, if it did not impose homogeneity on everyone, would be unable to provide the means for the greatest number of people to realise their potential as free and rational beings. On the other hand, he said "the ties of kindred and friendship, family and nation" would be lost if a universal, homogeneous state (to use Grant's language) were imposed.

Watson, then, like Grant a generation later, asked one of the key questions of modern political philosophy: whether a 'universal and homogeneous state' is the best political and social order in terms of fulfilling human aspirations? Watson ultimately answers no. Such a state would not actualise the highest potential of people since it does not recognise their differences. While an individual must learn that to set aside his individual desires and "make himself an organ of the community" in order to act morally, at the same time he must be free to criticise the community if it fails to act in accordance with rational principles.

In his *Speculative Idealism*, Watson appropriated Hegelian principles to underpin his critiques of empiricism, utilitarianism and American-style liberalism, rejecting all three concepts on the grounds that they failed to recognise moral obligation. Thus, Hegel's thought provided Watson with a conceptual model for reconciling the dualism of the common-sense school, the scepticism of the empiricists, the atomism of the utilitarians, and even the materialism of the Darwinians. Hegelian thought showed Watson the basic interrelationship of all things: mind and matter, man and nature, philosophy and science, and the individual and the community.

Watson extended his Idealist reconciliation of the individual and the state to relations among nation-states. Individual states, like individual people, are differentiations of mankind's organic unity. The purpose of states is "to secure the best conditions of life for the citizens in harmony with and limited by the universal principles of morality." Thus, "the good of one State cannot be separated from the good of another."⁵⁰ Yet, in the same way that states must maintain the differentiations between individuals and institutions if the good of the whole is to be achieved, so, too, in a world of sovereign states, must the differentiation of cultures and societies be maintained. As Watson put it, "Each nation has its own special task, arising from differences in climate, economic, religious, artistic and scientific relations."⁵¹ In this regard, he holds that the independence of states is necessary for the good of humanity as a whole.

Obviously, then, Watson did not favour the idea of a world-state. Indeed, as I argued in Part Two, he rejected Bertrand Russell's notion that people must surrender their patriotic attachments and establish an "International Authority" that would assume sovereign status over all national groups. In an argument that resembles Grant's view that love of the good is rooted love of one's own, Watson questioned the view that a federation of nation-states necessitates the abandonment of particular loyalties.

Nevertheless, despite his insistence on the political and cultural autonomy of nation-states Watson defended imperialism. Civilised nations are duty-bound to assume authority over those who are less civilised — if the purpose of that

authority is the moral and material betterment of those people. He also maintained that assuming authority over a colonised people does not mean the suppression of their particular culture. In any case, the imperial nation must not expect to maintain permanent authority over its colonial subjects.

There is no justification for the rule of a foreign government which does not seek to promote civilisation, liberty and progress in the subject people, and does not take the necessary steps to fit them for self-government.⁵²

To the degree a civilised nation failed to live up to this principle, Watson argued, "its rule can only be regarded as an unjustifiable tyranny."⁵³

Watson, as I have discussed, regarded the British Empire as coming as close as was practically possible to achieving this Ideal world-state. In his analysis of the post-First World War era, Watson promoted the British Empire as the most successful experiment in international governance. The Empire, he wrote, succeeded in "combining the freedom of the separate organs with the unity of the whole,"⁵⁴ and provided the best means for lifting colonised people to higher levels of development, both moral and political. Grant, it will be recalled, echoed this view early in his career when he saw the Empire's mission as one of helping people in backward regions move towards greater political consciousness and the modern use of their resources.⁵⁵

This was Watson's Ideal, too, and his appropriation of Hegel provided a theoretical foundation for imperialism — or, what might be called the 'Spirit of empire'. Watson's Idealism provided him with a positive notion of imperialism in which "empire" is less an economic and military enterprise and more an agent for

the furtherance of mankind's moral and Spiritual potential. Does Watson's Idealist view of empire have any relevance in our post-colonial era?

