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ABSTRACT

No Prime Minister has ignited the public imagination like Pierre Elliot Trudeau; and yet, no prime minister has been as misunderstood. Trudeau dominated Canadian politics for nearly fifteen years; his impact on Canadian political culture has been arguably greater than any other figure of the late twentieth century. Yet major aspects of his political thought have been misconstrued or ignored in the scholarly studies of his life, thought, and political activity. This thesis attempts to illuminate aspects of Trudeau’s political thought that are important for understanding the actions of his government, and for understanding Canadian political values that exist in the 21st century as a result of his influence. Three primary arguments are put forward. Firstly, that Trudeau was a modern liberal whose thought was consistent with the tradition of modern liberalism as it existed in Canada. Secondly, that Trudeau was a radical within that tradition, reforming it significantly according to his own ideas, which had been strongly influenced by French personalist philosophy and the political economic ideas of his mentors—such as Joseph Schumpeter—at universities in the United States, France and England. And thirdly, that Trudeau’s form of modern liberalism was high-modernist, a Canadian variant of that international movement of political scientism that swept through much of the world in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. With these different aspects of Trudeau’s thought unveiled, concluding thoughts on the potential negative consequences of his philosophy are offered, such as the universalistic tendencies of his form of liberalism, and his unrealistic faith in social science knowledge to solve all human political, social, and economic problems.
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PREFACE

Canadian political history has for some time been seen as uninteresting and largely irrelevant. Simply perceived as reflections of the 'real' forces of economy, political events have been considered products of more important social happenings. This perception needs to be changed. Politics are an integral part of social reality, not a mere reflection of it. Furthermore, political actions can be primary forces of change, moulding social realities to the vision of the actors involved. Social and cultural history need to re-incorporate politics for a more complete and relevant historical vision to be realized. In this essay, I attempt to reconcile Canadian political history with social, cultural, and intellectual history in the hope of creating a more holistic vision of the Canadian past. Whether or not I am successful is, of course, for the reader to judge.
Introduction

The 2004 Canadian election saw the return of the Liberal Party for a fourth consecutive term in power; representing the political centre was the secret to the Liberal Party's success, as it had been since the early 20th century. The left wing New Democratic Party and the right wing Conservative Party were unsuccessful in their appeals to the Canadian public because they could not market themselves as sufficiently "safe," as sufficiently "middle of the road." Defining the political centre is the key to understanding Canadian political culture and the liberalism that dominates it. Without such a definition, the unattractiveness of the other parties cannot be fully understood. Important clues for defining the Canadian middle were offered during the leaders debate of the 2004 campaign. During that debate, the leaders of the Conservative and Liberal parties, Stephen Harper and Paul Martin, locked horns over the issue of same-sex marriage. There was one exchange in particular that was of interest, not for the inherent wisdom of what was said, but for how the "argument" proceeded. Stephen Harper claimed, "that this [same-sex marriage] falls under the authority of Parliament." Considering the "rules" of parliamentary democracy, under which the elected have the right to govern, this seemed like a reasonable thing to say. However, Paul Martin disagreed with Harper, responding, "once the Supreme Court has made a decision and said this is a right, then I do not believe Parliament should use a notwithstanding clause to overturn it. ... if we are not prepared to protect minorities against the occasional oppression by the majority, then ... the basic values of this country will wither away." He questioned Harper's "basic commitment to the Charter, basic commitment to minorities rights, and basic commitment to our freedoms in this country." Martin's reply was not an argument but an appeal to what he believed were the shared values and beliefs of his audience, the Canadian public. By making an appeal to "the basic values of this country," Martin was calling for support from the modern liberal consensus that dominates Canadian political culture today. This consensus is a recent phenomenon; the Charter of Rights and
Freedoms, for example, on which Martin based his appeal, did not exist until the Constitution Act of 1982. Yet the ideas behind this legislation—including commitments to individual rights and to multiculturalism—and ideas associated with the welfare state—especially Medicare—have become entrenched as “Canadian values,” that is, they are considered by the vast majority of the population to be essential parts of Canadian identity. It is not a coincidence that many of these Canadian values were formed in the 1960s and 1970s when the Liberal government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau was in power. Trudeau’s government had a profound and lasting impact on mainstream Canadian political culture through his government’s expansion and entrenchment of the technocratic welfare state and the modern liberal ideology that built it. Trudeau was a powerful symbol of the rise to dominance of modern liberalism in Canada’s political culture, a political philosophy that he helped shape and that his term in power helped embed into the public’s conception of their own collective and individual identities.

My project has been inspired, in large part, by Ian McKay’s article, “The Liberal Order Framework.” In this article he argues that we should conceive of Canada as constituting a “liberal order,” in which liberalism provides the central, unifying worldview that defines “Canada” as a social, economic, cultural and political unit. The flexibility of his proposed framework allows for a possible holistic re-conception of Canadian history—as opposed the fragmentation that characterizes it now—in which different fields of historical inquiry are given the focal point of the expanding liberal order. Different historical actors and events are reconceived to react against, conform with, or propagate further the growing liberal hegemony. He proposes we conceive of Canada as a “historically specific project of rule.”

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.  

This essay is an attempt at the “reconnaissance” he calls for. Conceived of in terms of the liberal “project of rule,” Trudeau’s life, philosophy, and time in power are given greater historical significance; seen as neither a continuance of the liberal “tradition” nor as a clean break from the past, the modern liberalism Trudeau adhered to is given substance if we conceive of it as the adoption of new strategies and techniques in the pursuit of protecting liberal hegemony in the context of the challenges (and resistances) of its times. In this sense, as will be demonstrated, Trudeau represents both a continuation of the liberal project of rule and a break away from it; his was a new form of liberalism that defended the existing hegemony while changing it. He was both an “insider” and an “outsider,” who articulated the core liberal values, but also reshaped them.

This essay will explore the two most important systems of thought that together constitute modern liberalism in Canada and, in particular, in the political philosophy of Pierre Trudeau: 1) the “modern” aspect, what I call “scientific culture,” which loosely defined includes a progressive faith in the power of scientific methods and rational thought to create a better world; and 2) “liberalism,” the political philosophy that continues to animate Canadian worldviews and which, in all its varied forms, provides a secular morality for political organization based on a universal and universalizing code of individual rights and freedoms. To be more clear, I will look at how ‘outside’ ideas of social science—the main motor of scientific culture—have intermingled with ‘inside’ ideas of classic liberalism to form the modern liberalism we have now.

A secondary purpose of this essay is to retell the familiar story of the creation of the Canadian welfare state with the above emphasis in mind. The story I wish to tell is of the rise to dominance of “modern” liberalism at the expense of a long established tradition of “classic” liberalism. More accurately, I plan to tell the end of that story, the part when the champions are crowned and the new order enthusiastically proclaimed. Other authors, like Doug Owram, Barry
Ferguson, and in a different way, George Grant, have told different, penetrating versions of earlier parts of the story—of the rise of new social science liberal intellectuals first within the universities and then within different governments and institutions of the state—but don’t look at the late 1960s or 1970s, partly due to the time at which they were writing and partly because of time period on which they chose to focus. The climax of that particular story, as I argue, comes with the election of Pierre Trudeau in 1968. Trudeau was a principal and particularly articulate advocate of the new modern liberalism; he was not, however, a pioneer of this new sort of liberalism. Trudeau was firmly entrenched within the cultural and intellectual norms of his day. He was the product of an exceptionally varied and elite education that embodied and propagated those norms; he studied political economy, law, and political science/philosophy at the top universities in Canada, France, England, and the United States. But, to be sure, he was somewhat radical in his vision of the new liberalism and he did come into politics at the right time, when the new form of liberalism had hit a high point with the majority of the Canadian public, bolstered as it was by the 1960s obsession with new technology and “progressive” political and cultural atmosphere. So, while Trudeau’s philosophy was becoming more and more politically mainstream, and indeed in intellectual circles had been mainstream for some time, he is important in that he was the first true modern liberal intellectual to come to power, and his philosophy to a great extent steered government policy during the 1970s, entrenching the modern liberal consensus that exists to this day.

I have three principal arguments to make. Firstly, that, as expressed in Cité Libre and in his other published writings, Trudeau’s political philosophy was representative of and indeed helped shape the new “modern” form of liberalism that has been dominant in Canadian political

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2 George Grant wrote primarily in the 1960s before Trudeau’s time in power. Doug Owram’s The Government Generation: Canadian Intellectuals and the State 1900-1945 (Toronto 1986) and Barry Ferguson’s Remaking Liberalism (Montreal 1993) looked at the period 1900-45.

3 Lester Pearson was a transitionary figure, intellectually a modern Keynesian reformist liberal, but whose political style was consistent with traditional Liberal Party practice. Maintaining power trumped desire for change, allowing only slow evolution.
culture since the 1960s. Secondly, that Trudeau’s particular form of modern liberalism had certain anomalies or distinctive features caused by adherence to the ideas of, for example, his supervisors at Harvard, Schumpeter and Leontief, and by a now obscure philosophy called Personalism, which help explain some of the ambiguities of Trudeau’s thought and political actions that confused commentators at the time and continue to do so today. Thirdly, that Trudeau’s philosophy and actions in power correspond with the phenomenon called “high-modernism,” a politicized version of scientific thought that called for the application of social science theories of rational planning to the operations of the state and that was in fashion with nearly every modern state—liberal or not—during the mid-20th century.

Throughout this essay, I will be speaking to what I see as a void in Canadian political history in general, and in Trudeau’s thought in particular. No author has offered a general history of liberalism that ties together the ideas and movements of the 19th century to those of the late 20th century. The historiographical debate that surrounds this topic has tended to be fragmented into different periods. McKay has called for a merging of these arguments and narratives under his liberal order framework but none exists at the current time. In the first chapter, I offer a very general outline of the history of modern liberalism in Canada as a first step in filling this void. But further than that I attempt to synthesize a number of the different arguments offered by historians who have been active in this debate. Gad Horowitz famous Canadian adaptation of the ‘liberal fragment’ thesis contends that English Canada should be understood as a homogenous shard of British-American liberal culture that represents a sort of fossilized, simplified version of 17th century Britain-through-America, holds some elementary truths about Canadian liberal origins, but is simplistic and misleading, as Peter Smith and Janet Azjenstat so ably demonstrate.4 Smith and Azjenstat argue that Horowitz’s story—that the

4 Horowitz adapted his thesis from Louis Hartz’s and Kenneth MacRae, The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada, and Australia (New York 1964). Hartz
original loyalist fragment consisted of a mixture of conservatism and liberalism—does not conform with the primary evidence left by the original loyalist colonists, who expressed, they contend, a mixture of the ideas offered by liberalism and republicanism (alternatively called civic humanism).\(^5\) Conservatism, marked as it was by an organic vision of the social order, did not appear as a major influence in these early writings. Republicanism was instead the main rival to liberal ideas of democracy, claiming as it did the need for direct participatory political participation (responsible government) and for the creation of a virtuous society. Paul Romney goes further, contending that the biases of historians—as in the case of conservative historian Donald Creighton, his main example—have concealed the important republican tradition of 19th century Canadian political culture to the detriment of Canadian unity.\(^6\) He argues that conservatives (classic liberals) and modern liberals have skewed history to validate their preferred vision of a centralized, nationalistic state devoid of powerful sub-states and sub-cultures—of semi-autonomous provinces responsible to their particular peoples and cultures.

The rejection of the Hartz-Horowitz line of argument by Romney, Smith and Azjenstat is certainly convincing and a valuable interpretation of 19th century political culture, but it appears to be too rigorous in its denunciations. Conservatism cannot be dismissed as a significant cultural force in 19th and early 20th century English Canada. Imperial loyalties and Victorian attitudes regarding hierarchies of status, class and culture were certainly conservative and cannot be dismissed as purely civic humanist/republican in nature. Moreover, in French Canada, ultra-Montane conservatism was undeniably powerful up until at least the 1950s. Using the liberal order model provided by McKay, I attempt to overcome these tensions and contradictions by considering these (and other) different political cultures as existing together, mixing and fusing

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over time to become specifically Canadian forms of political culture. Liberalism was the dominant driving force with which other political cultures had to negotiate; but as the term negotiate implies, this necessarily meant the others forms of political culture did not disappear entirely, but became part of the whole, existing in sometimes camouflaged form to the present day.

Furthermore, with the exception of Barry Ferguson and Doug Owram, little or no distinction has been made between 19th century classic liberals and 20th century modern ones, caused in large part by the liberal fragment thesis and “spectrum paradigm,” which Smith and Azjenstat critique as the assumption of an inevitable drift from conservatism to liberalism to socialism. In other words, conservatism was the original Canadian political culture, followed by liberalism, which was destined to be replaced by socialism, in large part because of Canada’s original community-oriented conservative roots. Smith and Azjenstat dismissed this theory/myth when they discredited the myth of Canada’s original conservatism, but this does not mean that other historians did not follow it. As Ferguson comments, the history of liberalism and of Canadian politics in general has been undermined by the assumption that if one wasn’t a classic liberal, then one was a social democrat, ignoring the possibility of the third way of modern liberalism. I agree with Ferguson and extend his analysis further by identifying two major schools of modern liberalism within the Canadian tradition: the Keynesian reformist modern liberalism of the Second World War period and the radical modern Trudeau-type liberalism of the 1960s and 1970s.

