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The liberal order framework: A prospectus for a reconnaissance of Canadian history

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Abstract: By a historical practice of reconnaissance, which begins not with the essentialist project of rethinking Canada, but rather with the more modest goal of mapping the Canadian state as a project of liberal rule in northern North America, Canadians can get beyond the present socio-cultural versus national-political impasse in Canadian history writing.

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Full text: The present world of Canadian historians is at once proliferous and exhilarating, deprived and crisis-ridden. Proliferous: few humans could possibly absorb the yearly output of monographs, articles, theses, papers, and books through which hundreds of scholars pay homage to the ideals of detailed archival research, monographic thoroughness, and analytical objectivity. An ever-expanding literature, increasingly based on the specialized languages of social science and cultural studies, much of it written in the other official language, often hidden away in unpublished studies, and now ranging across many 'disciplines' and practices other than academic history, defies the most disciplined of readers. Exhilarating: one is over and over again reminded of the politico-ethical centrality of historical exploration, of the new knowledges, truths, and critiques that only detailed empirical research can generate. Deprived: most of all, of strategies of integration, whose feasibility seems to recede with each new addition to the sum of historical research. And crisis-ridden: there is a 'pre-millennial' atmosphere among Canadian historians, a sense that the field, like the country it seeks to understand, is in crisis.(1) In this charged environment, calls for a return to centrally managed and well-disciplined nation-building political narratives have the paradoxical effect of inducing further fragmentation. Such 'traditionalist' interventions often miss the point that fears of irrelevance, incoherence, and balkanization are widely shared. Many historians in a variety of 'camps' are asking disturbing questions - if sometimes only in private conversations and correspondence. Why even have a field called history if it lacks internal coherence, if its distracted practitioners are too busy to attend seriously to each others' work, if many of their primary loyalties lie with other (sometimes ahistorical) theoretical and methodological traditions? Should we keep on producing historical monograph after monograph if neither we historians nor 'our audience' - a nebulous entity under conditions of postmodernity - will ever read more than a fraction of them? And why have a field of Canadian history if even the most powerful and far-reaching methodologies often treat Canada as a 'stage' on which relatively universal processes and formations interact? If Canada is more or less just a 'vacant lot,' one more (relatively minor) place where class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and so on, interact - as they do everywhere else on the planet - why not go to where the action really is, to the United States, to Europe, or 'global' analyses? What, besides narrow horizons, arbitrary and dated disciplinary boundaries, or sheer timidity, would hold us to this 'vacant lot'? In our own thinly Canadianized 'History Wars North,'(2) we have dutifully followed our international mentors in demonizing the Other within our gates, all the better (perhaps) to keep our own more disabling fears of nihilism at bay. It is always the Other who threatens to destroy the Muse of History, by suffocating her in the airless corridors of the state or by dismembering him(3) in a postmodern orgy of self-indulgence, subjectivism, and cultural disorder. Such dualisms allow one both to describe a crisis and to exempt oneself from it. A panic-stricken polemical extravagance - the end is nigh! there is a corpse on the floor! - is paradoxically combined with the most complacent and removed sense of self-satisfaction. The emergence of a substantial new Canadian political history in the past decade, centred on the themes of 'ideology,' 'state formation,' and 'law and order,' suggests a way out of this impasse. Drawing innovatively on international theory and historiography, these three streams have made a particularly strong contribution to the study of mid-nineteenth-century Canada. The new history of political thought, much of it written outside the discipline of history, has rediscovered Canada's nineteenth-century civic humanists, situated them imaginatively in a transatlantic debate centred on liberalism and communitarianism, and attempted to reperiodize Canadian history with respect to certain broad ideological patterns.(4) The new history of state formation, influenced to a greater extent by Marxist political economy and theories of the state, and also by such theorists as Gramsci and Foucault, has tracked the rise and consolidation of 'Colonial Leviathan' and focused on the fine grain of 'governmentality' as well as on the broader patterns of ideology.(5) The new history of Canadian law and order has probed not just the empirical history of jurisprudence, but reconstructed the form of law as a determinate abstraction, necessarily of a certain type and yet, at the same time, specific to its time and place.(6) If one were to pass from praising the innovative and imaginative work associated with all three streams to a more critical observation, one might say that scholars in all three clusters have been unselfconsciously regional in range, monographic in strategy, and cautious about generalizing beyond tightly defined localities and 'cases'; many of them have proved remarkably resistant even to referring to the work of differently situated scholars on topics very close to their own.(7) This review article would like to take the risk of predicting that these themes, brought together in a new strategy of reconnaissance,(8) could provide us with a 'third paradigm' beyond the traditional nationalist and socio-cultural history narratives - a way of 'going beyond the fragments' in Canadian history writing. This prospectus is an early and inevitably flawed and partial reading of what this potential paradigm might hold for the writing of Canadian history in the twenty-first century. The core argument is succinct: the category 'Canada' should henceforth denote a historically specific project of rule, rather than either an essence we must defend or an empty homogeneous space we must possess. Canada-as-project can be analyzed through the study of the implantation and expansion over a heterogeneous terrain of a certain politico-economic logic - to wit, liberalism. A strategy of 'reconnaissance' will study those at the core of this project who articulated its values, and those 'insiders' or 'outsiders' who resisted and, to some extent at least, reshaped it. Rather than beginning with the ambition of 'rethinking Canada' in one great social or political synthesis - a procedure that often takes for granted the very boundaries of the 'Canada' to be rethought - we could begin with the more modest goal of combining the new tools of social and cultural theory with more traditional political narratives and economic analyses. In this more problem-centred approach, to 'rethink' Canada does not mean to synthesize and integrate all Canadian experience into an account that, in the best of worlds, would be acceptable to everyone. It would entail, rather, probing the Canadian state's logical and historical conditions of possibility as a specific project in a particular time and place. Although this approach obviously shares a great deal with both the traditional nation-building and the newer socio-cultural schools, its development would require the elaboration of a new general paradigm distinct from either. Once we have abandoned synthesis as an unattainable goal, we can 'think Canada' in a different way. We are missing a large library of big books that would help us do so. Where is our late-twentieth-century general interpretation, deeply informed by critical theory and enriched by a nuanced reading of a vast range of the primary and secondary sources, of 'French/English relations'? Or the substantial and sophisticated book, written with the historian's distinctive concern for the specific as well as the general, of the Quiet Revolution?(9) Or its counterpart, an equally 'big book' offering a general historical interpretation of Canadian regionalism, east and west? This questioning is not in any sense to minimize the political historians' achievements - in the writing of biographies and studies of specific trends, in the interpretation of federalism, and in writing subtle and interesting colony-to-nation and regional narratives - that many social and cultural historians have too easily cast aside; rather, it is to imagine a dialogue in which both camps add their insights to understanding Canada as a political and socially-specific solution to a series of historical problems. Nor does it mean jettisoning the outlook and achievements of social and economic history, particularly as it has indispensably reflected the insights of Marx into the complex logic of capitalism;(10) it is, rather, to imagine what would happen if the workaday adjective 'Canadian' - Canadian working-class history, Canadian women's history, Canadian gay and lesbian history - exerted the 'force of qualification' over that which it modifies. It is to imagine a way of doing history that locates the 'problem of Canada' within the history of power relations: to map, across northern North America, both the grids of power (penitentiaries and criminal codes, schools and legislatures) through which a given hegemonic 'social' was constructed and centred, and the forces of resistance capable, at certain times, of effecting far-reaching changes of the project itself. It is to imagine a Canada that, however 'solidly' if deceptively reified as a sovereign nation-state among nation-states, is nonetheless 'unsolidly' haunted by the insubstantiality of much of its 'sovereignty'(11) - a Canada non-identical, in crucial respects, with itself, and non-reducible to some natural or supernatural agency or essence (such as the St Lawrence River, the Canadian Shield, or the workings of 'inevitability,' 'Fate,' and 'Providence'). On this new reading, Canada becomes less a self-evident and obvious unit, and more an arrestingly contradictory, complicated, and yet coherent process of liberal rule. It is to imagine a 'Canada' simultaneously as an extensive projection of liberal rule across a large territory and an intensive process of subjectification, whereby liberal assumptions are internalized and normalized within the dominion's subjects. A liberal order is one that encourages and seeks to extend across time and space a belief in the epistemological and ontological primacy of the category 'individual.' It is important to make the analytical distinction between the liberal order as a principle of rule and the often partisan historical forms this principle has taken through 150 years of Canadian history. Canada as a project can be defined as an attempt to plant and nurture, in somewhat unlikely soil, the philosophical assumptions, and the related political and economic practices, of a liberal order. As Fernande Roy has remarked in her pathbreaking monograph on turn-of-the-twentieth-century Quebec, the term 'liberalism' simultaneously suffers from semantic overabundance and poverty; it is all too easily confounded with capitalism on the one hand and democracy on the other.