Perhaps the way to approach that question is to recall the question I asked of Taylor's multiculturalism. Taylor defends multiculturalism with the argument that in a world in which international migration is making all societies less culturally homogeneous, multiculturalism is the only way to go. "There are other cultures, and we have to live together more and more, both on a world scale and commingled in each individual society."⁵⁶ Economic globalisation, increasingly diverse nation-states and even the creation of "diasporic identities" as a result of major shifts in the world's population, mean Grant's contention that a nation-state needs to express a common sense of purpose if it is to survive is, by Taylor's view, highly problematic. "We are living in multinational societies, and they will only become more multinational ... we have to recognise that we cannot all share the same historical identity; our growing nation-state(s) (are) going to need to accept and work with a plurality of historical identities."⁵⁷ That may well be the case, but the question I asked was whether Taylor's ideal of multicultural recognition actually works to promote the tolerance for diversity he desires. With its notion of the equality of all cultures, multiculturalism may very well undermine any substantive cultural identity and produce the conditions for an increasingly homogeneous world, a world of boutique multiculturalism.

Paradoxical as it may seem, it was exactly this homogenisation of cultures that Watson's imperialism sought to avoid. Recall that for Watson the

independence of each state is necessary for the good of human as a whole because each state has its "special mission." Moreover, Watson justified empire on the basis that advancing a colonised people to a higher form of civilisation does not imply the destruction of a colonised people's culture or the imposition of an alien civilisation. Watson recognised that in the modern world many cultures that had made some "advance in civilisation" were unable to maintain a civilised government after they came into contact with the modern western world. Indeed, as he acknowledged, many of these first encounters have seen atrocities perpetuated against the "native race." But for Watson such a situation makes it even more incumbent upon the civilised power to assume the guardianship of the "lower" race. Given the similarities between Watson and Taylor in terms of the need to respect diverse cultures, there is, perhaps, some irony in the thought that Taylor's multiculturalism might be used to bolster a new kind of imperialism, or that Watson's imperialism may actually preserve the world's cultures.

Watson used India as an example of the general beneficence of empire. He observed that in the mid-eighteenth century India was in a state of near anarchy and British statesmen reluctantly realised that Britain had to assume control of the country "in the interests of humanity and justice." Rightly or wrongly, Watson regarded British rule as an example of relatively enlightened imperialism. Whether these views are accurate, or even palatable today, is neither here nor there. Watson's point is this: Sometimes one state (or group of states) has to assume control of another when the latter is unable to maintain its

sovereign status in a way that best serves the principles of justice and humanity.

Even though he would likely be dismissed today as 'politically incorrect', Watson was careful to qualify his support for imperialism by arguing that even if one nation possesses all the highest qualities of civilisation — "a preposterous supposition," as he puts it — it would still not have the right to impose its culture on other nations by force.⁵⁸ In this regard, Watson is also careful to delimit imperial rule:

The rule of a foreign and subject people is a difficult and delicate task. The better elements in the older civilisation must be recognised and fostered. To destroy a people's faith in their traditional customs and laws can only lead to the overthrow of all moral rules and the introduction of moral anarchy. A whole foreign civilisation cannot be externally imposed upon a people. The foreign government must act so as to create a feeling of loyalty to itself in the minds of the subjects, while these must learn to look to it for security of person and property, for freedom of thought and speech, and for the defence of their special form of worship.⁵⁹

In other words, for Watson, imperial rule can preserve cultural differences, as well as foster the conditions that allow people to become self-governing and autonomous.

Though out of favour today, Watson's view of imperialism is worth reconsideration since, as some argue, we may be entering a new age of empire. For example, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue in Empire that while the age of nation-state imperialism is over, "a new imperial form of sovereignty has emerged." Sovereignty, they say, is being transferred from nation-states to a new global sovereignty that they label as "empire." They define "empire" as "the sovereign power that governs the world." It does not adhere to any particular

nation-state, rather, this new imperial sovereignty is manifested in a series of national and supranational organisms that are united "under a single logic of rule" — the logic of economic globalisation. Of course, the United States is the pinnacle power in this new imperial order. The United States and its collaborators have unleashed global market forces that are replacing the old imperialistic nation-state with a new transpolitical global order where economic considerations supersede all other concerns. This new "empire" establishes no territorial centre of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries. "It is a *decentered* and *detritorializing* apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire globe within its open, expanding frontiers."⁶⁰

The authors emphasise that they are not using the word empire as a metaphor, but as a concept. Hence, they characterise empire as a form of rule that lacks boundaries or barriers to its imposition. Such a characterisation certainly accords with the etymology of empire. The word is derived from the Latin verb *imperare*, meaning to command or requisition or make ready. It is related to another verb, *parere*, mean to produce or bring forth. In true Hegelian fashion, then, Hardt and Negri, like Taylor, recognise that ours is a birth time. What is being born is a new concept of overarching authority.