The first chapter’s greater purpose is to contextualize Trudeau within the history of modern liberalism, without which it would be impossible to understand how Trudeau was a radical within modern liberalism’s established traditions. In the second chapter, my three main arguments (outlined above) will be offered through a primary analysis of Trudeau’s political philosophy. The purpose of this analysis is to bridge major gaps in contemporary understanding
of Trudeau’s political philosophy and actions while in power. Like other authors, I see Trudeau’s actions to be consistent with his philosophy, making his writings avenues for understanding changes in the Canadian federal state, as well as the actions taken by that state.\(^7\) Furthermore, Trudeau’s ideas themselves are immensely important in their own right, as they were the direct cause of these socio-political transformations, and perhaps even more importantly, they were the most influential force that changed Keynesian-type modern liberalism into a specifically Canadian, radical and ideological version of modern liberalism. While significant, penetrating work has already been done on Trudeau’s philosophy, especially on the aspects concerned with his anti-nationalism and his conception of the individual and community, serious misunderstandings persist.\(^8\) In particular, the powerful influences of personalism, Schumpeterian economics, and scientism on his liberal thought are given cursory analysis, just scratching the surface of their implications, if they are considered at all. Personalism and Trudeau’s favourite social science theories provide crucial keystones without which his philosophy cannot be properly understood. I would go further to say that without knowing the implications of these aspects of Trudeau’s liberalism it would be impossible to have an accurate and meaningful understanding of Trudeau’s philosophy and actions in power, nor would an accurate definition of modern liberalism as it has existed since Trudeau’s time be possible. In other words, 21\(^{st}\) century Canadian politics cannot be fully understood without an accurate understanding of Trudeau’s influence on modern liberalism as it continues to exist today. In the

\(^7\) Trudeau himself believed this to be true, see page 32 of this thesis. Other historians concur; for example, James P. Bickerton et al. argued: “En réalité, cependant, installé au pouvoir, Trudeau restera toujours fidèle aux principes de base de la philosophie politique qu’il a élaborée et exposée avant de se joindre au Parti libéral. C’est une philosophie libérale, respectueuse des droits individuels et, dans une moindre mesure des droit collectifs, fondée sur une conviction progrésiste envers la raison, méfiante à l’égard des revendications communautariennes et stoïquement opposée au nationalisme.” (Six Penseurs en quête de liberté, d’égalité et de communauté [Sainte-Foy 2003]: 130)

\(^8\) Authors who have offered scholarly works directly analysing Trudeau’s thought include: Claude Couture, La Loyalité d’un Laïc: Pierre Elliot Trudeau et le Libertalisme canadien (Montréal: Harmattan, 1996); John L. Heimstra, “Trudeau’s Political Philosophy: its implications for liberty and progress” (Master’s Thesis (Philosophy), Toronto 1983); Charles Blattberg, Shall We Dance? A Patriotic Politics for Canada (Montreal 2003); James P. Bickerton et al., Six Penseurs en quête de liberté, d’égalité et de communauté (Sainte-Foy 2003; Stephen Clarkson and Kristina McCall, Trudeau and Our Time, volumes 1 & 2 (Toronto 1990).
conclusion, I will reflect on the nature of Trudeau's modern liberal ideology, and on how it has continued to be of significance in Canadian political culture.

With this analysis, I wish to participate in McKay's goal to make Canadian history politically relevant: "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." In a small way, I hope to 'destabilize' the current political debate by re-opening to question some of the values and ideas Paul Martin accepted as faith during the aforementioned debate. The political situation needs to change; there have been no genuinely new political ideas in the past two decades, and the potential consequences of this stasis—from regional separatism to unsustainable and ineffective social programs to political apathy and the 'malaise of Modernity'—have already exposed their disturbing face.

Methodology

My theoretical approach arises from a mish-mash of different methodologies mostly, but not exclusively, from the "post-modern" schools of thought associated with intellectual history and cultural theory; Michel Foucault, Jurgen Habermas, Thomas Kuhn, Clifford Geertz, Raymond Williams, Charles Taylor and Thomas Bender are a few of the authors who have most enriched my thinking. For the purposes of this essay, I think it necessary to explain, briefly, my conception of political culture, as this project is primarily a history of political culture and of the dominant philosophies and ideologies within it.

When approaching historical topics surrounding politics, philosophy and culture, it is necessary to employ discourse analysis of one form or another. A term of seemingly infinite complexity, "discourse" refers to the "conversation" within a somewhat coherent collective (community, society) that informs and shapes thought; it is a mutable and constantly changing body of cultural knowledge through which meaning is created and transferred, providing the locus of knowledge creation, and subsuming the thought of those operating within the discourse. For some time Michel Foucault has been most closely associated with discourse analysis; one commentator has defined Foucault's use of the term as:

...ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern.\(^\text{10}\)

From this definition discourse appears to have no limits, constituting the entirety of human experience, mentally, socially and even physically. To give a more applicable definition, discourse could also be conceptualized as a totalizing philosophy in practice, for in addition to an intellectual framework, it implies the power relations, emotional experience, and social practices

that are involved. For example, “liberalism” and “scientific culture” are, in my essay, considered to be different but overlapping and intertwined discourses, as they are both totalizing worldviews with social, physical and emotional/spiritual practices.

Thomas Bender provides a concrete and specific way of approaching discourse as it relates to culture and philosophy and to actual people and societies. Bender presents a bounded and specific idea of “discourse” that is grounded in social reality, which he calls “cultures of intellectual life:”

Men and women of ideas work within a social matrix that constitutes an audience or public for them. Within this context they seek legitimacy and are supplied with the collective concepts, the vocabulary of motives, and the key questions that give shape to their work. These communities of discourse, which I am here calling cultures of intellectual life, are historically constructed and are held together by mutual attachment to a cluster of shared meanings and intellectual purposes. They socialize the life of the mind and give institutional force to the paradigms that guide the creative intellect.¹¹ (original emphasis)

Here we see discourse as attached to a social community whose limits, generally speaking, are defined by a common language of ideas and cultural concepts that are formed and re-formed around historically constructed questions. The social science intellectuals—including of course Trudeau—associated with the rise of modern liberalism would be one such community, with its own language of theories and concepts particular to them and formed around historically constructed questions, such as “how do we fix the social inequality?” Or, “how do we eliminate the ‘boom-bust’ cycle of capitalism?”

Although implicit in discourse analysis in general, with the requisite relationship of knowledge and power, the political consequences remain vague, if ominous, insinuations. These political insinuations correspond, as I see it, with the idea of “political culture;” which constitutes the available symbols, ideas, attitudes, feelings and beliefs that could potentially be used to construct and give meaning to the social order in which the individual exists. Included in this concept are the notions of what constitutes (ab)normal, (il)legitimate or (un)acceptable

¹¹ Thomas Bender, Intellect and Public Life (Baltimore 1993): 3-4.
power relationships and social behaviour in the political order. The individual could, theoretically, draw upon the complex web of symbols and ideas that make up political culture in any way he or she likes; indeed, new combinations of these elements lead to change over time. However, in reality, individuals are raised with a somewhat vague configuration of political culture passed on to them by the existing tradition of their community. In essence, political culture provides the means to understand the social order, but not necessarily at the conscious level, and therefore usually reflects the existing hegemony, or consensus, of “common sense” beliefs. For example, Trudeau was raised within the cultural and intellectual context of Quebec in the 1940s and 1950s, with its signature mixture of classic liberalism and ultra-Montane nationalism, influenced also by his bilingual newly bourgeois family, the various schools he attended, and by his social network (i.e. friends). A great deal of variety can exist even in the presence of a hegemonic discourse, but the available concepts and, especially, the techniques of legitimation of power relationships and political behavior confine the thought and action of most individuals to the limits embodied in their respective political culture. In my analysis, when I am talking about a “modern liberal consensus,” or of liberalism as the “hegemonic discourse” within Canadian “political culture,” it is the above conceptions of these terms that inform my thinking.

But if “political culture” only defines the possible limits of thought, then Geertz’s conception of ideology defines how programs of political action are constructed out of a political culture. According to Geertz, “ideologies” are a modern phenomenon caused by the collapse of the traditional order and the inability of cultural traditions to explain the new social conditions; it is “a confluence of sociopsychological strain and an absence of cultural resources

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12 The phenomenon when all (or the vast majority of) members of a society agree on fundamental philosophical-cultural assumptions is, in the academic world, called “hegemony,” in the realm of everyday life it is referred to as “common sense.” The “common sense” revolution instigated by the Conservative Party in Ontario during the 1990s provides an excellent, explicit example of hegemony at work: in reaction to the social democratic government in power, the Conservatives proposed an “ideology-free” alternative, based not on theory but on “common sense.” The Conservative Party was in fact proposing a return to the traditional ideology of classic liberalism, so deeply rooted in the majority of the population that its description as “common sense” was overwhelmingly acceptable to the voting public.

by means of which to make sense of the strain, each exacerbating the other, that sets the stage for the rise of systematic (political, moral, or economic) ideologies.”¹⁴ Their purpose is not only to “to render otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful,” but to “make it possible to act purposefully within them,” which together accounts both for the highly figurative nature and for the intensity with which, once accepted, ideologies are held.¹⁵ Ultimately, ideologies are “maps of problematic social reality and matrices for the creation of collective conscience,”¹⁶ which embody specific programs of action designed to create new social/political orders, legitimating their programs by objectifying moral sentiment (and thereby reinforcing calls to action). Ideologies are specific, coherent configurations of political culture that embody political action and moral authority, including a complex system of beliefs and ideas that explain (or map) the world in a highly particular way. Ideologies rise out of political culture, and in this sense they are limited by it; but they also have the capacity to change political culture, as their program of action has the ability to change social reality and, more importantly, expose gaps in the ability of the ideology and its base concepts (from political culture) to explain new and old social realities alike. Much like Kuhn’s scientific paradigms ultimately lead to their own destruction by exposing internal theoretical flaws, ideologies can change the larger political culture, often at the expense of their own self-destruction.

During my research, these conceptions of “ideology,” “political culture,” and “hegemonic discourse” greatly assisted my ability to understand and explain the changes that occurred in Canadian political culture from 1920 to 1980. Within the hegemonic discourse of liberalism that had existed in Canadian political culture since the late 19th century, modern liberalism arose as a new ideology to explain the new social realities and offer creative solutions to new social problems. In the opinion of many intellectuals, classic liberalism could no longer

¹⁴ Ibid, 220.
¹⁵ Ibid.
¹⁶ Ibid.
convincingly explain and, as a result, could no longer offer effective programs of political action to deal with the problems created by the new social realities. The new form of liberalism more effectively explained the existing social reality and offered tangible solutions to a society in crisis—largely from the experience of the Great Depression and in general from the modernizing effects of industrialization over the previous 50 years. Shifts in hegemony are slow, unpredictable and never inevitable: Trudeau’s rise to power in 1968 symbolized the culmination of a 50-year process that was not pre-ordained but which happened nevertheless, and which almost certainly will be displaced by yet unimagined forces of political-cultural change.
Chapter I: A Brief History of Liberalism in Canada

"Science and war—and God knows what else—have uprooted us and the whole world is roaming. Its mind is roaming, Heather. Its mind is going mad trying to find a new place to live." – Hugh MacLennan, *Two Solitudes*

A: Liberalism: definitions and early developments

Trudeau’s particular contribution to modern liberalism can only be properly understood if it is placed within the political and intellectual traditions of his time. First and foremost, this requires a brief rendition of the history of liberalism in Canada. It is necessary that we understand the classic liberalism from which modern liberalism arose: both strains are part of the great family of liberal thought; their seemingly large differences disguising fundamental similarities. Trudeau’s thought in particular exposes both the continuity of liberal thought and its startling ability to absorb and adapt opposing traditions. With clear definitions of classic and modern liberalism established, and the historical trends that informed their particularities in Canada, we will be well placed for an examination of the intricacies of Trudeau’s modern liberalism.

The original English speaking liberal thinkers were members of the English, Scottish and American bourgeois class in the 17th and 18th centuries. The ideas expressed by these thinkers were compatible with the social position and practices that maintained that class, both economically and politically. This does not mean, however, that liberalism was created with this purpose in mind. On the contrary, the authors of these texts sought to explain philosophically the unfolding modern world order established by Sir Isaac Newton’s new science. The previous totalizing philosophy of Aristotle no longer offered satisfactory explanations of the social, political and moral order, based as it was on a classic worldview grounded in a defunct

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Ptolemaic science. The early liberal thinkers faced the challenge of creating a political philosophy that grounded humanity in the atomist worldview of modern science.