(12) Liberalism begins when one accords a prior ontological and epistemological status to 'the individual' - the human being who is the 'proprietor' of him- or herself, and whose freedom should be limited only by voluntary obligations to others or to God, and by the rules necessary to obtain the equal freedom of other individuals.(13) In the sense brought to life by Margaret Thatcher and theorized by many contemporary neo-liberals, it is the individual who truly exists, in a way 'society,' 'community,' and 'the cosmos' do not.(14) The state in particular lacks any finality of its own; it is the individual, whose rights are predicated on self-possession and property, whose purposes, knowledges, and practices truly exist, and whose 'interests' are 'obvious.' Roy suggests that 'liberalism' is best grasped as an ideology performing both a cognitive and a mobilizing function, which resolves antinomies by ranking three core elements: first 'Liberty,' which gives its name to the entire ideology (and from a basic affirmation of an individual's 'natural right' to liberty, we can move quickly to the claim that there exists a subset of liberties, encompassing 'free labour,' 'free trade,' a 'free press,' and so on); second, 'Equality,' which is always subordinated to the first principle of individualism, and interpreted in ways that render 'commonsensical' the particular inequalities stemming from the exercise of the individual's liberty; and, third, 'Property' - more exactly, the individual's right to hold property - which is in a sense even more 'fundamental' than 'liberty,' for if one's property in oneself is the precondition of one's liberty in the first place, the pursuit of property requires the further development of those characteristics that define one as a free-standing individual. In its classical, nineteenth-century form, liberalism entailed a hierarchy of principles, with formal equality at the bottom and property at the top. Conceptualized in this way, liberalism as a hierarchical ensemble of ideological principles can be distinguished from the historical forms it has assumed, and it can also be distinguished from the competing ideological formations alongside which it evolved and which it worked to envelope and 'include' - or to silence or even eliminate. The liberalism that a liberal order sought to install as the structured and structuring principle of both public and private life is, in this reconnaissance of Canadian history, something more akin to a secular religion or a totalizing philosophy than to an easily manipulated set of political ideas; and, in this context, it is something more than one bounded ideology among other ideologies. The 'individuals' at its conceptual nucleus are not to be confused with actual living beings. Rather, 'the individual' is an abstract principle of the entity each one of them might, if purified and rationalized, aspire to become. In the classical liberal model, hegemonic in Canada from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1940s, a true individual was he who was self-possessed - whose body and soul was his alone; only those human beings who met the criteria of true self-possession were 'true individuals.' It appears to be a paradox that mid-Victorian liberals in Canada sought to limit the right to vote for both women (on the grounds of gender) and adult men (on the grounds of property), that they imposed high property qualifications for such institutions as the Senate, and that they felt obliged to exclude from the franchise those from other races (notably the Chinese and Japanese, as well as unassimilated Amerindians) who, as deficient individuals, were not to be trusted with it.(15) Catholics, the largest denomination of Christians in northern North America, could not realistically be so excluded, but there remained a perceived tension between the demands of their faith and the claims of liberal individualism: they were, at least until the 1890s, in a sense probationary liberals.(16) Mid-nineteenth-century liberal discourse is also strikingly characterized by a hesitation to enfranchise even male adult workers and to extend to them the right to free association: undeducated, prisoners of their passions, prone to disrupt with their conspiracies and strikes the calculus of individual interest, and hence tendentially aliberal in their collectivism, workers were often conceptualized as doubtful prospects for liberal individualism.(17) Women, tied as mothers or mothers-to-be by nature and society both to their bodies and to wider networks of family and kin, were also often excluded from individualism in this order;(18) and the same definitional rigour excluded Amerindians, many of them imprisoned in 'communism' and standing in the way of free-market 'development.'(19) Women, workers, ethnic minorities, and Amerindians all obviously have their own histories, which should not be lumped together into one homogeneous 'Canadian' synthesis; but their stories can all be related to each other by noting the consistency of a liberal model which tended to mark them all out as 'Other,' and which, in the nineteenth century, excluded them from the burdens and responsibilities of full individuality. There is a liberal-order 'bridge' connecting these autonomous subaltern histories of experience and struggle. To rescue the rational kernel from the mystical 'Lockean' shell of Louis Hartz, famously associated with the thesis that American society was liberal from its inception,(20) one would say that, far from being already a 'consensus' viewpoint in northern North America, liberalism was, as late as the 1840s in the eastern British North American colonies, and the 1880s in the Prairie and Pacific West, a highly contentious and endangered program. Its adherents, who from the 1840s to the 1870s had won and consolidated hegemony within the Canadian and Maritime colonies, and in the federal state, nonetheless had to scramble to understand, control, and project into the future a liberal concept of their dominion. Liberal Canada was surrounded by 'exceptions' that defined the 'rule': and sovereign was he who decided on the exception - whose defence of the sovereignty of the core of liberal order required decisions to use force, cultural coercion, and other extraordinary but necessary measures against those spatially or conceptually on its periphery.(21) And one would also say that in contrast to the tendency of both Hartz and his 'civic humanist' critics to personify ideologies as agents in history, the Gramscian liberal-order research program would prefer to interpret ideological formations as being only relatively autonomous within social and economic formations. A distinguishing mark of the liberal-order frame-work would be the importance it attaches to the function of property, the primum inter pares in the trinity of liberal values, as the precondition of a liberal's identity. And one would also underline a difference in methodology. Arguments from the political-thought stream often seem both abstract and non-falsifiable because of their essentialism: more specifically, we are often launched on quixotic and somewhat ahistorical quests for the 'origins' of Canadian politics, on the assumption that they might prove to consist of a single idea set. The liberal-order strategy prescribes a more modest tactic of reconnaissance. It is conceded at the outset that, within the overall framework of the Canadian project of liberal order, a multitude of liberalisms share a definitional family resemblance, but not an essential identity. The realities of class, ethnicity, nation, regionality, gender, religion, and sexual orientation, which both Hartzians and their civic-humanist critics might treat as inessential, would be redescribed in this strategy as distinct, but also related categories of analysis. Such categories are distinct in that they emerge from their own levels of generality and are pertinent at their own levels of magnification, and can and should 'stand alone' in appropriate historical discussions. Yet they can also be illuminatingly related to each other. At a different level of magnification, a re/connaissance (a knowing again) of their interaction, and above all their general articulation with the project of Canada as a project of liberal rule, will lead us to a newly contextualized appreciation of (and eminently empirical propositions concerning) the many political and social realities a liberal order simultaneously preserved, cancelled, and transformed.(22) Placed beside mode-of-production Marxism, ready to 'expose' liberalism as an apology for emergent capitalist social relations, a liberal-order approach, although it comes from the same universe of interpretation and shares much the same drive to ideological critique, nonetheless suggests an alternative line of inquiry. Classical Marxist political economy and class analyses are fundamental to the understanding of the Canadian past, yet they have falteringly interpreted the rise of Canada itself. Their power has been greatest at the monographic, not the general, level where 'Canada' is often dissolved into 'the capitalist mode of production' or 'North America.' It has been empirically difficult, if not impossible, for Marxists to fortify a base-and-superstructure model with the argument that capital as such required a separate state in northern North America. Such a classical Marxist position is problematical in a colonial framework such as pertained through much of British North American and Canadian history, crowded as it is with liberal activists who, rather like communists in twentieth-century Third World countries, were the active 'superstructures' of a future base they earnestly struggled to build. They were determined to create in Canada, through tariffs, railway construction, a homegrown industrial transformation, and an expansive immigration policy, the material preconditions of a liberal society.