It is not my purpose to debate Hardt and Negri's thesis. It is perhaps sufficient to observe that it reads like a desperate update of Das Kapital and The Communist Manifesto. Indeed, there is much socialist nostalgia in their thesis. Liberal democracies are described as "societies of control," enveloped in the

"rhythm of productive practices and productive socialisation." Not unexpectedly, the authors see revolutionary potential in a "counter-Empire" led by "the multitude (an updated version of Marx's proletariat, presumably). The multitude includes all those who have been supposedly disenfranchised by globalisation — everyone from protestors and radical feminists to Third world revolutionaries and Islamic fundamentalists. Without ever defining how the multitude's 'new forms of power' will be exercised, the authors abstractly predict that the politics of the new era of will see the establishment of "global citizens" and an "absolute democracy" that will "take us through and beyond Empire,"⁶¹ whatever that may mean.

Such incoherence demonstrates why Watson's Idealist thoughts about empire could prove valuable, particularly given how Hardt and Negri's notion of Empire sounds a lot like Grant's tyrannical universal and homogeneous state. They are even reconciled to a certain amount of violence. "The new barbarians" of the multitude must "destroy with an affirmative violence" that will "create and recreate" the human world in a "secular Pentecost." How this "affirmative violence" will manifest itself politically is, again, never defined, but the use of the word "pentecost" is revelatory. The word refers the Christian festival commemorating the descent of the Holy Ghost on the apostles after the Resurrection of Christ.⁶² Empire, in other words, is a new manifestation of Spirit in the twenty-first century.

This is not so farfetched. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington in the fall of 2001, and the subsequent war against terrorists

who claim to be acting on an anti-western agenda in the name of religion, it is hard to believe the new century will deliver the benign secular (and socialist) utopia Hardt and Negri prescribe. Yet, the idea the world is undergoing some new form of political ordering is hard to doubt. Does the next world order mean empire, though?

There are those who say the West, especially the United States, has to start acting more like an imperial power. Max Boot makes "the case for American empire" in an essay in The Weekly Standard, arguing that most intelligent response to terrorism is for the United States "to be more expansive in our goals and more asserting in their implementation." Philip Hensher, writing in the British newspaper The Independent, argues that reviving some form of imperialism "might not be such a bad idea."⁶³ Such arguments, however, are not confined to the popular press.

Robert Conquest, in his 1999 book Reflections on a Ravaged Century, offers another form of an imperial relationship. He observes that while the western democracies, particularly the English-speaking nations, prevailed in the 20th century's ideological wars, they are now losing that sense of purpose and common cause that once sustained them in their fight. And this, he says, is dangerous because the post-Cold War world is increasingly fragmented and fractious. He urges the establishment of an "Association" of English-speaking nations and peoples, including Canada, the U.S., Britain, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, as well as the peoples of the Caribbean and the Pacific Ocean. In

a fragmented world, such a "political civilisation would be eminently prudent."

Closer integration of the English-speaking countries can create a centre of power attractive to the other countries with a democratic tradition and form the basis for a yet broader political unity in the long run. And this in turn could eventually be the foundation for a full unity of the democratized world.⁶⁴

Samuel Huntington, in his 1996 book The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order, argues that the conflicts of world politics are entering a new phase. This new phase has been described variously as the end of history, the return of traditional rivalries between nation states, and the decline of the nation state from the conflicting pulls of tribalism and globalism, among others. But according to Huntington these descriptions catch only aspects of the emerging reality. What they all miss — the central, aspect of what global politics is likely to be in the coming years, as he puts it — is that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation-states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups within different civilisations.⁶⁵

However, as Tom Darby observes, "when you transform a civilisation into a power unit you get an empire." Darby points out that while Huntington calls for the West to unite against other civilisations, there is considerable evidence that the West itself is fragmenting into various imperial power units. The European Union's efforts to set up its own military arm outside NATO suggests "the EU (is)

becoming an empire, and, in response, (the members of the) North American Free Trade Agreement becoming the same, and perhaps the 'rest' of the non-West forming imperial power units similar to those described by Huntington." ⁶⁶

