

George Grant and the Tyranny of Modernity and Progress

by

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PATRICK DALEY

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Chapter One	
Towards the Universal and Homogeneous State.....	11
Chapter Two	
The Tyranny of Modernity and Progress.....	35
Chapter Three	
Towards the Modern Canadian Tyranny.....	83
Chapter Four	
The Canadian Constitution as an Instrument of Tyranny.....	124
Conclusion.....	141
Bibliography.....	144

ABSTRACT

George Grant is one of our country's most misread writers. Known chiefly for his Lament for a Nation, he is considered to be an advocate for both political toryism and a traditional Canada threatened by the dynamism of United States (US) style liberal democratic/economic capitalist values. Yet to subscribe to this view of George Grant is to overlook the real depth of his work. Though he does draw his ethical viewpoints from his personal cultural environment, the range of his concerns is by no means this narrow and parochial. In fact, by drawing from his own particular cultural "situation", he is actually shedding light on a universal problem: that traditional cultural backgrounds - the concrete foundations which shape our ethical lives - are being besieged by the morally relativistic, conformist, and homogenizing forces of modernity and technological progress.

This thesis explores the nature of this universal problem. Drawing from the wider body of his work and some of his key sources (such as Hegel, Kojève, Heidegger, and Strauss) chapters one and two explore the Grantian contention that humankind is evolving towards a tyrannical liberal democratic/economic capitalist "universal and homogeneous state": the ultimate socio-political and economic framework of modernity and technological progress. Chapters three and four examine how traditional Canadian cultural values (particularly those of the aboriginals and French speaking Quebecois) are currently being threatened by this inevitable historical process.

INTRODUCTION

Now all the earth has cried aloud, lamenting:
Now all that was magnificent of old
laments your fall, laments your brethren's fall
from honourable station...all lament
in sympathy for your most grievous woes
- Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound

Alex Colville's painting Horse and Train captures the essence of philosopher George Grant's views on the relationship between modernity¹ and the future of humanity.² The piece's dark sombre colours reflect Grant's own pessimism regarding the clash between traditional societies and their values (as represented by the horse) with the forces of modernity and technological progress (as represented by the train). The confines set by the railway ties and the speed at which these forces are travelling sets a tone of inevitability about their collision.

A puzzling aspect of Colville's work is the horse's headlong rush to its seemingly inevitable doom. Is it aware of the train's presence and will it veer off at the last

¹. Modernity is a term used to describe the whole process of human evolution. It refers not only to how mankind's physical environment has changed over time, but also how human consciousness has evolved (or not evolved) along side with, or as a result of, these physical changes.

². There is a strong connection between Alex Colville and George Grant. English Speaking Justice, for example, is dedicated, in part, to the artist. In his "A Tribute to Professor George P. Grant" (found in Peter Emberley's By Loving Our Own,) Colville details the impact Grant had on his artistic life. Arthur Kroker uses Colville's To Prince Edward Island to describe the theories of the Canadian philosopher.

moment? Is it running blindly, ignorant of the oncoming collision? Or is the horse's vision distorted by the train's headlight, thus lulling it into a state of complacency? If Colville's work is an accurate reflection of Grant's ideas, then the answer lies closer to the third option. According to George Grant, societies, the Canadian one in particular, are in the process of losing traditional values because many of their inhabitants accept without question, and in some cases embrace, the byproducts of modernity and technological progress. Grant puts forth three related arguments to support this point: a) the world has been and is evolving towards a universal and homogeneous state and this evolution is linked to modernity and technological progress; b) the United States has become the centre of this evolutionary process; c) Canadian societal distinctiveness will fall victim to this process.

Though Grant's key works were written roughly a quarter of a century ago and inspired largely by the political, social, and economic issues which dominated that period, his thoughts are still relevant and applicable in a world poised to enter the twenty-first century. One need only examine a recent academic publication to prove this point. In The End of History and The Last Man, Francis Fukuyama employs the same basic methodology that Grant uses to explain mankind's current state of historical development.

According to this American writer, events such as the demise of the Soviet Union, the reunification of Germany, and the collapse of western and non-western dictatorships and autocracies, are not simply random occurrences in a chaotic world environment.³ Rather, they are signs of mankind's evolutionary progression towards a universal and homogeneous state - that is a state which transcends class, regional, and cultural particularism. Like Grant, Fukuyama believes that this evolutionary process is inevitable and linked to modernity and technological progress. And, like Grant, Fukuyama believes that US style democratic liberalism and economic capitalism will be the value system which shapes this process.

The relevance and applicability of Grant's thoughts in today's world, however, lie not so much on what these scholars agree on, but in where their thoughts differ. Fukuyama believes firmly in the inherent "goodness" of US style democratic liberalism and economic capitalism and seems to shrug off as inconsequential the replacement of traditional values with those of modernity and technological progress.⁴

³. F. Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, (Don Mills: Macmillan Canada, 1992) xi-xiii

⁴. There are very few references about the demise of traditional cultures in Fukuyama's text. On page xv of his introductory chapter, the writer mentions in passing that the values of the universal and homogeneous state will.."replace traditional forms of social organization such as tribe, sect, and family...". He goes into slightly more detail on the subject in chapters nineteen and twenty. However, his bias becomes clear

As such, his work is lacking any sympathy to their replacement. Grant, on the other hand, mourns their passing.

Though acknowledging the inescapable reality of living in the present and rejecting as futile a complete return to the "good old days," Grant believes that the demise of traditional cultural values deserves to be recognized. In the closing chapter of Time as History, for example, the scholar states that we should not embrace completely (as Fukuyama does) the byproducts of modernity and progress. Instead, he calls for us to remember, to love, and to think⁵ about what will be lost in human historical development.

Lament for a Nation is written in this reflective spirit. As people eulogize the passing of loved ones and dear friends, so too does Grant in this book eulogize the passing of a distinct Canadian cultural presence in the world community. His particular brand of lament is of the same variety as that of King David towards his son's death. Knowing that his child's fate was sealed, King David mourned while his son was still alive. He stopped grieving the moment he heard that his

when he asserts that loyalties given to traditional modes of social organization such as nationality and race are "irrational" when stacked up against the values of modernity and technological progress. (p.201)

⁵. G. Grant, Time as History (Canada: Hunter Ross Company)
49

son had died.⁶ Grant, knowing that traditional Canadian culture cannot withstand the pressures of modernity and progress, mourns before its complete demise as well.

It is a curious form of mourning. After all, what good is it to lament before the end? Would not that time be better spent savoring the last moments of companionship? Would there not be time enough for grieving after the inevitable passing?

King David chose to mourn this way in hope that God would spare his son's life. Perhaps also he did not want to dilute his feelings of grief with the feelings of acceptance and healing which occur after the death of loved ones. Grant's own lament-before-the-fact is no doubt a reaction to the dynamic nature of mankind's evolutionary process.

With most Canadians rushing boldly forward along the path of modernity and progress, they have little time or inclination to mourn what they are leaving behind. By looking back, the Canadian scholar is recognizing the worth of what will be irretrievably lost. Moreover, when the universal and homogeneous state is upon us, traditional cultural values will be little more than vague memories, if they are even remembered at all. No one will be able to mourn their passing

⁶. Longing for the beautiful Bathsheba, King David ordered her husband, Uriah, sent to a military front, knowing full well that the man would die there. Upon hearing of Uriah's death, David took Bathsheba as his own wife. God punished the Jewish king (in part) by striking the couple's first child with a fatal illness. These events are chronicled in 2 Samuel 11-12.

properly. If this is to be the case, then what better time to grieve than before their demise, when their worth can still be appreciated?

At any rate, sentimentality is not the only justification for a reexamination of Grant's works. His exercises of "remembering, loving, and thinking" reveal a disturbing aspect of mankind's evolution towards the universal and homogeneous state. Through the course of his reflections, Grant comes to the conclusion that the end of history will usher in an era of tyranny. Liberal democratic/capitalist values will be unable to prevent this state of affairs. Indeed, they will even perpetuate this future tyranny.

It is a fate which has ominous implications for Canadians when considered against our current constitutional problems. The traditional ties which bind this country together are unravelling as we grope to come to terms with fundamental questions of national identity in a modern technological world. How the issues surrounding this collective introspection are resolved may very well determine Canada's ability to remain as a distinct political unit. An exploration of Grant's concerns can provide some much needed insight as to how the world is currently evolving and how this evolution will affect Canadians.

This paper will seek to do just this. By examining Grant's works and applying them to our current political situation, it will show how traditional Canadian societal

values are being besieged by the forces of modernity and progress. Furthermore, through Grant's framework, this paper will prove that we will inevitably lose our distinct nature by being lulled into accepting values accentuated by universal and homogenizing institutions such as our constitution in general and our Charter of Rights and Freedoms in particular. Written in the spirit of a Grantian lament, it will serve as an exercise of "remembering, loving, and thinking" about what we are losing in this evolutionary process.

Reinforcing the notion of inevitability, the first chapter of this paper will trace the dialectical relationship between man, society and progress. In doing so, it will provide a brief historical account of man's evolution towards the universal and homogeneous state. The importance of technology and ideological liberalism to this process will also be explored. Finally, this chapter will show how the United States has become the centre of this evolutionary course. Fukuyama's research will be used to provide current illustrations.

Chapter two of this paper will explore Grant's skepticism regarding the inherent "goodness" of man's evolution towards the universal and homogeneous state. First, it will attack, as Grant does, the Western assumption that modernity and technological advancement will automatically lead to what is commonly referred to as human progress. This attack will be accomplished by briefly reviewing the concerns of the ancient

Greeks and Jews over this issue. Examples of human suffering caused by technological advancements will also be used to dispel the widely held Western assumption.

Second, this chapter will focus on Grant's assertion that the universal and homogeneous state will be tyrannical in nature. However, before delving into the scholar's thoughts on this issue, a liberal democratic definition of tyranny will be offered. The seemingly paradoxical concept of a liberal "tyranny of the majority" put forth by such writers as Madison and De Tocqueville will be explored beforehand as well. Once this is done, Grant's fears on the issue will be discussed at length. The overt "tyrannical" conduct of US liberal democratic regimes, particularly their conduct towards Canada, will serve as illustrations.

The third chapter of this paper will show the applicability of Grant's ideas in a modern Canadian context. First, our country's current political situation will be detailed. Addressed will be such issues as Quebec nationalism and aboriginal cultural self-determination. Once this is done, possible alternatives to our future as put forth by such writers as Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor (the journalist), and especially Charles Taylor (the University of Montreal professor) will be examined and refuted through Grantian logic. This task will be accomplished by distinguishing between the overt and covert tyrannical effects of modernity and progress.

Overt tyrannical actions imply some form of external subjugation. The annexation or absorption of Canada into the United States body politic would be an example of the overt tyranny of modernity and progress. By retaining the physical trappings of political independence (such as our flag, currency, and governing institutions), our country has seemingly escaped this fate.

Covert tyrannical actions, on the other hand, refer to the abolition and replacement of traditional values with those which will undergird the universal homogeneous state. The existence of a number of value systems (or ideologies) gives people a basis of choice in quality of life decision making. They provide alternative ways at looking at human social, political, and economic interaction. Once these values are replaced by those of modernity and progress, however, people will have fewer paths to choose from in their quest for the good life. It is an internal form of subjugation, one that is perpetuated by societal institutions.

Chapter four of this paper will show how our institutions are imparting liberal democratic/capitalist values at the expense of traditional competing values. To achieve this, the cause-effect-cause relationship between societies and their policy shaping institutions will be explored. This process will be detailed in a Canadian context. Drawing on the works of such scholars as Alan Cairns and Peter Russell, this chapter will show how our constitution, particularly through

the liberal rights provisions in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, is undermining the values which make Canada a distinct political entity.

In the last section of this thesis, the Grantian theme of inevitability will be reiterated. This will be done by briefly reviewing the points made in the previous chapters. During this review, the author will comment on Grant's religious beliefs and how these political beliefs shaped his political outlook. Though the Canadian philosopher refers to them rarely in the wider body of his works, these beliefs provide a possible answer as to why he abandons any hope he might once have had for humankind in avoiding the coming of the universal and homogeneous state. For Grant, true happiness can only be secured in the spiritual realm and cannot be achieved through purely secular means.

CHAPTER ONE:

Towards the Universal and Homogeneous State

...The whole mass of ideas and concepts that have been current until now, the very bonds of the world, are dissolved and collapsing into themselves like a vision in a dream. A new emergence of Spirit is at hand...

-Georg Hegel: Lectures at Jena

It's the end of the world as we know it...
and I feel fine...

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George Grant's critique of modernity is predicated around the concept of universal history. For him, the course of human events does not unfold randomly, as a meaningless collage of occurrences, deeds and experiences. Rather, he believes that there is an ordered progressive pattern to these events, with marked stages and a defined end. By studying human history within his evolutionary paradigm, he draws conclusions about the nature of this process.

It is an analytical approach by no means unique to Grant. According to Fukuyama, the idea of a universal history has been common in Western thought since the advent of Christianity - a belief system which adheres to a clearly established beginning for humankind (Creation) and a clearly established end (the day of judgement).⁷ Since then, secular versions of this basic methodology have been introduced by

⁷. F. Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 56

such scholars as Bacon, Machiavelli, and Kant.⁸ Grant's conviction of the universal and homogeneous state as the end result of human evolution is itself borrowed from the works of Kojeve, who in turn draws heavily from Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit. Still, as much as the Canadian philosopher is not the first to use this general approach, and as much as his specific view of universal history is not wholly unique as well, the conclusions he draws from his analysis differ from those of his sources and thus bear some scrutiny.

This chapter will explore Grant's view of human progress in detail. Examined first will be the relationship between his view of universal history and those of Hegel and Kojeve. Next, attention will be given to the specifics of the theory: namely how the universal and homogeneous state has, is, and will be shaped by the liberal democratic/economic capitalist value system. Once this is accomplished, Grant's opinion on technology (both human and nonhuman) and his conviction about the United States being the centre of this evolutionary process, will be studied. The works of Fukuyama will be used to provide current examples.

⁸. Ibid. 57

In basic terms, Grant's Hegelian influenced view of universal history is dialectical in nature. For Socratic Greek scholars such as Plato, the dialectic was a dialogical means used to resolve tensions between conflicting ideas.⁹ Individuals with opposing viewpoints would engage in debates to determine which of their hypotheses was more true. Through the process of dialogue, the inherent contradictions in the lesser theory would emerge, forcing it to adapt and change in accordance with the better one. If both hypotheses were found wanting, their inherent contradictions would cause them both to change.¹⁰ Conflict, contradiction, and change form the essence of the Platonic dialectic.

Though used primarily as method of philosophical discussion, the dialogical principle nevertheless underpins the Hegelian notion of the universal and homogeneous state.¹¹ According to Hegel (as interpreted by Kojève), humankind, due to an innate desire for peer recognition, is involved in a continuous process of labour (man against nature) and struggle (man against man) towards a political order that will

⁹. H.G. Gadamer, "Hegel and the Dialectic of the Ancient Philosophers" in Hegel's Dialectic ed. P.C Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976) 5

¹⁰. Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 61

¹¹. Ibid. 61

ultimately satisfy this innate desire.¹² The result of this evolutionary process will be a state that is politically universal (one that includes the maximum number of people possible for recognition) and socially homogeneous (one that includes the maximum number of peers possible for recognition).¹³ Through the dialectic process of conflict, contradiction, and change, older political orders will be negated in favour of ones which better reflect mankind's need for peer recognition.

Kojeve points out that Alexander the Great's empire was an early manifestation of this evolutionary trend. Though Alexander was not the first ruler to extend the borders of his realm, he was of the first to offer a unique form of citizenship to his subjects. Citizenship in his domain was not reserved exclusively for his own people - the Macedonians. Rather, societal rights and privileges were extended to all of the subjects he deemed worthy, irrespective of their racial origins. Moreover, in keeping with this spirit of universality, Alexander encouraged the Macedonians and Greeks to enter into marriages with the other races in his empire.¹⁴

Alexander's idea of universal citizenship was influenced by some of the precepts of classical Greek philosophy.

¹² A. Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1969) 11

¹³ Ibid. 55

¹⁴ A. Kojève, "Tyranny and Wisdom" in On Tyranny ed. A. Bloom (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963) 180-181

Inspired by the works of such wise men as Aristotle and Plato, the Macedonian based his empire on the spirit or essence of Greek civilization and culture.¹⁵ It was a basis of unity which could transcend narrow geographic and ethnic loyalties.

Despite its universal character, however, Alexander's empire was not an adequate model to represent mankind's continuous process of struggle and labour. Though it could provide the maximum number of people necessary for recognition, it could not provide the maximum number of peers required. The term "peer" connotes sameness, equality of status. Alexander's empire was a slave state, made up of two unequal societal classes.¹⁶

Kojeve argues that early Christian doctrine, did much to reconcile these class differences. The religion made its followers "fundamentally equal," ignoring not only geographic and ethnic differences, but class distinctions as well. Greeks, Jews, masters, and slaves, were all accorded the same spiritual status in the eyes of the movement.¹⁷

As a religious ethic, however, Christianity could only provide a universal and homogeneous Church. The basis of a universal and homogeneous state only occurred with the decline of religion, with less emphasis being placed on spiritual

¹⁵ Kojève, "Tyranny and Wisdom", 1963

¹⁶ G. Grant, "Tyranny and Wisdom" in Technology and Empire (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1969) 87

¹⁷ Ibid. 88

values and more being placed on secular (ideological) ones. Kojève states that Napoleon's empire was one of the first states that could truly satisfy, at least in theory, man's innate desire for peer recognition.¹⁸

Though the scholar provides no elaboration of this last point in the body of his text, a brief examination of Napoleonic history within the Hegel-Kojève dialectical framework will show it to be true. Extending virtually from one end of the European continent to the other, Napoleon's empire was universal in orientation. At its zenith between 1810-1812, Spain, Holland, Italy, and the Germanic states in the Confederation of the Rhine were among its annexed territories and dependencies.¹⁹ The principles embodied in the Code Napoleon provided a trans-geographic and trans-ethnic basis of unity for the realm much as the essence of Greek civilization did for Alexander's empire.

Unlike the precepts of Hellenic culture, however, the Code Napoleon offered a substantial degree of societal homogeneity to the people it represented. Promulgated in 1807, the legal code enshrined some of the egalitarian principles which evolved from the French revolutionary period. Though its chief purpose was to protect individual property rights and the interests of the business middle class, the Code

¹⁸ Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, 69

¹⁹ M. Chambers et. al. The Western Experience (New York: Alfred A, Knopf, 1983) 733

Napoleon was universally applied throughout the empire, abolishing in its wake traditional and parochial legal customs.²⁰ Citizens in Warsaw, therefore, were accorded the same rights and restrictions as citizens in Paris. All were equal under the law.

With these facts in mind, it would be reasonable to assume that Napoleon's empire, along with the principles which shaped it, could have served as the political model for mankind's evolutionary process. After all, its laws provided people of the middle class, a societal group which had previously chafed under the economic and political restrictions of socially immobile monarchical regimes, with a greater opportunity to secure recognition. In this case, recognition could be realized through the financial gains of business entrepreneurialship. The accumulation of wealth through one's own means was a measure of success and a source of admiration among peers. Even members of the working classes, if they were able and ambitious, could achieve these rewards of recognition under the Code Napoleon. Moreover, as the empire encompassed much of the continent, it provided a great number of people to acknowledge these personal achievements.

Yet despite fulfilling the basic requirements of universality and homogeneity, Napoleon's regime was not the political model which would shape mankind's evolutionary

²⁰ E. M. Burns et. al. Western Civilizations (New York: W Norton & Company, 1984), 701

progression. Nor did France become the centre of this process. Defeated by his enemies for the last time in 1815, Napoleon was exiled to the island of St. Helena, where he died roughly six years later.²¹ The continental order that he created was promptly replaced by parochial absolutist monarchies - an international order that would exist intact until the First World War.