(23) And classical Marxist exposures often have 'read off' class interest simply from class position. If Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony has taught us anything, it is to appreciate the extent to which a given social group can only exercise leadership over others by going beyond its immediate corporate interests to take into account the interests of other groups and classes. This group -- in general, but not always, a social class -- must secure its position of cultural leadership through a combination of coercion and consent, in a day-by-day process that is never finally completed, 'total,' or secure; it must also defend its claim to sovereignty against rival state projects. The 'historic bloc' that emerges from the transcendence of immediate corporate interests must engage in far-ranging compromises, both economic and cultural, with those subaltern groups necessary for its material survival; it must transcend, in a sense, its own temporality, by actively imagining as part of its project of rule the economic base most suited to its vision. (It is never denied, of course, that past economic structures set the material limits within which such strategies could be articulated and realized.) A liberal-order framework constructed on Gramscian lines would treat liberal politics not as something to be 'exposed,' and whose secret already lies in an underlying economic reality. Rather, politics is something to be 'explored,' a terrain in which people became aware of their interests and struggled, politically, to fight for them. In the case of the liberal order, the new framework had to be constructed against or alongside radically different ways of conceptualizing human beings and societies.(24) In contrast with classical Marxism, this neo-Marxist liberal-order framework would not necessarily privilege economic and class relations as the site, but rather as a crucial site, of liberal rule. At a certain level of magnification, it is as crucial to look at the power exerted by men over women, or by heterosexuals over homosexuals, as it is to attempt to trace all things back to class. Finally, it is an awkward fact that the nineteenth-century consolidation of the Canadian project required a massive extension of a relatively autonomous state, whose newly institutionalized capacities - in the census and in hospitals, in penitentiaries and insane asylums, the Criminal Code and the police, the tariff and the poorhouse -- all bore witness to a dramatic new unleashing of institution building, a newly intense drive to master the chaos of life and liberalize social relations, often before the development of the 'fundamental classes' classical Marxists view as pivotal to capitalism.(25) For many working in political theory, 'liberal' values are self-evidently good; the organizing binary is 'liberalism/illiberalism.'(26) At the close of the twentieth century, liberal assumptions have been so successfully and massively diffused through the population that it is difficult to see, let alone treat accurately and with scholarly empathy, the aliberal positions they have replaced. A liberal-order strategy of reconnaissance would attempt to do so, by treating 'liberty' and 'freedom' and (above all) 'the individual' as the contestable and historically relative terms of a particular and probably transient political program. A liberal-order reconnaissance would aim to see our present-day politics afresh, to make the familiar unfamiliar, to destabilize the conventional first-order apprehension of our own world. The presentist and hubristic catalogues of abnormalities, crimes, and mistakes that revisionist Canadian history has produced in such quantities -- 'they were so misguided in the old days,' we say to ourselves, as we read of past racism and sexism -- would give way to a more dispassionate and realistic analysis of the developmental logic, the socio-cultural structures, the non-accidental and general reasons for such phenomena. The paradoxical result might well be an appreciation of the enormity of what the Canadian liberal order undertook -- the replacement, often with a kind of revolutionary symbolic or actual violence, of antithetical traditions and forms that had functioned for centuries and even millennia with new conceptions of the human being and society. It was no small matter to divorce 'man' from his surroundings, to make his economic and symbolic interests the centrepiece of political and social endeavour, to assert, with all the certainty of scientific political economy, that one could read the signs of his spiritual and material well-being from the data of the market. The construction of this 'individual' was a momentous and complex enterprise. It was not merely a weekend's work to wrench 'values' from the fabric of the cosmos, where, inter alia, Aristotle and the church fathers had found them, and to assert the 'individual's' right and duty to justify his own norms. It was not the work of an idle week to 'normalize' the laws of liberal political economy and society, with all their wrenching impact on the lives of settled communities and traditions, and to so consolidate the intellectual authority and prestige of those 'professionals' who commanded this language that their elevation within the state apparatus in the first quarter of the twentieth century would seem more the working out of an inevitability than the consequence of a political choice.(27) These successive revolutions required a degree of inner certainty and ruthlessness; they required, one might even say, a liberal vanguard of 'free' and 'cultured' men willing to restrict 'democracy' (which many of them distrusted well into the twentieth century)(28) in the interests of safeguarding the true interests of 'individuals.' It would be easy for a contemporary mind, inescapably shaped by the liberal order, to miss what was startling, revolutionary, and endangered about the nucleus of liberalism when it first assumed its pedagogical role in northern North America, before its mid-century transition to a hegemonic ideology in the centre and its late-century transition to state hegemony from coast to coast. Judged in the light of a condescending posterity, these Canadian liberals can be defined by their limitations and timidity; but evaluated according to a different standard, one that pays attention to the demographic and cultural influence of forces arrayed against them and the totalizing force of their implicit vision, they can be realistically 're-viewed' as something more like revolutionaries. Compared to ancien regime societies, both in New France and in early mercantile British North America, in which honour was profoundly connected to rank - a principle of order connecting human beings to a vast, complicated, and dense social fabric(29) - a liberal order was a kind of revolutionary simplification. Compared with Amerindian societies, which saw humanity as positioned on a continuum in which animate and inanimate, human and animal, natural and supernatural were all interconnected - to the point that such contemporary categories themselves can only simplify the profoundly holistic Amerindian vision of the universe - the liberal vision saw individuals as separate from, and acting upon, the natural world.(30) Out of a colonial population divided among a dozen-odd political entities, and substantially influenced by aliberal ancien regime cultures, emerged a small vanguard of true believers, fired by a utopian vision of progress, rationality, and individualism, who brilliantly adapted ideas and practices drawn from a North Atlantic triangle of liberal discourse to a highly heterogeneous and even unpromising early-nineteenth-century northern North American reality. The book(s) we are missing on this theme of 'The Canadian Liberal Revolution' would necessarily dwell on seven arresting moments. First, the Rebellions of 1837, Lord Durham's Report, and the Act of Union of 1841 taken together as one moment could be interpreted as the high point and defeat of liberalism's civic humanist adversary;(31) and Lord Sydenham could be taken to be a liberal revolutionary, whose campaign of state violence and coercive institutional innovation was empowered not just by the British state but also by his Benthamite certainties.(32) Second, the 'historic compromise' of reconstructed Tories and 'reformed' radicals that British power did so much to effect was the necessary precondition of 'responsible government,' the formula for political compromise first tried out in Nova Scotia, which was so successfully generalized across colonies of markedly different economic and political circumstances.(33) Third, Confederation - interpreted more broadly and comprehensively than the political reorganization of 1864-7 to include the subsequent elaboration and stabilization of a federal system down to 1896 - could be seen not so much as the 'Birth of a Nation'(34) as the 'Consolidation of a General Liberal State Program'; here one would take on board Paul romney's profoundly important questioning of the centralist 'Myth of Confederation' and see this extended moment as one that was more profoundly shaped by liberalism than is suggested in many conventional accounts. Fourth, the 'liberalization' of the West, first by the replacement of the paternalist Hudson's Bay Company with such new British colonies as Vancouver Island, and then by the Canadian state, and also through a massive extension of private property on the basis of the homestead acts and freehold tenure, would constitute an obvious theme of significance.(35) Fifth, the great historic compromise in the 1870s through which a National Policy of tariff protection designed to secure liberal objectives through the protection of industry was made palatable, first to a restive population largely dependent on primary production, and then to the Liberal Party, which after 1896, by inheriting and strengthening a policy it had once maligned, marginalized a once-powerful and pervasive radical critique of liberal political economy. Sixth, the 'liberalization' of Quebec, through patronage and, more crucially, strategic political compromises, which combined to neutralize and contain the civic humanist critique of liberalism and capitalism, given solidity - particularly in Quebec, but to a lesser degree in other provinces - by the Catholic Church. And, seventh, codification of a framework of civil and criminal law, culminating in the world novelty of the Criminal Code of Canada (1893), which solidified the liberal ideal of 'equality before the law' in a way that potentially made an abstract principle into a tangible reality for every adult Canadian. This ability to bring a liberal discourse on property and conduct into direct contact with every subject - there were legally, revealingly, and crucially, as yet no Canadian 'citizens'(36) - is as good an indication as any of a liberal project of Canada that, over sixty years, had achieved dominion-wide hegemony. Another approach would be the systematic study of the obstacles to liberalism in northern North America, a method which, in itself, would serve to defamiliarize the ruling ideology. One can think of three sorts of major impediments, categorized according to how closely they were situated (both conceptually and, often, geographically) to the individualist nucleus of the project. First, there were those who were 'internal' to the project: not just 'republicans' and 'Tories' who had been 'persuaded' into liberalism in the 1840s, but also those who persistently confronted and were often influenced by different imperatives of liberalism in the United States.(37) Civic humanism was not so much a memory of the past as it was a cultural resource in the present: it did not die with William Lyon Mackenzie and A.A. Dorion, but persisted into the twentieth century, especially on the socialist left.(38) It would modify the strict reading of liberal order among subalterns. Labour historians have been hesitant to acknowledge the impact of liberalism on Canadian workers, who have given the Liberal Party far more support over time than the parties claiming to speak on their behalf.