The first step, taken emphatically by Thomas Hobbes, was the creation of a new type of individual. According to Hobbes, society was made up of self-interested individuals who lived together under a state in order to prevent the inevitable war of “everyman against everyman.” While not a true liberal, Hobbes established liberalism’s foundational principle of the rational individual driven by self-interest, which would be built upon by John Locke and later by thinkers of the Enlightenment to become—with the addition of the ‘liberty’ principle—liberalism. The new philosophy thus came to correspond with the atomist worldview of Newtonian physics and Baconian applied philosophy—the scientific method—which together formed the basis of modern science, thus healing the rupture between science and philosophy that had occurred during the scientific revolution. This early relationship between modern science and liberal philosophy is important for my later discussion of modern liberalism, which effectively merged the two separate fields of thought into one.

Liberalism did not arise as a concrete theory of social and political relations. The differences between the major liberal thinkers are too many for a clear ideological formula to be determined. This does not mean, however, that liberal thought lacks unity. As liberal philosopher John Gray argues, there is a “persistent though variable conception of man and society” that defines the liberal tradition. He identifies four elements that give “liberalism a definite identity which transcends its vast internal variety and complexity”:

It is individualist in that it asserts the moral primacy of the person against the claims of any social collectivity; egalitarian, inasmuch as it confers on all men the same moral status and denies the relevance to legal or political

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18 See Thomas Kuhn, The Copernican Revolution (Cambridge, MA 1957), for an excellent discussion of the transition between the classical and modern scientific worldviews.
19 See John Gray, Liberalism (Buckingham 1995), chapter 2.
20 George Grant makes similar links between science and liberalism, though he focuses on the early unity of the two types of thought which he claims persists throughout—the basis of our ‘technological’ civilization—not distinguishing a clear difference in the relationship of science and liberalism in modern versus classic liberal thought. See English Speaking Justice (Toronto 1998): chapter 1.
order of differences in moral worth among human beings; *universalist*, affirming the moral unity of the human species and according a secondary importance to specific historic associations and cultural forms; and *meliorist* in its affirmation of the corrigibility and improvability of all social institutions and political arrangements. (original emphasis)\(^{21}\)

Of these four elements, another liberal philosopher, Will Kymlicka, puts special emphasis on the “meliorist” aspect, identifying the over-arching goal of all liberals: “Our essential interest is in leading a good life, in having those things that a good life contains.”\(^{22}\) The implications of this, he argues, are profound. In order to pursue the “good life” we must open to question the moral foundations and very purpose of our lives. Thus, rational self-reflection on “what is good” is the core feature of the liberal enterprise, rendering open all traditions, ideas, and practices to question. This does not mean that liberalism is anti-traditional; in fact, traditions can be given deep moral significance and contemporary relevance through *self-reflexive rational questioning* by the individual. Only then can accepted knowledge be given worth or meaning to the individual—to be proclaimed “good”—according to his own terms, and not anyone else’s. Built on a foundation of individualism, egalitarianism and universalism, the essential meliorist aspect of liberalism forms the basis of liberal political morality.\(^{23}\)

The general unity of the liberal family of thought does not deny the variety, complexity and ambivalence that underscore its various branches. English speaking liberalism, for one, has its own particularities that make it an identifiable offshoot within the liberal family. English speaking liberalism can itself be broken down into smaller national categories—American, Canadian, English—and again into categories within nations, such as “classic” versus “modern” Canadian liberalism.\(^{24}\) The point is that liberalism is impossible to define absolutely; its

\(^{21}\) Gray, *Liberalism*, xii.
\(^{23}\) Ibid., 10-19.
\(^{24}\) That is the problem with categories: they never accurately capture the essential features they seek to define. Thus, categories always expose flaws within their own definitions, spawning more and more subcategories until the idea of “category” itself becomes meaningless. For example, we could say there exists modern Anglo Canadian British Columbian Vancouver liberalism, which could describe some limits of my own liberal thought while completely missing the essential features, describing basically nothing of meaning or value.
complexity is too vast and the individuals who ultimately express liberal thought are particular in their own way. However, I believe the differences between classic and modern Canadian liberalism are possible to identify in a general but still meaningful way, as they disagree—are fundamentally contradictory—on a few essential features: firstly, in their conception of the role of the state in society and in relation to individuals; secondly, in their conception of "forces" within society; thirdly, on the limits of "private property;" and fourthly, in what constitutes the ultimate moral source of political legitimacy and justice.

B: Classic Canadian Liberalism

Classic Canadian liberalism draws its inspiration principally from the school of thought most often associated with John Locke and Adam Smith. I will identify what I think are the most important hallmarks of classic liberalism in Canada, based on the above-mentioned issues over which modern liberals disagree.

First of all, let us start with a general point: classic liberalism in Canada would more accurately be described as a hybrid of liberalism, conservatism and republicanism. The influence of the latter two is most clearly demonstrated in that Christianity was the primary source of political legitimacy and justice in classic liberalism in Canada. Classic liberalism cannot be thought of without Christianity being placed at the centre as the moral foundation of society; the aforementioned liberal political morality was tempered by the higher laws of Christian theology. The state, though separate from the church in official structure, had to conform to the moral regulations of Christian theology: the illegality of divorce and sodomy—

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25 Conservatism has an organic, hierarchal vision of the social order, as legitimated by God. There are different classes of people based on socio-economic roles, race and sex. The social order is considered permanent, reinforced as it is by religious codes and powerful cultural norms. For example, a medieval monarchy was conservative, as the King was at the top of the hierarchy, just below God and sanctioned by Him, followed by the aristocrats (noble families), merchants, peasants and slaves.

26 Two other important conservative forces that merged with classic liberalism are French and English Canadian nationalism, the former in part reacting to the latter, which was aggressive and tied to the British Imperialism.
two practices which are potentially acceptable in liberal philosophy—until 1967 is a particularly apt example of how this played out in practice. The Christian basis of classic liberalism was conservative because of the necessary hierarchal nature of a Christian community, and the assumed permanence of that hierarchy, based as it was on absolute Truth as revealed by God. This does not mean that classic liberals were anti-progressive—far from it—but on certain, mainly moral issues where Christian values and liberal values conflicted, Christian values would triumph, through the courts, or through parliament. Closely related to the conservative position, republicanism demanded the pursuit of a virtuous social-political order, virtue being defined by Christian morality in the 19th Century Canadian context. Responsible government, something anathema to true conservatives, was required to achieve the virtuous society, for only then could a government be held accountable to its citizens sense of virtue. Echoes of the republican tradition will be seen in Trudeau's philosophy, demonstrating republicanism's continued, if ignored, legacy.\(^\text{27}\)

Besides Christian-based moral imperatives (i.e. prohibition) demanded by the citizenry, the classic liberal state was minimalist or non-interventionist in nature. The reasoning for this was essentially libertarian, or more accurately, pure 17th century liberal: the state must be kept as small as possible to allow individuals the maximum political, economic and social freedom. The state existed primarily to enforce the legal system that maintained these civil freedoms through laws aimed at achieving equality—that is, limiting the abuse of one individual's freedom by another—and to maintain order, provide military protection from invasion, etc.

Economic freedom (capitalism) plays a particularly strong role in classic liberalism, caused in part by the expansive scope of classic liberal definitions of "private property," and in

\(^{27}\) My discussion of republicanism/civic humanism draws on arguments made in Peter Smith and Janet Azjenstat's "Canada's Origins: The New Debate" and Ian McKay's "The Liberal Order Framework."
part by the real political power of those elites who dominate the economy. In classic liberalism, property is the sacrosanct possession of individuals; it provides the basis for the socio-economic order. It also has powerful implications for the political and legal order, as an autonomous individual is defined as having ownership of his own self, and on this basis, has claim to the moral primacy of a “person” with the full legal “rights of personhood” that go along with that. The state, therefore, cannot intervene in the economic realm for that would violate property rights and thus disrupt the entire socio-economic and political order. Lastly, the stance of a non-interventionist classic liberal state is reinforced by pseudo-scientific claims made in regards to the “laws” of economy, history, and human nature: the “rights of man,” as based on natural law; and the idea of “progress,” based on Adam Smith’s famous “invisible hand,” and on the inevitability of scientific-technological advancement, as well as the teleological “laws” of history. In the classic liberal formula, societal progress—materially and morally—can only be achieved with a minimalist state, as it serves the twofold purpose of protecting individual freedoms—of life, speech, property, etc.—arising from the rights of man, while not interfering with the natural and inevitable engines of progress that lurk in the liberal economy—private enterprise, free-market capitalism—and history. The end goal of progress constitutes, essentially, a classic liberal utopia: an egalitarian, Christian-based society void of material wants but respectful of individual autonomy (think the American Dream). In the present day, this form of liberalism is called “conservatism” or “neo-conservatism.”

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28 It is a basic fact that those who were in parliament up to 1920 were almost always a part of the middle-upper class professional and business elites; little has changed since.

29 The famous ‘persons’ case in 1929 demonstrates this point: before this trial women were not considered persons because they were the property of their husbands (or fathers) and thus did not have ownership of ‘the self.’ On this basis, they were denied many of the fundamental ‘rights of man’ that were accorded to the men, who had the privilege of self-ownership.

30 Ferguson concurs and elaborates: “In recent years, libertarian and neo-conservative critics have found all too much public policy based on the theory and practices of reformist liberals. The resulting backlash has led to theoretical restatements in economics and political science based on strong scepticism about the productive capacity of regulated capitalism, fear for the effects on individual freedom of action from the interventionist state, and an individualist “libertarian” definition of social, political, and economic rights.” (From Remaking Liberalism, 239.)
In Canada, classic liberalism was a foreign import—brought by English and American liberals in the 19th century—that gained its 'Canadian' distinctiveness in the way the liberal order unfolded once it arrived. Ian McKay summarizes these developments in a sweeping stroke:

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 ... ; 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 awkward 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. ... [By the early 20th century], across a wide political spectrum, Canadian political thinkers, even French-Canadian nationalist like Henri Bourassa, saluted the brilliance of a classical liberalism inherited from Britain and developed afresh in northern North America.31

Industrialization, modernization and the threat of political instability caused by two world wars and a great depression would create new challenges for classic liberal hegemony. These challenges would lead to crisis and, ultimately, internal transformation. The minimalist state of classic liberalism would prove inadequate in the face of these new challenges, providing the focal point for the modern liberal critique.32

C: The Rise of Modern Liberalism

At heart, the problem that plagued the classic liberal order was the obvious tendencies towards economic (and thus social and political) inequality of the capitalist system. As one author put it, the political/economic “problems were twofold: the underlying tendencies of capitalism and the capacities of parliamentary government [to affect those tendencies].”33 In other words, could and/or should government be used as a corrective agent for the problematic tendencies of capitalism? Any system of public welfare up to this time had been impossible,  

32 Or at least that was the argument put forward by modern liberals. Classic liberals of course disagreed.
33 Ferguson, Remaking Liberalism, xv.
since the sanctity of private property and the protection of individual civil liberties made an interventionist state impossible. The need for action became more pressing when the economic crisis intensified to the point of collapse in the 1930s. The Second World War provided a brief respite, but with the approaching peace, government was faced with the terrifying future of a failing economic system and the potential collapse of the entire liberal order. Starting at the turn of the century, intellectuals searched for new ways to fix the system; the alternative was throwing it out altogether, something most Canadians—being classic liberals—were loath to do. Modern liberalism developed out of these challenges as the way to fix the system.

As it happened, the “fix” was, in essence, the application of the theories and techniques of the newly emerged social sciences to the apparatus of the state. Not surprisingly, the central agents of the new movement of “progressive reform” were university graduates of the new social science disciplines. These new intellectuals gradually replaced the previous generation of progressive reformers, those powerful advocates of conservative Christian morality who had counselled and cajoled governments towards state-directed social-moral reform as part of their “progressive” agendas of the 19th and early 20th centuries. How this replacement was achieved is unclear—Christianity is hardly a pushover when it comes to claims of moral legitimacy. There is no question, however, that the rising tide of modern scientific culture was a major factor. The increasing authority of science at the popular and, especially, elite levels—the result of the technological marvels and economic efficiency it had produced—was the primary cause of the acceptance of social science ideas as legitimate in the political realm. The increasing political influence of university-trained intellectuals, and indeed the increasing collusion

34 The increasingly popular alternative was social democracy, or socialism, as represented by the growing strength of the social democratic party, the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation
36 Prohibition being the most famous, but others surpassed it in terms of long-term significance. Public schools and penitentiaries were both products of “progressive,” Christian-based movements that sought to “reform” children and criminals to accept prescribed codes of morality and behaviour. Owram’s Government Generation details the gradual rise in influence of social scientist experts in the state bureaucracies and political parties.
between universities and the state, was another related cause. Progressive Christians gradually lost power to the new intellectual forces, slowly reduced from the pinnacle of the intellectual hierarchy to negotiating a place in this new hegemony of modernity. Classic liberals were more successful, forcing the social scientists to accept key aspects of their philosophy on equal terms, forcing a partnership of power in the new political order. What emerged as dominant by the 1960s was a hybrid ideology of social science “rationalism” and classic liberalism, the ideology behind the technocratic welfare state: modern liberalism.