A number of reasons are offered for the demise of the Napoleonic empire. The French, for example, could not destroy Great Britain's naval superiority and thus, could not successfully interrupt the Island country's global trade patterns. Nor could Napoleon successfully create a continental trade system at the exclusion of the English. Strategic defeats in Spain and Russia undermined France's military strength, rendering the empire vulnerable to combined enemy attack.²²

Whatever the reasons offered, however, the fall of Napoleon's empire seems to point out an inconsistency in Kojeve's logic. If his notion of mankind's dynamic historical progression is true, then why did a state which possessed the politically universal and socially homogeneous characteristics necessary for this process fall in defeat? Moreover, how

²¹ Ibid. 707

²² Chambers et al., 733-738

could it be defeated by regimes representing traditional, reactionary values?

To answer these questions, one must bear in mind the role technology plays in mankind's historical progression. For many, the term technology brings to mind a relationship between humankind and machines. The relationship can be viewed in a negative or positive light, but the key fact is that man and machine are regarded separately. From this perspective, humankind in general and human evolution in particular exists independently of technology. George Grant, however, takes a different view, equating human progress with technological progress.²³

Driven by our process of struggle and labour, or as he defines it, our will to mastery, Grant argues that we constantly shape both ourselves (our inner consciousness) and our external environment.²⁴ Indeed, the changes we make to our physical surroundings can be viewed as an external reflection of the changes in self-perception that we are creating. The conquest of nature then, is an important element in our quest for recognition. The better we can control and shape our

²³ G. Grant, "A Platitude" in Technology and Empire (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1969) 137

²⁴ G. Grant, "In Defence of North America" in Technology and Empire (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1969) 18

physical surroundings, the better we can lead ourselves to the end of history.²⁵

To help us conquer nature, we invent tools. Building on the ideas and scientific discoveries of preceding generations, these tools (technological innovations) become increasingly sophisticated over time. The discovery of fire, the development of brass and iron weapons, the use of mechanized equipment, such as looms, steam and electric engines and more recently computers; all have evolved out of our will to mastery. Thus, in order for a political order to represent man's dynamic quest for recognition, it must not only be universal and homogeneous in nature, it must also be that at the forefront of technological innovation. Because if our process of struggle and labour is linked to the conquest of nature, and the conquest of nature depends on the use of tools, then the political order that can create the best, most efficient tools, will best be able to fulfill mankind's ultimate goal.

Although Napoleon's empire was a "modern" regime, that is a regime founded upon some of the most innovative political, social, and strategic principles available at that time, it was not the centre of technological progress. The French leader may have been more willing or better able to adopt new concepts and tools than his contemporaries, but these

²⁵ Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, 49

innovations were available to all. For example, Napoleon was not responsible for the creation of, nor did it have exclusive access to, military artillery. He was, however, quicker to successfully incorporate this tool of war into his strategic planning.²⁶

The reasons offered for the fall of Napoleon's empire can be attributed to its technological limitations. Napoleon did not have the industrial capacity to exclude Great Britain indefinitely from continental trading. Nor could France develop and manufacture better, more efficient ships than the British - ships which could have been used to neutralize or destroy British naval superiority. Without the capacity to defeat this last great enemy, the empire's forward movement was stalled. Dissatisfaction spread among its dependencies, satellites, and allies as it increasingly became unable to justify its role as the representative of modernity and progress.²⁷

Thus, though severely weakened by military defeats in Russia, the empire would most likely have collapsed under its own weight. The economic avenues offered to the people in the annexed territories and dependencies could secure short term loyalty, but eventually the people in these regions would have demanded political satisfaction. Indeed, the notion of state

²⁶ P. Paret, "Napoleon and the Revolution in War" in Makers of Modern Strategy ed. P. Paret (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986) 124-125

²⁷ Chambers et al., 738

nationalism which developed out of the French Revolution and was later used by the Emperor to marshall strength in France, would most likely have filtered to these subject people, fuelling their desire for some form of independent political expression. At any rate, it would not be until nearly one hundred and fifty years after the Napoleon's final defeat before a state system would arise combining the universal and homogeneous political principles introduced by the empire along with the technological capacity necessary to lead mankind's evolutionary process.

George Grant states that there have been three regimes in the twentieth century with the potential to lead man into the end of history: Hitler's (Nazi) Germany, the Marxist-Leninist Soviet Union, and the liberal democratic/capitalist United States.²⁸ Nazi Germany, the youngest of the three state systems, was also the first to fall. Hitler's vision of an Aryan dominated (populated) universal and homogeneous world order proved repugnant to most people outside of Germany. In 1945, his regime was defeated by the combined technological forces of the Soviet Union, the United States and their allies.

The Soviet Union, undergirded by Marxist-Leninist (communist) principles, held its claim as the representative of man's evolutionary process much longer than Nazi Germany. With its stress on universal equality of condition (a form of

²⁸ G. Grant, Time as History, 10

equality which rejects any class distinctions), Marxism-Leninism provided a trans-ethnic, trans-geographical basis of unity to an otherwise societally heterogeneous political order. The ideology's internationalist orientation also enabled the Soviet Union to expand its sphere of influence into large segments of the global community by providing developing countries such as Angola, Cuba, and North Korea with a governing model to deal with the forces of modernity and progress. As such, the Eurasian country had a universal and homogeneous political basis to satisfy the Hegelian requirements for peer recognition.

Unlike Hitler's Nazism, Soviet Marxism-Leninism provided a comprehensive alternative to the older means of expressing our technological will to mastery. According to communist theory, in the older economic system (capitalism), the forces of production (capital) are owned primarily by one social class (capitalists). Workers sell or rent their services to this social class in exchange for some kind of wage.²⁹ Through their uses of the tools and materials of production, workers create products or goods -goods that have acquired a greater value than the materials and tools that went into their production.³⁰

²⁹ M.J. Brodie and J. Jenson, Crisis, Challenge & Change (Ontario: Methuen Publications, 1980) 6

³⁰ E.K. Hunt, Property and Prophets (New York: Harper & Row, 1981) 88

Marxist-Leninists believe that this system is unjust. They argue that capitalists, who usually play no part in the production process, receive the benefits of surplus value, that is the value difference between the finished product and the value of the materials and tools before production; and workers, who through their efforts create surplus value, receive no share.³¹ The only way that this injustice can be resolved is through the communal ownership of the forces of production and through the equal sharing of surplus value.

Despite fulfilling the basic political and technological/economic requirements necessary to represent mankind's evolutionary process, however, the Soviet Union ceased to exist in 1991. Its demise differed from that of Napoleonic France and Hitler's Germany. While Napoleon and Hitler were defeated militarily by their enemies, the Soviet Union collapsed largely under the force of its own weight. The process began formally with the near bloodless revolutions in its Eastern and Central European dependencies, culminating with the secession of the Soviet Republics from the national government. Though this chain of events surprised many Western political and military experts, Fukuyama predicted in

³¹ Ibid. 88-89

1989 that communism would become largely discredited as an ideological model for modernity and progress.³²

Fukuyama, arguing along Hegel-Kojeve lines, asserts that the Soviet Union fell because its citizens could not fully realize their desire for economic and (or) political recognition through Marxism-Leninism.³³ With its stress on the communal ownership of capital and the equal sharing of surplus value, communism downplays the role of efficiency in the production process. More emphasis is placed on social aspects of the economic relations (such as full employment) than in the ability to create a variety of goods in large quantities (which is valued in systems stressing efficiency). Though the Soviet Union and the Marxist-Leninist regimes in Eastern Europe could provide some goods to their constituents, more goods in fact than can be obtained in developing countries, they could not offer the variety and quantity of goods available in the profit-driven economically efficient Western States.³⁴ Citizens in communist regimes became dissatisfied because they measured their economic desire for recognition not by what goods they had in relationship to developing countries, but by their level of consumer deprivation in relation to Western countries.

³² Fukuyama, "The End of History" in The Globe and Mail December 12, 1989

³³ Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 177

³⁴ Ibid. 93

According to Fukuyama, the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites also collapsed because the totalitarian nature of Marxist-Leninist regimes proved irreconcilable with mankind's need to nurture self-worth.³⁵ The writer states that to escape persecution, citizens in these states had to constantly subordinate personal desires in favour of officially sanctioned principles.³⁶ Although individuals in any societal system must compromise personal interests for the sake of coexistence, the level of deference required in communist regimes was tantamount to complete submission.

Marxism-Leninism provided some citizens with a means to fool themselves into believing that they were sacrificing their own needs for a greater good, but eventually this belief gave way under constant pressures of compromise and submission. For many of these people, the knowledge that they were living under fear of persecution threatened their sense of freedom and self-worth, thus denying them their need for the peer recognition of this self-worth.³⁷ At any rate, because their basic economic and political requirements were not being met, the constituents of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies abandoned their Marxist-Leninist institutions in favour of an ideological and governing

³⁵ Ibid. 181

³⁶ Ibid. 167

³⁷ Ibid. 177

framework which could - democratic liberalism/ economic capitalism.

To Fukuyama, this fundamental economic and political shift was an exercise of rational choice. The constituents of the former Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies knew that democratic liberalism/economic capitalism was the best means by which they could satisfy their desire for peer recognition.³⁸ In the economic sphere, capitalism could provide them what it provided for people in Napoleon's empire: consumer wealth as a gauge in measuring both self-worth and worth in relation to others. Individuals could prove their initiative by securing the ownership of capital and/or accumulating a wide variety of goods. Though this liberal economic system perpetuates a form of class distinction based on wealth, it is still egalitarian by virtue of the fact that it extends the opportunity for material success to all.³⁹

In the political sphere, this ideological and governing framework offers people a means of preserving and enhancing estimations of self-worth that the Marxist-Leninist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union could not. Individuals in liberal democracies are accorded certain fundamental rights (guarantees) against possible abuses by

³⁸ Ibid. 205

³⁹ Fukuyama, "The End of History" in The Globe and Mail December 6, 1989

other individuals and society as a whole.⁴⁰ Because of these guarantees (which are usually enshrined in some form of charter or bill of rights), there is less of a need for people to subordinate their wills to avoid persecution.

Citizens in liberal democracies can also enhance their estimations of self-worth through the shaping of government policy. Whether this involvement is manifested directly, by seeking public office, or indirectly, by voting for those who are seeking public office, people in these countries have a real choice in formulating the laws and guidelines under which they live.⁴¹ Fukuyama argues that democratic liberalism bridges the master-slave gap which characterizes all other political models created and used throughout mankind's dialectical journey. The governing process is one of self-mastery, therefore one which accords the measure of self-worth that can only be achieved through mastery.⁴²

Anyhow, Fukuyama is stating that it is by conscious choice that liberalism/economic capitalism is becoming (has become?) the model for the universal and homogeneous state. As the constituents of the former Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies were aware of this model's economic and political benefits and sought for it actively, so too will

⁴⁰ Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 202

⁴¹ Ibid. 202-203

⁴² Ibid. 200

oppressed people throughout the world make a similar choice.⁴³ Humankind will still have to deal with such issues as pollution, unemployment, and world hunger, but as time progresses, more people will choose to deal with them within a liberal democratic/economic capitalist framework. To illustrate his point, the American writer offers some statistics detailing this value system's growing popularity. In 1940, there were only thirteen liberal democracies worldwide. By 1990, there were sixty-one.⁴⁴

Though George Grant's key works on the subject were published at a time when the Marxist-Leninist Soviet Union could still make a realistic claim as the representative of modernity and progress, he too is convinced that we will define our "will to mastery" through democratic liberalism/economic capitalism. To him, it is the ideological and governing model which can best shape mankind's evolutionary process. However, in a break from the Hegel-Kojeve-Fukuyama line of argument, Grant also stresses that the United States will become the centre of this process.

Both Hegel and Kojève have distinctively European visions of the universal and homogeneous state. Hegel, for example, believing that the values of Napoleonic France would shape the forces of modernity and progress, states that the beginning of

⁴³ Ibid. 51

⁴⁴ Ibid. 50

the end of history occurred in 1806- with the French military victory over reactionary Prussia at Jena.⁴⁵ In his brief sketch of mankind's dialectical history, Kojève ends with Napoleonic France as well and makes no reference to the American liberal revolution which started in 1776. Though Fukuyama refers to "the spirit of 1776," he does so in conjunction with the values of the French Revolution, and does not equate the United States directly as the representative of this process.⁴⁶

Grant, on the other hand, believes that United States can best represent the forces behind mankind's dialectical evolution because it is a country without a history before the age progress.⁴⁷ When the first Protestant settlers (Puritans) came to North America, they encountered an untamed wilderness, a land that was not yet theirs. The taming of this frontier (as well as its natives) was not only a way to make the land their own, but also the central way these Puritans expressed outwardly their belief in God.⁴⁸ Technological advancement was a byproduct of this religious quest. With the decline of religious puritanism, material and technological advancement became an end in itself as opposed to just a means to an end.

⁴⁵ Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, 41

⁴⁶ Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 200

⁴⁷ Grant, "In Defence of North America" in Technology and Empire (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1969) 17

⁴⁸ Ibid. 24

Arguing from this perspective, Europe as a whole has not become the dynamic centre of modernity and progress because it is not purely driven towards technological mastery as is the United States. Dutch-English Puritanism may have evolved out of European culture, but it is only a fragment of the sum of attitudes, beliefs, and traditions, some conducive to technological progress and some not, which make up the essence of that culture.⁴⁹ Europeans have been less inclined to shape their external environment than North Americans. After all, their land was already their own, shaped gradually by each succeeding generation.

By the same token, Europe did not (and still does not) represent the modern values of ideological liberalism as purely as the United States. The French Revolution, for example, marked a dramatic attempt to replace traditional authoritarian values with liberal democratic ones. Symbolizing this attempt, the leaders of the revolution introduced a new calendar, with day one representing the first day of the new political order.⁵⁰ French liberalism, however, could not ignore or eradicate traditional attitudes and ways of thinking. Though Napoleon's empire exported many of the Revolution's principles throughout the European continent, the liberal democratic notion of political self-determination was

⁴⁹ Ibid. 18-19

⁵⁰ Burns, 693

not one of them. Indeed, because of its highly centralized bureaucracy, his regime was in many ways more absolutist than some of the authoritarian monarchies he was combating.

In contrast, the liberal democratic/economic capitalist values underlying the American Revolution flourished. According to Louis Hartz, the British American colonies were founded almost exclusively by a liberal fragment⁵¹ of the

⁵¹. Hartz developed his "fragment theory" in order to explain why European cultures (such as the British culture) have evolved differently than the cultures in their former colonies (such as the American culture). Arguing that cultures can be defined by the basic value orientations (ideologies) which underlie them, Hartz asserts that there are three such basic ideological orientations: conservatism (toryism), liberalism, and socialism. These three value sets are interrelated. Ideological liberalism, for example, with its stress on the sanctity of the individual and the egalitarian notion of equality of opportunity, developed as a response to the traditional communitarian conservatism, with its more static and hierarchical view of human relations. Ideological socialism, in turn, developed as a response to liberalism's overly high regard for individual rights, combining conservatism's communitarian outlook towards social responsibility along with a notion of egalitarianism that is based on equality of condition rather than liberalism's equality of opportunity.

Hartz argues that European cultures have evolved differently than those of their former colonies because the latter were not populated by a true ideological cross-section of the mother society, but rather were populated by ideological fragments of the mother society. For example, whereas seventeenth and eighteenth century Britain was primarily conservative in orientation, with a minority liberal segment, most of the American settlers came from the liberal segment. In the nineteenth and twentieth century, ideological socialism flourished in Britain because of the presence of both conservatism and liberalism in its cultural make-up. Socialism floundered in the United States because of the absence of conservatism in its cultural value make-up. For more information on the fragment theory, please consult Louis Hartz's The Founding of New Societies. William Christian and Colin Campbell offer a precis of the theory in their Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada.

mother society.⁵² Traditional communitarian tory (conservative) values, which were dominant then in Britain, were a distinct ideological minority in North America. Conservatism was so weak that it virtually ceased to exist in the United States after the Revolution.⁵³ At any rate, if mankind's process of struggle and labour can best be expressed in a technologically innovative and liberal democratic/capitalist order, then the United States, as the most purely technologically driven and most purely liberal democratic/capitalist state, will be at the centre of this process.

Yet, as much as this point distinguishes George Grant's views on the nature of modernity and progress from those of Hegel, Kojève, and Fukuyama, his pessimism regarding the inherent "goodness" of this process marks a much clearer break. Both Kojève and Fukuyama are optimistic about Hegel's view of the end of history. Kojève, believing that there would be no need for philosophers in the universal and homogeneous state, abandoned his teaching and research, spending the rest of his life promoting European integration.⁵⁴

⁵² L. Hartz, "The Fragmentation of European Culture and Ideology" in The Founding of New Societies ed. Louis Hartz (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964) 4

⁵³ W. Christian and C. Campbell, Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada (Canada: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1990) 26

⁵⁴ B. Cooper, The End of History: An Essay on Modern Hegelianism (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984) 10

Though Fukuyama is less overtly enthusiastic about mankind's evolutionary process than is Kojève, his concerns cannot be measured against those of George Grant.⁵⁵

In the conclusion of his article "The End of History," Fukuyama states that he is saddened by the coming of the new world order.⁵⁶ His sadness, however, is not a challenge to his belief that we can best fulfill our basic goals and aspirations through the liberal democratic/economic capitalist universal and homogeneous state.⁵⁷ Nor is it meant to be a criticism of the human tendency towards self-creation and the conquest of nature. Rather, he is more concerned that the end of history will rob us of the noble character of our process of struggle and labour - the willingness to fight and die for abstract ideological principles.⁵⁸ Grant, on the other hand, questions more fundamentally the "goodness" of the entire process. His concerns will form the basis of the second chapter of this paper.

⁵⁵ It is interesting to note that Fukuyama was a high level functionary in the US State Department - a bureaucratic institution in the heart of modernity and progress. Thus, like Kojève, he was actively working towards the liberal democratic/capitalist universal and homogeneous state. He is currently continuing "the good fight" as a resident consultant at the Rand Corporation.

⁵⁶ Fukuyama, "The End of History" in The Globe and Mail December 18, 1989

⁵⁷ Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 337

⁵⁸ Fukuyama, "The End of History" in The Globe and Mail December 18, 1989

CHAPTER TWO:

The Tyranny of Modernity and Progress

In a monarchy, adulation is paid to the prince; in a democracy to the people, or the publick. Neither hears the truth as often as is wholesome, and both suffer from want of the corrective. The man who resists the tyranny of a monarch, is often sustained by the voices of those around him; but he who opposes the innovations of the publick in a democracy, not only finds himself struggling with power, but with his own neighbors.

-James Fenimore Cooper: The American Democrat

We must all be alike. Not everyone born free and equal as the Constitution says, but everyone made equal. Each man the image of every other; then all are happy, for there are no mountains to make them cower, to judge themselves against.

-Ray Bradbury: Fahrenheit 451

Lament for a Nation is George Grant's most widely read book. Though structured around Prime Minister Diefenbaker's defeat in the 1963 general election, it is no mere tribute to the politician or his party, the Progressive Conservatives. Rather, the book chronicles what Grant believes to be a crucial turning point (or better yet point of no return) in Canadian politics: namely that point where our country becomes firmly, inextricably bound to the US shaped, liberal democratic/economic capitalist universal and homogeneous state. Because the latter is the regime model which best represents the process of human and non-human technological development, Grant argues that no other regime model, not even one founded upon the joint principles of Canadian nationalism and (communitarian) socialism, will be able to serve as a realistically possible or viable governing alternative.