(39) The first women's movement in Canada suggests parallels. The elevation of women, even if in a separate sphere, was implicitly a collective goal requiring a collective subject; and the first-wave feminists placed great strain on liberal definitions (implicit or explicit) of the 'individual,' whose family contexts and responsibilities they underlined, and whose sexual identity many of them came to question - a point not missed by the many ideologically consistent liberals who spoke against the enfranchisement of women from the 1880s on.(40) The social reforms with which feminism was closely allied, such as temperance, also caused many liberals great concern because these reforms tendentially interfered with the rights of free individuals and free enterprise.(41) It was characteristic of the workers' and women's movements that their political language was deeply marked by the liberalism they both implicitly and explicitly questioned. Second, another category of opposition was that associated with francophone and Catholic Quebec,(42) ambiguously situated both 'within' the project (indeed, at its very geographical centre), yet culturally distanced from it by reasons of nationality and religion.(43) That the making of the liberal order in Quebec necessitated far-ranging compromises of liberal ideological principles can illuminate the more general issue of how the order was articulated to (and sought to incorporate) pre- and aliberal sociopolitical forms. That the British North America Act says so little about issues now taken to be fundamental, such as language rights, testifies to its profoundly liberal character; but that it says something about language at all, in section 133, later confirmed in the Manitoba Act, and something more about religious education, brings out the historic price liberals were willing to pay to achieve their dominion. In order to achieve a historic bloc that would allow them to convey liberal rule to as wide a population as possible, liberals were willing to compromise on the question of the separation of church and state and, to a point, on other sociocultural issues - but on the crucial condition that Catholic communitarianism be restricted as much as possible to Quebec (and even there subordinated in the hierarchy to a state liberalism that would remain, down to the 1950s, eminently 'classical').(44) The hegemonic incorporation of Quebec was indispensable to the achievement of liberal order and could only be achieved through carefully articulated politics of elite accommodation and cultural compromise, which have gone on to become misleadingly mythologized as defining features of Canada itself. What is misleading about this myth is that it overlooks the uncompromisingly liberal context within which such 'accommodations' and 'compromises' were made and which they were designed to preserve: these were less 'compromises' than 'bargains with liberal hegemony.' Finally, there were, on the edges of a liberal dominion, other aliberal entities more completely external to its project of rule. Long-established and once military powerful, Aboriginals, the demographic majority in most of the territory eventually to be claimed by the liberal dominion, were people whose conceptions of property, politics, and the individual were scandalously not derived from the universe of Locke, Smith, Bentham, or Lord Durham. The containment of these alternative logics was an ideological imperative of the liberal order, without which it could not exist as a transcontinental project. A reconnaissance of this 'Other' would mean relativizing the Canadian/liberal claim to represent the rule of law; the Canadian project would be seen instead as a historically contingent formula for liberal order, in competition with older and long-established Aboriginal practices.(45) It would mean revisiting the history of prairie reservations and Native agricultural policy, which has already been well explored and theorized, to ask what it tells us about the process of the Canadian liberal revolution in general. It would mean a revaluation of Ottawa's handling of the 'Indian Question' as not just a series of misunderstandings, premised on a distanced misreading of Native societies, but rather as a fulfilment of liberal norms, which required the subordination of alternatives. Canadian imperialism in the High Arctic and in the West was not incidentally related to the Canadian values articulated by the 'Ottawa men' of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From Joseph Howe and John A. Macdonald down to the 1940s, there was a consistency of approach to Amerindian issues which invites theorization within a liberal-order research program.(46) It was perhaps in the residential schools that the full utopianism of a vanguard liberalism came to the fore, for within these Christian/liberal manufactories of individuals, pre-eminent laboratories of liberalism, First Nations children were 'forced to be free,' in the very particular liberal sense of 'free,' even at the cost of their lives.(47) A liberal-order reconnaissance of Canadian history, which can be conveyed only partially and telegraphically here, entails seeing how far and how complexly this principle of liberal order functioned across the wide array of social formations and territories that ultimately cohered, from the 1860s to the 1890s, into the Dominion of Canada. It cannot, will never, and is in fact not designed to stand in for 'other' subaltern histories - the record of working-class struggle, the formation of the Quebec nation, emergence of first-wave feminism among women, and so on. A reconnaissance is not a synthesis. It is a contingent, partial, and (perhaps) somewhat risky attempt to derive a sense of general patterns from particular discrete sightings; its preferred tactic is to relate some of these autonomous histories to each other via bridging concepts and plausible correlations. A liberal-order framework, by beginning with the fact of the Canadian state project, might well be falsely accused of returning to a top-down, state-centric line of interpretation. The more accurate charge would be that this approach radically calls into question the 'top/bottom' binarism that has condemned so much historigraphical debate in Canada to a wearisome and fractious sterility. From this perspective, there is no 'top' and no 'bottom': there is a centre and a periphery, a liberal project and its 'resistors.'(48) One can read as much 'liberal ordering' into inheritance patterns, or the conception of the household as a 'private sphere' ruled by an authorized free-standing individual patriarch, or even in the location of a particular fence post, as one can into the National Policy. What connects the farmer's fence with Macdonald's tariff is a common respect for private property and the propertied individual as the foundation of a sociopolitical order ultimately defended by the state's legitimate violence. What it meant to succeed, to own things, to shine as a success in the eyes of one's parents,(49) to be a real man, to construct lines on maps and barriers around whole countries, to separate what's 'mine' from 'yours', 'ours' from 'theirs': with regard to these fundamental questions of property, the farmer's fence post and the prime minister's tariff policy share a common universe of assumptions and values. A central, and difficult, issue will be that of saying when the liberal order had attained hegemony - which, we remember from reading Gramsci, is never a once-and-for-all achievement of some (unverifiable) majority consensus, but a consistent (and verifiable) logic of rule. An equally challenging and interesting question for this project will be that of 'where.' Often imprisoned by the present-day Canadian nationalist myth-symbol complex, historians are inclined to write 'continuous national histories,' a strategy that tends to eternalize the present-day map of Canada(50) and to attribute to the entire dominion patterns characteristic only of one of its parts. It would be more interesting to devise ways of mapping the spread of liberalism across both space and time, as it extended its grasp from a few nineteenth-century southern outposts to encompass, by the early twentieth century, a subcontinent. If the urban Maritimes and the St Lawrence Valley functioned as a sort of 'Piedmont' of liberal ordering, where the Canadian liberal formulae were first fully worked out, documenting and explaining the extension of these formulae from coast to coast to coast, in social and political conditions often bearing little resemblance to those of the 'liberal nucleus,' is the obvious and necessary following step. Even so, even reading backwards from the 'end' of this process, one would want to avoid colouring the Canadian map a homogeneous liberal red: there would remain many places, and are to this day, where de jure liberal rule coexists with the de facto power of very different conceptions of the political and social world.(51) A further challenge to confront a liberal-order framework as a new reconnaissance of Canadian history would be the related one of articulating the distinctiveness of the liberal order in Canada: that is, in trying to explain the country's existence in terms distinct from the essentialist generalizations of Laurentianism, frontierism, or the (now widely disputed) neo-Hartzian 'Tory touch' thesis.(52) Canada's 'origins' are typically sought in a river system, a rock formation, a mode of production, or the (highly debatable) ideological 'core' of its supposedly pivotal (Ontario Loyalist) settlers. Liberal-order arguments are admittedly not all that well suited to the Quest for Canadian Exceptionalism. Nonetheless, one anticipates they will develop a different, more modest explanation of Canada's separate North American existence, placing greater emphasis on the cumulative impact within a transatlantic liberal universe of marginal differences - 'adaptations,' to invoke social evolutionism for a moment - through which a universal ideology and general project of rule confronted, changed, and was changed over time by the particularities of its surroundings, most notably the strength of its opponents. We know that principles of liberal governmentality and liberal political economy were directly imported from the colonial metropole. They also reflected, to an extent present-day historiography is only starting to recover, a dialogue with the republican founding principles and subsequent hegemonic liberalism of the United States. Against the environmentalism and naive nationalism of older interpretations of Canada's existence, against the 'Toronto School Syndrome,' the liberal-order reconnaissance would not look for a providential or natural something 'outside history' on which to secure the possibility of the 'Canadian' state project. It would rather explore the contingent and pragmatic reasons why one type of liberal state experiment might have been considered more efficient and less risky than another - why, for example, some quite astute liberal minds in Canada thought that '(Liberal) Freedom (Necessarily) Wore a Crown.'