On the other hand, Robert Cooper, in his 1996 book The Postmodern State and the World Order, argues that the West must unite on the basis of "defensive imperialism." The existence of what he calls pre-modern zones of chaos such as Afghanistan are too dangerous for established states to tolerate and, as a result, "it is possible to imagine a defensive imperialism." In a rather prescient observation, Cooper writes that

If non-state actors, notably drug, crime or terrorist syndicates take to using non-state (that is, pre-modern) bases for attacks on the more orderly parts of the world, then the organised states may eventually have to respond. ⁶⁷

Western countries, perhaps acting under the mandate of the United Nations, might, under extreme circumstances, need to take charge of these countries and provide good government, administrative competence and institutional order until the locals can do it themselves — what Cooper calls the "imperialism of neighbours."

A system in which the strong protect the weak, in which the efficient and well-governed export stability and liberty, in which the world is open for investment and growth — all of these seem eminently desirable. If empire has not often been like that, it has frequently been better than the chaos and barbarism it replaced. ⁶⁸

Cooper's rationale and prescription for enlightened imperialism certainly resemble Watson's Idealist claims for the British Empire. Of course, words like "empire" and "imperialism" have acquired near-demonic associations to some,

but it might be noted that even British Prime Minister Tony Blair has resurrected the ideals of nineteenth-century imperialism. In a speech to the Labour party in the fall of 2001, Blair defended Britain's participation in the war against terrorism saying, "the starving, the wretched, the dispossessed, the ignorant, those living in want and squalor from the deserts of North Africa to the slums of Gaza to the mountain ranges of Afghanistan: they too are our cause."⁶⁹ Except for the place names, the sentiment would not have been out of line with that of a nineteenth-century imperialism who regarded the British Empire as a civilising force in the world.

It is certainly not a sentiment to which Watson would have objected. And that in itself suggests that if there is a new form of imperialism emerging, then Watson still has something to say even in our post-idealist age, maybe more than even Taylor and Grant in some ways. Canada would not be immune from 'imperial' affairs, and given that both Taylor and Grant cast the 'crisis' of Canada as a consequence of and a response to modernity, Watson's thought may prove more valuable. Watson's version of empire — the imperial power must act in such a way as to preserve diverse cultures and encourage responsible government — certainly come closer to fulfilling Taylor's multicultural requirement for recognising different cultures. Furthermore, Watson's Idealist view of empire provides a kind of philosophic countervail, at least in theory, to Grant's vision of the tyranny of the universal and homogeneous world-state that would make Canada impossible.

Indeed, it is not hard to connect Watson's Idealist notion of empire to Robert Conquest's idea of an Association of English-speaking nations. Conquest points out that countries such as Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom lack the power to act autonomously with any but local effect. Yet, their interests, like those of the United States, are deeply involved in the world scene, and in acting together they could make contributions far beyond their own areas that would help the whole world community. Under closer Association, countries such as Canada, which have often felt themselves committed by the more or less unilateral decisions of the United States, would more fully share not only the responsibility of decision-making, but also that of military or other action.

Conquest also suggests that Canada's membership in such an Association may well mitigate separatist aspirations in Quebec, as well as offset secessionist inclinations in Western Canada. "On an Association basis, the former trend might be muted and the latter still largely satisfied." But even if Quebec did secede, there might be even more reason for English-speaking Canadians to look upon the idea of Association positively. As Conquest concludes: "It is plain that minds are ripe for broader solutions."⁷⁰

Might a nineteenth-century Canadian philosopher, John Watson, be the one to offer these solutions? Philosophers, as Hegel taught, do not predict the future. Still, Watson's thought allows us to revisit the idea of imperialism without apology. That may prove valuable both in lending a theoretical warrant for empire (or, perhaps, Association) and in providing an ethical code for 'defensive

imperialism'. If 'empire' is the way the West is tending, Watson may offer a worthy response to the 'crisis' of Canada in letting Canadians once again consider the Ideal of imperial citizenship.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

The Cunning of Spirit

To be sure, as Grant argued, there is every possibility that a new age of empire would eliminate difference and diversity and tend towards tyranny. But Grant, it must be remembered, was reacting to the one-sided Hegelianism of contemporary liberalism in which Hegel's principle of reconciliation had been radically shifted in favour of the universal as opposed to the particular. Grant, while supportive of liberal rights, believed the logic of the Hegelian system leads inexorably to the application of universal principles to all people regardless of their differences. Watson, however, argued, more or less, that a universal and homogeneous World-State would not succeed because it was impossible to impose homogeneity on everyone. Which thinker is right remains to be seen, of course. Nevertheless, if Spirit is ushering in the remaking of the world order, Watson, Grant and Taylor certainly offer intelligible ways of thinking about it, particularly as it relates to the future of Canada.