Grant's central concern (or cause for lament) in this book is that mankind's inevitable evolutionary course (as outlined by Hegel, Kojeve, Fukuyama, and Grant himself in the first chapter of this thesis) will mark the end of a distinctly Canadian cultural presence in the world community. Before expanding on the Canadian philosopher's views, however, it will first be necessary to define what is meant by the terms political culture and Canadian political culture. The term political culture is an all encompassing one, one that reflects, at the deepest level, the very essence of a society's identity. Simply put, it defines what constitutes a particular society: how people within it see themselves in relation to those around them, what matters to them, what their values are (both as individuals and collectively). Societal institutions (such as parliament) and institutional arrangements (such as federalism) are also included within the broad definitional parameters of the term.⁵⁹

Though narrower in scope, the term Canadian political culture, is a much more difficult one to define. Canadians today, for example, are still struggling to answer fundamental questions about both our collective values and the nature of our institutional arrangements. Are we a bicultural society or are we multicultural? Are we a society organized around the precepts of centralized federalism or de-centralized

⁵⁹. T. Magstadt and P. Schotten, Understanding Politics (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984) 539

federalism? Are we a culture based on unconditional human and civil rights or are we a culture which subscribes to an asymmetrical application of human and civil rights; that is rights applied with varying degrees of force from area to area and from region to region?⁶⁰ Dorothy Dobbie and the Hon. Gerald A. Beaudoin, the authors of the 1992 Report of the Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada, perhaps compound the definitional problem by stating that we are all of these contradictory things.

In Lament for a Nation, George Grant draws from his own personal heritage when he discusses the broader nature or essence of Canadian political culture. As a member of English Canada's traditional societal elite, Grant's family have lived and prospered building a community in North America founded upon British values and institutions. Their effort was a deliberate one, a conscious attempt to build a society that was distinctively non-American in orientation. Because the value system which makes up this traditional culture contains communitarian elements that are not completely compatible with US style liberalism, Grant asserts that it will be lost once the universal and homogeneous state is upon us.

Despite its popularity, however, and despite the fact that it helped secure his reputation as a Canadian political

⁶⁰. A. Cairns, "Constitutional Change and the Three Equalities" in Options for a New Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 88

thinker, the thesis that Grant argues in Lament for a Nation seems to fall flat when compared against the Hegel-Kojeve-Fukuyama dialectic. After all, if the evolutionary course of human history is fuelled by an innate desire for peer recognition, and if this innate desire can best be expressed in a liberal democratic/economic capitalist world order, why should Canadians mourn the passing of an anachronistic cultural element - particularly the elitist one that George Grant was born into? In the Canada that Grant seems to be reminiscing about, English speaking white Anglo-Saxon protestants enjoyed a number of political, social, and economic privileges that were not as readily available to others in the community, enjoyed not so much by virtue of their talents and efforts, but largely because of an accident of birth. Would not the coming of a world order based on universal political equality and societal homogeneity in fact do away with such an arbitrary form of elitism?

Still, as much as it may be difficult for those who do not share Grant's personal cultural heritage to lament its eventual passing, it would be wrong to dismiss his arguments because of this fact. Though his concern about the demise of traditional cultural values is expressed in a personal way, his key point remains: all cultural values that are not compatible with the outlook which is currently shaping the course of human history will succumb to its pressures. Whatever cultural values have made Canadian society

distinctive, be it Grant's own, or be it those of some other segment, will be lost in this evolutionary process.

Moreover, it can be argued that the personal approach Grant uses to describe Canadian political culture is an appropriate one in this case. Gad Horowitz points out that Canadian societal distinctiveness is due in no small part to the basic value orientation of people like Grant's ancestors. Building his argument on Louis Hartz's fragment theory, Horowitz contends that the influx of American settlers (Loyalists) into Canada after the American Revolution strengthened the country's small communitarian conservative (tory) value segment. The presence of this ideology spurred (either by itself or in conjunction with the communitarian values of future immigrants) the growth of socialism in Canada.⁶¹ Although Horowitz concedes that liberalism is the dominant ideological segment in Canada's cultural makeup, he argues that Canadian liberalism is different than the US variety because of its interrelationship with the smaller socialist and tory segments.⁶² At any rate, by mourning the demise of his own cultural heritage, Grant is also mourning the demise of the communitarian segment of Canadian political culture and thus the demise of any substantive ideological difference between Canada and the United States.

⁶¹. G. Horowitz, "Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in Canada" in Party Politics in Canada H. Thorburn ed. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1985) 45-46

⁶². Ibid. 52

As much as it would be wrong to dismiss Grant's thesis because it is argued in a personal way, it would also be wrong to assume that Lament for a Nation is nothing more than a nostalgic tribute to a Canada that once was and will never be again. Though the book is a "look back", it is also a "look forward" - a "look forward" as to how the forces of modernity and progress will actually shape our lives. It is a look forward, that, when taken in context with his other works on modernity and with those of his key sources, reveals what Grant believes to be real dangers about the nature of emerging global culture. In essence, Grant is concerned that mankind's evolutionary process, fuelled by the forces of non-human and human technology, will usher in an age of tyrannical conformism, one that will prevent the unfettered growth of human excellence.

Looking beyond the superficial details outlined in Lament for a Nation, this chapter will explore more fully Grant's concerns about the progressive course of human history. This will be accomplished by comparing and contrasting his critique of modernity with those of his most influential sources: Martin Heidegger (and through Heidegger Friedrich Nietzsche) and Leo Strauss (and through Strauss Plato). Because Grant and his sources draw heavily from classical teachings, this chapter will also examine the fears the ancient Jews and Greeks had about human progress in general and technological progress in particular. Before doing so, however, it will be

necessary to dispel some commonly held assumptions regarding the goodness of man's evolutionary process.

For many people, the terms "modern", "human evolution", and "progress", signify something good, something better than what was before. These are seemingly common-sensical assumptions to make. By drawing on the knowledge and experiences of previous generations, we are able to solve problems in ways that people before us never could. By the same token, future generations will be able to build and improve on what we have learned in ways that we can now only imagine. To Hegel, Kojève, and to a large extent Fukuyama, these seemingly common-sensical assumptions form the basis of their views on the goodness of the universal and homogeneous state - the ultimate framework in which the forces of modernity and progress will be expressed. One need only contrast modern technological/economic and socio-political developments to the state of affairs in previous generations in order to appreciate their point of view.

With little practical knowledge of their external environment, people in bygone times were largely victims to the whims of nature. Natural disasters such as floods,

hurricanes, and earthquakes; diseases such as leprosy, the plague, and tuberculosis; the inner workings of the human body; all were once mysteries to mankind, things to be feared. Life was often short, unpleasant, and subject to chance. In other words, people were controlled by their physical surroundings and not in control.

Through technological/economic innovations, however, people were largely able to eliminate this element of chance from their lives. Floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes gradually became understood as simple manifestations of nature, things to be avoided and not feared superstitiously. The black plague was discovered to be a byproduct of unsanitary living conditions, a disease that could not only be controlled, but conquered. As people became increasingly aware of the inner workings of the human body, means were found to lengthen lifespans.

Today, the gradual assertion of our wills over our external surroundings and our bodies has provided people in technological societies with the freedom to pursue a level of quality of life unmatched in preceding generations. Whereas our ancestors had to toil long hours merely to preserve their existence, we today can work regulated hours to pay for our food and living arrangements, enabling us to have enough free time to spend with our friends and family and also to pursue personal interests. Our time on this earth can also be spent in much greater comfort as well. Items such as toothpaste,

shampoo, automobiles, television sets, nintendos, and compact disc players - items which we use daily and take for granted - were simply not available to people in other periods.

From this perspective, the goodness of modernity and progress can also be measured by socio-political means. Through the process of self-creation, human consciousness has expanded incrementally over time. As such, people have not only acquired a better understanding of their own wants and needs, but also a greater appreciation of the wants and needs of those around them. Inequalities between the sexes and different races may exist today and inhumane acts committed against other people may still occur, but they now occur outside established norms in western industrial societies, as vestiges of barbarism that have yet to be overcome, and are not officially sanctioned guiding principles as in previous generations.

The liberal democratic value system undergirding the universal and homogeneous state has also provided us with a formidable yardstick by which we can measure standards of human dignity - human dignity in this case being defined as an individual's ability to express him/herself as an individual.⁶³ No other governing model can better offer individuals the freedom of choice in quality of life decision making. By not conforming to liberal standards of justice, regimes outside of

⁶³. L. Strauss, "Perspectives on the Good Society" in Liberalism Ancient and Modern (New York: Basic Books Inc.) 262

the framework of modernity and technological progress risk being labeled as tyrannies.

From a liberal democratic perspective, a tyranny is a polity in which the will of the few is favoured over the will of the many. Constituent members in such systems are forced to gear their lives around a particular set of human relations. Coercive measures can be, and often are, used to ensure that official values are adhered to. Regimes such as the former communist totalitarian dictatorships in Eastern Europe and Nazi Germany are popularly equated as tyrannies. In any case, when faced with these obvious technological/economic and socio-political benefits of mankind's evolutionary process, even George Grant concedes that life is easier for people today than in previous times.⁶⁴

Despite making this concession, however, Grant does not equate the terms "modernity" and "progress" as something fundamentally good. To him, there are consequences to mankind's process of struggle and labour which far outweigh whatever material benefits this process may have given us. At the root of his concerns is the question of control: is our will to technological mastery a manifestation of our control, that is our ability to shape ourselves and our destinies, or are we prisoners of a process that we have created for

⁶⁴. G. Grant, "The Minds of Men in the Atomic Age" in Canadian Political Thought ed. H.D. Forbes (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1985) 285

ourselves? It is a question which not only encapsulates his own concerns on the issue, but is also the concerns of other people, in ancient and more recent times.

In Time as History, Grant mentions that Western intellectual thought has been influenced heavily by the ancient Jewish and Greek cultures.⁶⁵ Though he provides no elaboration on this point in the body of his text, history is replete with examples of how their ideas have shaped both how we live today and how we have evolved. Francis Bacon, for example, justified his notion of scientific progress through such biblical references as Genesis 1;28: "subdue the earth and rule over it."⁶⁶ The development of modern science is also founded upon the principles of Greek rational thought. Yet as much as our evolutionary course can be traced through their influences, the ancient Jews and Greeks have also expressed wariness about human progress in general and technological progress in particular.

Ancient Jewish concerns over this issue can be found in the story of Adam and Eve. In this story, the first man and woman lived contentedly in paradise, with everything they could ever need at their fingertips. Their lives were so simple and free from want, they did not even need clothes.

⁶⁵. Grant, Time as History, 21-22

⁶⁶. F. Flynn, "Technology and the Masks of Prometheus" in Two Theological Languages ed. Wayne Whillier (United States: The Edwin Mellen Press, Ltd. 1990) 123

They had only one restriction: they were forbidden to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge. Curiosity and temptation got the better of Adam and Eve, however, and they tasted the forbidden fruit.

Referring to another story, Frank Flinn labels Cain as the father of inventors, shapers of our external environment. After Cain murdered his brother Abel, he and his progeny were forever cursed by God. Seth who was begotten to replace Abel, was not an inventor, nor were any of his offspring.⁶⁷ Flinn also mentions that the biblical God's displeasure towards graven images was a condemnation of man made images of Him and not of natural holy images.⁶⁸

Underlying these three accounts is a common theme: man has the God-like power to create but it is a corrupting power, one that can lead to unholiness and then disaster. Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan to eat the forbidden fruit. After consuming it, they became dissatisfied with the lot God had created for them and took steps to change things for themselves (ie covering their nakedness). For their transgression, they were expelled from paradise.

Before killing his brother, Cain attempted to cheat God by offering Him a sacrifice of his own invention. When God rejected this sacrifice and accepted Abel's natural offering,

⁶⁷. Ibid. 126

⁶⁸ Ibid. 126

Cain became jealous and committed the crime which led to his fall from grace. The law against graven images was a means to prevent people from trying to shape God as they wished to see Him, thus asserting their power over Him.

Doubts regarding the goodness of technological progress can also be found throughout ancient Greek history. In 700 BC, for example, the poet Hesiod chronicled the myth of Prometheus. Prometheus, a Titan, stole a spark of fire (a symbol of technological innovation) from the god Zeus and gave it to mortal man. In punishment for this act, Zeus had Prometheus chained to a column.⁶⁹ There, he remained helpless as a longed winged eagle picked at his liver.⁷⁰

Mortal men, according to Hesiod, were also punished for Prometheus' theft. Though they were allowed to enjoy some of the good that came out of technological innovation, Zeus balanced off this good with evil. Zeus, in union with the other gods, created women for men to share their lives with. If a man chose to live with a good woman, then his life would

⁶⁹. In Prometheus Bound, Aeschylus offers a different account of the myth than Hesiod. Hesiod, as a devout believer in the god Zeus, is not overly sympathetic to the plight of the Titan Prometheus. Aeschylus, on the other hand, does not hold Zeus in high regard and glorifies the life of the Titan. Although this contrast may seem significant when discussed in the context of Greek attitudes toward technological innovations, the key fact remains: Prometheus is punished for challenging the authority of the gods.

⁷⁰. Hesiod, "Theogony" in The Poems of Hesiod ed. R.M. Frazer (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983) 63

contain both good and evil. If he chose to live with a bad woman, then his life would be miserable.⁷¹

There are striking similarities between the myth of Prometheus and the Jewish accounts listed above. As the ancient Jews are warned about the pitfalls of challenging God's power of creative innovation, so too are the ancient Greeks being warned about the consequences they will suffer when they encroach on the preserves of their gods. Though both peoples are allowed to keep the knowledge they have acquired, they will have to suffer hardships because of it. The ancient Jews, for example, are exiled from paradise. When Pandora, the first woman created by Zeus and the other gods comes to earth, she opens a jar that she has brought with her, letting loose on man the evil and misery trapped within.⁷²

In his poem "Works and Days", Hesiod also offered a pessimistic five stage history of man which challenges today's commonly held assumption that each succeeding generation will be better than the one before. Hesiod's historical account is not a technologically regressive one, however. People in the fifth stage, for example, know more than those in preceding generations and are better able to work with and shape their external environment because of this knowledge. Yet to Hesiod,

⁷¹. Ibid. 66-67

⁷². Hesiod, "Works and Days" in The Poems of Hesiod ed. R.M. Frazer (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983) 99

this knowledge does not make them better people. Rather, each stage, with the exception of the fourth, is less moral (good) than the one it replaces. A brief examination of his account will illustrate this point more clearly.

To Hesiod, the first (best) men were called the golden race of mortal men and lived close to the gods in harmony and near paradise.⁷³ Not needing to struggle to survive,..."every good thing was theirs to enjoy: the grain-giving earth produced her fruits spontaneously, abundantly, freely; and they in complete satisfaction lived off their fields without any cares in blessed abundance."⁷⁴ Following the golden race of men were the silver race, a race that was..."much worse than the first, being unlike the golden in both thought and appearance." (101 lines 125-130). The bronze race of men were meat eating barbarians, with little care for farming. Though a noble race of demi-gods (the race which fought wars at Thebes and Troy) occupied the world next, they were replaced by the iron race of men, the race which Hesiod belonged to.⁷⁵

This fifth stage was, to Hesiod, a dehumanizing one. It was a time when men worked ceaselessly by day and suffered anguish at night. Though they did, through their toil, achieve some good, they brought on themselves great evil as

⁷³. Ibid. 101

⁷⁴. Ibid. 101

⁷⁵. Ibid. 102-103

well. The poet believed that the people in his time were morally degenerate, incapable, because of their selfishness, of sustaining positive human relationships. In the end, their system of justice would become corrupt, representing only the needs of those who were strongest and those who were most willing to take advantage of their fellow citizens. As punishment for their moral degeneracy, Hesiod believed that the people in his race would be abandoned by the gods, thus causing even further moral degeneracy.⁷⁶ So repulsed was he by his society's values, Hesiod wished that he had been born in either an earlier or later time.⁷⁷

This last point shows that Hesiod's view of human development was cyclical and not incremental as is the view held by Hegel, Kojève, Fukuyama, and most people today. The fall of the iron race of men was to be followed by a return of the first stage, and thus each of the subsequent stages as well. Though Hesiod's view shows that the incremental "stepladder" perspective of historical development is not the only one, this is not a sufficient challenge to today's commonly held perspective. In The End of History and the Last Man, for example, Fukuyama concedes that there may be some periods of setback, however, he states that there is still an

⁷⁶. Ibid. 103-104

⁷⁷. Ibid. 103

overall progressive pattern to human history.⁷⁸ George Grant makes a similar argument in Time as History. He states that there is an inevitable forward momentum caused by the collective living and willing of individuals, a momentum that cannot be completely stopped by isolated historical events.^{79 80}

Hesiod also seems to contradict himself when he recounts the Succession Myth in his poem "Theogony". In the Succession Myth, the order of events is cyclical in nature. The god Ouranous, fearing the power of his children, kept them prisoner in the bowels of the earth.⁸¹ His son Kronos, however, evaded capture and deposed his father from his position of power.⁸² Kronos, fearing the power of his children, sought to do away with them as well.⁸³ Kronos' son Zeus eluded capture and later became the king of the gods.⁸⁴ Though Zeus also neutralized his daughter Athena, he himself was not

⁷⁸. Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 48

⁷⁹. Grant, Time as History, 11-12

⁸⁰. This is a theme that Leo Tolstoy expands on in War and Peace. To Tolstoy, the conflict between Imperial Russia and Napoleonic France was not caused by the actions of a few key people. Rather, a point was reached where the sheer momentum created by the collective hopes, dreams, and fears of people made the clash inevitable.

⁸¹. Hesiod, "Theogony", 35

⁸². Ibid. 36-37

⁸³. Ibid. 57

⁸⁴. Ibid. 83

deposed by any of his children - a fact which breaks this seemingly cyclical chain of events. At any rate, according to Dodds, Hesiod's chief concern in his history of man was not its cyclical form but the issue of material progression/moral degeneration.⁸⁵

Traces of pessimism regarding societal progress can also be found in other periods of ancient Greek history. In the fifth century BC, for example, the historians Herodotus and Thucydides assigned limits to human achievement. Herodotus argued that man would be prevented from rising above his assigned station by some form of religious Power.⁸⁶ Though Thucydides believed in gradual upward progress, he asserted that certain disasters would always occur because human nature remained constant.⁸⁷

In the fourth century BC, doubts existed regarding the goodness of contemporary (modern) values when compared with those of the past. According to Dodds, "men looked over their shoulders to a supposedly more stable past, to what they called "the ancestral constitution", or beyond that to a state of primal innocence no longer to be found save among remote people: Plato...celebrated the values of Stone Age man;

⁸⁵. E.R. Dodds, "The Ancient Concept of Progress" in The Ancient Concept of Progress and other Essays on Greek Literature and Belief (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973) 4

⁸⁶. Ibid. 12

⁸⁷. Ibid. 12

Xenophon those of the early Persians; Ephorus discovered such virtues among the Scythians, while Ctesias attributed them to Indians."⁸⁸ This tendency to look back is a direct challenge to the optimistic view of human progress commonly held today. After all, if the human condition really did improve with each succeeding generation, why would these thinkers bother extolling past (simple/ primitive) values?

The Ancient Greeks have also influenced the works of more recent critics of modernity such as Martin Heidegger, Leo Strauss, and through these two writers, George Grant.⁸⁹ Centring his concerns on the issue of meaning and existence (being), Heidegger came to the conclusion that Socratic and post-Socratic (Western) metaphysical thought clouded and abstracted the issue, thus preventing us from truly understanding it.⁹⁰ Only the ancients, particularly the pre-Socratic Greeks such as Hesiod, had the ability to answer the

⁸⁸. Ibid. 13

⁸⁹. This is not to say that Grant was not influenced by other sources. Grant credits a number of people, both personally and academically, in the formulation of his ideas, a proper listing of which is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the foundations on which Grant builds his critique of modernity can adequately be traced through a study of Heidegger and Strauss, two writers whose ideas are found throughout Grant's works. "A Conversation with George Grant: Intellectual Background" and "A Conversation with George Grant: Philosophy" found in Larry Schmidt's George Grant in Process, offer a personal account of who Grant considers to be the sources who have most impacted on his work.

⁹⁰ G. Steiner, Heidegger (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1978) 31

fundamental question "what is?".⁹¹ In fact, a brief examination of Heidegger's concerns will not only challenge today's commonly held assumption about the goodness of progress, but will also show similarities, both in content and form, between his ideas and those of Hesiod.