(53) In this sense, derivative as most liberal ideas were in Canadian history, they became cumulatively less so as they were adapted to the heterogeneous social and cultural terrain of northern North America. Thus the Canadian liberal order, inspired in many ways by its British prototype, and secondarily by its American competitor, was shaped and reshaped by the complexity of the pre-liberal and aliberal British North American worlds it had simultaneously to preserve, cancel, and transcend. Here, and not in any 'foundation' or 'essence,' is the complex logic of Canadian distinctiveness. It lies in the liberal imperative to harmonize older ways with its new, underlying conception of the world. As it expanded from its core in a few eastern centres to take ownership of a dominion encompassing a subcontinent, Canada as a liberal project of rule was shaped not only by its founding values but by the necessary and often difficult compromises that were required if such values were to become hegemonic - that is, durably install themselves in law, daily experience, personal conduct, and intellectual life. From the beginning, this was an inescapably hybrid political project. In the mid-century making of Canada, the signs of 'bargaining with hegemony' were everywhere: a language of politics in which civic humanism, contractualism, and utilitarianism were woven together, often in the speeches of one and the same liberal activist; a 'mixed constitution' allowing for both monarchy and a measure of carefully controlled popular participation, a 'partial separation' between church and state that nonetheless left the Christian churches with a pivotal role in educating the young and 'civilizing' Amerindians, and a constitutional framework that left room, in a system of checks and balances, for local substates to flourish within a liberal dominion and under the sovereignty of the Crown. Such characteristics were not awakward compromises incidental to the liberal project of Canada, but indications of concessions that, in seemingly qualifying the liberal vision, also brought it down to Canadian earth - a specifically Canadian answer to such liberal challenges as political obligation, social cohesion, and economic development. Their cumulative impact was to give the Canadian liberal order its peculiar traditions and, one might say, its uncanny persistence. Turn-of-the-century Canada represented, in many respects, the apex of the liberal project. With Laurier in power after 1896, the Catholic ultramontanes' communitarian critique of liberal order seemed to have been contained, if not silenced; with the Liberal Party's acceptance of the National Policy tariffs, a modus vivendi had been reached on the subject of the most corrosive single economic issue in Canadian politics. Across a wide political spectrum, Canadian political thinkers, even a French-Canadian nationalist like Henri Bourassa, saluted the brilliance of a classical liberalism inherited from Britain and developed afresh in northern North America. After years of disappointment, the West was being settled under the decisive policies of Clifford Sifton: as one would expect, the state left the key problems of accommodation to a strange and difficult terrain to the immigrant families themselves on their independent homesteads. Perhaps the piece de resistance of the Canadian liberal order was to carve upon the map, in lines that majestically remind us of Euclidean geometry and panoptical state power, the perfect geometry of the Province of Saskatchewan: perhaps even more impressive, however, than this quadrilateral demonstration of panopticism was the molecular checkerboard of quarter-sections and individual properties contained within the new province's boundaries - a social ideology set down on the land and hence made part of everyday western experience. Even the new immigrants in their 'sheepskin coats,' drawn to Canada through the free workings of an international labour market that operated just as liberal political economy said it would, could be 'Canadianized' (liberalized) in a generation. And when critics pointed out the anomalies in the pattern - a state-subsidized Canadian Pacific Railway enjoying monopoly privileges and enormous corporate and political power, or Ottawa's colonial policy of retaining control over crown land and mineral resources - they would be answered by other voices: such anomalies, often described as 'emergency measures,' indicated merely that Canada needed to return to its founding liberal principles. In Winnipeg and in Saskatoon, one burned a lamp, in the early twentieth century, for the eternal truths of liberalism: no sense of the 'nucleus' of the twentieth-century liberal project could exclude one of its most powerful and prescient organic intellectuals, J.W. Dafoe of the Manitoba Free Press.(54) In the twentieth century that 'belonged to Canada,' racial minorities would long be excluded from the franchise, only a minority of adults could vote in federal and provincial elections (in Quebec, this restriction would persist until 1940), and there were, until the 1940s, subjects but not citizens. The magic of nationalism has converted this 'Canada' into a country like the one we now inhabit - but it was essentially a liberal empire, not a nation, and not a democratic state. There is a textbook answer to explain a supposed transition from the nineteenth-century dominion to the multicultural liberal democratic nation state: Canada simply glided, slowly and surely, down Arthur Lower's Most Famous Stream of liberal democracy. More and more people were brought aboard the good ship, and the unsightly detritus of the past vanished into the distance. The liberal-order approach, centred on the Gramscian concept of 'passive revolution,' would undoubtedly offer a much bumpier and less pleasant ride.(55) Liberal ideas and practices were undeniably rethought in the early twentieth century, by intellectuals such as John Watson and Mackenzie King, by Social Gospellers and Progressives - by a host of 'New Liberals' whose key insight was that the rights of the classically defined individual could no longer be the foundation of politics and social life. The requirements of society, that 'evolving social organism,' could only be safeguarded through a greatly expanded and much more activist state responsible for the general welfare of its citizens.(56) In much historical writing, the nineteenth-century liberal order is retrospectively abolished by such turn-of-the-century reformers; or else it is subdued in the second quarter of the twentieth century by the liberal order's first powerful 'opposition' outside itself, the socialist movement, which in Canada articulated a civic humanist argument for a postliberal democracy. Just as the first four decades of the nineteenth century can be mapped as ones in which, from a multitude of interests and identities,(57) a new project of liberal state formation eventually emerged to effect a historic compromise, so too might the first four decades of the twentieth century be mapped as ones in which a new democratic state formation slowly emerged which sought to redefine the meaning of the word 'Canada.'(58) It is an often-related narrative, and much of it captures a truth. Yet in many respects this 'new democracy' was contained: classical liberal assumptions did not disappear, and there was no 'institutional rupture' marginalizing either the Liberal Conservatives or the Liberals as continuing political formations. Another big book is waiting to be written on the ways the left program of new democracy was contained in the middle years of the twentieth century through a seemingly conciliatory, ultimately profoundly disintegrating, process of 'passive revolution' in which, unusually in world terms, Canadian liberalism vanquished its enemies within and without. The thesis of 'passive revolution' maintains that, confronted with a serious quasi-revolutionary challenge to its hegemony, the liberal state executed far-ranging changes in its social and political project to 'include' some of those previously excluded, with the quid pro quo that they divest themselves of the most radical aspects of their oppositional programs (such as demands for a comprehensive change in property relations or in the nature and function of political 'representation'). The crucial cases for examination in Canada would be that of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation,(59) the Communist (subsequently Labor-Progressive) Party, and the left-led industrial unions. Substantial institutional concessions were made to this multi-voiced left, but only at the cost of 'editing' out their unacceptably aliberal elements. The 'passive revolution' imprisoned the left advocates of 'new democracy' in an ever-constricting iron cage of liberal pragmatism. The Canadian 'Keynes' revealingly lost, somewhere in his transatlantic passage, his quirky interest in the comprehensive socialization of investment along with his far-ranging schemes for regional development. What had once seemed a new democratic transformation of the locus of sovereignty in the 1940s - an event duly eternalized within the intertwined memories of social democracy and Canadian nationalism - proved deceptive. Since the 1950s the 'collective prince' has been not the people, but the market and the managerial state. Fiscal exuberance and a ballooning public debt did not change, but, in many respects, underwrote this reality.(60) It might be said that, if the collapse of the British Empire made the new Canadian democracy possible, the rise of the American Empire made it unlikely: postwar Americanization of popular culture and the economy was the ironic counterpart to the emergence of the 'new democratic nationality.' An even more profound contradiction was that the new democracy never effected a political separation from the undemocratic liberal formulae from which it had descended. The new ideologues invested themselves completely in imperial state forms that, by design, had never explicitly articulated a doctrine of popular sovereignty. If the nineteenth-century dominion had never been the free state of a sovereign people, but was rather a locally managed dominion within a liberal empire, whose territorial claim rested fundamentally on the legacy of Britain's commercial might and armed violence in North America, the twentieth-century dominion, however much influenced by the Social Gospel, the 'new democracy,' the socialist ideals of the CCF and the Communist Party, and so on, nonetheless never decisively distanced itself from this imperial legacy. This was still, in many critical eyes, perhaps most decisively those of Quebecois, the same old empire, with the same kinds of men in charge, revering the same distant queen, jockeying for the same threadbare colonial honours, flocking in their sunset years to the same anti-democratic Senate. To abbreviate and anticipate what should some day be a long and more subtle discussion: the reconceived centre could not hold. It could not, without the old ideological resources of empire, or a new and more rigorous sense of its vocation, even become much of a hegemonic centre. An immensely powerful complex of liberal myths and symbols, amply sustained in a corporate guise by American multinationals