The ‘new’ form of liberalism had its roots in the thought of John Stuart Mill, the great English liberal philosopher of the 19th century, whose writings—especially On Liberty—pushed the envelope of liberal thought from the contractual individualism of Locke to one that placed greater emphasis on egalitarian principles and the social/cultural relationships of individuals. Barry Ferguson, a rare historian of modern liberalism in Canada, gives a penetrating definition of the ‘new’ liberal ideology that Mill spawned:

Liberal-democratic theory was further developed and elaborated by influential writers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. ... [These writers] pushed liberal-democratic thought towards a self-described new liberalism that emphasized an extension of rights to mean equal participation in and fulfillment from the spectrum of social, political, and economic life. This enlargement of the concept of rights was supported by new economic theory which showed that the immense productive capacity of capitalism effectively provided for human wants. The new rights position did not advocate the abandonment of a market-based economy. But it argued in favor of a major role for the state as agent for the redistribution of economic and political rights because the state was the agent of the interests and needs of every human being in society. Above all, it argued for the extension of measures of human welfare from the utilitarian counting of aggregate income to the broad assessment of social well-being, opportunity, and satisfaction for all men and women. Liberal individualism was reinterpreted to include the equal “positive” rights of opportunity and security. These rights were distinguished from the old liberalism and its focus on the “negative” rights to individual property accumulation and to certain legal protections. Under the new liberalism, the individual’s role is transformed and individual fulfillment thus resides in his or her full participation in society. Individual rights are economic as well as political; human welfare is social as well as economic.

Owram argues: “By 1945 the separate spheres [university and government] had become inalterably intertwined. The civil service depended on the expertise that the university could provide, and for men of advanced learning the government had become a prime alternative to university teaching.” (Owram, 326.)

Ideas from this school of thought persist in paternalist government practices such as, for example, government control of liquor licenses, liquor distribution and its public consumption, and the regulation of pornography and public nudity.

Rationalism: 1) Philos. the theory that reason is the foundation of certainty in knowledge. 2) Theol. The practice of treating reason as the ultimate authority in religion. 3) a belief in reason rather than religion as a guiding principle in life. 4) the principle or practice of using reasoning and calculation as the basis for analysis, a course of action, etc. From The Canadian Oxford Dictionary (Toronto: Oxford University Press Canada, 2000): 848.

Ferguson, Remaking Liberalism, 237-238.
Obviously, this new form of liberalism contradicts several key points of the “classic” liberalism discussed earlier. If accepted, these contradictory points de-stabilize the foundation of the classic liberal order and open the way for sweeping changes in the structure of the state and its relationship with individuals and society. First of all, the “extension of rights” to include “equal participation and fulfillment” in the social, economic as well as political realms necessitates unacceptable restrictions—to classic liberals—on individual freedoms that violate the social contract—based on inviolable laws of nature—that has at its heart the autonomous moral individual. Any intrusion into the rights of individuals in the social or economic realm would not only restrict political freedoms—through regulation of activities—but would violate the sacrosanct cornerstone of classic liberalism, private property, resulting in unknown appropriation of property—taxation—in the name of an alternative code of rights based on an alternative code of natural law. Even worse, this intrusion into the economic realm would slow or halt the teleological forces of progress driven by the invisible hand of the free market. Ferguson hints at modern liberalism’s alternative code of natural law when he says the expansion of rights was “supported by new economic theory,” by which he means theories of political economy influenced by the new social sciences.42 The social sciences either reject the invisible hand theory or place it within the context of several other socio-economic “forces” that create or enforce inequality. Instead of the capitalist economy being seen as the sole source of material, technological and, ultimately, moral progress, it is seen as a potential enemy of true progress, which is redefined along egalitarian and democratic principles of social welfare.43 To be more clear, capitalism tended to increase the total wealth of society—which was good—but not its

42 Ferguson plays down the role of social science, emphasizing the role of liberal political economic thought. I think it is impossible to separate the two streams of thought at this late point in time, with one influencing the other, and vice versa.
43 As mentioned before, in classic liberalism Christianity played an integral role in defining what moral progress constituted.
equal distribution, which had become the new definition of social progress. The social contract now included the right to a "fair" slice of the economic pie, as well as the classic code of rights that guaranteed individual political freedoms under a code of civil law. The discovery by social science of negative socio-economic forces that prevented equality of opportunity allowed for the re-orientation of liberalism towards democratic principles, most of important being that "the people" collectively "own" society, thus the state must be redefined to become "the agent of redistribution" as well as protector of civil liberties. Ferguson further elaborates, describing the goal of modern liberalism: "What they did do was to make the perpetuation of the market subordinate to the well-being of the individual, and they conceived the rights of each as attendant upon the rights of all. ... The new liberalism was an argument for the provision of equal conditions for all men and women and the extension of the measure of well-being to include the totality of social, economic, and political life."

These crucial shifts in the conception of individual rights, private property, and the role of the state are the cornerstones of modern liberal thought. If we move from the general to the specific, the story of the rise of modern liberalism becomes immensely complicated. There was no smooth transition, nor was the outcome ever certain, or absolute; the battles for intellectual legitimacy—required for ideological supremacy—were confused and sometimes fierce. Most of all, the 'battles' were in reality exchanges of ideas between individuals who shared an intellectual community within the framework of Canadian political culture; these communities ranged from university classrooms to debates in parliament, from bourgeois dinner parties to picket lines and newspaper editorials. Most importantly, very few actors were 'pure,' hard-line

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44 Modern liberalism differs in important ways from social democracy, though there are similarities in their analysis of society and in their definitions of progress. More will be said on this in Chapter 2. These similarities arise, I believe, from their shared social science mentalité or 'way of seeing' the world.

45 Though it should be emphasized that, like all forms of liberalism, the basic features of modern liberalism admit for a great variety of philosophical positions. As we shall see, Trudeau's version was but one possible configuration out of the innumerable possible forms.
modern liberals, social scientists, classic liberals or progressive Christians; they were usually some combination of these, as well as other,\textsuperscript{46} different schools of thought.\textsuperscript{47}

In Doug Owram’s, \textit{Government Generation}, and Barry Ferguson’s, \textit{Remaking Liberalism}, we are given detailed, expansive analytic descriptions of the careers of the key “social science experts” (or “liberal political economists”) largely responsible for the rise of modern liberalism and the creation of the welfare state during and after World War Two. The focus of both authors is on the conversations and debates that ranged around the issue of the “interventionist” (or “positive”) state, how that state would practically function, and the social, moral, and political goals of that new state.\textsuperscript{48} The story Owram tells is of the gradual infiltration of the state by a small, interwoven community of social science experts who slowly but increasingly pressed forward their agenda of reform—based on theories of macro-economic management—that ultimately led to the creation of the welfare state. According to Owram, the social science intellectuals became more and more focussed on questions of economic management of the state, and less and less on its purpose, signalling the rising hegemony of modern liberalism: “The expert had triumphed in Ottawa. Having managed the war with such success he had convinced the government that he could manage the post-war world as well.”\textsuperscript{49}

Owram further argues that the new intellectuals successfully tied economic management to

\textsuperscript{46} For example, Socialist thought.

\textsuperscript{47} Owram similarly argues: “For the reformers of the time, and often those since, there has been a tendency to portray the debate as a clear-cut one between the forces of light and reason, that is advocates of the positive state, and those of reactionary darkness, the proponents of laissez-faire. ... For Canada [this] is completely inappropriate. In fact, the Canadian intellectual scene was especially complex and must be pictured as a three-cornered debate. Traditional values of British Victorian liberalism competed with the dominant idealist philosophy of the late nineteenth century. Also present was a new interventionist liberalism that rested on a socio-mechanistic view of the state. What made the debate all the more confusing is that ... the philosophical lines were rarely neatly drawn. Intellectual trained in the Canadian system in the years around 1900 were likely to have admiration for the constitutional liberalism and philosophical idealism and, with the rise of the social sciences, faith in the empirical method. ... After the First World War, of course, modern technocratic liberalism assumed a dominant position within the intellectual community. Economic circumstances dictated that traditional laissez-faire liberalisms abandoned.” (\textit{Government Generation}, p. 330.)

\textsuperscript{48} The different terms here evidence the bias of classic versus modern liberals regarding the expanded state, one being a negative description, the other positive.

\textsuperscript{49} Owram, \textit{Government Generation}, 317.
social welfare, giving their social science theories a powerful legitimacy. In essence, a properly managed economy would cause uninterrupted economic expansion in part fuelled by the redistribution of wealth through social welfare. In other words, the welfare state driven by macro-economic theory would, as a by-product, eliminate social and economic inequality. Thus, social science theory and contemporary liberal thought had successfully merged, the former providing the means, and the latter providing the ends, of the modern liberal project. Ferguson disagrees with Owram’s emphasis on the social science aspect of the political thought of the new intellectuals; he argues that the debate over the ultimate purpose and direction of the state was primary, and in this sense, dominated by ideas of political economy found in contemporary liberal thought. It is a fair criticism that shifts the emphasis if not the essential features of the debate, and which reinforces my own argument: that social science merged with liberal thought to create modern Canadian liberalism.

To be clear, the end of the Second World War did not see the triumph of the modern over the classic liberals: at best, they achieved a draw. The partial, incomplete creation of the welfare state reflected the continuing power of the classic liberals, who still held the political edge, constituting the powerful traditional elite within the party, best symbolized by the presence of C.D. Howe, the “minister of everything” during the King and St. Laurent regimes. The compromise position negotiated by the modern liberals, and aided by political circumstance,

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50 Ibid., 285-319.
51 Ferguson, Remaking Liberalism, 240-246.
52 As argued by Owram, by the end of the second world war the impact of the new social science intellectuals had been felt by all three of the major political parties, signalling a growing consensus in Canadian political culture, not just in the ‘Liberal’ Party. In fact, the Liberal Party under MacKenzie King was arguably more reticent than the new Progressive Conservative Party. The old guard classic liberals were still a powerful—even decisive—force that resisted the reforms of the new modern liberals within the Party. This is not terribly surprising when one considers that the Liberals had been the government party for most of the 20th century and thus had attracted the support and influence of powerful corporate interests who were concerned primarily with the maintenance of their own considerable economic-political power, which was entirely maintained by the classic liberal order of individualism, private property, and free market capitalism.
53 The Second World War placed the social science experts in a powerful position in the government, as they were relied upon to create and run a state during total war. This necessitated the complete control of the economy by the state, including state-run war factories. The success of their management of the war economy lent weight to their
was state management of the economy—through economic ‘levers,’ like control of interest rates—but only partial implementation of welfare policies. For economists, who saw the two as integrally linked, this compromise impeded the potential of social and economic progress. For the classic liberals, this compromise was acceptable, especially since the managed economy entered a period of uninterrupted expansion, in practice making capitalism more effective, thus maintaining and even improving their power, without having to give up too much in the way of taxes or individual autonomy.

In her book, *Planners and Politicians*, P.E. Bryden picks up the story where Owram and Ferguson left off, shifting focus from the modern liberal intellectuals to the Liberal Party of 1957-1968. For Bryden, the modern liberals are the young “planners” of the party, who battle with the Liberal establishment for direction of policy. The reticence of MacKenzie King and Louis St. Laurent to fully adopt the arguments of the modern liberals for fear of upsetting the power “old guard” of the party—the classic liberals—continues under the watch of Lester Pearson, who, though part of the modern liberal elite of the 1940s, acts as a diplomat between the two wings of the party. The “planners” of the party were a new generation of modern liberals who wanted to complete the project started by their predecessors, and, in fact, take it a step further. Pearson’s attempts to democratize the party to foster new ideas and attract support for a party fallen on hard times resulted in a number of radical modern liberals joining the party and pushing the agenda of reform—including among them, Pierre Trudeau. Their success at controlling policy formation appeared to give them the upper hand against the party elite, as the electoral victories, based partly on that platform, gave democratic legitimacy to their cause, resulting in the tentative creation of the Canada Pension Plan in 1965 and Medicare in 1967-68.

arguments for management of the economy during times of peace directed toward economic expansion and social justice.

55 Ibid., 168.
But resistance within the government and the Party to the modern liberal agenda was still strong throughout the 1960s, forcing compromise whenever possible.