To Heidegger, existence is not atomistic. All people, animals, and things, in all periods of time, exist in a broad interrelationship of Being. True knowledge of this interrelationship, as well as to the fleeting nature of our own physical existence is clouded or masked by our tendency to view life through subjective conditions of awareness (horizons).⁹² Modern metaphysical thought sustains these illusory horizons by trivializing the true nature of existence.⁹³

Although George Grant incorporates the notion of horizons into his own works on modernity, he credits his use of the term not to Heidegger, but to a scholar who influenced Heidegger's views: Friedrich Nietzsche.⁹⁴ According to

⁹¹. J. Anderson, "Introduction" in Martin Heidegger's Discourse on Thinking eds J. Anderson and E. Freund (London: Harper & Row, 1966) 19

⁹². Ibid. 17

⁹³. Steiner, 31

⁹⁴. Grant synthesises the works of Nietzsche and Heidegger into one complete view of modernity. When asked how Heidegger influenced his ideas on this subject, the Canadian scholar discussed Nietzsche. In "A Conversation with George Grant: Intellectual Background" and "Nietzsche and the Ancients: Philosophy and Scholarship" Grant makes reference to Heidegger's

Nietzsche, we create these subjective conditions of awareness (ie Christianity) in order to protect ourselves from the harsh reality of existence, which is, simply put, man's inevitable confrontation with the dark abyss (oblivion/death). These horizons are relative, ever changing, subject to the passage of time. When their limits are discovered, they are replaced by new ones.

It is interesting to note that Heidegger's disregard for Socratic and post-Socratic thought can also be attributed to Nietzsche. Nietzsche believes that Socrates and Plato, the founders of modern Western rational thought, were contemptuous figures. In the opening chapter of Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche asserts that Socrates was a harbinger of societal degeneracy and decay as opposed to progress, his views on reason a moral tyranny used to mask the true nature of existence.⁹⁵ Arguing in a similar vein, he accuses Plato of cowardice, of being unable to face the abyss the way pre-Socratics such as Thucydides could.⁹⁶ So severe is Nietzsche's

interpretation of Nietzsche. For more information on the relationship between George Grant's view of modernity and those of Nietzsche/Heidegger, please consult "A Conversation with George Grant: Intellectual Background" and "A Conversation with George Grant: Philosophy" in George Grant in Process edited by Larry Schmidt. Grant also expands on Nietzsche's view of modernity in Time as History.

⁹⁵. F. Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols (England: Penguin Books, 1990) 43

⁹⁶. Ibid. 117

disregard for Greek rationalism, Grant considers him to be the most formidable critic of Plato.⁹⁷

At any rate, Nietzsche believes that we are evolving to a point where we will no longer need subjective conditions of awareness to cushion the harsh reality of existence. For him, this state of affairs will be liberating. When we finally come to realize that horizons and the ethical codes which shape them (such as Christianity and Christian ethics) are in fact man-made, we will no longer have to limit our thoughts and actions to their dictates.⁹⁸ Armed with the powers of science and technology, we will have the potential freedom to will, create, and shape as we see fit both our physical environment and the state of our inner consciousness.⁹⁹

Nietzsche, however, asserts that not all us today have the courage to see the truth of existence in its pure, harsh, unadulterated form. In recognition of this fact, he divides mankind into three broad hierarchical categories: last men, nihilists, and supermen. The largest group in modern society, last men are those people who have complete faith in the seemingly common-sensical assumption that human and non-human

⁹⁷. G. Grant, "Nietzsche and the Ancients: Philosophy and Scholarship" in Technology and Justice (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1986) 89

⁹⁸. W. Dannhauser, "Friedrich Nietzsche" in History of Political Philosophy eds. L. Strauss and J. Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) 840

⁹⁹. G. Grant, Time as History, 29

technological progress is good. For them, the secular egalitarian values (political universality and societal homogeneity) undergirding mankind's evolutionary process are worthy of a form of belief once reserved almost exclusively for spiritual religions.¹⁰⁰ The will to power, that is the will to shape both ourselves and our physical surroundings, is tamed and molded in order to fulfill the ethical dictates of this value system. Nietzsche regards last men with contempt, arguing that their egalitarian outlook will force us to lower our standards of human excellence¹⁰¹, thus lowering our potential to achieve nobility and greatness through unchained willing.¹⁰²

Nihilists, on the other hand, are aware that the secular egalitarian values shaping modern society, as well as all other value systems for that matter, are nothing more than man-made horizons. As such, nihilists see no reason to shape and mold their will to power along ethical lines. They will simply for the sake of willing.¹⁰³ According to Nietzsche, it is only third and smallest category of people in modern society, the supermen, who not only see the truth of existence in all its finality, but who also have the courage and

¹⁰⁰. Ibid. 33

¹⁰¹. F. Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, 112

¹⁰². G. Grant, Time as History 33

¹⁰³. W. Dannhauser, 842

strength to actually create horizons in which the last men will live.¹⁰⁴

In both Time as History and "Nietzsche and the Ancients: Philosophy and Scholarship", Grant comments on the fact that Nietzsche's view of modernity has not been given the serious attention it deserves in English scholarship. He cites a number of reasons for this neglect. For example, as a German thinker writing in the late nineteenth century, a period of heightened Anglo-German tensions, Nietzsche's works were either overlooked or dismissed by English scholars because of cultural bias. This cultural bias was reinforced after Hitler's Nazis expropriated the superman concept in order to help justify their own narrow political views.¹⁰⁵

Grant also cites differences in research and writing styles as a possible reason. A passionate thinker, Nietzsche's works are imbued with strong feeling.¹⁰⁶ In

¹⁰⁴. Ibid. 846-847

¹⁰⁵. G. Grant, Time as History, 23

¹⁰⁶. There is an interesting similarity between Nietzsche's philosophical style and the literary style of Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky. One need only compare the bold, sweeping, and emotion charged opening lines of Dostoevsky's Notes From Underground ("I am a sick man...I am an angry man. I am an unattractive man. I think there is something wrong with my liver."(15)) with the equally bold, sweeping, and emotion charged opening lines of Nietzsche's Twilight of the Idols ("In every age the wisest have passed the identical judgement on life:...it is worthless...Everywhere and always their mouths have uttered the same sound - a sound full of doubt, full of melancholy, full of weariness with life, full of opposition to life."(39)) in order see this point to be true. Both writers are swept up with the confident, almost god-like feelings of power that is the hallmark of their own particular

Twilight of the Idols, for example, he condemns German music as being "constipated and constipating".¹⁰⁷ He is equally emotionally descriptive in his critique of Emmanuel Kant when he accuses Kant of being an idiot.¹⁰⁸ According to Grant, it is this penchant for emotionalism as well as his tendency to lapse into verse that has earned Nietzsche the reputation as "a second rate poet masquerading as a philosopher"¹⁰⁹ among English scholars, whose own research and writing styles are more cerebral and scientific.

Though considering Nietzsche to be a "teacher of evil"¹¹⁰, Grant takes the German scholar's ideas seriously, arguing that they should be taught to English and North American students.¹¹¹ Indeed, Grant's high (if not fearful) regard for Nietzsche's scholarship can be seen by the fact that of all the thinkers who have influenced his writings on modernity, Nietzsche's ideas are the only ones he expands on at any

means of expressing the Nietzschean "will to power". Nietzsche, in fact, considers his discovery of Fyodor Dostoevsky's works to be one of the "happiest accidents" of his life.(109)

¹⁰⁷. F. Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, 71

¹⁰⁸. F. Nietzsche, The Anti-Christ (England: Penguin Books, 1990) 133

¹⁰⁹. G. Grant, Time as History, 23

¹¹⁰. G. Grant, "Nietzsche and the Ancients: Philosophy and Scholarship" in Technology and Justice, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986) 90

¹¹¹. Ibid. 90-91

length. Of primary concern to Grant is the extent in which the German philosopher's vision of reality will influence the nature of modern technological society. If, as Nietzsche says, man-made ethical codes are relative and rendered meaningless by the endless, relentless passage of time and if human conduct will be guided by nothing more than an unchained egocentric will to power, how will this affect human relationships, both at the personal and community levels? It is a concern which Grant shares with and received answers in part from Martin Heidegger.

According to Heidegger, we have created for ourselves a world as dehumanizing as the one populated by Hesiod's iron race of men because of our lack of willingness to discover our true place in the greater realm of Being. Lacking autochthony (rootedness),¹¹² people in the modern technological age are becoming increasingly alienated from their cultural heritage and from other people.¹¹³ Without these traditional values and ethical norms to guide us, we lack the purpose and sense of restraint (inherent with an awareness of other people's needs) necessary to control the potentially destructive forces of technology.¹¹⁴ Like Hesiod, Heidegger asserts that the gods

¹¹². M. Heidegger, "Memorial Address" in Discourse on Thinking eds. J. Anderson and E. Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1966) 48-49

¹¹³. Steiner, 90

¹¹⁴. Heidegger, "Memorial Address", 51

have abandoned people in the modern age¹¹⁵ and, like Hesiod, Heidegger considers a more rooted, simple past and a future based on these past values as better ages than the current one.

George Grant also sees today's society as dehumanizing. Succumbing more and more to the pressures of modernity, people today are abandoning traditional modes of living in favour of what the Canadian scholar terms the "mass society".¹¹⁶ According to Grant, mass societies are nothing more than collections of highly organized urban-metropolitan centers geared around satisfying the material consumption needs of large amounts of people.¹¹⁷ Because they force people to deal more with strangers than with neighbours and friends (Grant draws a comparison between shopping at a large super-market as opposed to a country store), mass societies deprive individuals of maintaining any real sense of community.¹¹⁸ They undermine and weaken traditional bonds of organization such as church and family by providing people with the seeming

¹¹⁵. M. Heidegger, "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking" in Discourse on Thinking eds. J. Anderson and E. Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1966) 60

¹¹⁶. G. Grant, "An Ethic of Community" in Social Purpose for Canada ed. M. Oliver (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961) 6

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 7

¹¹⁸. Ibid. 7

freedoms of material acquisition and consumption - seeming freedoms which foster alienation and self-gratification.¹¹⁹

Yet as much there are similarities between Grant's vision of modern society and that of Heidegger¹²⁰, the two thinkers make use of the Nietzschean concept of horizons in a completely different way. For Heidegger, the knowledge (or supposed knowledge) that the Socratic and post-Socratic values sustained by modern metaphysical thought are nothing more than man-made subjective conditions of reality, is liberating. Once these values are recognized as such, they will be rendered impotent, no longer able to hinder our search for the true nature of existence. Armed with the awareness of our place in the greater realm of Being, we will then be able to shape human and non-human technology in accordance with this greater (albeit unspecified) plan.¹²¹ George Grant, on the other hand, believes that the transient nature and moral relativism of modern man-made values will render these values powerless to protect citizens of the mass society from an ever

¹¹⁹. Ibid. 8

¹²⁰. It is interesting to note that the ideas in Heidegger's Memorial Address and those in Grant's Lament for a Nation are presented in a similar fashion. As George Grant looks back to his own cultural heritage to discuss the nature of modernity, so too does Heidegger draw on his own Bavarian cultural values and attitudes when discussing mankind's future in the technological age.

¹²¹. Steiner, 32-33

encroaching tyranny.¹²² It is a belief which the Canadian scholar draws largely from the works of Leo Strauss.

Though Leo Strauss' works are as influenced by ancient Greek thought as those of Martin Heidegger, his debt lies more with the Socratic thinkers than with the pre-Socratics. For Strauss, the values which undergird the works of thinkers such as Plato and Xenophon, provide a basis for grappling with universal truths which is as relevant today as it was in the fourth century BC.¹²³ Concerned primarily with the issues of morality, virtue, and the perfection of man, these Socratic thinkers sought to find the best (ideal/good) regime that would promote these values. In order to accomplish this goal, they devoted their lives to both contemplation (in order to determine what constitutes virtue) and to the teaching of political leaders (so that these leaders could rule virtuously). It is this dual moral model of intellectual discovery/social and political pedagogy which Strauss believes should form the basis of modern society.

George Grant's own view of modernity is based loosely on this Straussian approach. He too believes that a truly good (just) society can only be built on the foundation of human

¹²². L. Schmidt (ed.) "A Conversation With George Grant: Theology and History" in George Grant in Process (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1978) 103

¹²³. L. Strauss, "On Classical Political Philosophy" in What is Political Philosophy? and other Studies (United States: The Free Press, 1959) 82

excellence that was strived for by Socratics such as Plato. Unlike Strauss, however, Grant asserts that Christian values (a love of God and through a love of God a love of man¹²⁴) should form the basis of this Platonic (Socratic) quest for excellence. This difference from the orthodox Straussian philosophical outlook is an important one and will be expanded on later in this chapter.

Both Strauss and Grant (through Strauss) assert that the central problem of modernity is the fact that people today are no longer guided by the stringent principles outlined by the Socratic thinkers. Our regimes, including the universal and homogeneous state - the regime that most represents the values of modernity and progress - are founded on the notion of "what can be achieved or obtained in the here and now" as opposed to "what ought to be achieved or obtained". Because we have lowered our standards for the achievement of human excellence, we are in danger of being victimized by these imperfect regimes (tyrannies), tyrannies which have at their disposal all of the powers of modern science and technology.¹²⁵ According to Strauss, it is a state of affairs with so much potential for misery and human destruction that the Socratic

¹²⁴. W. Whillier, "George Grant and Leo Strauss: A Parting of the Ways" in Two Theological Languages ed. W. Whillier (United States: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990) 72

¹²⁵ L. Strauss, "Restatement on Xenophon's Hiero" in What is Political Philosophy? and other Studies (United States: The Free Press, 1959) 96

Greeks turned their back from this path and channelled their imagination in other directions.¹²⁶

Events in the last century lend credence to these concerns. The same technology that has provided us with the comforts and seeming freedoms listed earlier in this chapter, has also subjected us to a number of horrors as well - a fact which calls into question the notion that human consciousness has expanded to any great extent over the centuries. Tools of war such as tanks, grenades, mustard gas, and more recently, atomic and nuclear weapons, have increased mankind's destructive capacity to a level unheard of in previous times. Many of these tools have been used and are still being used today, at a cost of millions of lives.

The political leaders of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union have also used technological innovations to carry out repressive policy objectives. In Nazi Germany, for example, Hitler used a manufactured poisonous gas in his bid to exterminate Europe's Jewish population. Soviet policy makers sanctioned the use of modern weaponry and surveillance techniques to intimidate and control people within their country's borders. Moreover, in their bid to achieve and maintain nuclear parity with the United States, they have indirectly put the health of their constituents at risk (as exemplified with the nuclear disasters in the Urals in the

¹²⁶. Ibid. 96

1950's and more recently in Chernobyl). When Strauss outlines his fears about the tyranny of modernity and progress, he clearly has these two regimes in mind.

Yet as much as Strauss is quick to label Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union as tyrannies, he is less forthright about his views on the United States. A cursory study of his works would in fact seem to suggest that he is a supporter of both the North American country and the regime model it represents: liberal democracy/economic capitalism. In his article "What is Political Philosophy?", for example, Strauss tempers Plato's criticism of democracy by stating that this regime model provides people with the freedom to perfect themselves if they choose to do so.¹²⁷ Strauss also makes reference to the tolerance of democracy, stating that the Athenians allowed Socrates to live and speak for seventy years before his arrest.¹²⁸ Moreover, he states that no real comparison can be drawn between communism and modern democracy because of the latter's tolerance for the rights of others.¹²⁹ Strauss' seeming support for the United States can be seen by his connection to foreign policy realists such as Hans Morgenthau, who believe that US policy makers have the right to use

¹²⁷. L. Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy?" in What is Political Philosophy? and other Studies (United States: The Free Press, 1959) 36

¹²⁸. Ibid. 36

¹²⁹. Ibid. 38

whatever means at their disposal to protect their country from their enemies (particularly the Soviet Union during the cold war).

If Strauss' view on the nature of the emerging global culture is accurately reflected by these facts and statements, then they would seem to put him in the same basic intellectual camp as Hegel, Kojève, and Fukuyama and thus at fundamental odds with George Grant. This is particularly puzzling when considering Grant's debt to Strauss' scholarship. After all, how can the author of Lament for a Nation - a book which eulogizes the absorption of a beloved traditional culture into the larger liberal democratic/economic capitalist world order - possibly find common ground with a thinker who is an apparent apologist for this very same emerging world order? The answer to this question can be found by exploring more fully the implications of Grant's departure from the orthodox Straussian philosophical approach.

As a "lover of Plato within Christianity"¹³⁰, Grant attempts to blend the tenets of his philosophy with those of his religion.¹³¹ For him then, the pursuit of human excellence (centred around an introspective quest for knowledge of virtue) is not merely a striving for self-perfection, but rather is primarily a means towards spiritual revelation and

¹³⁰. G. Grant, "Nietzsche and the Ancients: Philosophy and Scholarship", 90

¹³¹. Whillier, 70

thus a means towards understanding God's greater plan for us here on earth.¹³² Key to this exercise of faith and understanding is a genuine love of one's own - that is a love and concern for the needs of all mankind as if they were our own needs because of our relationship as God's children.¹³³ It is a genuine love in the sense that it is other-centred as opposed to self-centred.¹³⁴

With this love, however, comes a responsibility to act on it. Grant is therefore compelled, because of his religious beliefs, to share with his brethren whatever fruit he has reaped through spiritual revelation.¹³⁵ If his exercises of faith and understanding reveal to him dangers regarding the nature of modernity and technological progress - dangers which can hinder us from discovering our individual place in God's greater plan, then it is his Christian duty to warn us. It is a duty which he believes supercedes both his own selfish needs and personal safety.¹³⁶

Strauss, on the other hand, is more elitist in outlook than Grant is and is thus, consequently, less compelled to

¹³². G. Grant, "Faith and Multiversity" in Technology and Justice (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986) 38

¹³³. L. Schmidt (ed.), "A Conversation with George Grant: Theology and History", 105

¹³⁴. G. Grant, "Faith and Multiversity", 74

¹³⁵. Whillier, 77

¹³⁶. G. Grant, "Faith and Multiversity", 54-55

share directly with the whole world the wisdom he has reasoned through his introspective quest for knowledge.¹³⁷ Only a small minority of people in society, according to Strauss, have the intellectual capability and moral fortitude necessary to strive for human excellence along the Socratic dual model of intellectual discovery/social and political pedagogy. He believes that the vast majority of people would be disturbed, perhaps even moved to act against philosophers, if they were presented with the undiluted truth. In order to guard against this, Strauss organizes his writings along two levels: a) exoteric (surface) and b) esoteric (ugly/dangerous)¹³⁸. The teachings in the exoteric layer of his works are diluted and designed for casual reading by common men. The real teachings in his works, however, are found in the esoteric layer and are written not so much for fellow philosophers but for young men who have the potential to become philosophers along Socratic lines.¹³⁹

Whatever inconsistencies there are then between Grant's view of a liberal democratic/economic capitalist tyranny and Strauss' seeming support for this regime model can be attributed to their very different academic approaches.

¹³⁷. Whillier, 64

¹³⁸. H.D. Forbes, "The Political Thought of George Grant" in Journal of Canadian Studies, Volume 26, Number 2, 64

¹³⁹. I.G. Weeks, "Two Uses of Secrecy" in Two Theological Languages ed. W. Whillier (United States: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990) 88

Strauss couches his concerns about the emerging global culture through double-layered meanings. Grant, on the other hand, motivated by the dictates of his Christian moral code, in a sense peels off the exoteric layer of Strauss' teachings and exposes the esoteric truth for all to see. One need only examine Strauss' exoteric/esoteric teachings on democracy more carefully and then compare them with Grant's outlook on the nature of modernity in order see this point to be true.

As a philosopher in the spirit of Socrates, Strauss often draws on the works of the Socratic Greeks in order express his own views on the relationship between morality and human social and political conduct. Therefore, when in "What is Political Philosophy?"¹⁴⁰ and "The Liberalism of Classical Greek Philosophy"¹⁴¹, he states that Plato equates democracy with Hesiod's fourth race of men, it would be reasonable to assume that both Plato and Strauss (through Plato) are confident that the regime model's underlying value: democratic freedom, will be able to provide lasting justice for its citizens. After all, according to Hesiod, the fourth race of men were demigods, as good as the first (golden) race of men and "juster and better"¹⁴² than all of the others. If this is

¹⁴⁰. L. Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy", 36

¹⁴¹. L. Strauss, "The Liberalism of Classical Political Philosophy" in Liberalism Ancient and Modern (New York: Basic Books, 1968) 35

¹⁴². Hesiod, "Works and Days", 10

the yardstick by which Plato and Strauss (through Plato) measure the worth of democracy, how could they think otherwise?