and foundations, never went away in the days of the 'new democracy.' Since 1975, as the idea of new democracy and the 'Canada' it articulated has progressively faded from view, the country has rung, again and again, to manifestos of the 'true believers' of the doctrines of classical liberalism. After their brilliantly executed struggle for cultural hegemony, classical liberal individualism rides high again, and what had once appeared a decisive 'transcendence of the classical liberal order of the nineteenth century' stands revealed as something more like an interregnum, a temporary moment of emergency social legislation. Can Canada be reprogrammed a third time, along the lines of this undoubtedly massive shift away from the values of the new democracy, towards a restoration of the nineteenth-century paradigm? Notwithstanding the depth and tenacity of the liberal order in Canadian history, this refocus seems unlikely. Had we asked a Victorian liberal why one should support the project of Canada, the answer might well have entailed some version of 'Peace, Order, and good Government' - the benefits to all free-standing individuals of living in a stable British country, governed sensibly by a parliamentary monarchy, and anchored in a deep sense of the British Constitution and the Queen's law. If we asked a mid-twentieth-century Canadian the same question, we might well have heard a new democratic defence of national distinctiveness in terms of universal social programs, democratic inclusiveness and tolerance, eastwest economic linkages, and international peacekeeping. How (or if) neo-liberals will attempt to 'Canadianize' themselves is an intriguing mystery. True believers in unfettered individualism and global markets, these exponents of the hegemonic ideology presently lack any persuasive justification for Canada in the reductionist market terms in which they seek to cast social and political questions. Most of the neo-liberals' grand economic objectives would, in fact, be better realized without a separate Canadian state in northern North America - and they know it.(61) Theirs is a brilliant definitional challenge that should arouse Canadian historians from their dogmatic slumbers, petty debates, and narrow horizons. (1) It is telling that there are so few recent major works by Canadian historians of all persuasions on the political crisis of the past thirty years. For a critique of the historical assumptions in the existing literature on the crisis, see my 'After Canada: On Amnesia and Apocalypse in the Contemporary Crisis,' Acadiensis 28, 1 (1998): 76-97. (2) For the American prototype, see Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past (New York: Metropolitan Books 1996). For an Australian intervention with a neo-Granatsteinian gothic title, see Keith Windschuttle, The Killing of History: How Literary Critics and Social Theorists Are Murdering Our Past (New York: Free Press 1996). For a thoughtful and moderate intervention on underlying issues in Anglo-American historical scholarship, see Thomas L. Haskell, Objectivity Is Not Neutrality: Explanatory Schemes in History (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1998) - an excellent antidote to naive realism and obscurantist theory-mongering in academic historical discourse. (3) After all, in a twenty-first-century context, there is no reason why Clio should be assigned a fixed gender identity. (4) An informative collection based on the political-thought approach can be found in Janet Ajzenstat and Peter J. Smith, eds., Canada's Origins: Liberal, Tory or Republican? (Ottawa: Carleton University Press 1995). Among the important recent titles, see especially Jane Errington, The Lion, the

Eagle, and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1987); Paul Romney, Getting It Wrong: How Canadians Forgot Their Past and Imperilled Confederation (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1999); Gordon Stewart, The Origins of Canadian Politics: A Comparative Approach (Vancouver: UBC Press 1986); Robert Vipond, Liberty &Community: Canadian Federalism and the Failure of the Constitution (Albany: State University of New York Press 1991). (5) Seminal titles here include Paul Craven, 'An Impartial Umpire': Industrial Relations and the Canadian State, 1900-1911 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980); Bruce Curtis, True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education, and State Formation in Canada West (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992); Jean-Marie Fecteau, Un nouvel ordre des choses: La pauvrete, le crime, l'Etat au Quebec de la fin du XIXe siecle a 1840 (Montreal: VLB 1989); Alan Greer and Ian Radforth, eds., Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992); and J.I. Little, State and Society in Transition: The Politics of Institutional Reform in the Eastern Townships, 1838-1852 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997). Some of the most important work from Atlantic Canada still remains unpublished: see Rusty Bittermann, 'Escheat! Rural Protest on Prince Edward Island, 1832-1842' (PhD thesis, University of New Brunswick 1991) and Daniel Samson, 'Industry and Improvement: State and Class Formations in Nova Scotia's Coal-Mining Countryside 1790-1864' (PhD thesis, Queen's University 1997). For interesting new international titles that might stimulate further Canadian work, see Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent, eds., Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico (Durham, NC: Duke University Press 1994), and James C. Scott, Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed (New Haven: Yale University Press 1998). Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1991), has proved a stimulus to much recent work. (6) Among important recent titles, see Michael Boudreau, 'Crime and Society in a City of Order: Halifax, 1918-1935' (PhD thesis, Queen's University 1996); Desmond H. Brown, ed., The Birth of a Criminal Code: The Evolution of Canada's Justice System (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1995); Philip Gerard and Jim Phillips, eds., Essays in the History of Canadian Law, 3: Nova Scotia (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History and University of Toronto Press 1990); Louis Knafla, ed., Law and Justice in a New Land: Essays in Western Canadian Legal History (Toronto: Carswell 1986); Peter Oliver, 'Terror to Evil-Doers': Prisons and Punishments in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History and University of Toronto Press 1998); Steven Maynard, 'On the Case of the Case: The Emergence of the Homosexual as a Case History in Early-Twentieth-Century Ontario,' in Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson, eds., On the Case: Explorations in Social History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998), 65-87; Jim Phillips, Tina Loo, and Susan Lewthwaite, eds., Essays in the History of Canadian Law, 5: Crime and Criminal Justice (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History and University of Toronto Press 1994); Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo, Making Good: Law and Moral Regulation in Canada, 1867-1939 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997); John C. Weaver, Crimes, Constables, and Courts: Order and Transgression in a Canadian City, 1816-1970 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1995); Brian Young, The Politics of Codification: The Lower Canadian Civil Code of 1866 (Montreal and Kingston: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History and McGill-Queen's University Press 1994). (7) One might point out that this failing is particularly glaring in the case of Ajzenstat and Smith, eds., Canada's Origins, wherein political theorists dissect what 'civic humanism' and 'liberalism' might mean without referring to the work of such historians as Fernande Roy, Jean-Marie Fecteau, Tina Loo, or the entire 'state-formation' school. (8) If we were to replace the scientistic and positivist metaphor of 'synthesis' in which all the subaltern identities lose themselves in a new compound, with antipalingenetic metaphors drawn from cognitive 'mapping' and 'reconnaissance,' we might have more interesting and useful conversations across the many barriers dividing historians. The 'modesty' of this prospectus may seem curiously mismatched to the high-powered polemics that characterize our millennial moment, within Canadian historiography as elsewhere, but any attempt to 'read into' a flourishing monographic literature an implicit general logic requires a sense of modesty. (9) This is not to detract from Kenneth McRoberts's classic Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis (Toronto: McClelland &Stewart 1988), and similar titles from political science; but a general historical treatment of the Quiet Revolution would ask rather different questions and incorporate the cut-and-thrust of debates in its own way. It seems astonishing that Canadian cultural history, having long since accomplished the 'linguistic turn,' has yet to 'turn' to theorizing representations of the major language communities in Canada - a 'turn to language' that would obviously be of immense significance in Canada. (10) On Marxist attempts to write the 'general history of Canada,' see especially the often rich and suggestive work of Stanley Ryerson, The Founding of Canada: Beginnings to 1815 (Toronto: Progress 1972), and Unequal Union: Confederation and the Roots of Conflict in the Canadas, 1815-1873 (New York: International Publishers 1968). For interesting reflections on Ryerson's work, see Gregory S. Kealey, 'Stanley Brehaut Ryerson: Canadian Revolutionary and Marxist Historian,' in Workers and Canadian History (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1995), 48-100. Ryerson's general Marxist theorization of Canadian history has not been pursued by a subsequent generation of radical scholars: it would seem that, within major camps of Marxist scholarship - political economy (often in the journal Studies in Political Economy) and working-class history (exemplified by many of the historians associated with Labour/Le travail) - attempts to theorize Canada itself have been displaced by more monographic and 'case study' approaches. (11) And, for this reason, perhaps the most important of all the 'classic' Canadian historians for this approach was the heretical J.B. Brebner, whose sophisticated and brilliantly iconoclastic works - particularly The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia: A Marginal Colony during the Revolutionary Years (New York: Columbia University Press 1939) and North Atlantic Triangle: The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain (New York: Columbia University Press 1945) - are largely unexplored resources for contemporary historians. No doubt the reasons for Brebner's eviction from the Toronto-constructed canon are many. He worked intensively in a field far removed from the neo-Wagnerian myth-symbol complex Canadian nationalists have woven around the St Lawrence Valley, he became an American citizen, and his highly innovative micro-history did not sit well with the reigning environmentalism. One might also put forward the hypothesis