Indeed, that Canada's future is still open to question is, well, unquestionable. So much so that it is sometimes hard not to regard Grant's statement about the 'impossibility' of Canada as prescient. Even cursory readings of the newspapers should be enough to convince anyone that Canada's claims to sovereign status are increasingly problematic. The American president refers to

Canadian oil and gas as "domestic" supply. Canada, it is said, must become part of a "continental" defence system and better co-ordinate its immigration and customs systems with those of the United States. There is talk of "harmonising" policies in regard to a North American security perimeter. Others advocate the adoption of the American dollar as Canada's standard of living falls farther behind that of the United States. And, of course, there is free trade. All of this has led some commentators to conclude the Canada is little more than a suburb of the United States, and to proclaim that

a moment of national truth is approaching, a time when we have to face up to the implications of Canadian decline ... Eventually we may decide to negotiate some kind of union because nobody will remember the point of continuing to stay separate.⁷¹

I make no argument either way regarding such views. I mention them merely to recall the context and purpose of this essay: the problematic nature of Canada's political existence, and how Hegel's thought has been variously appropriated in responding to that problem.

I would like to think that I have offered a wide-ranging consideration of the responses of three Canadian political philosophers to the tensions they perceived in the Canadian political community. I believe I have demonstrated how Watson's, Grant's and Taylor's efforts at finding solutions to the 'crisis' of Canada were informed, in part at least, by their appropriations of Hegelian thought, particularly his principle of reconciliation. And I believe I have shown that their respective 'readings' of Hegel, either as elaborators or detractors, are a testament to the long domicile of the Hegelian Spirit on the northern half of the

North American continent. Considering that Canada's political future remains, as always, problematic, there is every reason to believe Hegel still has much to say to us.

ENDNOTES TO PART FIVE

1. David Taras and Beverly Rasporich, eds., "Introduction," A Passion for Identity: Introduction to Canadian Studies, (Toronto: ITP Nelson, 1997), p. 10.
2. Taylor, Reconciling the Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Federalism and Nationalism, p. 59.
3. Taylor, Hegel, p. 570.
4. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values," in Reconciling the Solitudes, p. 183.
5. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 43.
6. Ibid, p. 183.
7. For communitarians, I am thinking of Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Amitai Etzioni, as well as Taylor. For example, in giving priority to the *good* of the community, Sandel speaks of "loyalties and convictions whose moral force consists partly in the fact that living by them is inseparable from understanding ourselves as the particular person we are — as members of this family or community or nation or people, as bearers of that history, as citizens of that republic ... To imagine a person incapable of constitutive attachments such as these is not to conceive an ideally free and rational agent." See "The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self," Communitarianism and Individualism, ed. Shlomo Avineri and Avner de-Shalit, (Oxford, 1992), p. 23.
8. The phrase is Max Nemni's, and is taken from his paper, "The Illiberal Strand in Taylor's Conception of Quebec's Contemporary Nationalism." This unpublished paper was delivered at the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association in 1997. I thank Barry Cooper for bringing it to my attention.
9. Michael Lusztig, "Canada's Long Road to Nowhere: Why the Circle of Command Liberalism Cannot be Squared." Canadian Journal of Political Science, (1999), p. 465. My emphasis.
10. Janet Ajzenstat, "Decline of Procedural Liberalism: The Slippery Slope to

Succession," in Is Quebec Nationalism Just?, ed. Joseph H. Cairns, (Montreal and Kingston, 1995), p. 120-122. She is quoting from Taylor's essay, "Shared and Divergent Values."