Nevertheless, upon closer examination, Strauss' observation is revealed to be nothing more than a misleading exoteric teaching. Hesiod's fourth race of men may have been just and good but they eventually perished and were replaced by the god-forsaken fifth race. By drawing attention to the Hesiod/Plato parallel, Strauss is really stating that justice built on democratic freedom is as transitory as the reign of the fourth race of men and will thus not be able to prevent the emergence of a regime model as god-forsaken as the fifth race. This esoteric truth can be substantiated by reviewing more fully Plato's critique of democracy in general and democratic freedom in particular.

For Plato, the freedoms enshrined in democracies negate the senses of restraint and discipline necessary for proper living. Distinguishing between necessary desires, that is desires which sustain existence (such as a proper diet) and unnecessary desires, that is desires superfluous to existence or more precisely vices (such as gluttony),¹⁴³ Plato asserts that the latter are "physically harmful and psychologically damaging to intelligence and self-discipline".¹⁴⁴ In

¹⁴³. Plato, The Republic (England: Penguin Books, 1979), 377-378

¹⁴⁴. Ibid. 377

democracies, however, the majority of people, in the absence of an overarching governing concept of virtue, give in to their baser instincts, designating an equal value to desires and pleasures, both necessary and unnecessary.¹⁴⁵ Thus, whereas Strauss may use liberal freedom to promote an unencumbered search for knowledge, truth, and the good regime, he is under no illusion that every one else will have the desire or ability to use their freedom the same way. Liberal democratic freedom is a freedom to do evil as well as good.¹⁴⁶

It is from this line of argument that one may discern Strauss' true concerns regarding a possible modern liberal democratic (American) tyranny. According to Strauss, the best (most just) regime is one that can successfully balance off the diverse interests of its citizens. Crucial to this task is proper leadership, that is, the ability of political leaders to forgo their own selfish needs in favour of those of their constituents.¹⁴⁷ Regimes that fail in this task risk subjecting some citizens to the viewpoints of others, much as do regimes defined as tyrannies earlier in this chapter.

The ability for a regime to safeguard alternative viewpoints and perspectives is, to Strauss, at no time more important than in today's world. He argues that there is a

¹⁴⁵. Ibid. 380

¹⁴⁶. Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy?", 36

¹⁴⁷. Strauss, "On Classical Political Philosophy", 84-85

danger of conformism in the modern American mass society - a danger that seems to contradict the liberal order's exaltation of individual expression.¹⁴⁸ It is, however, a central problem in liberal democratic societies, one that stems from the natural tension of balancing off freedoms. Strauss points out that it is impossible for people to enjoy unlimited freedoms in these regimes. Limitations have to be set so that the interests and desires of citizens do not conflict with those of their neighbours. In order to accomplish this, laws have to be drafted and adhered to, and if conformism is to be prevented, the political leaders who draft these laws have to be "enlightened and free from prejudice."¹⁴⁹

Strauss' concerns in this regard are by no means unique. In the earliest years of the American political experiment, for example, a number of theorists warned that the liberal values shaping that nation could lead to intolerance and tyranny. James Madison, one of the co-authors of the Federalist Papers and a former president of the United States, cautioned that governments representing the will of the majority need not necessarily be right or enlightened in their policy making. He stated that "...where people govern themselves, and where, of course, the majority govern, a danger to the minority arises from opportunities tempting a

¹⁴⁸. Strauss, "Perspectives on the Good Society", 263

¹⁴⁹. Ibid. 263

sacrifice of their rights to the interests, real or supposed, of the majority.¹⁵⁰

Alexis De Tocqueville also believes that a tyranny of the majority could be set up at the expense of the minority. Doubting that complete homogeneity could be achieved in liberal-democratic systems, he pointed out that a small number of people would always be separated from the mass of society by either intellect or wealth. Because such people would be in the minority, and because governments would reflect the will of the majority, they could be liable to persecution and discrimination from these governments. Only diligent care and attention towards minority rights could prevent democratic societies from becoming repressive regimes.¹⁵¹

At any rate, given the fact that Strauss considers liberal freedom to be morally relative, to what extent does he really believe that democratic policy makers possess the diligence and attention that De Tocqueville believes is required in order to protect minorities from homogenizing and conformist societal pressures? And if liberal policy makers fail to prevent homogeneity and conformism, to what extent

¹⁵⁰. J. Madison, "To Thomas Ritchie, December 18, 1825" in The Complete Madison ed. S. Padover (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1968), 46.

¹⁵¹. M. Zetterbaum, "Alexis De Tocqueville" in History of Political Philosophy eds. L. Strauss and J. Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 768-772

does he consider this state of affairs to be intolerant and tyrannical?

For Plato, the answers to these questions are clear. The Greek scholar believes that there is little chance that the best qualified people will be chosen to lead in democracies.¹⁵² Moreover, according to Plato, the lack of restraint inherent in this regime model will encourage its constituents - including its leaders - to fulfill their own unbridled desires at the expense of the common good.¹⁵³ It is a state of affairs which Plato believes will lead to tyranny.¹⁵⁴ As a scholar in the Socratic/Platonic tradition, it is not unreasonable to assume that Strauss holds a similar opinion, if not one he is willing to share publicly, then one he holds privately in his heart of hearts. After all, though he acknowledges that the Athenian democrats allowed Socrates to live for seventy years before his arrest, the point he makes is clear: Socrates was punished for not conforming to societal norms.

Still, as much as exercises in philosophical detective work such as the one listed above may offer insights into the nature of Strauss' esoteric teachings, they cannot reveal with any real degree of certainty the essence of these teachings. Rather, they are only able to provide calculated guesses based

¹⁵². Plato, The Republic, 376

¹⁵³. Ibid. 380-381

¹⁵⁴. Ibid. 382

on an informed "reading between the lines" of his writings. Though George Grant uses similar tactics in interpreting Strauss' exoteric/esoteric works,¹⁵⁵ he criticizes the American based thinker's indirect style, stating that its unclear nature undermines the force of his arguments - particularly when these arguments are compared against Kojève's clearly made assertions regarding the goodness of the emerging global culture.¹⁵⁶ In any case, when Grant launches his own critique of the universal and homogeneous state, he argues directly what Strauss only hints at with reticence: democratic liberalism/economic capitalism (and any purely secular ideology for that matter) is flawed and thus will be powerless to prevent the tyrannical intolerance and conformism which stems from the mass society (and thus the form of the universal and homogeneous state).¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵. G. Grant, "Tyranny and Wisdom", 108-109

¹⁵⁶. Ibid. 109

¹⁵⁷. In his article "The Political Thought of George Grant", H.D. Forbes points out that the difference between Grant and Strauss' writing styles may be due to the fact that Strauss was writing from the very heart of modernity - the United States. Forbes' assertion is an astute one. As a German born Jew growing up in the early twentieth century, Strauss was fully aware of the dangers of provoking the ire of a cultural majority - an awareness that more than likely did not dissipate when he immigrated into the United States' cultural "melting-pot". Grant, on the other hand, was not only writing in a more tolerant ideological setting, he was also a member of Canada's traditional societal elite. Because of this, we should not be too quick to praise Grant for his moral and intellectual bravery. After all, it is easy to profess a willingness towards martyrdom when one will more than likely never have to become a martyr.

At first glance, it seems almost irresponsible to paint liberal democracies with the same brush as one would repressive regimes such as Nazi Germany. After all, the policies initiated by the Nazis to promote societal conformism (such as the attempts to exterminate Europe's Jewish population) were extremely brutal and are condemned today by most people in liberal democracies. Yet as much as the intolerance and conformism inherent in technologically advanced liberal democratic mass societies are not as overtly and blatantly present as they were in Nazi Germany, the fact remains that they are still present in these societies, albeit in a more benign way. The essence of any repressive regime is the denial of choice in quality of life decision making. For Grant, the emergence of a global order based on one set of value relations - especially a liberal democratic/economic capitalist set, will foster just such a lack of choice.

Grant expands on his conviction in English Speaking Justice. Structuring his book around the thoughts of American liberal theorist John Rawls, Grant outlines what he believes to be the fundamental flaw of modern secular liberalism. A contractarian liberal, that is a liberal who believes that policy making should be predicated around the notion of social contract (a societal living arrangement made by a group of individuals of equal status), Rawls argues that justice can

only be actualized through an understanding of this living arrangement.¹⁵⁸ Key to this understanding is the distinction between the right and the good.

Rawls asserts that liberal societies should not define justice around one view of the good. Constituents may have different opinions of the good and, as equal members in the social contract, it would be wrong to subject some to the moral views of other equal members.¹⁵⁹ Rather, he states that justice should be based around the right, that is the underlying set of legitimate (fair) expectations individuals receive upon entering the societal contract with other like-minded individuals.¹⁶⁰ This scheme of justice as fairness allows people, as rational thinkers, to live by their own private code of good. In other words, it allows them to be moral self-legislators.¹⁶¹

Grant, however, does not believe that we humans, by simple virtue of our rationality, have the ability to will justly. Without an overarching universal (timeless) concept of virtue from which to guide moral conduct, we will fall victim to our baser instincts, judging (through the power we

¹⁵⁸. G. Grant, English Speaking Justice (New Brunswick: Mount Allison University Press, 1974) 14

¹⁵⁹. J. Rawls, "The Right and the Good Contrasted" in Liberalism and its Critics ed. M. Sandel (New York: New York University Press, 1984) 49

¹⁶⁰. Ibid. 46

¹⁶¹. Grant, English Speaking Justice, 28

have granted ourselves as moral self-legislators) the good by standards of convenience as opposed to the more stringent standards of what ought to be.¹⁶² As such, Grant believes we would be misguided to put our faith in the modern secular notion of liberal justice. Because of its moral relativism, it is nothing more than a Nietzschean horizon, a subjective, man-made shadow of reality, transient in the path of time. A flawed illusion, it is (and will be) unable to control the powerful and often destructive forces of human and non-human technology, and thus will be unable to prevent the intolerance and conformism inherent in the mass society.¹⁶³

One need only examine intolerant actions emanating from the United States -the fountainhead of modernity and progress - to understand Grant's concerns. Loyalists immigrating to Canada after the American Revolution, for example, were not merely people unhappy over a continental shift in political power. Many of them left (or were forced out) because their communitarian tory (conservative) values were not welcome in a virtually complete liberal society.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, according to Gad Horowitz, this expulsion "inoculated" the United States

¹⁶². G. Grant, "Faith and Multiversity", 60

¹⁶³. "A Conversation with George Grant: Philosophy" in George Grant in Process ed. Larry Schmidt (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1978), 145

¹⁶⁴. G. Horowitz, 45

from the development of alternative value (ideological) orientations within its borders.¹⁶⁵

American hostility towards the Soviet Union provides a more recent example of this intolerance. Much of the American tension regarding this Eurasian country can be attributed to ideological conflict. The Marxist/Leninist brand of socialism espoused by the Soviet Union, with its extreme communitarian outlook towards human and economic relations, offered a completely different approach to progress than the American value system. As a result, various US governments have actively sought to neutralize Marxist/Leninist influence both within their country and abroad.

In the 1950's, for example, United States Senator Joseph McCarthy conducted government sanctioned hearings to determine the extent in which Marxist/Leninist communism had permeated into the American ideological mainstream.¹⁶⁶ Citizens accused (or suspected) of having communist connections were ostracized by society at large and often prevented from pursuing their chosen careers. By adopting Marxist/Leninist or perceived non-American values, nations run the risk of provoking active US hostility. Castro's Cuba, for example, has been under American economic blockade for over thirty years. Writing during the time of the Vietnam conflict, Grant points out that

¹⁶⁵. Ibid. 44-45

¹⁶⁶. Christian and Campbell, 45

American actions in this Asian country were imperialistic,¹⁶⁷ much as European involvement in Africa during the nineteenth century was imperialistic.

Canadians also have experienced the intolerance linked with the forces of modernity and progress. In Lament for a Nation, George Grant argues that John Diefenbaker's 1963 electoral misfortunes were a direct result of his efforts to distance Canada somewhat from the US political and economic orbit. Because of his attempts to provide Canadians with distinct policy alternatives, the Conservative Prime Minister angered continentalists on both sides of the US and Canadian border. Seizing on Diefenbaker's reluctance to obey without question the dictates of US defence policy, the combined forces of the North American establishment, which included the Liberal Party, the Canadian press, business and military elites, and the American State Department (indirectly), worked to defeat him in the 1963 general election.¹⁶⁸

According to Grant, Diefenbaker's subsequent defeat marked the end of Canada as a distinct political unit. Pearson's Liberals, after assuming office, returned to the continental integrationist policy making path that was championed by Mackenzie King. Ideological choices presented

¹⁶⁷. G. Grant, "Canadian Fate and Imperialism" in Technology and Empire (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1969) 64

¹⁶⁸. G. Grant, Lament for a Nation (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965) 27

to Canadians in quality of life decision would henceforth be limited by the tyrannical nature of liberal democratic/economic capitalist values. How this tyranny has shaped and is shaping Canadian society today - indeed if it has materialized at all - will be explored more fully in the third chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE:

TOWARDS THE MODERN CANADIAN TYRANNY

All human love is subject to the law that it be both the love of one's own and the love of the good, and there is necessarily a tension between one's own and the good, a tension which may well lead to a break, be it only the breaking of a heart.

- Leo Strauss: "What is Political Philosophy?"

History is replete with prophets. In every age and in every civilization, individuals claiming to have a special insight into the Truth have preached their vision of this Truth to receptive and unreceptive audiences alike. As the years pass and as the course of human events unfold, these harbingers of the future are either vindicated in their claims or they are revealed (charitably) as story-tellers or (uncharitably) as charlatans. In any case, it is in the comfort of hindsight that these people are finally judged.

Though George Grant never claimed to be able to predict specific human events, he nevertheless asserted that these events would unfold within certain rigid specified confines.¹⁶⁹ In his frame of analysis, man may have some freedom of action, but it is a freedom of action akin to the horse's in Alex Colville's painting Horse and Train. As much as the horse in Colville's painting has freedom of movement within the confines of the railway tracks, its collision with the oncoming train is unpreventable. In a similar vein, man may

¹⁶⁹. Grant, Time as History, 12

be able to some degree shape the forces of modernity and technological progress, but according to Grant, these very same forces will lead us inevitably to the tyrannical liberal democratic/economic capitalist universal and homogeneous state. It is a prediction which firmly places the Canadian thinker in ranks of the prophets and thus, nearly thirty years after the first publication of Lament for a Nation, into the realm of historical judgement as well.

With the benefit of hindsight, this chapter will determine whether or not the passage of time has vindicated or condemned Grant's fatalistic assertion about Canada's absorption into the larger US shaped global culture. This will be done by first detailing the current political situation in Canada. Emphasis will be placed on seeming inconsistencies between Grant's predictions and this state of affairs. Once this is accomplished, it will be ascertained whether Grant's concerns about the nature of modernity and technological progress have actually been dealt with within the broad spectrum of liberal ideology. Despite the assertions of Hegelian liberals (or communitarians¹⁷⁰) like

¹⁷⁰ In basic terms, communitarians advocate a view of human relations that differs from that of social contract liberals. Whereas social contract liberals believe that communities are nothing more than collections of autonomous individuals who agree to live together (either as a means to escape the chaotic state of nature, as Hobbes and Locke contend, or by virtue of their capacity for rational/moral conduct, as Kant contends), communitarians believe the bonds which tie individuals in society are more substantial than this. Thus, though they are not necessarily opposed to liberal individual freedom, communitarians such as

Charles Taylor and Kantian liberals like Will Kymlicka, however, it will be argued in this chapter that the ideology will not be able to prevent the societal conformism and lack of substantive choice in quality of life decision making inherent in the mass society. Grant's predictions about the tyrannical universal and homogeneous state are actually in the process of coming about.

In the twenty eight years that have passed since the first publication of Grant's Lament for a Nation, a number of events have occurred which would seem to challenge its thesis. Although firmly linked to continental economic capitalism (through the Free Trade Agreement) and committed to liberal democratic values (with the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution and the entrenchment of a Charter of Rights and Freedoms) Canada remains an independent political unit. Moreover, the intolerance and lack of choice which Grantian

Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer argue that this freedom is not an end in itself. Rather, they believe that such freedom should only exist as a means for individuals to discover and understand the full meaning of their bond with other members of their respective communities. For a more complete assessment of this view of societal relations, consult Michael Walzer's "The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism" in the February 1990 edition of Political Theory and Charles Taylor's "Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate" found in Nancy Rosenblum's Liberalism and the Moral Life. Will Kymlicka also provides an overview of communitarianism in Liberalism, Community, and Culture.

analysis links with modernity and progress has seemingly not developed to any great degree in our country as well.

Current attitudes in Canada outside Quebec (COQ) towards minority rights in general and cultural minority rights in particular seem to call into question the tyrannical intolerance of liberal democratic values. One of the major points of contention among Canadians outside Quebec over the Meech Lake process, for example, was a possible conflict between the proposed distinct society clause and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The concern centred around the fact that the Quebec clause might undermine the Charter protection of minority groups in that province. Indeed, this commitment by English speaking Canadians to a uniform code of minority rights may yet prove to be a major stumbling block between them and the French speaking Quebecois in future constitutional negotiations.¹⁷¹

The issue of homosexual rights is a specific example of COQ's tolerance in this area. On December 9, 1992, Federal Justice Minister Kim Campbell announced a government proposal to include gay and lesbian rights in Canada's Human Rights Act.¹⁷² Though some homosexuals argue that the proposal (because it defines marriage as a union between couples of the

¹⁷¹. A. Cairns, "Constitutional Change and the Three Equalities", 80

¹⁷². "Gay Rights Protected " in Winnipeg Free Press, Thursday, Dec.10, 1992

opposite sex) could prevent same-sex couples from receiving an equal level of spousal benefits as heterosexual couples,¹⁷³ it does extend direct formal rights to a societal segment that previously did not have them. Moreover, the fact that homosexuals are currently using the courts and the Charter as vehicles to secure benefits for their mates demonstrates that there are entrenched institutional means in COQ for the promotion of greater societal equality. As a consequence of using these institutions, individuals who have chosen openly gay or lesbian lifestyles are becoming more firmly integrated into the wider community.