Only with the victory of Trudeau did the Liberal Party fall firmly to the control of the modern liberals; he was the first party leader to truly be one of them. Moreover, Trudeau was the first leader to speak the language of modern liberalism directly to the people, who were ready for his message after two turbulent decades of social, cultural, and political modernization and liberalization. This was the age of high-modernity,⁵⁶ when the future became the Promised Land, and the limits of the technological potential of science seemed boundless. ‘Trudeaumania’ can best be understood when placed within the context of the ‘progressive’—modern liberal—spirit of the high-modern 1960s: the obsession with the rationalized/scientific future and rejection of the irrational/traditional past; the cult of technology fuelled by television, jet planes, and the space race; the unprecedented wealth generated by the newly modernized state; the demographic bulge of baby-boomer ‘teenagers’ whose youthful drive and unprecedented leisure time allowed them to push the limits of modern, liberal behaviour and culture; the pressure-cooker atmosphere of anxiety and hope created by the cold war and nuclear arms proliferation; the sexual revolution caused by the birth-control pill and new liberal attitudes toward sex before marriage; the liberalization of race and gender social and political categories associated with the civil rights and women’s movements; the new future-oriented liberal form of Canadian nationalism that—combined with the excitement of super-modern Expo ’67 and the centennial anniversary of confederation—made the people ready, even eager, for a progressive, modern, charismatic leader who would guide them towards the potential of the new, ‘modern’ Canada.

⁵⁶ The high-modern period began around 1950 and ended around 1975. As the term suggests, this period was when faith in the promise of modernity hit its ‘highest’ point. Science, technology, progress, rationality; the Enlightenment project was finally unveiling its full promise, after so many decades of prodigious labour in its name and dissatisfaction with its results. After 1975, the “post-modern” or “late-modern” period began, in which massive problems associated with the modern world came under increased scrutiny, and resulted in widespread criticism of and disillusionment with the modern way of thinking.
Chapter II: Trudeau’s Political Philosophy

"Canadians have begun to experience a new involvement in the style as well as the practice of government. Trudeau did not initiate this. But it exploded in his presence." From Trudeau: A Man for Tomorrow\(^57\)

"It was if Canada had come of age, as if he himself single-handedly would catapult the country into the brilliant sunshine of the late 20\(^{th}\) century from the stagnant swamp of traditionalism and mediocrity in which Canadian politics had been down for years." From The Spectator, 1968.\(^58\)

A: Introduction

No prime minister has ignited the public imagination like Pierre Elliott Trudeau; and yet, no prime minister has been as misunderstood. A modern mythology consumed Trudeau in 1968, placing him as Prime Minister of a nation yearning for change. Trudeau himself believed in this mythology that, as The Spectator approvingly noted, preached the end of tradition and the beginning of the inevitable “sunshine” that beckoned in golden age of the late 20\(^{th}\) century. Trudeau was truly “A Man for Tomorrow.” But Trudeau did not start something new; he was a product of his times, the next chapter in the story of modern liberalism. Then again, he was no ordinary modern liberal; he was a high priest of the new order, a true believer and outspoken proponent of the a new secular faith.

Trudeau was part of a new generation of intellectuals schooled during the 1940s and 50s, when the experience of the Second World War was still fresh and intellectuals earnestly debated what the new world should and would be like. With the cold war not yet fully under way, the late 1940s saw the merits of liberalism and socialism debated freely and fluidly. As Trudeau says in his Memoirs, “We were witnesses on an almost daily basis to the spread of communism in Europe. Young people, in particular, were truly fascinated by the Soviet model….And the beauty of the intellectual climate in Paris was that all the tendencies of contemporary political thought were articulated by worthy spokesmen—the Christian left, the worker priests, and proponents of orthodox Marxism as much as Catholic integrisme, the existentialism of Jean-Paul

\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 187.
Sartre, and pure liberalism.59 In Paris, London, and at Harvard in the United States, Trudeau studied political economy under well known economists and political scientists, such as Joseph Schumpeter and Harold Laski, and was exposed to an array of existing thought that merged into his own particular personal philosophy, which he spent the next 32 years articulating, first in writing and then in action.60 As Trudeau himself confirms:

No doubt because the last months of my life that were dedicated entirely to studying were spent at the London School of Economic, it was there that everything I had learned until then of law, economics, political science, and political philosophy came together for me. My reflections as a student, undertaken at Harvard, Paris, and London, reached their conclusion at [the London School of Economics]. When I left this institution, my fundamental choices had been made. I was to acquire more knowledge and to encounter countless options throughout my life. But my basic philosophy was established from that time on, and it was on those premises that I based all my future political decisions; it was that philosophy that underlay all my writings.61

I hope to shed light on a few of the major components of Trudeau’s political philosophy, to explain what makes it peculiar to, and what makes it typical of, modern liberal thought. Above all, we must think of his philosophy as a continuation and extension of the trends in modern liberalism outlined in the previous section. And, as a close second, we must keep in mind that he was raised a bilingual Montreal Quebecer, and that he wrote all his essays in the political and intellectual climate of Quebec in the 1950s—under the disdained conservative nationalist Duplessis—and 1960s—during the “Quiet Revolution” and the rise of the equally derided modern “Quebecois” nationalists. The first section will delve into Trudeau’s modern liberal roots, and look at his close affinity to the rationalist, socially oriented liberalism of John Stuart Mill. Part Two will look at the moral foundations of his liberal ideology, including his Christian and Personalist influences, and his vision of the “Just Society.” Part three examines Trudeau’s scientific outlook, including his understanding of history as the rational unfolding of universal truths, his belief in the necessity of a high-modern, scientific state, and his Schumpeterian views on the inevitable demise of capitalism. Altogether, we will have a clear conception of what exactly Trudeau’s ideology entailed, and how it conformed with and differed

59 Pierre Trudeau, Memoirs (Toronto 1993): 44.
60 Ibid., 39-48.
61 Ibid., 47.
from that of the normative modern liberalism outlined in chapter one. In the end, we will have a picture of radical modern liberalism, a Canadian manifestation of high modernity.

B: The Engine of Progress: Liberalism as Rational Process of Critique

From reviewing Trudeau's philosophy, it is apparent from quotations he used, influences he mentioned in his writings and comments he made in interviews, that he was well versed in the major literature of his time in political economy, social science, theology and law. At heart, Trudeau was a liberal, and he appears to have most admired 19th century English liberals like Lord Acton, T.H. Green, and John Stuart Mill. Lord Acton and T.H. Green he admired as forerunners of personalism, a philosophy on which I will comment further. Mill, on the other hand, animates Trudeau’s manner of thought and methods of social action. The parallels between Trudeau’s intellectual life—in writing and in action—and Mill’s are striking, indicating a deep affinity for the 19th century liberal—an internalized adoption of his way of thinking. For one, Mill was an advocate of public intellectual work:

Mill was a strong believer in as well as practitioner of “higher journalism,” which could serve as a pretty good description of most public-intellectual work today. Often the public intellectual is someone who has established a scholarly reputation that gives his or her public-intellectual work credibility and enables the advancement of ideas that would be rejected out of hand from someone who lacked such a reputation. And so it was in Mill’s case. ... Mill received a respectful though critical hearing for views that were radical and even heretical at the time and might have been dismissed as crackpot had he not been so respected for his scholarly contributions.

In one particularly telling example, Trudeau critiques nationalist thinking as woefully deficient in the fields of knowledge he himself was familiar with: “To judge by their writings, we may say without exaggeration that until very recently they knew nothing of universal legal thought, from Duguit to Pound; nothing of sociology from Durkheim to Gurvitch; nothing of economics, from Walras to Keynes; nothing of political science, from Bosanquet to Laski; nothing of psychology, from Freud to Piaget; nothing of pedagogy, from Dewey to Ferriere. They filled in these gaps in their social thought with a set of ideas which they called the social doctrine of the Church.” (Trudeau, The Asbestos Strike, [Toronto 1970]: 12-13.)

Trudeau admired Lord Acton both for his Catholic commitment to liberalism and his stridently anti-nationalist views. Both sides of Lord Acton’s philosophy were important to Trudeau, though Acton’s pre-personalist, catholic liberalism has been largely ignored while his anti-nationalist influence has been commented on repeatedly. Trudeau’s frequent quotation of Lord Acton in anti-nationalist essays, and general avoidance of religious topics, was, I believe, the main reason for this.

The lives of Mill and Trudeau fit this description exactly, with Trudeau being among the most productive and influential public intellectual of the 1950s and early 1960s. Trudeau’s writings were aided by an established reputation as a respected academic, the most important work being his introduction and epilogue to *The Asbestos Strike* in 1956. Based on this reputation, Trudeau’s “radical and even heretical” essays were met with the respect, if not necessarily approval, of intellectuals in Quebec at the time. His arguments were, without a doubt, purposely written to antagonize the political and intellectual establishment of the government and the universities of 1950s Quebec.

Even more striking are Mill and Trudeau’s shared views on the subject of public opinion. Mill believed that the structure of government was of little concern as a source of intellectual and political oppression. Public opinion was the real threat to free thought; as Mill said: “It is desirable, in order to break through that tyranny, that people should be eccentric...that so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time.” Public opinion “leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, enslaving the soul itself.”

Public opinion is, as Mill says, the “mental slavery” of society. Trudeau had the exact same opinion:

In Canada, and this includes Quebec, we have never known tyranny except in its figurative forms, for example the tyranny of public opinion. ... public opinion seeks to impose its domination over everything. Its aim is to reduce all action, all thought, and all feeling to a common denominator. It forbids independence and kills inventiveness; condemns those who ignore it and banishes those who oppose it. ... I early realized that ideological systems are the true enemies of freedom. On the politic front, accepted opinions are not only inhibiting to the mind, they contain the very source of error. When a political ideology is universally accepted by the elite, when the people who 'define situations' embrace and venerate it, this means that it is high time free men were fighting it. There is thus the danger that mass media—to the extent that they claim to reflect public opinion—constituted a vehicle of error, if not

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66 This point is debatable, especially for the 1960s, with authors such as his philosophical opposite, George Grant, rising to prominence.
67 Trudeau attended a high-profile academic conference on economics in the Soviet Union in 1952. He was president of the Canadian Bar Association for a period in the 1960s, which certainly influenced his appointment as Minister of Justice in 1966, and won the Governor General award for best scholarly paper in 1959 for an article titled “Some Obstacles to Democracy in Quebec,” from the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. XXIV, No. 3 (August 1958).
68 Trudeau was barred from being appointed to professorships no less than three times during the 1950s, despite his exceptional credentials as both an economist and a lawyer.
indeed an instrument of oppression. For my part, I have never been able to read newspapers without a sense of uneasiness, especially newspapers of opinion. They follow their customers and are therefore always lagging behind reality. 71

Both authors were basically satisfied with the political systems they inhabited; Trudeau in particular was famous for his defence of the Canadian Federal system in the face of Quebecois nationalists. 72 For him, the threat to freedom lay in the oppressive intellectual climate of Quebec in the 1950s, for which he spared no scorn in his writing:

In Quebec, during the first half of the twentieth century, our social thinking was so idealistic, so a priori, so divorced from reality, in sum so futile, that it was hardly ever able to find expression in living and dynamic institutions. By isolating some aspects of this thought, we may show the reader just how little ... people were prepared to accept, interpret, and influence realities in this highly industrialized province. In my analysis, I attach little importance to the few circles where liberal and realistic thought existed on the fringes of our monolithic ideology, as I call it. 73

The ‘monolithic ideology’ he mentions was the oppressive ideological doctrine of ‘public opinion’ among Quebec’s political and intellectual elite during and before the 1950s, which he fought against—through his ‘free’ liberal and ‘realistic’ social science thinking—as a public intellectual.

Trudeau’s likeness to Mill goes beyond the similarities of their careers as public intellectuals. His way of thinking was at heart the same as Mill’s: he was a rationalist modern liberal whose conception of the individual was grounded in the social realm. A good liberal intellectual, for Mill and Trudeau, was a public intellectual who fought against the oppressive dogmatism and prejudice of public opinion. Liberal progress, they believed, arose through the public challenge of social and cultural values: “I believe that the way to progress is the free challenge of ideas and confrontation of values... the challenge is to have all these values

71 Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians (Toronto 1968): xxii. Examples like this abound in his writings for Cité Libre during the 1950s.
72 See: Trudeau’s “Quebec and the Constitutional Crisis” and “The Practice and Theory of Federalism” in Federalism and the French Canadians. When Trudeau entered federal politics his motivation was to prevent the provincial government was gaining too much power and thus upsetting the balance of the federal system. By entering federal politics he hoped to help maintain that balance. Also, Trudeau argued for provincial rights in the 1950s, supporting the Duplessis government on its position against the federal government on the issues of federal grants to universities, as he believed that this arrangement violated provincial powers as set out in the BNA act and other constitutional legislation. For Trudeau, the Canadian federal-provincial system was close to ideal; his aim was the maintenance of the status quo.
challenge each other in terms of excellence, and it is this challenge which permits a society to
develop on the basis of excellence." Public opinion has the capacity and tendency to create
and enforce ideologies of inequality and, ultimately, injustice; free thought and free speech are
undermined, as is the moral autonomy of the individual. The "mental slavery" of public opinion
was an oppressive source of injustice in the same way that political and economic repressions
were in the 17th and 18th centuries, at the time of the classic liberal writers. Liberation from
social as well as political and economic oppression is the fundamental distinguishing
characteristic that defines modern versus classic liberals; and from this distinction a whole new
world of possibilities opens up for both sources of injustice and potential strategies of battling
them.