that Brebner's sophisticated nonessentialist and non-nationalist treatment of a Canada not identical with the space of its present claim to sovereignty could only frighten and confuse those scholars schooled in the essentialist 'metropolitanism/continentalism' binaries of Toronto. (12) Fernande Roy, Progres, harmonie, liberte: Le liberalisme des milieux d'affaires francophones de Montreal au tournant du siecle (Montreal: Boreal 1988), 45-58. The discussion of the next two paragraphs is in all respects heavily dependent on Roy's discussion. (13) C.B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke (London: Oxford University Press 1962), 264. One should remark that it is a matter of debate among historians of political thought how much North American liberalism was centred on 'possessive individualism' as Macpherson defines it. One can retain the gist of Macpherson's definition and his emphasis on a material underpinning to individualism, without necessarily focusing on Lockean doctrines or according them originary status. See Elie Halevy, The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism (Boston: Beacon Press 1955), for the turn in liberal thought from natural rights towards utility, and David F. Ericson, The Shaping of American Liberalism: The Debates over Ratification, Nullification and Slavery (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1993), for a stimulating point-by-point comparison of republicanism and liberalism in a specific historical context. For an excellent Canadian discussion, see Colin D. Pearce, 'Egerton Ryerson's Canadian Liberalism,' in Ajzenstat and Smith, eds., Canada's Origins, chap. 8. (14) As Anthony Arblaster remarks in The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1984), 15, liberalism 'involves attaching a higher moral value to the individual than to society, or to any collective group. In this way of thinking the individual comes before society in every sense. He is more real than society. In the quasi-historical theories of the social contract developed by Hobbes, Locke, Paine, and others, he is seen as existing before society temporally as well. Finally, his rights and demands come morally before those of society.' (15) A fine study of 'legal liberalism' and discrimination on the grounds of race is James W. St. G. Walker, 'Race,' Rights and the Law in the Supreme Court of Canada: Historical Case Studies (Waterloo: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History and Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1997). (16) See Rainer Knopff, 'The Triumph of Liberalism in Canada: Laurier on Representation and Party Government,' in Ajzenstat and Smith, eds., Canada's Origins, chap. 7. An excellent account of mid-Victorian liberalism and the question of 'papal aggression' can be found in J.M.S. Careless, Brown of The Globe, I: The Voice of Upper Canada, 1818-1859 (Toronto: Macmillan 1959), 99-136. Much material of fascinating import can be found in J.R. Miller, Equal Rights: The Jesuits' Estates Act Controversy (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1979). There is ample scope for Canadian historians armed with contemporary theories of nationalism, and following the lead of such historians as Linda Colley and Terence Ranger, to do important work on the ways in which Protestantism, British ethnicity, and imperialism fused into the image of the 'ideal Canadian individual' in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For a sophisticated analysis that links the emergence of liberalism to theological politics, see Pierre Manent, An Intellectual History of Liberalism, trans. Rebecca Balinski (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1995). It may be suggested that the somewhat strained and inconclusive debate over 'secularization' would be sharpened and clarified if, on the basis of this and other studies, it could be transformed into a debate over 'liberalization.' (17) For good Ontario overviews, see Jeremy Webber, 'Labour and the Law,' in Paul Craven, ed., Labouring Lives: Work and Workers in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Government of Ontario, 1995), 105-201; Eric Tucker, ' "That Indefinite Area of Toleration": Criminal Conspiracy and Trade Unions in Ontario 1837-77,' Labour/Le travail 27 (1991): 15-54. (18) For an interesting distillation of the large literature on liberalism and patriarchy, see Mary Dietz, 'Context Is All: Feminism and Theories of Citizenship,' in Chantal Mouffe, ed., Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community (London: Verso 1995), 63-85. She writes: 'The denial of citizenship to women is, of course, a historical but not a contemporary feature of liberalism. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that at least in early liberal thought, the ethical principles that distinguish liberalism - individual freedom and social equality - were not in practice (and often not in theory) extended to women, but solely to 'rational men,' whose 'rationality' was linked to the ownership of property' (82 n. 12). For a pathbreaking Canadian discussion, see Lykke de la Cour, Cecilia Morgan, and Mariana Valverde, 'Gender Regulation and State Formation in Nineteenth-Century Canada,' in Greer and Radforth, eds., Colonial Leviathan, 163-91. For a study of the subtle relationship between liberalism and the reform of married women's property law, see Lori Chambers, Married Women and Property Law in Victorian Ontario (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History and University of Toronto Press 1997). (19) Perhaps the most suggestive account from a liberal-order perspective is that of Sarah Carter, Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990). (20) See Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution (New York: Harcourt, Brace &World 1955), chap. I. (21) For an important discussion, see John P. McCormick, Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism: Against Politics as Technology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997), chap. 3. (22) One of the most valuable research projects illuminating this simultaneously conservative and revolutionary aspect of liberal order is that of Brian Young; of his many studies, In Its Corporate Capacity: The Seminary of Montreal as a Business Institution, 1816-1876 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1986) is a particularly engrossing account of the transition of one 'precapitalist' and 'seigneurial' institution to capitalist social relations. (23) See A.A. den Otter, The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997), for a fine discussion that imaginatively draws out the wider cultural purposes of railway construction in the liberal imagination. (24) There was, of course, a lasting and deep mutual penetration of liberalism and capitalism after the mid-nineteenth century, but it is important to keep these categories analytically separate. And it is equally crucial to evade the temptations of overly emphatic social evolutionary accounts, for alternatives to liberal order were not 'fated' by evolution to disappear so much as liberals fought tenaciously and often against the odds to 'disappear' them, often in ways that changed the liberal project itself. (25) That such institution building fell far short of a twentieth-century conception of the state as 'general manager' of the economy is obvious, but a literature that stresses only this, or that merely critiques the individualist legacy of Victorian liberalism without asking what might have been (and still is) ideologically efficacious about it, is incomplete. See James Struthers, No Fault of Their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-1941 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1983), for a superb discussion of the twentieth-century legacy of liberal individualist doctrines of 'less eligibility.' (26) A striking example can be found in Joseph H. Carens, ed., Is Quebec Nationalism Just? Perspectives from English Canada (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1995), chap. 1. (27) See J.L. Granatstein, The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins 1935-1957 (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1982); Doug Owram, The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State, 1900-1945 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1986); and Barry Ferguson, Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark, and W.A. Mackintosh 1890-1925 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993). (28) As Anthony Arblaster remarks, in the phrase 'liberal democracy,' the 'adjective "liberal" has the force of a qualification.' See Arblaster, Liberalism, 76-8. There is a good theoretical discussion in J.S. McClelland, A History of Western Political Thought (London and New York: Routledge 1996), 458-74, and a stimulating historical overview in Michael Bentley, Politics without Democracy, 1815-1914: Perception and Preoccupation in British Government (London: Fontana 1989). See also the important discussion in Paul Edward Gottfried, After Liberalism: Mass Democracy in the Managerial State (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1999), chap. 2, 'Liberalism vs. Democracy.' For an attempt to contextualize liberal critiques of democracy in the broader context of a debate with civic humanism, see Janet Ajzenstat, 'The Constitutionalism of Etienne Parent and Joseph Howe,' in Ajzenstat and Smith, eds., Canada's Origins, chap. 9, a treatment somewhat marred by an unconvincing attempt to associate enthusiasm for a one-party dictatorship with the civic humanism of Mackenzie and Papineau. (29) For illuminating discussions, see Dale Miquelon, New France, 1701-1744: 'A Supplement to Europe' (Toronto: McClelland &Stewart 1987), 227-58; and Edith I. Burley, Servants of the Honourable Company: Work, Discipline and Conflict in the Hudson's Bay Company 1770-1879 (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1997), 19-63. (30) I am drawing upon Georges E. Sioui, For an Amerindian Autohistory (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1992), and Olive Patricia Dickason, Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times (Toronto: McClelland &Stewart 1992), 79-83. (31) For the 'civic humanist' credentials of the Patriotes, see Louis-Georges Harvey, 'The First Distinct Society: French Canada, America, and the Constitution of 1791,' in Ajzenstat and Smith, eds., Canada's Origins, chap. 4. (32) See Ian Radforth, 'Sydenham and Utilitarian Reform,' in Greer and Radforth, Colonial Leviathan, 64-102; Janet Ajzenstat, The Political Thought of Lord Durham (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1988); Phillip Buckner, The Transition to Responsible Government: British Policy in British North America 1815-1850 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press 1985). (33) That roughly the same kinds of liberal reform movements emerged in such a striking diversity of socioeconomic settings suggests the difficulty of explaining so pivotal an event as responsible government in straightforward 'mode-of-production' terms. See Peter Russell's important discussion of the elitist character and damaging long-term implications of the Confederation deal in Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Be a Sovereign People? (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992); and Philip Resnick, The Masks of Proteus: Canadian Reflections on the State (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990), 54-70. After all, what could have been less marginal, less accidental, and more revealing of an underlying framework of political and economic values than the decision not to refer the scheme of Confederation to the votes of the people? (34) The Fathers were convinced that they did not need to attain the approval of the mere human beings for the political order they were designing for individuals. The new federal government in Ottawa, although neither constituted from below by a sovereign people nor itself sovereign in most key respects, nonetheless consolidated much of the former British North America into that immense portion of the globe that Canada now claims. This exercise in liberal state formation was sold to French-speaking Lower Canadians as a divorce from Upper Canada that would guarantee their distinctive language and religious traditions; to Ontario anglophones as a divorce from the French Canadians and a measure that would open the West to Ontario farmers; and to British North Americans generally as a great measure to build a railway and thwart the expansion of the American democracy. See A.I. Silver, The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1982), and Ged Martin, Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation 1837-67 (Vancouver: UBC Press 1995). (35) Tina Loo, Making Law, Order, and Authority in British Columbia 1821-1871 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1994), which stands as one of the most exciting and provocative studies of the emergence of 'liberal legality.' (36) See William Kaplan, ed., Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993), although this volume does not succeed in placing the concept of citizenship in an international or long-term perspective. (37) Vipond, Liberty &Community, brings David Mills, MP for Bothwell, and subsequently minister of justice under Laurier from 1897 to 1902, to life as a significant 'decentralizer' in Canada's constitutional history; Mills's liberalism, voiced eloquently in the London Advertiser, was very much influenced by the teachings of Thomas Cooley at the University of Michigan, one of the most important legal minds in the United States. (38) The history of 'citizenship' remains largely unwritten in Canada; one of the untapped primary resources for such an enterprise would be the organ of the country's first dominion-wide socialist movement, which was called Citizen and Country. (39) From the late-Victorian period to today, with only a few interruptions, Canadian workers have been successfully integrated as subordinates into the Canadian political project by the two mainstream liberal parties, a point radical and Marxist labour historiography has been reluctant to emphasize. But see Craig Heron's illuminating discussion in 'Labourism and the Canadian Working Class,' Labour/Le travail 13 (1984): 45-76. One of 'biggest' of the big books we are missing is a sophisticated and theoretically alert reconstruction of the liberal dimensions of agrarian revolt in Canada. (40) Note in particular Stephen Leacock, 'The Woman Question,' in Social Criticism: The Unsolved Riddle of Social Justice and Other Essays (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), 51-60, which turned to the 'law of supply and demand' for support for its argument against women's rights. (41) For a thoughtful discussion, see Brian Trainor, 'Towards a Genealogy of Temperance: Identity, Belief and Drink in Victorian Ontario' (MA thesis, Queen's University 1993). (42) Quebec shares with British Columbia the honour of having a sophisticated literature about the history of liberal politics. In addition to the works of Roy, Fecteau, and Young already mentioned, one should also note Jean-Paul Bernard, Les Rouges: Liberalisme, nationalisme et anticlericalisme au milieu du XIXe siecle (Montreal: Les Presses de l'Universite du Quebec 1971); Bernard L. Vigod, Quebec before Duplessis: The Political Career of Louis-Alexandre Taschereau (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1986); and Gilles Bourque et Jules Duchastel, Restons traditionnels et progressifs: Pour une nouvelle analyse du discours politique: Le cas du regime Duplessis au Quebec (Montreal: Les Editions du Boreal 1988). (43) See Ronald Rudin, Making History in Twentieth-Century Quebec (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997), for an exploration of the ways in which Quebec historians have sought to 'normalize' their society's distinctiveness. (44) For a sophisticated and convincing elaboration of this point, see Gilles Bourque, Jules Duchastel, et Jacques Beauchemin, La societe liberale duplessiste 1944-1960 (Montreal: Les Presses de l'Universite de Montreal 1994). Catholics such as Laurier were 'defective individuals' in the mid-century liberal imagination because, trapped in medieval 'superstition,' and under the sway of a foreign pope, their 'free-standing' self-possession was imperfect. Laurier himself feared that his faith alone would bar him from the Liberal leadership. One might suggest that, on this issue, one finds an interesting difference between Canadian and American liberalisms. Despite intense Protestant misgivings on this issue, Catholics, who had as individuals been pivotal to the Canadian project since its inception, could be admitted even to the prime ministership in the 1890s - as witness John Thompson, not only a Catholic but a convert to Catholicism. The concept of 'Protestant hegemony' in Canadian history is in urgent need of re-examination. (45) For a fascinating illustration, see Hamar Foster, ' "The Queen's Law Is Better Than Yours": International Homicide in Early British Columbia,' in Phillips, Loo, and Lewthwaite, eds., Essays in the History of Canadian Law, 5: 41-111. (46) See E. Brian Titley, A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada (Vancouver: UBC Press 1986); Frank James Tester and Peter Kulchyski, Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63 (Vancouver: UBC Press 1994). (47) On the residential schools, see J.R. Miller, Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), and John S. Milloy, A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System 1879 to 1986 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press 1999). (48) See Dante Germino, Antonio Gramsci: Architect of a New Politics (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press 1990), 57-8, for a discussion of this Gramscian innovation in the language of Marxist politics. (49) For 'vulgar liberalism,' see Allan Smith, 'The Myth of the Self-Made Man in English Canada 1850-1914,' in Canada: An American Nation? Essays on Continentalism, Identity, and the Canadian Frame of Mind (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1994), 324-58. (50) At least as this map has entered the popular imagination: the actual shape of the claims of Canadian sovereignty is quite different. (51) A fine monograph that could be read as an illuminating study of this pattern can be found in Ken Coates, Best Left as Indians: Native-White Relations in the Yukon Territory 1840-1973 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990). (52) See Gad Horowitz, 'Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in Canada: An Interpretation,' in Ajzenstat and Smith, eds., Canada's Origins, chap. 2. (53) See John Farthing, Freedom Wears a Crown (Toronto: Kingswood House 1957). (54) There is an interesting discussion of his 'crypto-liberalism' in David Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies 1910 to 1945 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990). (55) For the concept of passive revolution, see Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence &Wishart 1971), 207. (56) See Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1985). For an interesting account of changing political ideals, see John English, The Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System 1901-20 (1977; Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1993). The pioneering exploration of the concept of the 'new democracy' is James Naylor, The New Democracy: Challenging the Social Order in Industrial Ontario 1914-25 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991). (57) One might mention here the complex political character of Canadian regionalism, which has often paradoxically demanded not that 'Canada' cease to exist, but that the Canadian economy and political system operate 'fairly,' in a way that recognizes the distinctive interests of 'region.' Seemingly antithetical (the one centripetal, the other centrifugal), 'regionalism' and 'pan-Canadian nationalism' have historically been mutually dependent: often a Canadian regionalist is striving for the better, fairer integration of his or her region into the Canadian polity, yet in terms that are tendentially post-liberal. (58) There was logic, as well as poetry and 'popular-front politics,' in the appellation 'Mackenzie-Papineau' the left attached to the Canadian battalions that defended democracy in republican Spain: socialists were reclaiming and legitimizing the civic humanist reading of Canadian history, and in particular the idea that the 'Canadian people' had a democratic legacy. (59) The historians who stress the CCF's essential moderation and mild 'social democracy' have often failed to register the sweeping character of the radical socialist transformation demanded in David Lewis and Frank Scott, Make This Your Canada: A Review of CCF History and Policy (Toronto: Central Canada Publishing Company 1943). (60) See James Struthers, The Limits of Affluence: Welfare in Ontario 1920-1970 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Government of Ontario 1994), for a careful deromanticization of the partial transition to 'social citizenship.' See also C. David Naylor, Private Practice, Public Payment: Canadian Medicine and the Politics of Health Insurance, 1911-1966 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1986); John R. Miron, Housing in Postwar Canada: Demographic Change, Household Formation and Housing Demand (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1988); and John C. Bacher, Keeping to the Marketplace: The Evolution of Canadian Housing Policy (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993). The most suggestive and rigorous analysis of the capitalist entrapment of the welfare state remains Claus Offe, Contradictions of the Welfare State (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 1985). (61) See Thomas J. Courchene with Colin R. Telmer, From Heartland to North American Region State: The Social, Fiscal and Federal Evolution of Ontario. An Interpretive Essay. Monograph Series on Public Policy (Toronto: University of Toronto, Faculty of Management 1998). The thesis of this much-honoured (if profoundly ahistorical) monograph is that Ontario is no longer the 'heartland' of a Canadian nation state, but is emerging as the 'premier economic region state within North America,' 2.

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