Tolerance for cultural minorities in COQ also seems to call Grant's thesis into question. First introduced as a national policy in 1971,¹⁷⁴ the notion of multiculturalism has since grown to become one of the defining features of our political culture.¹⁷⁵ In contrast to the conformist cultural "melting pot" of the United States, Canada's "cultural mosaic" seems to protect and enhance alternative societal outlooks within the broader community. Section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, for example, states that the "...Charter

¹⁷³. Winnipeg Free Press Friday December 11, 1992

¹⁷⁴. A.J. Parel "Multiculturalism and Nationhood" in George Grant & the Future of Canada ed. Y. Umar (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1992) 139

¹⁷⁵. C. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values" in Options for a New Canada eds. R. Watts and D. Brown (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 57

shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians".¹⁷⁶ In 1988, "An Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada" was enacted to ensure that this process would continue.¹⁷⁷

Perhaps the most profound illustration of cultural minority tolerance in COQ is the case of the natives peoples. There seems to be a strong cultural preservation commitment among Canadians towards aboriginals. In a 1987 survey, 61% of the respondents believed that natives should govern their own affairs. When respondents were provided with more information on the issue, their number rose to 73%.¹⁷⁸

Tolerance and support for aboriginal rights among Canadians outside Quebec is also expressed at the constitutional level. Section 35 of the 1982 Constitution Act, for example, deals specifically with the concerns of the Indian, Metis, and Inuit people of Canada. This distinction between the three broad aboriginal branches is significant. Up until this time, the concerns of the Metis and Inuit were not afforded the same political and constitutional attention

¹⁷⁶. Constitution Act 1982, Section 27

¹⁷⁷. Parel, 140

¹⁷⁸. I. McKinnon et al., "Aboriginal Self-Government and Canadian Public Opinion" in Aboriginal Self-Government and Constitutional Reform (Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resource Committee, 1987) 35

as status Indians.¹⁷⁹ Section 37 of the 1982 Constitutional Act guaranteed that a First Ministers Conference (FMC) would be held within a year of patriation in order to address the issue of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.¹⁸⁰

Aboriginal issues have been addressed throughout the Post-Meech Lake constitutional process as well. In their Report of the Special Joint Committee on a Renewed Canada, for example, Gerald Beaudoin and Dorothy Dobbie recommended a preamble to our constitution that would recognize the trusteeship of our country to "...Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, French-Speaking, English speaking, Canadians all".¹⁸¹ Their recommended Canada Clause acknowledged our historic debt in part to "...the aboriginal peoples, whose inherent rights stem from their being the first inhabitants of our vast territory to govern themselves according to their own laws, customs and traditions for the protection of their diverse languages and cultures..".¹⁸² It is interesting to note that aboriginals are listed before any other group in

¹⁷⁹. A. Cairns, "Citizenship and the New Constitutional Order" in Canadian Parliamentary Review Autumn 1992, 3

¹⁸⁰. C. McCormick, "Self-Government for Aboriginal People" in Canadian Parliamentary Review Winter 1990-1991 12.

¹⁸¹. G. Beaudoin and D. Dobbie, A Renewed Canada: The Report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons Government of Canada, February 28, 1992, 23

¹⁸². Ibid. 24

both the recommended Preamble and the recommended Canada Clause.

In the recent Canada Round of constitutional renewal, natives groups secured a number of key gains. Participants in the negotiations (federal, provincial, and territorial constitutional affairs ministers as well as native leaders) agreed, for example, that the inherent right of aboriginal self-government should be recognized in the Constitution.¹⁸³ Though this would allow for greater aboriginal cultural and political autonomy - perhaps even the creation of aboriginal legislatures equal in stature to federal and provincial legislatures¹⁸⁴ - it would not amount to a form of benign cultural apartheid.¹⁸⁵ Like homosexuals and other minority groups, native peoples would have their concerns met within the institutional framework of the wider community.

In their efforts to forge links between this cultural minority group and society at large, the Canada Round negotiators agreed that all provisions relating to aboriginal

¹⁸³. Consensus Report on the Constitution - Charlottetown August 28, 1992, i

¹⁸⁴. Ibid. 15

¹⁸⁵ It is interesting to note that Manitoba Justice Minister Jim McCrae used the apartheid analogy when describing the nature of the province's proposed aboriginal court. McCrae was adamant that the native court remain firmly integrated into the existing judicial system. He expressed concern that a separate aboriginal court would be tantamount to segregation. For more information, please consult "Native Court to Get Tryout" in Winnipeg Free Press, Friday, January 8, 1993

cultural and political self-determination should be accommodated for within the broad confines of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.¹⁸⁶ They also agreed that aboriginal peoples should have special representation in the Senate,¹⁸⁷ the House of Commons¹⁸⁸ as well as consultation in Supreme Court candidate submissions.¹⁸⁹ In fact, of the 60 proposals made in the 1992 Consensus Report on the Constitution (Charlottetown), twenty five dealt specifically with the relationship between aboriginal peoples and the wider community. If Grant's vision of an intolerant and tyrannical liberal democratic/economic capitalist universal and homogeneous order is in the process of coming about, would such measures to protect the aboriginal peoples and other minority groups really be made?

Though most Canadians outside Quebec (as well as most Quebecois) rejected the proposed Charlottetown Accord in a referendum held on October 26, this fact cannot be used as an example of cultural intolerance towards native peoples. A Decima poll conducted on the night of the referendum showed that only 4% of the respondents in COQ who rejected the Accord did so because they thought "too much was given to

¹⁸⁶. Ibid. 15

¹⁸⁷. Ibid. 4

¹⁸⁸. Ibid. 8

¹⁸⁹. Our Future Together - Fact Sheet, Government of Canada, 5

aboriginals".¹⁹⁰ There is thus no reason to believe that if and when constitutional discussions resume in the future, the issue of aboriginal cultural and political self-determination will not be accorded the same status as it received in the Canada Round.

Efforts made by the Quebecois to preserve and enhance their own cultural heritage also seems to challenge Grant's thesis. He himself sympathetic to their plight, the Canadian thinker preferred the cultural particularity of Quebec nationalism to Liberal Prime Minister Trudeau's ahistorical cultural cosmopolitanism.¹⁹¹ For Grant, French Canada's rootedness in traditional Catholicism left it outside of the general framework of modernity and technological progress, thus making it better suited to withstand universal and homogenizing pressures from the US than the less nationalistic English speaking Canada.¹⁹² Despite efforts to preserve their distinct cultural heritage, however, Grant argued that the Quebecois, in part because of the population disparity between them and English speaking North Americans, would eventually be overwhelmed by these pressures.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰. "The Meaning of No" in Maclean's November 2, 1992, 17

¹⁹¹. "A Conversation with George Grant - Canadian Politics" in George Grant in Process ed. L. Schmidt (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1978) 20

¹⁹². Ibid. 14-15

¹⁹³. Ibid. 14

Yet French Canadian nationalism has seemingly evolved in a way other than the Canadian philosopher predicted. Rather than being swept aside or overwhelmed by the forces of modernity and technological progress, the cultural preservation efforts of the Quebecois have actually become reconciled to and have kept pace with these forces. Quebec sovereigntist Pierre Bourgault, for example, points out that the nationalist movement in his province is influenced by current world trends.¹⁹⁴ In contradistinction to such "simplistic minds" as the cosmopolitan Pierre Trudeau, Bourgault argues that the nature of modern internationalism, rather than discrediting or stifling the growth of culturally particularistic national movements, actually fosters and encourages them.¹⁹⁵ The more sensitive the Quebecois become to the pressures of internationalism, therefore, the harder they will push for sovereignty.¹⁹⁶

Bourgault's line of reasoning is expanded on by the separatist Parti Quebecois (PQ). In their submission to the Belanger-Campeau Commission, for example, the PQ argue that two world events, the collapse of Eastern European communism and the ongoing trend towards liberalized global trade, are

¹⁹⁴. Bourgault, Pierre, Now or Never (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1990) 40

¹⁹⁵. Ibid. 42

¹⁹⁶. Ibid. 42

compatible with Quebec political sovereignty.¹⁹⁷ Firstly, they point out that the fall of Soviet communism has signalled an end to an "ideological and military encumbrance" which had until this time shaped modern international relations.¹⁹⁸ With the end of cold war politics, smaller national units will now no longer need to seek protection within the confines of greater political empires.¹⁹⁹

According to the PQ, the ongoing movement towards liberalized global trade (a process that is now being facilitated by the removal of cold war trade barriers), is also compatible with Quebec independence. Since economic agreements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) extend most favoured nation trading status to nations irrespective of their size, they argue that a politically sovereign Quebec will be guaranteed access to the US and other markets.²⁰⁰ As a result of this, they state that there is no longer any reason for the Quebecois to seek economic protection in and to share their economic policy decision making power with a non-French federal government.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁷. Parti Quebecois, "A Sovereign Quebec in the Global Village" in Canada Adieu ed. Richard Fidler (British Columbia: Oolichan Books, 1991) 38-39

¹⁹⁸. Ibid. 39

¹⁹⁹. Ibid. 39

²⁰⁰. Ibid. 40

²⁰¹. Ibid. 38-39

Moreover, they point out that membership in international economic associations such as GATT and the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will most likely protect their fledgling country from possible economic reprisals initiated by the newly truncated English-speaking Canada.²⁰²

The nationalistic attitudes of the Parti Quebecois and sovereigntists such as Pierre Bourgault seem to support Francis Fukuyama's vision of the emerging global order. Though the American writer concedes that traditional cultural attitudes can hinder the proper development of world wide democratic liberalism, he does not believe that these two societal outlooks are mutually exclusive. Rather, he argues that liberalism and cultural nationalism can coexist if countries based on them respect the rights of all their citizen.²⁰³

Fukuyama also states that in order for stable democracies to emerge, societies must first have a sense of common national identity founded upon a unifying factor such as ethnicity.²⁰⁴ From this perspective then, movements of national cultural self-determination such as those of the Slovaks in the former Czechoslovakia, those of the Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians in the former Soviet Union, and that of the

²⁰². Ibid. 39-41

²⁰³. Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 216

²⁰⁴. Ibid. 216

Quebecois in Canada, because they provide a common basis of identity for their respective peoples, are actually a by-product of the emerging liberal democratic/economic capitalist world order. As political, economic, and social attitudes continue to converge internationally, so too will societies seek such seemingly parochial bases of national unity to express these common values. If Grant's vision of an ahistorical, non-nationalistic universal and homogeneous state is correct, would political movements founded upon notions of cultural diversity actually be flourishing as they are today? More specifically, would the cultural self-determination efforts of the Quebecois be as forceful and determined as they are today?

Despite these apparent inconsistencies between his prediction of an emerging tyrannical liberal democratic/economic capitalist universal and homogeneous state and the current state of affairs in Canada, however, George Grant is not generally viewed as either a charlatan or a story teller because of this fact. Rather, his ideas have been and continue to be studied by academics and non-academics alike. University professor Peter Emberley, for example, points out that Grant's works are of enduring achievement.²⁰⁵ Artist Alex

²⁰⁵. P. Emberley, "Preface" in By Loving our Own ed. P. Emberley (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990) xii

C o l v i l l e ²⁰⁶ a n d p o e t
Dennis Lee²⁰⁷ list his vision of modernity as a source of
creative inspiration. Indeed, so popular are Grant's ideas,
that in the early 1990's alone, a number of articles and three
books devoted to them have been published.

This lasting interest would seem to suggest that there is
a middle-ground between prophesy and actuality - a threshold
of tolerance offered to harbingers of the emerging Truth when
their visions do not come completely true. Predictions
offered by people like Grant then, are not taken as signs of
events that must occur, but as warnings against one possible
future out of many possible futures. If negative events do
not unfold as envisioned, it can be argued that these events
have been successfully avoided, much as ship captains are able
to steer their vessels clear of rocky shoals and shallow
waters by heeding the warning signals of a lighthouse.

In Radical Tories, journalist Charles Taylor attempts to
reconcile the views expressed in Lament for a Nation with the
current Canadian cultural and political situation from this
perspective. Though he recognizes the dangers relating to
modernity and technological progress, he does not see them as
an inevitable consequence of mankind's evolutionary process.

²⁰⁶. A. Colville, "A Tribute to George Grant" in By Loving Our Own ed. P. Emberley (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990) 3

²⁰⁷. D. Lee, "Grant's Impasse" in By Loving Our Own ed. P. Emberley (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990) 11-13

He believes that Grant's assertions should be taken as a warning as to what we could become.²⁰⁸ Armed with the knowledge provided to us by Grant, Canadians can forge an independent liberal polity.

University of Montreal professor Charles Taylor²⁰⁹ shares this qualified optimism. Like Grant and other such "knockers"²¹⁰ of modernity, he asserts that current trends towards atomism and moral relativism can lead to an alienating and conformist tyranny, or as he calls it, a "soft despotism".²¹¹ Unlike these critics, however, Taylor believes that the problem lies not so much in the fact that today's society is defined by a secular humanistic form of individualism, but that the true importance of this individualism is either overlooked, misunderstood, or debased by both "knockers" and "boosters" of modernity alike.²¹² By discovering the moral current underlying authentic self-expression (authenticity), the negative features of man's evolutionary process can actually be avoided.

²⁰⁸. C. Taylor, "Threnody: George Grant" in Radical Tories (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1982) 148-149

²⁰⁹. Unless otherwise stated, all future "Charles Taylor" references will be to the University of Montreal professor.

²¹⁰. C. Taylor, The Malaise of Modernity (Canada: Anansi Press, 1991) 11

²¹¹. Ibid. 9

²¹². Ibid. 17

Though Taylor's ideas fall within the broad rubric of liberal ideology, it is not the Rawlsian social contract variety of liberalism criticized by Grant in English Speaking Justice. Whereas Rawl's concept of justice as fairness is drawn largely from Emmanuel Kant's view of moral autonomy, Taylor's liberal roots are embedded in the ethical teachings of Hegel. At first glance, this distinction may seem trivial. Fukuyama, for example, sees little difference between Hegel's brand of liberalism and the liberal values which have shaped the United States.²¹³ For him, efforts of the disenfranchised in American society to secure equal civil rights (such as the struggles of the blacks in the 1950's and 1960's) can easily be described in terms of a desire for peer recognition.²¹⁴

Grant also makes no real distinction between alternate forms of liberalism. Like Fukuyama, he believes that the Hegelian concept of universal history is fully compatible with the growth of US liberalism - more so in fact (as discussed in the first chapter of this thesis) because of his conviction that the United States is the centre of this evolutionary process. The fact that Grant bases his critique of the Hegelian universal and homogeneous state to a large extent on the moral relativism of Rawl's Kantian influenced theory of justice also shows that he is little troubled by these

²¹³. Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, 203

²¹⁴. Ibid. 204

distinctions. In English Speaking Justice, he points out that it is the parochial arrogance of scholars such as Karl Popper and Bertrand Russell who deny European thinkers like Hegel a place in the wider body of English-speaking liberalism.²¹⁵

Yet as much as Grant and Fukuyama are willing to treat liberal ideology in a broad or "macro" context, Taylor contends that the differences between Hegel's concept of individual freedom and those held by social contract theorists like Kant are significant. According to the University of Montreal professor, these differences not only provide an alternate means for humanity in general to shape the forces of modernity and technological progress, they also offer an explanation as to why Canadian culture has evolved distinctly (and can remain distinct) from that of the United States. In order to test Taylor's claim, this chapter will apply his thesis to modern Canadian circumstances. Before doing so, however, it will be necessary to depart briefly from George Grant's view of modernity and explore the differences between Kantian and Hegelian liberalism.

Kant's social contract liberalism is based on his belief that all humans possess within themselves the capacity for proper (rational) moral conduct. By virtue of our potential as fully autonomous moral self-legislators, the German scholar argues that we should be free from externally imposed

²¹⁵. Grant, English Speaking Justice, 91-92

constraints to this potential.²¹⁶ Indeed, it is our duty (moral imperative) to ensure that our actions, both on the personal and societal levels, do not interfere with the freedom of other individuals.²¹⁷ Any person, group of persons, or government who trespass on the moral preserves of those around them, are violating their human dignity.

In order to ensure right action in our dealings with others, Kant formulated three abstract principles of conduct known as the Categorical Imperative. The first formula of the Categorical Imperative states that all maxims we devise to guide our individual affairs are morally valid only if they can be applied as universal law.²¹⁸ If maxims cannot be so applied (eg through self-contradiction or irrationality), then they cannot be considered moral.²¹⁹ If Chuck for example, feels compelled to cheat on an exam in order to secure his personal ends, he can judge the moral nature of that action by considering what would happen if everybody cheated on their

²¹⁶. T. Hill Jr., "The Kantian Conception of Autonomy" in Dignity and Practical Reason (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992) 88

²¹⁷. E. Kant, "Metaphysics of Morals: Metaphysical Principles of Virtue" in The Essential Kant ed. A. Zweig (Toronto: Mentor Books, 1970) 417

²¹⁸. E. Kant, "Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals" in The Essential Kant ed. A. Zweig (Toronto: Mentor Books, 1970) 324

²¹⁹. P. Hassner, "Emmanuel Kant" in History of Political Philosophy. eds. L. Strauss and J. Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) 590

exams. In this particular case, universal cheating would corrupt the entire academic process: people would no longer bother learning and grades would be rendered meaningless.

The second formula deals with the universal nature of moral autonomy. Because each human being has the capacity to will rationally (morally), we should all be accorded with equal dignity. In order to ensure our own human dignity as moral agents, however, we are duty-bound to treat individuals as ends in themselves and not just as means to an end.²²⁰ Chuck's decision to cheat on an exam, for example, is not only morally wrong because it fails to meet the requirements of the first formula, it is morally wrong because it violates this one as well. Though Chuck may secure his personal ends by cheating, he is undermining and cheapening the honest efforts of his classmates, thus interfering with their pursuits.

The third principle formalizes autonomy in a social setting. It stipulates that the rational political order should be a kingdom of ends - a conglomeration of moral self-legislators joined together by common external laws.²²¹ As objective manifestations of subjective will, these common laws are prescribed by us in order to facilitate the pursuit of our individual rational ends. By obeying them, we are not submitting to the will of a leader or a government but are

²²⁰. Kant, "Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals", 330

²²¹. Ibid. 334

actually fulfilling our duty as rational, morally autonomous individuals.²²²

Kant's Categorical Imperative provides the moral underpinnings for what Charles Taylor calls modern procedural liberalism. According to Taylor, a procedural liberal polity is one which does not exalt a particular view of the good life. Rather, the rational ends of each individual in society are given equal status.²²³ As a Roman Catholic living in a procedural liberal system, for example, Chuck has every right as a human being to live his life according to his moral dictates. His B'Hai neighbour Dawn, however, has the very same right. Neither is justified in interfering with the other's moral pursuits.

The chief function of societal and governmental institutions in procedural liberal polities is to ensure that this equal status is enforced.²²⁴ In other words, they are tools, instruments, means by which each of us can pursue our individual quest for the good life. They fulfill their basic task by attending (at least in theory) to our common, universal need for what are called "primary goods" - goods which are deemed essential to the pursuit of our individual ends (eg income, medical care, education, and entrenched

²²². Ibid. 334-335

²²³. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values", 68-69

²²⁴. Ibid. 68-69

personal freedoms).²²⁵ By failing to provide (as much as a scarcity of resources will allow) primary goods to all members of society, a procedural liberal polity would be violating the spirit of the social contract. Taylor offers the United States and (to a large extent) English speaking Canada as examples of procedural liberal societies.²²⁶

Despite its commitment to individual self-determination, the University of Montreal professor argues that it is this branch of liberalism which can lapse into the benign tyranny described by George Grant in English Speaking Justice. Guided by nothing save a desire to pursue their own individual ends, Taylor states that citizens in value neutral, procedural polities run the risk of adopting a fundamentally instrumental or means oriented outlook towards both their physical environment and the society in which they live.²²⁷ In the first case, traditional hierarchical views about the relationship between humankind and nature tend to become narrowed and flattened.²²⁸ With little regard for the

²²⁵. A. Gutmann "Introduction" in Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition" (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 4

²²⁶. C. Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition" in Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition" (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 54

²²⁷. C. Taylor, "Alternative Futures" in Constitutionalism, Citizenship, and Society in Canada eds A. Cairns and C. Williams (Toronto; University of Toronto Press, 1986) 195

²²⁸. Taylor, The Malaise of Modernity, 14

intricacies of eco-systemic balance, animals, plantlife, and the elements are then manipulated and used for the efficacious and convenient promotion of human freedom.²²⁹

In the second case, this narrowed and flattened outlook invades human societal relationships. Because individual self-determination is an exalted end in procedural liberal polities, citizens tend to become preoccupied with the issue of rights. Institutions designed to safeguard individual rights such as bills or charters (and the courts which enforce and define the parameters of these bills or charters) become more highly regarded than those which demand individuals to give of themselves for the greater good of society.²³⁰ According to Taylor, citizens in these systems are more apt to exercise their rights in a court of law than to take the time to participate fully in an election (eg, by reading policy statements, attending meetings, volunteering services, and voting).²³¹

Grown alienated from their natural environment and the society in which they live, the University of Montreal professor contends that procedural liberals are little prepared to deal effectively with the challenges of modern

²²⁹. Taylor, "Alternative Futures", 196

²³⁰. C. Taylor, "Atomism" in Philosophy and the Human Sciences (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 188-189

²³¹. C. Taylor, "Cross Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate" in Liberalism and the Moral Life ed. N. Rosenblum (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1989) 179-180

technology. Their flattened and narrowed perspectives render them unable to see anything beyond the efficacious and convenient satisfaction of their personal objectives. In the absence of an enlightened democratic guiding hand, both government institutions and the forces of modernity will become increasingly subjected to the dictates of impersonal bureaucratic agencies.²³² Though left free to pursue their own goals, procedural liberals, through apathy and complacency, will abrogate their right as individuals to shape the larger issues of life.²³³ It is a state of affairs which Taylor believes can be avoided by an adherence to substantive liberalism - a socio-political outlook rooted in Hegel's ethical teachings.