11. Ibid, p. 132.
12. Jurgen Habermas, "Struggles for Recognition in the Democratic Constitutional State," in Multiculturalism and The Politics of Recognition, p. 114-116.
13. John Dunn neatly summarizes Taylor's essential themes as: "the conception of the self-interpreting individual as metaphysically dependent upon rather than independent of society, and of the self-interpretation of that individual as in turn dependent upon the resources of the language of a particularly language-community. See "Elusive Community: The Political Theory of Charles Taylor," in Interpreting Political Responsibility, p. 184.
14. Krob, Hegel's Community, p. 253, 261.
15. Norman Barry makes this point, too. See "Charles Taylor on Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition," Community and Tradition: Conservative Perspectives on the American Experience, ed. George W. Carey and Bruce Frohnen, (Lanham, Maryland, 1998). He writes: "The deliberate propagation of Frenchness by coercive law is logically no different from the imposition of Englishness through an allegedly universal set of liberal constitutional principles." p. 112.
16. Brian Barry, Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism, (Cambridge, 2001), p. 65.
17. Ibid, p. 65. See also Andy Lamey, "Francophonia forever," Times Literary Supplement, (July 23, 1999), p. 13-14 for a concise overview of the tensions in Taylor's thought.
18. Taylor, Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition, p. 64.
19. On this topic, see Amelie Rorty and Arthur Ripstein. Respectively: "The Hidden Politics of Cultural Identification," Political Theory, 22, 1, (February, 1994), p. 156-160; and "Recognition and Cultural Membership," Dialogue, XXXIV, (1995), p. 332-334.
20. Clifford Orwin, "Charles Taylor's Pedagogy of Recognition," in Canadian Political Philosophy: Contemporary Reflections, ed. Ronald Beiner and

Wayne Norman, (Toronto, 2001), p. 239.

21. Grant, Lament for a Nation, p. 68.
22. Ibid, p. 22.
23. Grant, "Nationality and rationality," pp. 51-52.
24. Grant, "Revolution and Tradition," in Tradition and Revolution, p. 93.
25. I refer the reader to Endnotes #8 to 11 in Part Three. See also Dennis Duffy, "The Ancestral Journeys: Travels with George Grant," Journal of Canadian Studies, 22, 3, (Autumn, 1987), p. 90-103.
26. Grant, Time as History, p. 33.
27. Grant, "Nationalism and Rationalism," Power Corrupted: The October Crisis and the Repression of Quebec, p. 51.
28. Grant, Selected Letters, p. 221.
29. Ibid, p. 194-195.
30. "I mean by liberalism the belief that man's essence is his freedom." See Grant, "Appendix 2, Introduction to the 1966 Edition," Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 118. Also, Cayley, George Grant in Conversation, p. 47.
31. Athanasiadis, George Grant and the Theology of the Cross, p. 227.
32. Joan O'Donovan sums up this aspect of Strauss's thought quite succinctly: "For Strauss, as for Plato and Aristotle, neither the phenomenal world, the givens of experience, nor the eternal things, as objects of contemplation, change or evolve. Being and truth are unchanging and self-identical. They do not dialectically complete themselves through successive 'historical' stages so that the structure and content of experience and thought change from stage to stage. The situation of thought is a permanent one; *it is not fundamentally transformed by political action or religious 'revelations'*." See O'Donovan, George Grant and the Twilight of Justice, p. 76-77. Her emphasis.
33. Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, p. 22-23.
34. Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli, p. 294-296.

35. Grant, Philosophy in the Mass Age, p. 102-103.
36. Grant, Technology and Empire, p. 105.
37. Ibid, p. 103.
38. Ibid, p. 108. Grant writes, "I find it impossible to know whether he (Strauss) thinks there is in the Bible an authority of revelation which has a claim over philosophers as much as other men."
39. Yusuf Umar, "The Philosophical Context of George Grant's Political Philosophy," George Grant and the Future of Canada, p. 13.
40. Strauss, "Interpretations of Genesis," lecture in the Works of the Mind series, University of Chicago, January 25, 1957, p. 14. Cited by Wayne Whillier, ed., "George Grant and Leo Strauss: A Parting of the Way," in George Grant: Two Theological Languages, (Lewiston, N.Y., 1990), p. 67.
41. Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing, (Glencoe, Ill., 1952), p. 21. The full statement is: "The precarious status of philosophy in Judaism as well as in Islam was not in every respect a misfortune for philosophy. The official recognition of philosophy in the Christian world made philosophy subject to ecclesiastical supervision. The precarious position of philosophy in the Islamic-Jewish world guaranteed its private character and therein its inner freedom from supervision."
42. Grant, Two Theological Languages, p. 12.
43. Grant, "Conversation," in George Grant in Process, p. 65. See also H.D. Forbes, "George Grant and Leo Strauss," in George Grant and the Subversion of Modernity, p. 190-191. Whillier makes a similar point, p. 69.
44. Quoted by Larry Schmidt, "An Interview with George Grant," Grail: An Ecumenical Journal, 1, 1, (1985), p. 44.
45. Grant, "Conversation," George Grant in Process, p. 65.
46. The only substantive comparison of Watson and Grant of which I am aware is that of Bruce Elder's, in Image and Identity: Reflections on Canadian Film and Culture, (Waterloo, Ont., 1989), chapter two. It was this book that planted the seed of my essay, and I thank Brian McKillop at Carleton University for drawing it to my attention.
47. Watson, The State in Peace and War, p. 55.