Most importantly, the rational individual's field of vision is extended. Modern
liberalism's totalizing social vision opens new areas of human experience—to rational critique and
potential reform. The protective 'private' freedoms that exist in the classic liberal vision are
circumscribed by the competing system of modern liberal 'public' freedoms of social and
economic inequality. The traditional regulators of social experience—the churches, traditional
codes of behaviour and morality (cultural norms), feudal and modern national bonds of
community allegiance (nationalism, imperialism)—are, at least potentially, replaced as arbiters
of thought and behaviour. As is well known, the state expanded to become the new regulator of
social practice, replacing 'backwards' and 'outmoded' traditional ideas of 'correct' or 'good'
behaviour with modern liberal ones; the new state institutions were legitimised and sanctified by
political legislation and legal codes.75

The Quiet Revolution in Quebec famously demonstrates a particularly accelerated and
thus magnified transfer of power between classic liberals and modern ones; the massive changes

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75 Trudeau himself as Minister of Justice in 1967 enacted the most famous legal change when divorce and sodomy
were legalized.
in official political ideology—and, as a result, in the form and function of the state—clearly demonstrate the different socio-political vision of the modern liberals. The election of Jean Lesage in 1960 saw, within six years, the dismantling of a classic liberal state and the creation of a modern one: the church lost control over public schooling (which furthermore was massively expanded, its curriculum made secular and scientific, especially in regards to post-secondary education) and its position as regulator of public morality; economic ministries were created or expanded to give the state direct influence and/or control over the economic development of the province (for example, Hydro-Québec); and new ministries of welfare (social development) and culture were created to engage issues of ‘social inequality.’ The state became the new locus of identity, replacing the church and traditional ‘French-Canadian’ nation of the Duplessis era and before. Due to the particularly heated political and intellectual environment of the 1950s and 1960s in Quebec, the rhetoric of those involved was exaggerated and idealized, with the victors loudly proclaiming not just the righteousness of their victory, but its inevitability, as dictated by their teleological, modern liberal vision of progress.\textsuperscript{76} The mythology that surrounds that time period was created by the modern liberal intellectuals—Trudeau being but one, particularly vociferous example—whose newly gained political dominance required a sustained effort of legitimizing propaganda to ensure the powerful vision of the classic liberals—and their conservative, religious-nationalist ideology—not be allowed to resurface in any significant

\textsuperscript{76} Claude Couture critiques the modernist vision of Trudeau in particular, but also by extension other modern liberals like Lucien Bouchard who were Trudeau’s political enemies in later years once modern liberal hegemony had been firmly established. See: Claude Couture, \textit{Paddling with the Current}, 1-25; 104-105. The political battles between ‘federalists’ and ‘separatists’ that have occurred since the ‘Quiet Revolution’ are nothing more than squabbles within the modern liberal family; the separatists wanted a modern liberal state all to themselves, and the federalists wanted to stay in the existing Canadian one. The Duplessis era and the time before was referred to as the “Dark Ages” and the modern future as the enfolding of a “golden era.” For Trudeau especially the “pre-modern” period before 1960 was an age of emotion or unreason, as opposed to the modern world of reason, rationality, and the unveiling of the light. Trudeau thought in this way while writing his memoirs in the early 1990s; when talking of his time teaching law in the early 1960s, he remembers, “I was also distressed by the attitude of certain students to whom I was teaching public law, young people who didn’t even seem to be aware that we had barely emerged from a prolonged Great Darkness.” (Trudeau, \textit{Memoirs}, 74.) Couture convincingly argues that this way of conceiving of Quebec is simplistic. Quebec under Duplessis was never ‘monolithic,’ and there certainly wasn’t a dividing line between modern and pre-modern—then the two coexisted before and after 1960.
The rapid replacement of the church institutions by secular ones vividly portrays this shift in political and intellectual ideological power. The modernization of Quebec during the Quiet Revolution represents the final product of the logic and vision of modern liberalism.

At the forefront of the radical modern liberals—and as co-founder of their most radical journal, *Cité Libre*—Trudeau exemplified the modern liberal “attitude.” And, in essence, this vision was that of Mill’s socially-embedded rational individual. “Monolithic” systems of thought (ideologies) were the enemy of “free” men. Free men were above ideology, they were rational individuals in touch with social reality and able to use ideologies as pragmatic tools: “I would not hesitate to follow any policy... whether other people call it socialist, capitalist, or free enterprise or anything else” so long as it “can solve a given problem without destroying the basic beliefs which I have in man, in freedom and in democracy.” And in 1975, he strongly restated his position; he didn’t believe in “the absolute liberal state,” he approaches liberalism “not as a doctrine. It is not something you apply. Liberalism is a way of thinking.” Trudeau placed his liberal way of thinking above other “ideologies,” for liberalism was rational—ideology-free—, able to utilize various ‘ideological’ ideas if practically useful, discarding them when they no

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77 The power of the old vision’s mythology proves itself in the creation of modern Quebecois nationalism, which fills the cultural void left by modern liberalism’s sterile cultural and spiritual vision.

78 In English Canada, the shift was more gradual, more like a ‘Quiet Evolution’ than a revolution, but with similar results as Quebec, with religion becoming far less important, almost disappearing from the public sphere, and the old English Canadian nationalism, based on British Imperialism, almost completely vanishing, to be replaced by a new ‘Canadian’ nationalism, based on the idea of a multiculturalism, official bilingualism, and other modern liberal ideas of tolerance and equality—i.e. the ‘caring’ welfare state, and inclusion of minorities in the framework of justice.

79 For a brief time Quebec was politically more modern and more liberal than the federal government, at least until Trudeau exported himself to the federal Liberal Party as part of ‘balancing’ strategy to maintain the federal-provincial power structure by, in essence, making Canada as modern and liberal as Quebec suddenly was. As noted in the previous chapter, powerful classic liberal forces were tempering the drive of the modern liberal radicals in the Liberal Party, preventing them from ‘finishing the job.’ Thus, the federal government was, at most, a bit ‘behind’ Quebec, whereas in the late 1940s and 1950s Ottawa had been the frontrunner, the source of inspiration for the radical modern liberals in Quebec—including Trudeau, who worked in the Privy Council for two years (1950-52), and the leader of the Quebec Liberal Party during the Quiet Revolution, Jean Lesage, who had been a cabinet minister under Louis St. Laurent.

80 Couture argues we should not conceive of modernity as a definite historical reality, but as an attitude, since a truly modern society has never in fact existed. I agree with this terminology as I see modernity as a ‘way of seeing and thinking,’ constructed from a variety of discourses particular to the ‘modern’ world, for example Science, Rationality and Liberalism.


82 Ibid., 101.
longer provided the desired results, or if they endangered fundamental liberal freedoms. For Trudeau, his liberal way of thinking constituted the only one that was truly rational, and thus truly practical.

However, this form of practical liberalism was, as he said himself, embedded on a foundation of beliefs concerning man, freedom, and democracy. This adds up to a foundation of ideological liberal truths: 1) the pre-eminent existence of the “rational individual;” 2) that “reason”—that is, objective rationalism—provides access to truth or, properly, exposes untruth; and 3) that the individual is the locus of morality—the conduit to or home of Truth or the Good. In effect, we have uncovered a ‘way of thinking’ that has the process of rational critique as its crux, and, as a consequence, has an exclusive claim to truth. But this exclusive claim to objective rationalism cannot be understood without the pre-existing, morally absolute, definitions of the individual. Like most liberals, Trudeau claimed to be beyond ideology, but he most emphatically was not.

C: The Moral Foundations of the Just Society

Trudeau grounded his liberal vision in a Christian universe. Though he very rarely mentioned his religious beliefs, and his relentless attacks on ‘traditionalism’ in Quebec usually implied—albeit indirectly—the Catholic Church, there is no doubt that he was a practicing Catholic. Trudeau exposed the Christian basis of his liberalism most explicitly, but still in a roundabout way, in a series of essays he wrote for VRAI magazine in 1957, which were designed to explain the philosophical basis of his political arguments: “Authority, philosophically speaking, comes from God or from the nature of things, since God has created man with a nature that compels him to live in society: subject, that is, to politics. ... Men stay

83 These three liberal ‘truths,’ interestingly enough, are also found in classic liberalism, and indeed are in large part what distinguish Trudeau as a liberal instead of a social democrat, of which he was often accused during his political career.
free because *no one* is fully vested by God or nature with authority to rule his fellows.”

Trudeau clearly states that ‘God created man with a nature that compels him to live in society,’ placing God as the ultimate source of moral authority. He restates this in the following paragraph: “Liberty is a free gift—a birthright, which distinguishes man from beast.”

God invested men with equal moral authority; “no one” person has greater authority than any other. Logically, it follows that, on this basis of moral equality, all men are equally “free” in their individual political power. From these presuppositions, Trudeau argues that only democracy entails a morally legitimate form of politics, since it is based on *voluntary* submission to authority: “For the only good action, of real moral value, is a voluntary action, chosen by the enlightened thinking of the person who performs it.” And further, “Democracy is superior to other political systems, as I have explained, because it solicits the express agreement of the people and thus avoids the necessity of violent changes [to ensure individual liberties, like in the French Revolution]. At each election, in fact, the people assert their liberty by deciding what government they will consent to obey.” In other words, democracy is legitimate because it respects and derives its authority from the God-given morality latent in every individual citizen.

Trudeau’s democratic liberalism was *not* separate from his religious beliefs; it was founded on them.

Trudeau goes further, arguing that key tenets of Christianity can only be fully realized in a liberal framework:

> Sermons and worthy books are always talking of respect for the human personality and of the inviolability of conscience. In the context of our Christian civilization, those phrases have no meaning unless all men are regarded

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85 Ibid., 48.
86 To avoid any confusion, Trudeau used the out of date terms ‘man’ and ‘men’ in the way we use ‘human’ now; that is, in the current universal sense, which includes women for one and non-whites for another.
87 Ibid., 36.
88 Ibid., 77.
89 The classic liberal proposition that free men are autonomous because they hold property over themselves is echoed here, though Trudeau’s formulation is explicitly universal, unlike many classic liberals: Originally, only white English men who owned a specified amount of property (i.e. upper class or bourgeois) qualified as full persons (i.e. free individuals) who could fully participate in the democratic system in place.
as fundamentally free and equal, each man being of infinite value in himself, bound only by his own conscience; from which it must follow that neither authority nor obedience ought to be taken for granted. If my father, my priest, or my king want to exert authority over me, if he wants to give me orders, he has to be able to explain, in a way that satisfies my reason, on what grounds he must command and I must obey.\footnote{Ibid., 27.}

Only liberalism respects and gives political expression to the Christian individual’s “inviolability of conscience,” for only liberals conceive of the individual as “fundamentally free and equal.” Liberal politics and Christian doctrine are brothers-in-arms, mutually reinforcing and, indeed, philosophically necessary for a coherent vision of political morality. Without civil freedoms the Christian person cannot be guaranteed that his inviolability of conscience will be respected; and without the legitimacy of Christianity, the liberal individual cannot be conceived as possessing “infinite value” as a moral entity, the basis of liberal fundamental freedoms. In Trudeau’s formulation, liberal democracy was the logical political expression of Christianity.\footnote{Trudeau, \textit{Memoirs}, 40.}

Trudeau’s liberalism went beyond the liberalism-as-rational-process of Mill; for all his emphasis on rational thought, Trudeau held a moral commitment to social justice and social responsibility. This commitment arose from his “adherence to personalism:”

It was [in France] that I became a follower of personalism, a philosophy that reconciles the individual and society. The person, according to [Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier], is the individual enriched with a social conscience, integrated into the life of the communities around him and the economic context of his time, both of which must in turn give persons the means to exercise their freedom of choice. It was thus that the fundamental notion of justice came to stand alongside that of freedom in my political thought.\footnote{Though be no means certain, it appears that Trudeau was influenced by Lord Acton on this point, as he had a similar commitment of liberalism and Catholicism that necessitated free-thought as part of Christian faith.}

In personalism we find a key revision to the liberal concept of the individual that fundamentally contradicts classic liberal principles. For, essentially, we find a denial of self-interest as the motivator of individual rational thought. Instead, individual rational thought is motivated by a sense of social responsibility, guided by social conscience towards the common good, towards social justice. As Trudeau implied here, social justice meant \textit{ensuring} the social and economic contexts allowed individuals “freedom of choice.”
Trudeau’s transformation of the category of the individual from self-interested rational entity to that of a socially-interested rational person marks his principle deviation and contribution to the developing character of modern Canadian liberal thought. It is what gives current modern liberalism its moral tinge, the idea of Canadian society being more caring than, as is often said, the individualistic society to the south.\textsuperscript{93} The concept of the “person” as espoused by Trudeau’s personalist influences thus requires a little fleshing out. A historian of personalism, Kevin Schmiesing, summarizes personalism’s general characteristic as follows:

Several general points might be proposed as key characteristics of the personalist approach. First, the human person is taken as the starting point of philosophy (this in contradistinction, for example, to \textit{a priori} truths or empirical scientific facts). Second, the fundamental structure of the human person is perceived as a combination of matter and spirit (this opens most personalists to the possibility of transcendence). Third, the person is conceived not as an atomistic individual, but as a being whose nature implies community (often described as “intersubjectivity”). ... Personalism is not a philosophical system at all ... it is more an attitude that branches out into nuanced perspectives, bound together by one central idea ... affirmation of the absolute value of the human person\textsuperscript{94}

Trudeau’s defence of individual freedom gains a deeper complexion of meaning placed within the personalist context. Firstly, above all else, the human person’s existence as an absolute value requires all ideas and philosophies concerning human society must respect this fundamental fact; liberalism provides one adequate system of defence for the person’s existential integrity. Secondly, in contrast to classic liberalism, the individual cannot be separated from the community as an atomistic classic liberal individual—that is, society as a mere collection of individuals—but rather as a radical version of Mill’s modern liberal individual, extending the boundaries of social interaction to all aspects of social, economic and cultural activity. Thirdly, we can see proper avenues for fusion between liberalism and religion—in the person as “combination of matter and spirit,” both in individual personal and by extension interpersonal (cultural community) values. In practice, personalists in France were often ‘worker-priests,’ usually confused with pure socialists, but inappropriately so considering their continued

\textsuperscript{93} Editorialists often call this attitude ‘Canadian moral smugness.’
commitment to Christianity, anathema to materialistic, atheistic socialists. Biographers of Trudeau, Clarkson and McCall, noted that personalists were a force in Quebec, and that Trudeau himself had a full conversion experience to the movement. His involvement in social and political activism from that time on (1950) were equivalent to the efforts of French worker-priests: he was driven by a sense of Christian mission—a quasi-evangelical impulse—to save and convert his Quebec brethren from injustice. Furthermore, Cité Libre was begun as a personalist journal, founded by committed followers of the religious philosophy—including Trudeau—and modelled after the famous and influential French personalist journal, *Esprit.* Trudeau’s political quest to create a just society was motivated by deep religious feeling, drawn from his Catholic beliefs and his intellectual-spiritual commitment to personalism.

Overall, the combination of personalism and liberalism reinforced Trudeau’s liberal-rationalist and religious-personalist moral claims to be above ideology: by being grounded in historical realities—the absolute value of the transcendental person and his social contexts—his liberal way of thinking was necessarily superior. But, as has been argued, this notion of liberalism—and now personalism—as being beyond ideology was false, and a key attribute of any ideology.

Trudeau’s specific personalist influences offered particular ideas that added more concretely to his developing vision. The two dominant personalist thinkers of the time, and the main contributors to *Esprit,* Jacques Mauritain and Emmanuel Mounier, appealed strongly to Trudeau, as noted earlier from his *Memoirs.* Schmiesing summarized the key aspects to their personalist philosophy:

Maritain, with Mounier, saw the concept of person as the antidote to excessive individualism. ... Maritain, like Mounier, "articulated his philosophy in opposition to individualism and collectivism." Maritain's stress on an "integral humanism," and Mounier's similar stress on "personalism" led them to reject the "bourgeois individualism" and the socialist collectivism that they saw as the major political systems vying for dominance of Europe during the

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95 Stephen Clarkson and Kristina McCall, *Trudeau and Our Times,* vol. 1, 55-56.
96 Ibid., 58-67.
97 Ibid.
interwar period. ... Both were convinced that contemporary civilization was in crisis and a new humanism was necessary. Both hoped, moreover, for a "new Christian order of civilization."

These positions are virtually identical to those outlined by Trudeau. Vehemently against both the “bourgeois individualism”—classic liberalism—that had created so much social injustice in Quebec and the “socialist collectivism” of the Quebecois nationalists that denied universal liberal values, Trudeau’s analysis of history and society was, as we shall see, remarkably similar to that of Maritain and Mounier.

Furthermore, Trudeau’s vision of the “just society” presented the powerful, appealing, and new form of humanism called for by the Personalists, but offered within the more acceptable modern liberal package. With the addition of personalist quasi-secular morality, the utopian vision of modern liberalism—individual freedom combined with socio-economic equality—became Trudeau’s Just Society. The protection of individual freedoms remained, but the egalitarian aspect of utopia was reformed from the simple redistribution of wealth to a more positive future of never ending progress towards social justice. Trudeau states:

To remain free, then, citizens must seek their welfare in a social order that is just to the largest number; in practice only the majority has the power to make and unmake governments. It follows that men can live free and at peace only if their society is just.

Society needed to become a servant of the public good, and to do this, the forces of injustice—inequality—needed to become forces of justice—equality. Capitalism, for example, needed to be reformed to become a source of opportunity for everyone, or it needed to be abandoned for a

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58 Schmiesing, A History of Personalism.
59 Trudeau’s conflict with modern Quebecois nationalists is too well known to go over in detail. His foremost critique of the nationalist position was its insistence on the need for a state to represent the Quebecois nation. This violates Trudeau’s idea of a liberal state, which is made up of individual citizens, not nations. Furthermore, most of the cultural values of the Quebecois nationalists Trudeau disdained as ‘backward traditionalism,’ as values lacking universal relevance and thus relevance at all in the modern world. Philosopher John Heimstra summarized Trudeau’s views on the matter: “In the long term, as society progresses further, a culture should reduce its protection of particular values and become more open. ... All forms of protection should eventually be dropped except protection of individual freedoms.” (John Hiemstra, “Trudeau’s Political Philosophy: its implications for liberty and progress,” 19)
60 Humanism: 1) an outlook or system of thought concerned with human rather than divine or supernatural matters. 2) a belief or outlook emphasizing common human needs, seeking solely rational ways of solving human problems, and being concerned with humanity as responsible and progressive intellectual beings. From The Canadian Oxford Dictionary.
61 Trudeau, Approaches to Politics, 37.
system that would be more “just”. If the individual-person did not benefit from his social environment, or if some benefited more than others, then that social environment had to be changed. The state needed to become a positive force for equality: democracy demands the public good be served. The state had a duty to ensure the social environment benefited its individual citizens, and benefited them equally, or it should, and eventually would, be replaced. That, in short, is Trudeau’s moral vision of the Just Society.

D: Engineering the Just Society: Moulding Social Reality with the Scientific State

The creation of a Just Society demanded that unjust social realities be first acknowledged, and then transformed, from negative to positive forces in society. We have already established the reality of the rational-moral individual-person in Trudeau’s thought and of the embedded-ness of that person in society, but we have not satisfactorily explored what the social realities of society entailed, nor how they could be changed. It is in Trudeau’s conception of history as progress that the full implications of his conception of social reality become clear. Social science thinking provides Trudeau his conduit for understanding.

Trudeau’s conception of the Just Society arose from his understanding of history as progress towards liberty. For Trudeau, liberty included guarantees on individual autonomy and equality of socio-economic opportunity. And, the rational individual was the engine of progress. As one commentator put it, for Trudeau, “The individual is the fundamental starting point, goal, and mover of history.”

The rational modern liberal systematically scrutinizes and rejects false ideologies, driving history forward: Individualism, scepticism, rationalism, however, continued to undermine the traditional powers. And the day came when absolute monarchy, in its turn, was obliged to step aside to make way for the bourgeoisie, its ally of earlier days. But as the dynasties disappeared, there was already a new cohesive again at work to fill the vacuum and head off a weakening of the state: popular sovereignty, or democratic power.

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103 Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, 160.
His version of history was teleological; monarchy led to bourgeois democracy, which in turn led to popular democracy. Progress, it is assumed, will result in the perfected popular democracy demanded by the modern liberalism. Trudeau and his generation of modern liberals represented the next stage in the unveiling of human destiny; indeed, Canada was their experiment, which, if allowed to proceed, would become a model for 'backward' nations. As Trudeau said, "Canada could become the envied seat of a form of federalism that belongs to tomorrow's world ... Canadian federalism is an experiment of major proportions; it could become a brilliant prototype for the moulding of tomorrow's civilization."\textsuperscript{104} In a speech to the Liberal Party in 1968, Trudeau unveiled what that future Canada would be like:

The triumph of logic in politics over passion, the protection of individual freedom against the collective tyranny, and a just distribution of the national wealth. For many of us, the world of today stands on the threshold of a golden age. By building a truly just society, this beautiful, rich and energetic country of ours can become a model in which every citizen will enjoy his fundamental rights, in which two great linguistic communities and people of many cultures will live in harmony, and in which every individual will find fulfilment... liberation is the only philosophy for our time, because it does not try to conserve every tradition of the past: because it does not apply to new problems the old doctrinaire solutions: because it is prepared to experiment and innovate and because it knows that the past is less important than the future.\textsuperscript{105}

The rational rejection of doctrines of passion would lead to the liberation of individuals from the forces of collective tyranny; the "golden age" would unveil a virgin society pure of the darkness of tradition, ready to engage new problems with the uncontaminated logic required to experiment and innovate in the future world. Trudeau elaborated on the details of his vision in an essay that aggressively denounced nationalism:

In advanced societies, where the interplay of social forces can be regulated by law, where the centres of political power can be made responsible to the people, where the economic victories are a function of education and automation, where cultural differentiation is submitted to ruthless competition, and where the road to progress lies in the direction of international integration, nationalism will have to be discarded as a rustic and clumsy tool. ... In such a world, the state—if it is not to be outdistanced by its rivals—will need political instruments which are sharper, stronger, and more finely controlled than anything based on mere emotionalism: such tools will be made up of advanced technology and scientific investigation, as applied to the fields of law, economics, social psychology, international affairs, and other areas of human relations; in short, if not a pure product of reason, the political tools of the future will be designed and appraised by more rational standards than anything we are currently using in Canada today.\textsuperscript{106}

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 179.
\textsuperscript{105} Donald Peacock, Journey to Power: The Story of a Canadian Election (Toronto 1968): 293.
\textsuperscript{106} Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, 202-203.
Trudeau’s “golden age” of liberal democracy takes on a metallic gleam; science, it appears, provided the standards by which progress would be determined. Frivolous ‘emotional’ hangovers from the dark past, such as cultural differences and nation-states, would eventually be devoured by the new humanism. As one commentator notes, “The nationalists, faced with the historical reality of ever increasing individual acceptance of universal values, opt to entrench their own particular values. They seek to base their society on the particular values of a language, nation, and culture just as scientific and high cultural values were becoming universal and translingual.”

Rationalism, science, and technology were to provide the new universal culture under which liberal persons would continue to vie for greater and greater progress in the golden age of the Just Society.

As horrific as this vision may seem, Trudeau’s science fiction was taken seriously at the time and, indeed, was not atypical. The essays and speeches these passages are from were presented in front of receptive, like-minded audiences: the Liberal Party for one, and other social scientists and lawyers at academic conferences as another. The 1960s was the high-modern decade of The Jetsons and Star Trek, after all, when faith in capacity of science to create a materialist utopia was a mass-cultural phenomenon. Trudeau was, without question, a follower of scientism. Scientism, simply, is the belief that scientific analysis, as the only legitimate means of accessing reality, can and should be applied to all aspects of human and non-human life. Scientism is a secular form of religion, including a faith in progress (to be achieved by the application of scientific principles), a doctrine of humanism, and a philosophic system of “correct thought,” namely Rationalism. “High modernism” represents the spread of scientism to the political realm: the application of scientific methods and scientific ideas to the political, and, consequently, the social realm was not only acceptable, but also desirable. The

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107 Heimstra, “Trudeau’s Political Philosophy,” p. 57.
108 The counter-culture movement of the 1960s was in part a different form of liberal (cultural libertarian) revolution and in part a backlash against the rationalist-scientific majority opinion, indicative of cultural breakdown and societal stress.
ideological goal was to create a scientific state with the capacity to fully rationalize (make intelligible) and then engineer the totality of human society. According to James Scott, a historian of high-modern states, "high-modernism... was fundamentally, as the term "ideology" implies, a faith that borrowed, as it were, the legitimacy of science and technology. It was, accordingly, uncritical, un-skeptical, and thus unscientically optimistic about the possibilities for the comprehensive planning of human [society]."\textsuperscript{109} High-modernism allowed social scientists to move out of the classrooms of the universities into the cabinets, ministries, and bureaucracies of the state. As a result, the public became both the student and the laboratory, the state its teacher and its experimenter.