Like Kant, Hegel values the rational pursuit of individual freedom.²³⁴ Mankind's dialectical journey from consciousness to Self-Consciousness (that is from a simple awareness of being alive to a greater self-understanding as a creative being) is an internal one, requiring persons to secure within themselves an understanding or awareness of their own human essence.²³⁵ Unlike Kant, however, Hegel holds

²³². Taylor, "The Malaise of Modernity", 59

²³³. Ibid. 97

²³⁴. Taylor, Charles, Hegel and Modern Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) 12

²³⁵. G. Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit ed. A. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977) 14-15

little faith in notions of abstract moral autonomy (moralitat).²³⁶ For him, these particular notions of constructivist individual freedom are empty and simplistic, unable to capture the full range of what it means to be human.²³⁷

In basic terms, Hegel argues that there is a cosmic, hierarchical order of things in the world. It is an order founded upon a mutually reinforcing relationship between a transcendent and over-arching Spirit (Geist/God) and human beings as individuals.²³⁸ More specifically, our identity as individuals is rooted in the fact that we are vehicles of this cosmic Spirit and that we can only become fully Self-Conscious individuals once we see ourselves in this capacity. Conversely, this cosmic Spirit needs the recognition of self-aware human vehicles in order to express Itself in concrete ways.²³⁹

Human historical evolution, according to Hegel, is actually the progressive fulfillment of this relationship. In the early phases of human development, individuals basically accepted our place in this hierarchical order without

²³⁶. C. Taylor, "Hegel: History and Politics" in Liberalism and its Critics ed. M. Sandel (New York: New York University Press, 1987) 178

²³⁷. Hegel, 29-31

²³⁸. Hegel, 263-264

²³⁹. Taylor, Hegel and Modern Society, 79

question.²⁴⁰ However, driven by the desire for peer recognition, we became overtime, more aware of our creative powers as individuals and turned our backs on notions of cosmic hierarchy.²⁴¹ Eventually, the desire for peer recognition will lead us back to the cosmic hierarchical order - not as victims submitting to the whims of fate or nature, but as creative, powerful individuals, fully aware of our mutually reinforcing association with Geist.²⁴²

Because his view of Self-Consciousness is contingent on our relationship with Geist and other people and not merely on personal freedom as such, Hegel argues that our conduct as rational human beings should reflect this state of affairs. In other words, rather than relying on the abstract and highly subjective principles of Kantian moralitat to guide our respective quests for authenticity, he states that we should act according to the concrete ethical dictates (Sittlichkeit) which define our interpersonal relations: namely our cultural values and the institutions shaped by these values.²⁴³ By recognizing ourselves as part of a wider societal whole and by acting freely and rationally according to this recognition, we

²⁴⁰. Hegel, 130

²⁴¹. C. Taylor, Hegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) 161

²⁴². Hegel, 134

²⁴³. A. Wood, Hegel's Ethical Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 196

fulfill ourselves as individuals while at the same time escaping the snares of atomism and purposelessness.²⁴⁴

It is interesting to note that there are some similarities between Hegel's view of human relations and that held by ideological conservatives like Roger Scruton. As Hegel contends that Self-Conscious individuals should conduct themselves according to their *sittlichkeit*, so too does Scruton point out that conservatives find their meaning as human beings in the ceremonies, traditions, mores, and customs which concretely reflect the essence of their respective political cultures.²⁴⁵ Moreover, Hegel's notion of cosmic hierarchy is also more akin to the organic and static conception of society held by conservatives like Scruton than it is to social contract liberalism. By linking authentic self-awareness to the discovery of an established order and not merely to the whims of personal choice, he is providing barriers or limits to individual freedom not recognized by most liberals.²⁴⁶

Still, as much as there are similarities between Hegel's social thesis and the ideological outlook held by conservatives like Scruton, there are key differences as well. Scruton, for example, places little value on individual self-

²⁴⁴. Hegel, 267-268

²⁴⁵. R. Scruton, The Meaning of Conservatism (England: Penguin Books, 1980) 27

²⁴⁶. Wood, 258-259

determination. According to him, citizens should conform to the established norms of their societies, placing the needs of the state above their own personal needs.²⁴⁷ For Hegel, on the other hand, healthy ethical orders require the willing participation of Self-Conscious individuals - individuals who do not subordinate their personal freedom to the needs of the state but rather fulfill their freedom by recognizing the needs of their fellow citizens.

Scruton's conservative outlook is also highly parochial in nature. Although he acknowledges that some states treat their citizens better than others, he argues that citizens are duty bound to obey the dictates of their respective national (cultural) institutions. By the same token, citizens should not apply their own cultural standards to other societies.²⁴⁸ Hegel, on the other hand, contends that ethical orders can be judged by an all encompassing yardstick: their ability to concretely express the relationship between Geist and Self-Conscious individuals. Because Self-Consciousness is a necessary component of this relationship and because this awareness can only be realized through peer recognition, Hegel argues that the universal and homogeneous state (as the order

²⁴⁷. Scruton, 19

²⁴⁸. Ibid. 49

which best satisfies the human hunger for peer recognition) is the ultimate model of ethical life.²⁴⁹

At any rate, though Taylor takes issue with the (albeit non-traditionally) theistic overtones of Hegel's social thesis,²⁵⁰

the general theory nevertheless provides the foundation for what he calls modern substantive liberalism. According to Taylor, a substantive liberal community is one which is structured around a commonly held perception of the good life (eg the values underlying societal institutions, ethnicity, language).²⁵¹ The securing and provision of primary goods to citizens may be a major end in these societies, but it is not the exalted end. More importance is accorded to the fulfillment and preservation of the shared moral horizon.²⁵²

By supplying individuals with a tangible cultural basis from which to define their identities, substantive liberal polities are simultaneously furnishing them with a *sittlichkeit* to guide their actions. As a result, Taylor argues that citizens in these societies, through their ability to find meaning in their concrete surroundings, are less apt

²⁴⁹. Wood, 207

²⁵⁰. Taylor, Hegel, 546

²⁵¹. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values", 70

²⁵². M. Walter, "Comment" in Multiculturalism and the Politics of Multiculturalism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 99

to be guided by instrumental reasoning than procedural liberals are.²⁵³ They tend to participate more fully in common political projects (eg elections) and are thus less likely to allow depersonalized bureaucracies shape the course of modernity and technological progress. Quebec, according to Taylor, with its stress on ethnic/linguistic preservation, is an example of a substantive liberal society.²⁵⁴

The University of Montreal professor states that the clash between COQ's largely procedural liberal outlook and Quebec's substantive liberalism is an underlying cause of Canada's present constitutional malaise. Because it is a rights based society - an orientation institutionalized and bolstered by the implementation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms - Taylor argues that COQ is shaped by two biases: a) the desire to have these rights offered universally, without exception, and b) a suspicion of collective (non-individualistic) aspirations.²⁵⁵ According to him, these biases will prevent English speaking Canadians from ever wholly condoning the cultural preservation efforts of the French speaking Quebecois. Quebec's bid for a constitutionally recognized distinct society status will always be viewed as a potential threat to the

²⁵³. Taylor, "Alternative Futures", 211

²⁵⁴. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values", 70

²⁵⁵. Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", 60

atomistic/individualistic spirit of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.²⁵⁶

Ironically, Taylor contends that this failure to properly recognize the primacy of cultural preservation is itself harmful to healthy individual development. He argues that as situated beings, rooted in our respective cultures, we draw our perceptions of self-worth largely from these backgrounds. If the preservation of our cultures are not fully recognized by the institutions of state, we as individuals suffer from this misrecognition.²⁵⁷ In any case, it is for this reason that Taylor states the Quebecois will most likely separate from the Canadian federation. By not having their ethno-linguistic convictions fully acknowledged by the wider society, they are being denied the opportunity to acquire a substantive level of self-understanding.²⁵⁸

Still, as much as Taylor is sympathetic with the Quebecois bid for cultural determination, and as much as he prefers substantive liberalism to procedural liberalism as a model for quality of life decision making, tensions exist between the subjective and objective elements of his Hegelian influenced social thesis - tensions which call the theory's usefulness into question. In the first place, his theory

²⁵⁶. Ibid. 55

²⁵⁷. Ibid. 25-26

²⁵⁸. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values", 65

requires the individual as a free and self-aware subject to find his/her unique place in the substantive social order. In the second place, the social order, as the concrete, objective expression of individual discovery, needs to be maintained so that individual discovery can occur. At times, however, the health of the social order may require the formulation and passage of policies which seem to curb or limit the pursuit of individual freedom. The subjective requirements of the theory are in a sense negated by the objective specifications.

The case of the Quebecois serves a concrete illustration of this tension. In their bid to preserve their province's historic culture, the Quebec government has implemented a number of language laws which limit the freedom of its non-French constituents. One law, for example, forbids immigrant and francophone children from attending English speaking school. Another law stipulates that commercial signs can only be written in French. A third law forces companies with more than fifty employees to conduct their business in French.²⁵⁹ In all cases, individuals are being forced to conform to standards imposed on them externally through social policy and are not acting according to subjectively reasoned ethical decisions drawn from their objective (cultural, social) environment.

²⁵⁹. Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", 52-53

Though Taylor admits that tensions between individuals and the state can exist in substantive liberal regimes, he points out that in circumstances deemed necessary for the health and survival of the national culture, actions such as those taken by the Quebec government (listed above) are justified. So long as all citizens are provided with fundamental human rights (Taylor cites the application of habeas corpus as an example)²⁶⁰, unequal (non-universal) treatment of citizens is an acceptable trade-off for the promotion of the greater societal good. According to the University of Montreal professor, the language laws passed by the Quebec government do not violate any fundamental rights. In this particular case, the survival of the national culture takes precedence over the convenience of some of its citizens to conduct all of their business in their language of choice.

From a Grantian perspective, however, substantive liberalism presupposes too high a level of enlightened government policy making for it to be considered a viable or safe model to guide human relations in the modern technological world. The strains which exist between the subjective and objective dimensions of Taylor's social thesis are complex and multi-layered, requiring careful reflection and study before being acted upon through national policy. At what point, for example, are individual rights deemed

²⁶⁰. Ibid. 61

fundamental; integral to healthy development of the self? At what point can these rights be curbed or suspended for the perceived greater good of society? At what point do actions taken to preserve the official culture or outlook of a society slip into a benign form of conformist tyranny?

As a "lover of Plato within Christianity", Grant does not believe that any wholly secular political order - not even one that draws ethical norms from its concrete cultural surroundings such as substantive liberal regime - can answer these questions satisfactorily.²⁶¹ By not exalting a love one's own within the framework of God's universal and timeless love, he contends that all societies run the risk of treating their citizens in a dehumanizing, instrumental fashion. The modern Quebecois, despite being guided by their ethno-linguistic aspirations, are no exception.

In the summer of 1990, for example, the citizens of Oka, a community near Montreal, became involved in a land dispute with a nearby Mohawk Indian reserve. At issue was the community's attempt to expand a local golf course on what the natives claimed to be their holy ground. Events reached a crisis point when Mohawk militants, angered by the community's bid to commence construction before a final decision on the issue had been reached, erected an armed barricade on the disputed land. Within hours, the Quebec government ordered

²⁶¹. W. Christian, "Religion, Faith, and Love" in Studies in Political Thought Winter, 1992 64

the provincial police (surete) to storm the barricade - a policy decision which led to the death of one surete officer and the escalation of the crisis into an armed standoff between the Mohawk militants and federal troops.

Though it can be argued that the issue would most likely have been decided in favour of the community in any case and though it can be argued that the Mohawk action was a clear violation of the rule of law, the very fact that events were allowed to escalate to the point they did lends more credence to Grant's view of modernity than Taylor's. After all, Taylor contends that the desire and need for recognition is the impetus behind the cultural determination efforts of the French speaking Quebecois. Would not then an enlightened Quebecois government recognize this same desire and need among minority cultures in the wider provincial community? More specifically, would it not, by virtue of its *sittlichkeit*, accord more importance to the cultural needs of the Mohawks than to the leisure requirements of the non-native community? By failing to contain the crisis - indeed by failing to prevent it from occurring at all - the Quebec government invites doubts regarding its ability to effectively apply liberal rights in a non-universal fashion.

It is interesting to note that these Grantian reservations about the viability of Taylor's social thesis are comparable to those held by Kantian procedural liberal Will Kymlicka. Whereas Grant's individualism is rooted in his

belief that the path to salvation is an internal one, one that cannot be imposed on us by external means, Kymlicka bases his societal outlook on similar ethical principles. Arguing that charges of moral relativism against Kantian theorists like Rawls are unfair and inaccurate, Kymlicka points out that the rationale underlying procedural liberalism is not so much that freedom is accorded a higher value than morality as a societal virtue, but that it is up to each individual to decide whether or not he/she will act along moral lines.²⁶² He contends that the role of the state is not to impose a view of the good on individuals, but rather to ensure that each of us is provided with the materials and freedom necessary to make our own choices about the good.²⁶³ According to Kymlicka, the chief problem with Taylor's social thesis and other such "communitarian" theories founded on the values of traditional societies is that they are exclusionary in nature, depriving citizens existing outside of the official ethical framework with the opportunity to make their own moral choices.²⁶⁴

Though Kymlicka clearly favours individual rights over collective rights, he does believe that our subjective freedom is influenced by objective factors. Like Taylor, he asserts that our quality of life decision making is rooted in our

²⁶². W. Kymlicka, Liberalism, Community and Culture (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) 12-13

²⁶³. Ibid. 80-81

²⁶⁴. Ibid. 87

cultural backgrounds. A healthy perception of our culture is essential to our self-esteem.²⁶⁵ For Kymlicka, however, our societal backgrounds are valuable only as contexts in which we exercise our moral autonomy and are not ends in themselves. From this perspective, they are accorded the status of a primary good²⁶⁶ - as essential to individual determination as is access to education or medical care.

Kymlicka argues that it is for this reason that sensitivity to minority cultural rights can and should be an essential component of procedural liberal polities like English speaking Canada. By denying individuals the option to express themselves within their respective cultural settings, procedural societies would simultaneously be denying them equality of opportunity in the public sphere. According to him then, special accommodations made to aboriginal groups by the Canadian government are actually a fulfillment of a liberal state's commitment to individual rights and not a distortion of this commitment. Native individuals are simply being provided with the means to make their own quality of life decisions.²⁶⁷ At any rate, Kymlicka's theory provides a possible explanation as to why Canadian procedural liberalism has evolved differently than that of the United States and

²⁶⁵. Ibid. 165

²⁶⁶. Ibid. 165-166

²⁶⁷ Ibid. 174-176

thus in a way other than Grant predicted. Because COQ's liberalism accommodates cultural diversity, citizens have a solid basis from which to conduct their common political projects.

Canadians are deceiving themselves, however, if they believe that they can circumvent the intolerant, homogenizing effects of modernity and progress. The combined forces of technological advancement and liberal values are too dynamic to be contained or ignored by traditional cultures. Nothing can be done to prevent this process. As the fate of the horse in Alex Colville's painting is sealed by the railway ties, so too is the fate of traditional cultures sealed by the path of time. One need only look at the case of the Quebecois to prove this point.

The cultural values that made French Canada distinct have been corrupted by the forces of modernity and progress. Traditional French Canadian society was organic, communal, and hierarchical in nature. The Catholic clergy and a small seigneurial class ruled paternalistically over a predominantly rural citizenry. Though there was little social mobility, few people questioned their assigned roles in life. After New France was conquered by the British, community leadership responsibilities were assumed almost exclusively by the Church.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁸. K. McRae, "The Structure of Canadian History" in The Founding of New Societies ed. Louis Hartz (New York: Harcourt,

Technological advancements, however, have disrupted the traditional mode of living. As French society succumbed to the forces of industrialization, they became urbanized. Liberal democratic institutions developed in conjunction with this process. Although the Catholic clergy did manage to maintain a societal leadership role for a time, their power was eventually undermined by the secular forces of ideological liberalism and nihilistic materialism. Today, the people of Quebec may have their own flag, political institutions, and language, but their basic values are little different from those held by other people on the continent.²⁶⁹

This last point leads to the essence of Grant's thoughts. For Grant, "national boundaries (are) only matters of political formality"²⁷⁰ when considered against the homogenizing influences of modernity and progress. Physical differences may exist, but if people view the world and human relations from the same perspective then these differences are merely superficial. In modern liberal societies, some people may be distinguished from the mass of society by their intellect and their wealth (as De Toqueville suggests), but these differences are inconsequential. Technological advancements such as computers and calculators have done much

Brace and World, 1964) 219-234

²⁶⁹. Taylor, "Shared and Divergent Values", 53

²⁷⁰. Grant, Lament for a Nation, 43

to promote an artificial level of intellectual parity. The equality of opportunity component of the liberal value system also gives people the promise of acquiring their own wealth. Without any other view of the good life to draw on, the "rags to riches" myth is enough to placate the mass of society.

Canadians have not managed to escape from the fate Grant outlines in Lament for a Nation. The core values which have made Canada a distinct societal entity have fallen victim to the homogenizing forces of modernity and progress. However, much as the horse in Alex Colville's painting is lulled into a false sense of complacency by the train's headlight, so too are Canadians being lulled by an illusion of distinctiveness. A more careful examination of current Canadian society in general and procedural liberal institutions like the Charter of Rights in particular, will show that we have no real choice in quality of life decision making.

Though Canadians outside Quebec, for example, partly define their national consciousness through multiculturalism, it is wrong to believe that this fact is reflective of a society housing a number of different views of the good life. Forced to define our economic lives through the dictates of capitalism, and bound together by the liberal values embedded in our governing institutions, the differences among us are becoming merely superficial. We may eat different foods, worship in different churches, and speak different languages,

but our quality of life decision making is dictated by the same external factors.²⁷¹

COQ's procedural liberalism may seem more tolerant to alternative views of societal relations than the substantive liberal variety of the Quebecois, however it makes no real commitment to the preservation of distinct cultures. Indeed, the hostile reactions of English speaking Canadians towards the (futile) cultural preservation efforts of the Quebecois, demonstrate a lack of tolerance for views straying from those of universal equality of opportunity. Aboriginals should take careful note of this situation. With their own cultural determination efforts firmly linked to the constitution in general and the Charter in particular, they could face similar hostility if their traditional values clash with those of modernity and technological progress. Their case will be explored more fully in the fourth chapter of this thesis, which focuses on the homogenizing effects of COQ's liberal institutions (such as the Charter).

²⁷¹. B. Cooper, "The Political Thought of George Grant" in George Grant in Process ed. L. Schmidt (Toronto: Anansi Press, 1978) 35

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF TYRANNY

...The values enshrined in the Charter as interpreted by the courts are likely to be treated as fundamental so that in political rhetoric they will "trump" competing values...