48. Ibid, p. 55. My emphasis.
49. Ibid, p. 213.
50. Ibid, p. 248.
51. Ibid, p. 214.
52. Ibid, p. 275.
53. Ibid, p. 274.
54. Ibid, p. 272.
55. Grant, Empire: Yes or No?, p. 11-13.
56. Taylor, The Politics of Recognition, p. 72.
57. Taylor, "Globalization and the Future of Canada," Queen's Quarterly, 105, 3, (Fall, 1998), p. 340-341.
58. Watson, The State in Peace and War, p. 181.
59. Ibid, p. 275. It is perhaps worth noting that even Indians acknowledge the general beneficence of British rule. Nirad Chaudhuri dedicates his book The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian, "to the memory of the British Empire in India which conferred subject-hood on us but withheld citizenship; to which yet every one of us threw out the challenge: Civis Britannicus Sum because all that was good and living within us was made, shaped, and quickened by the same British rule." I have taken the quotation from Robert Conquest, Reflections on a Ravaged Century, (London, 1999), p. 246.
60. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Empire, (Cambridge, Mass., 2001), p. xi-xvii.
61. Ibid, p. xv, 397.
62. Ibid, chp. 4.3.
63. The concept of empire is, it seems, intellectually respectable again even in the popular press. Max Boot, "The Case for American Empire," The Weekly Standard, Vol. 7, No. 5, Oct. 15, 2001; Philip Hensher, "Let's Be Honest: We need to impose our imperial rule on Afghanistan," The

Independent, Oct. 17, 2001; Emily Eakin, "It takes an empire, say several U.S. thinkers," International Herald Tribune, April 2, 2002; and Robert Cooper, "Why we still need empires," The Sunday Observer, April 7, 2002. I would like to think I have made a modest contribution to the issue. See Robert Sibley, "Like it or not, a new imperialism would make the world better," Ottawa Citizen, March 19, 2002, A16; "The Age of Empire has come again," Ottawa Citizen, Nov. 26, 2001, A14; "The great divide," Ottawa Citizen, Oct. 13, 2001, B6; "Is America's soul bronze or clay?" Ottawa Citizen, August 4, 2001, B5. I should not that I have not included these footnoted items in by bibliography.

64. Conquest, Reflections on a Ravaged Century, p. 281.
65. Samuel Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, (New Yor, 1996).
66. Tom Darby, "On Spiritual Crisis, Globalization, and Planetary Rule, Faith, Reason and Political Life Today. ed. By Peter Augustine Lawler and Dale McConkey. (Lanham, MD, 2001), p. 58-59.
67. Robert Cooper, The Postmodern State and the World Order, (London, 1996), p.11-12. See also his article "The next empire" in the British magazine, Prospect, October, 2001, n.p.
68. This quotation is taken from Cooper's essay in Prospect, n.p.
69. Quoted by Cooper, "The next empire," n.p.
70. Conquest, p. 276-278.
71. Michael Bliss, "Is Canada a country in decline?," National Post, November 30, 2001, p. A18. See also Drew Fagan, "Has Canada Become the 51st State?," Globe and Mail, March 16, 2002, p. F1. Brian Kappler, "It's time for Canadians to ask: Do we unite with the U.S. or not?" Ottawa Citizen, February 6, 2002. p. A14. And then there was this blazing headline for a newspaper essay article on "Canadians' fear of a U.S. takeover": "It's the Year 2025. There is no U.S. border. Has Canada become the 51st State?" Globe and Mail, March 16, 2002, F1. I have not included these footnoted items in the bibliography.

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