-Peter Russell: "The First Three Years
in "Charterland"

As for pluralism, differences in the technological state are able to exist only in private activities: how we eat; how we mate; how we practice ceremonies. Some like pizza. Some like steaks; some like girls; some like boys; some like synagogue, some like the mass. But we all do it in churches, motels, restaurants indistinguishable from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

-George Grant: "In Defence
of North America"

Nineteenth century novelist Victor Hugo believed that architectural structures chronicle the evolution of human spirit. Because these structures are designed and built by people, dwelt in and used by people, and even maimed and disfigured by people, they can accurately reflect the nature or the very essence of human relationships in their respective societies. Hugo wrote his Notre Dame of Paris in part to illustrate this thesis. A fusion of the Romanesque and Gothic architectural styles, the cathedral, according to the French writer, mirrors two very distinct societal outlooks. The rounded arches of the Romanesque style, for example, reflect a conservative societal outlook - a basic acceptance of the established order of things whereas the pointed spires and steeples of the later Gothic period reflect human aspirations

to break out of this mould and chronicles the creative power of the human spirit.²⁷¹

Though Hugo's representative thesis deals specifically with buildings, the basic principle which underlies it is similar to the one implied in the definition of political culture used in this thesis: the subjective nature of human values is expressed objectively in the external environment. For Hugo, these values are represented by mortar, brick, and stone. For writers of political culture like Hegel, they become manifest within the confines of the institutions of state. The relationship between societies (as collections of individuals) and their institutions is, from this perspective, a dynamic one. As much as societal affairs are conducted and shaped within parameters set by political institutions, these institutions themselves are shaped by the attitudes and expectations of the polity's citizenry. In essence then, mankind's dialectal journey towards the Hegelian universal and homogeneous state can be mapped out as a cause-effect-cause relationship between societies and their institutions.

Because George Grant's own view of human relations is "supremely" influenced by that of Hegel²⁷², it too can be applied to the above schema. Canada's absorption into the universal and homogeneous state is not simply being

²⁷¹. V. Hugo, Notre-Dame of Paris (England: Penguin Books, 1978) 129-130

²⁷². Christian, "Religion, Faith, and Love", 67

orchestrated by the joint efforts of various intolerant US administrations and members of Canada's liberal elite. Nor will this process mark the end of the country's superficially distinct institutional arrangements. Rather, the absorption will occur through the cause-effect-cause relationship between Canadian society and our institutions. According to Grant, we will impose the tyranny of modernity and progress on ourselves.

This chapter will explore this Grantian assertion more fully. In doing so, it will show how interpersonal and societal arrangements in English speaking Canada are affected by the values embedded in our seemingly value neutral procedural liberal institutions. To illustrate the homogenizing effects of modernity and progress on Canadian political culture, this chapter will focus on the constitution in general and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in particular. The case of the aboriginals will be used as a specific example.

As societal institutions, democratic constitutions are all encompassing. They not only define and dictate the nature of institutional arrangements in their respective polities, but also reflect and chronicle the basic values, attitudes,

and concerns of the citizenry.²⁷³ They are receptacles of political culture, describing the essence of that term in all its complexity. By comparing the content and form of national constitutions, one can gauge the differences between the polities under study.

Dissimilarities between British and American political cultural attitudes can, for example, be explored in this way. Not structured in the form of a single document, Great Britain's constitution is an amalgamation of mores, conventions, and statutes. Its form reflects the traditional British respect for community and law, trust in the institutions of state, and deference for custom and historical continuity. In contrast, the US constitution's structure as a single written document with an explicit demarcation of institutional limitations of power and a detailed bill of rights, mirrors the culture's reverence for individual autonomy and distrust for externally imposed authority.

Yet as much as there are differences between the British and American constitutions, the fact remains that they are both products of their political cultures. Though the US document is an outgrowth of revolution, the values embedded in it were not arbitrarily created when it was drafted. According to Roger Scruton, the values enshrined in the American constitution are an inheritance from British common

²⁷³. Scruton, 46

law. US founding fathers such as Madison and Jefferson were drawing from their own historical backgrounds when designing the document.²⁷⁴

At any rate, it is in this general vein that Alan Cairns describes the dynamic nature of the Canadian constitution. In his 1970 article "The Living Canadian Constitution", Cairns points out that the British North America Act was more than just a document regulating federal power sharing arrangements. Nor did it simply reflect the will or intentions of drafters such as Sir John A Macdonald. Rather, through interpretation and practice, the document evolved to fit the changing needs and expectations of Canadian citizens.²⁷⁵ Towards the end of the article, Cairns states that our future constitutional arrangements will be just as affected by developing societal concerns.²⁷⁶

A cursory look at our current arrangements would seem to suggest that they have evolved along line with traditional Canadian values. The 1982 Canada Act - including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (part one of the seven part act) - is apparently compatible with both the collectivist and individualistic elements of our political culture. In their

²⁷⁴. Ibid.

²⁷⁵. A. Cairns, "The Living Canadian Constitution" in Constitution, Government, and Change (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988) 29

²⁷⁶. Ibid. 42

Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada, William Christian and Colin Campbell point out that the constitutional provisions made to aboriginals are a clear illustration of Canadian communitarian sentiments.²⁷⁷ The scholars state that the Charter's notwithstanding clause (section 33), because it provides the federal and provincial governments with a check against the Charter's liberal rights provisions, is another example of these sentiments.²⁷⁸

Viewpoints such as those expressed by Christian and Campbell, however, are misleading. They presuppose that the collectivist and individualist elements of our constitutional arrangements are being exercised in an equal fashion. If these provisions are in fact being applied in a balanced way, they reinforce the underlying cultural attitudes which have shaped them in the first place. If they are not, the cause-effect-cause relationship between societies and their institutions will eventually lead to the withering away of both the latent value system and its corresponding institutional arrangement.

When Sir John A Macdonald was negotiating for Canada's dominion status, he did not wish to see the country evolve

²⁷⁷. Christian and Campbell, 36

²⁷⁸. Ibid. 36

into its current decentralized federal fashion.²⁷⁹ Distrustful of notions of populist liberal democracy and US style federal politics, he and his followers sought to adopt a governing arrangement which would maximize indirect societal representation and centralized authority.²⁸⁰ To help ensure the former, he supported the use of an appointed senate - its primary function being a check to the elected national assembly (the House of Commons). To help ensure the latter, provisions such as disallowance and the prerogative of Lieutenant-Governor were incorporated into the British North America Act.²⁸¹ It was believed by Macdonald and his supporters that provisions such as these two would undercut provincial authority while simultaneously promoting centralized power.

Yet despite Macdonald's convictions and despite the existence of constitutional arrangements which supported these convictions, events have unfolded in ways other than anticipated. In the first case, notions of populist democracy have gradually become the norm in Canadian politics. According to Peter Russell, this trend towards greater

²⁷⁹. A.Cairns, "The Judicial Committee and Its Critics" in Constitution, Government, and Society (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988) 44

²⁸⁰. P. Russell, "Can the Canadians Be a Sovereign People?" in Canadian Journal of Political Science December, 1991 691

²⁸¹. A.R.M. Lower, "Theories of Canadian Federalism - Yesterday and Today" In Evolving Canadian Federalism (England: Cambridge University Press, 1958) 20

societal interest and involvement in public affairs can particularly be noticed in what he terms macro-constitutional affairs - that is those affairs which deal with fundamental institutional reform or change.²⁸² To illustrate his point, he cites such examples as the post-second world war Newfoundland referendum, interest over the 1964 Fulton-Favreau amending formula, and the 1980 Quebec sovereignty referendum.²⁸³ It is an overall trend which not only was unprevented by the presence of the Senate, but one which will most likely lead to a reform of the institution along more direct democratic lines.

In the second case, the centralizing provisions of the BNA Act were undermined by countervailing pressures. Alan Cairns points out, for example, that provincial administrations fought hard to prevent any erosion of the division of governmental powers.^{284 285} As an other means to protect and enhance their

²⁸². Russell, "Can the Canadians be a Sovereign People?", 699

²⁸³. Ibid. 698-699 and 702

²⁸⁴. A. Cairns, "The Governments and Societies of Canadian Federalism" in Constitution, Government, and Society (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988) 146

²⁸⁵. In Liberty and Community, Robert Vipond states that the efforts of early provincial leaders (the book examines the period between 1867-1900) in combatting the growth of centralized authority was more than a mere power struggle between competing levels of government. He argues that these leaders were actually exercising principles of self-determination which they drew from their cultural environment (p.9).

authority, provincial governments sought to preserve and expand their territorial base.²⁸⁶ Their self-determination efforts were further helped by a number of favorable constitutional arbitration judgements made by the British Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC).²⁸⁷ Thus, even though various federal governments had means such as the power of disallowance at their disposal, they could not use these means either arbitrarily or without controversy. Eventually, through lack of practice, the centralizing provisions of the BNA Act lost their legitimacy at the expense of those provisions which could be interpreted to support provincial rights.

A closer scrutiny of our current constitutional arrangements will reveal that they too are evolving along lines other than anticipated by people like Christian and Campbell who define Canada's distinctiveness through notions of ideological pluralism. Though Section 33 of the Charter and Part II of the Constitution may be considered as concrete institutional reflections of our country's communitarian segments, these provisions are not accorded the same level of legitimacy through use and practice as the liberal democratic ones. The notwithstanding clause, for example, may provide the various Canadian governments with a check against a number

²⁸⁶. Ibid. 146-147

²⁸⁷. Cairns, "The Living Constitution", 32

of liberal individualist rights enshrined in the Charter, but it has only been invoked a handful of times. Moreover, governments that do choose to use it (as the Bourassa government in Quebec did over the language issue), may face negative public reactions.

In contrast, the liberal rights provisions in the Charter have become increasingly legitimate through constant use. According to Russell, "...the Supreme Court of Canada by the end of the first three years had rendered decisions in four Charter cases, had heard the argument in thirteen and had thirty-three on its docket waiting to be heard."²⁸⁸ Christopher Manfredi argues that this trend towards constitutional liberalism is being reinforced by the Canadian Court's increasing use of American judicial precedents in their own decisions. On matters dealing with sections 7 through 14 of the Charter (the sections referring to legal and individual procedural rights²⁸⁹, for example, he points out that the Canadian Court .."has cited 130 US decisions in twenty-three cases involving the Charter's legal rights, which is an average of 5.7 citations per legal decision." ²⁹⁰ ²⁹¹

²⁸⁸. P. Russell, "The First Three Years of Charterland" in Canadian Public Policy Volume. 28. 1985 378

²⁸⁹. C. Manfredi, "Constitutional Adjudication and the Crisis of Modern Liberalism" in George Grant & the Future of Canada ed. Y. Umar (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1992) 108

²⁹⁰. Ibid. 108

From a Grantian perspective, whatever allowance that were made for communitarian values in the 1982 Constitution Act in general and the Charter in particular, will be rendered useless as liberal clauses become increasingly legitimate over time. As a result, through the normal cause-effect-cause interplay between societies and their institutions, Canadians will define their quality of life decision making more and more along atomistic individualistic lines, while collectivist sentiments gradually wither away. The implications of this trend are clear: much as the horse in Alex Colville's painting is lulled into a sense of complacency by the train's headlight, so too are Canadians being lulled by the liberal freedoms associated with the Charter. In actuality, however, a common set of values is being promoted at the expense of other values, thus negating any real choice in quality of life decision making.

²⁹¹. In their article "Ties that Bind? The Supreme Court of Canada and American Jurisprudence, and the Revision of Canadian Criminal Law Under the Charter", Robert Harvie and Hamar Foster are more hesitant than Manfredi is in linking US legal precedents as sources of influence in Canadian Supreme Court decisions. They point out that American precedents are cited in less than 50% of the Canadian Supreme Court's decisions rendered before 1989 (p.729). As much as they stress this fact, however, they do not believe that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms represents traditional Canadian communitarian values (p.733). Rather, they point out that the "...Court's somewhat selective approach to United States jurisprudence is matched by its relatively consistent commitment to liberal values" (p.779). Harvie and Foster also state that in some areas the Canadian Supreme Court has rendered decisions bolstering liberal individual rights in excess of their American counterparts (p.782). For more information, consult their article found in the Osgoode Hall Law Journal Volume 28, 1990.

The intolerance of liberalism towards genuinely distinct value relations become apparent when considering the cultural self-determination efforts of Canadian aboriginals. As much as scholars like Will Kymlicka may believe that these efforts can be achieved and regulated within the broad parameters of procedural liberalism, a substantial gulf exists between traditional native values and those which shape the wider Canadian public sphere - a gulf which may never be bridged. According to A.C. Hamilton and C.M. Sinclair, the authors of the recent Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba Volume 1: The Justice System and Aboriginal People, aboriginal attitudes towards life in general and justice in particular are different from those held by Canada's predominantly white European descended society. These differences in turn have lead to actions of misunderstanding and abuse by the wider society against natives.²⁹²

Although Hamilton and Sinclair stress that they do not wish to oversimplify the similarities between the various groups and nations when defining the term aboriginal culture²⁹³, they nevertheless assert that the core value these groups all share is a sense of community, kinship, and

²⁹². A.C Hamilton and C.M Sinclair, Report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba Volume 1: The Justice System and the Aboriginal System, 18

²⁹³. Ibid. 29

family.²⁹⁴ All other attitudes and customs are rooted in this core value. Thus, while the Cree in northern Quebec may come from a fishing, hunting, and trapping societal background, and while the Mohawk in southern Quebec may have a primarily agricultural heritage, and while the two nations speak different languages,²⁹⁵ they both sanction ethical conduct which promotes peace and harmony in the larger group environment. It is a basic outlook which Hamilton and Sinclair contend does not fit well with Canada's alienating and confrontational judicial system.

Structuring her argument along similar lines, Aki-Kwe/Mary Ellen Turpel asserts that collectivist native self-determination efforts are being undermined by the individualistic values and rhetoric of the wider predominantly white, eurocentric society. She points out that terms like "aboriginal rights", "human rights", and "rights" in general, are western concepts which do not capture the deeper spiritual, political, and communal imperatives undergirding the aboriginal plea for cultural recognition.²⁹⁶ For her, the Canadian government's efforts to define the aboriginal struggle within the confines of the Constitution and the

²⁹⁴. Ibid. 22 and 26

²⁹⁵. Ibid. 29

²⁹⁶. Aki-Kwe/Mary Ellen Turpel, "Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms" in Canadian Women's Studies Volume 10 150

Charter and under such labels as "minority" versus "majority", are means by which the dominant Canadian culture can avoid genuinely recognizing the existence of an autonomous people.²⁹⁷ Turpel's distrust of Canada's liberal individualist governing institutions is shared by the Assembly of First Nations, who made their opinion on the Charter clear as early as 1982 when they stated that: "As Indian People we cannot afford to have individual rights override collective right...The Canadian Charter is in conflict with our philosophy and culture."²⁹⁸

Still, as much as the Assembly of First Nations would rather not have the self-determination efforts of their people defined within the framework of COQ's procedural liberal institutions, pressures from both inside and outside of the native community may force them to. In the first place, there is no unified aboriginal position regarding the constitution in general and the Charter in particular. The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), for example, will not support any self-government scheme that undermines the human rights provisions of the Charter.²⁹⁹ Arguing that they are victims of patriarchy in both the white and native societies, NWAC asserts that aboriginal women need institutional guarantees

²⁹⁷. Ibid. 150-151

²⁹⁸. The Native Women's Association of Canada, "Aboriginal Women and the Constitution Debates" in Canadian Woman's Studies Volume 12 1992 15

²⁹⁹. Ibid. 16

for both their status as human beings and as members of their historical community.³⁰⁰ Native leaders will have a difficult time insulating their culture from the liberal values embedded in the Charter while a significant number of their members use it to safeguard their dignity.

Secondly, the seeming tolerance in COQ for aboriginal self-determination may only be conditional on the process being defined within the homogenizing value framework of our procedural liberal institutions. According to Alan Cairns, Canadian culture is being transformed around the notion of constitutional citizenship.³⁰¹ As time goes on, more Canadians are seeing themselves as rights bearing members of a larger community, with an equal stake in determining the institutional arrangements of society.³⁰² Because natives are (at least in the short term) dependent on the resources of the wider community for their survival, Cairns points out that their bid for self-government will also be dependent on the good will of the wider community. If aboriginals conform to the values of citizenship embedded in our constitutional order, this tolerance will be secured. If, on the other hand, the native leadership persist on defining their self-determination efforts outside of the liberal democratic

³⁰⁰. Ibid. 14

³⁰¹. A. Cairns, "Citizenship and the New Constitutional Order"

³⁰². Ibid. 2

citizenship framework, Cairns warns that they may be treated as foreigners, without any of the sense of social obligation that comes with civic membership.³⁰³

It is an ultimatum which links the plight of the natives to that of the Quebecois. By not conforming to the dictates of COQ's procedural liberalism, the Quebecois lost much support for their (futile) cultural preservation efforts. In the Decima poll conducted after the constitutional referendum, for example, twenty-seven percent of the respondents in COQ who voted no - the largest single segment in all categories both "yes" and "no" - did so because they believed that the Quebecois were receiving too much in the Charlottetown package.³⁰⁴ At any rate, given the cause-effect-cause relationship between societies and their institutions, and given the pressure to conduct their bid for self-determination within the homogenizing value framework of the constitution in general and the Charter in particular, at what point will the efforts of the natives be rendered equally futile?

Canadians cannot alter the homogenizing effects of modernity and progress. Traditional values will vanish at the expense of liberalism and technological advancement just as surely as the horse in Alex Colville's painting will perish after its collision with the train. Mercifully for the horse,

³⁰³. Ibid. 6

³⁰⁴. "The Meaning of No", Maclean's November 2 1992, 17

it is being lulled into a sense of complacency by the train's headlight. By accepting without reservation the byproducts of modernity and technological progress, Canadians need also never know that they are being denied any real choice in quality of life decision making. They can satisfy themselves with the illusion of distinctiveness.

CONCLUSION

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help,
and thou wilt not hear?
Or cry thee "Violence!"
and thou wilt not save?
Why dost thou make me see wrongs
and look upon trouble?
Destruction and violence are before me;
strife and contention arise.
So the law is slacked
and justice never goes forth.
For the wicked surround the righteous,
so justice goes forth perverted
-Habakkuk: 1.2-4

George Grant's critique of modernity and technological progress is explicit and all encompassing. Drawing from such diverse sources as Plato, Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Kojève, and Strauss, he outlines the general way in which human evolution will occur. This thesis has studied the three broad arguments put forth in his commentary. In the first chapter, Grant's view about mankind's progression towards the universal and homogeneous state was explored. Examined also was his conviction that the liberal democratic United States would be the centre of this evolutionary process.

Chapter two focused on his assertion that the universal and homogeneous state would be dehumanizing and alienating in nature. Explored also in this section was his concern that the tenuous and morally relativistic values undergirding the emerging world order would prove inadequate in dealing with the powerful forces of human and non-human technology. Lastly, this chapter studied Grant's argument that this

evolutionary process would be intolerant to alternative views of human relations and would particularly mark the end of a distinct Canadian cultural presence in North America. For Grant, these negative aspects are the hallmark of what he calls the tyranny of modernity and progress.

Chapter three examined his concerns in a modern Canadian context. Dealt with first were the seeming inconsistencies between his thesis and current events. Next, the works of Hegelian liberal Charles Taylor and Kantian liberal Will Kymlicka were used to explain how the negative features of mankind's evolutionary process (eg alienation, ideological intolerance) could have been avoided by Canadians after all. This chapter, however, concluded by reiterating Grant's theory about the tyranny of modernity and progress. Though superficially distinct, the underlying factors we draw on in quality of life decision making are forcing us to conform to universalizing and homogenizing standards. Chapter four showed how we are imposing this tyranny on ourselves through the cause-effect-cause interplay between our society and our governing institutions.

As detailed as Grant's critique of modernity and technological progress is, however, and as accurately as it can be applied to modern Canadian circumstances, it offers very little in terms of prescriptive analysis. According to the Canadian political philosopher, mankind's journey towards the tyrannical US shaped liberal democratic universal and

homogeneous state is inevitable and unpreventable. It is a viewpoint which can prove frustrating for those who do not share his religious convictions. After all, from a completely secular perspective, of what value is a political outlook which does not provide human beings with a means to solve our own problems?

Yet it is this very outlook which Grant believes lies at the heart of our current dilemma. By taking matters into our own hands and indulging in our will to mastery, we are not only shaping our physical environment, but are also, in the process, imposing limitations on our internal growth. For Christians, human freedom is defined as a person's ability to discover, through introspection and prayer, the full range of his/her relationship with God, and through this relationship, to discover his/her relationship with other people. However, because we conduct our lives within the confines of tenuous and relativistic man-made moral horizons, we are actually abrogating this freedom.

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