In the previous chapter, we saw the movement of modern liberal social scientists into the political realm. They were not high-modernists, however, as their goals were somewhat too limited; the welfare state they created remained subservient to the capitalist economic system, it was a reformist measure calling for limited redistribution of wealth and fine-tuning of the economic machine, not for fundamental transformation. In the social-cultural realm even less was attempted, with established cultural norms remaining largely unchallenged at the political-legal level until well into the 1960s. But, to be sure, they were precursors to the generation of high-modernists that Trudeau belonged too. And to a large extent, forces greater than themselves, not lack of high-modernist ambition, stifled their progress. Only in early 1970s, when the Keynesian-capitalist economic machine started to break down, did Trudeau and the high-modernists get their chance to attempt a complete re-engineering of the economy to make capitalism subservient to the state. And again, only in the late 1960s, with legal changes to immigration, divorce, and language rights, did the state begin to seriously tamper with

established social-cultural norms. The climax of this latter process came with the Charter of Rights in 1982, and the Multi-Culturalism Act of 1985.\textsuperscript{110}

High-modernism cannot be fully understood if it is simply considered alone as an ideology of means; there must be another, complimentary ideology that provides the ends. True, for the social scientist politicians like Trudeau, the creation of the rational-scientific state was a goal in itself, but a tool is useless if there is no purpose—no goal—to which it can be applied.\textsuperscript{111} A car and a map are useful tools for transportation, but without a driver with a destination and without a reason for going to that destination, the car and the map have no purpose. They are useless. The same analogy applies to the high-modern state. Without a political ideology, laden with philosophical assumptions regarding history, humanity, and 'the good,' the high-modern state has no direction, no purpose. This explains why totalitarian high-modern states in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and Communist China have gone towards such different goals—with such murderous consequences—compared to modern liberal or social democrat high-modern states like Canada or Sweden. But before we discuss the greater implications of Canada's modern liberal form of the high-modern state, we need to understand the purpose of the state for Trudeau and the modern liberals, and how they legitimized its presence in the face of the lingering power of classic liberal ideology.

For Trudeau, the high-modern state was absolutely necessary as a tool for the creation of his ideological goal: the Just Society. Anything less, according to his ideology, would slow or worse reverse the march of progress. He was particularly adamant on this point, and it explains in large part why he so vehemently denounced the thinking of French-Canadian/Quebecois nationalists:

\textsuperscript{110} Though passed by the Progressive Conservative government, multiculturalism was an official ideology introduced by the Trudeau regime. Furthermore, Trudeau's government in the 1970s and 1980s formulated most of the details of the 1985 legislation.

\textsuperscript{111} Biographer of Trudeau, George Radwanski, comments extensively on the Trudeau government's immediate rationalization of government processes, especially of cabinet decision-making processes and bureaucratic regulations. Radwanski, \textit{Trudeau} (Toronto 1978): 235-265.
...this policy [classic liberal minimal state] was imposed on us by your clerical and bourgeois elites: these elites have always prevented the spread of the idea that the State’s role was to intervene actively in the historical process and to direct positively the community’s energies towards the common weal.\textsuperscript{112}

Powerful private interests had purposely concealed the state’s true purpose; they were enemies of progress, an evil scourge that had prevented true liberty for the citizens. But not only was their view of the state anti-progressive, so was their way of approaching social reality:

They had to suggest some cure for the “ills” introduced by industrialization. Unfortunately, few were qualified for the task. Clergymen, journalists, lawyers, and accountants vainly tried to become sociologists and economists, but they could not free themselves from a social environment that was traditionalist, anti-modern, and imbued with authoritarianism and fuzzy thinking. ... Our official thinkers, with amazing constancy, ignored all the social science of their own day.\textsuperscript{113}

Trudeau was an elite social scientist whose thinking was permeated by scientism/high-modernism to a very high degree; he believed absolutely in the power of science to identify the sources of social inequality and provide practical solutions to eliminate that inequality. Those “traditionalists” who disagreed with him either lived in the past or in a fantasy world that had never really existed at all. Their ideas were ridiculed, debased, and rejected; not only were they authoritarian in the protection of their private interests, but they were unable to see the obvious benefits of the new age.

Trudeau’s faith in science and in his own quasi-scientific social science training certainly added to his belief that he was above ideology, but this only serves to further establish him as an ideologue. Indeed, with the addition of scientism, Trudeau’s political philosophy took on an even stronger and more pernicious ideological flavour. Draped in increasing layers of legitimacy, his ideological beliefs were increasingly invisible, and to no one more than himself. In the following passage, Trudeau defended his ideological beliefs:

It is predicted that the realization of our nation-state will release a thousand unsuspected energies, and that, thus endowed, French Canadians will at last take possession of their rightful heritage. There is supposed to be some sort of creative energy that will bestow genius on a people who have none and give courage and learning to a lazy and ignorant nation. This is the faith that takes the place of reason for those who are unable to find a basis for their convictions in history, or economics, or the constitution, or sociology. ‘Independence’, writes Chaput, ‘is much

\textsuperscript{112} Trudeau, \textit{Against the Current}, 144.
\textsuperscript{113} Trudeau, \textit{The Asbestos Strike}, 12.
more a matter of disposition than of logic... More than reason, we must have pride.' That is the way all those dear little girls and young ladies feel, who like to put it in a nutshell thus: “Independence is a matter of dignity. You don’t argue about it; you feel it.”

This is Trudeau at his lowest point. In his defence of “reason,” he resorts to name-calling, denouncing his enemies as irrational “little girls.” This passionate diatribe hardly resembles the rational thought he so admired. It is the shrill cry of a man under fire; Trudeau was defending his beliefs, pure and simple. His pretensions to rational scepticism are exposed, and he fights fire with fire; nationalism is countered not with reason, but with the passionate beliefs of a modern liberal ideologue. But in his malicious attacks, what was he really doing? His name-calling hardly constitutes an effective tactic. It is in his appeal to the “convictions” of history, economics, the constitution, and sociology that he undermines the position of his enemies. In essence, by citing the authority of science, history, and law (an admittedly liberal-humanist version of the last two) as his own, he was appealing to legitimizing discourses shared by himself and, he assumed, his audience alike: modern liberalism and science. Moreover, when Trudeau said nationalists were ignorant and lacked genius, he meant that they were so in highly specific ways; they were “ignorant” in their supposed lack of scientific knowledge of reality, and they lacked “genius” in that that they were not rational in their rejection of his scientific understanding of reality.

Trudeau’s ideology, then, demands the forces of progress be allowed and, if possible, encouraged to guide history—as they should. It is the role of the state, and the politicians who operate it, to ensure that this occurs. That is their function: “The statesman must serve the general will of the nation and never obstruct the mechanisms whereby society serves itself.”

Politicians must ensure that the state acts as a positive, interventionist tool that tinkers with the forces that drive progress, thus increasing the positive effects of those forces and distributing

\[114\] Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, 173
\[115\] Trudeau, Approaches to Politics, 66.
access to their fruits fairly to the citizens. The state is an extension of the democratic will; it represents and serves the interest of the public good. It is simultaneously an extension of society and its servant. Anything less would be immoral; the state would be a source of sickness for society, a cancer within:

This is the source of our bad citizenship and political immorality; having learned to distrust the state as an enemy, citizens feel no guilt at making secret war on it. ... For fear of being led to our eternal damnation by these evils (communism, statism, imperialism, atheism), we have prevented the state from doing anything to increase its power, so that as a people we are helpless to take collective action to solve our collective problems—economic weakness, backward education, public health, and housing; and so on... Yet we live in society precisely so that we can tackle collectively the problems that we cannot solve individually. "

If conceived of as an authoritarian force, the state and its citizens are in a constant state of warfare: the citizen must fight for his liberties, and the state only grudgingly gives them up. In this passage, it is important to note that the 'collective problems' cited are all modern liberal in tone. They are all social problems; individual liberties are not mentioned at all. Their omission does not represent an insidious plot; it's just that they already existed under the classic liberal state, the target of Trudeau's ideological attacks.

The high-modern state Trudeau thought necessary would be a classic liberal's nightmare. As discussed, classic liberals believed in a minimalist state. Any intervention was thought to be either a form of tyranny or as interfering with the forces of progress. Trudeau had thus completely transformed the role of the state in society. As the embodiment of the democratic will, it was the state's duty to intervene in society. The state was meant to be a tool for social justice, protector of individual liberty, and engine of progress. He legitimized his concept of the state by appealing to three near-universally accepted discourses: science, rationalism, and modern liberalism. The first two are represented here: "And there will flow more good than evil from the present tribulation of federalism if they serve to equip lawyers, social scientists, and

116 Ibid., 43.
politicians with the tools required to build societies of men ordered by reason.\textsuperscript{117} Democratic modern liberalism is added and emphasized in the next:

We have seen that democracy tends towards the good of the community by encouraging each citizen and each group of citizens to protest against the defects of society and to demand justice. A state enlightened in this way can then play its part, which is to protect the rights of every individual, and especially of the weak. This function of the state is indispensable above all in a modern society like ours, where the citizen is in greater danger of becoming ensnared in a network of extremely complicated social, economic, and administrative institutions. ... So if the citizen wants to avoid being ordered about against his will, he must provide himself with a protector in the form of a state strong enough to subordinate to the public good all the individuals and organisms that go to make up society. That is why, as well as possessing ... the monopoly on physical force, the state must assure itself of the services of capable men, rivalling in competence and devotion the best specialists in industry, commerce, and the professions: without that, it is impossible to ensure the triumph of the public over the private good.\textsuperscript{118}

In the name of democracy and the good, Trudeau’s ideology demanded the state arm itself with experts who would protect its citizen’s individual and social interests by ensuring private interests did not ensnare them in their exploitative webs. Only with a state powerful enough to battle the strongest private forces—corporations, churches—could the public good be adequately protected and served. In Trudeau’s ideology, the state had powerful moral and utilitarian imperatives to exist in a proactive form.

The last hurdle that classic liberals could offer was the powerful discourse of property, the cornerstone of their ideology, and the foundation of ‘private’ interests. Trudeau easily dismissed the importance of property in favour of progress, social justice and democracy, and the necessity of scientific planning to achieve these. Property was but an archaic value of little use in the modern age: “The erroneous, liberal idea of property helped to emancipate the bourgeoisie but is now hampering the march toward economic democracy. Investment planning and resource development, for instance, both become in the last analysis matters for political decision... Economic planning must eventually be reduced to political planning.”\textsuperscript{119} Here we are handed hints of Trudeau’s economic vision: not capitalist, not socialist, but “pragmatist.”

\textsuperscript{117} Trudeau, \textit{Federalism and the French Canadians}, 197. Interestingly enough, Trudeau was himself a lawyer, a social scientist, and a politician.
\textsuperscript{118} Trudeau, \textit{Approaches to Politics}, 84-85.
Capitalism, and the system of property that upholds it, is worse than irrelevant, it is backwards, archaic and regressive. Socialism, while not having had a chance to prove its potential valour, risked a similar fate. As Trudeau stated:

The goal of all economic activity being the satisfaction of human needs, it follows that society should organize itself to draw from available resources the best results possible for the whole of the population. A human economy should abolish the exploitation of man by man and share production increases and leisure equally among citizens. ... In the scheme of production, private initiative and property, collective initiative and co-operative property, public initiative and nationalization, are only means in the service of human and economic objective, and should be evaluated as such.  

Both capitalism and socialism are simply means to an end, the tools of democracy to create prosperity for all. Accordingly, politicians and the state needed to replace private business as the lords of the economy, for private interests have failed to serve the common good: “In our highly industrialized societies, private initiative left to itself cannot guarantee common prosperity. That must be assured through planning.” To serve the common good, economic planning needed to be universal. To be so, it had to be centrally planned: “In these days, fiscal and economic theory both support the necessity of centralization... all the ideological thrusts are for centralization.”

The tone of all these statements is unmistakably high modernist. Trudeau repeats throughout his essays the imperative need for a strong state armed with the tools of social science to protect the public interest and aid the forces of social, economic and moral progress for the benefit of the public good. Property is tossed on top of the pile of discarded ‘traditionalisms,’ alongside national culture, organic community, and spirituality, as but another failed ideological notion that no longer served a purpose.

Trudeau’s conception of the economy, including his ambivalence about capitalism and his apparent disregard for private property, did not arise from the murky depths of some vague social science discourse; it matches almost exactly with the ideas of his supervisor at Harvard, the economist Schumpeter. Trudeau readily admitted his former supervisor’s influence when

120 Ibid., 92-93.  
121 Ibid.  
122 Ibid., 212.
asked if he was a follower of the popular economist, John Galbraith: “I’m inclined to say, ‘Who’s Galbraith?’ ....In terms of economics, you know, I spent two years studying with Schumpeter and two years studying with Leontief and if you want to know who is permeating my economic thinking you’d be better to think in terms of Leontief and Schumpeter.”

Leontief’s focus was mostly technical, while Schumpeter was concerned with macroeconomic political economy, based on his conception of economic history. Trudeau’s Schumpeterian conception of the high-modern state appears to differ significantly from other modern liberals whose economic idol was usually Galbraith or, if older, his predecessor, Keynes. Schumpeter’s conception of the economy also fits perfectly with Trudeau’s teleological vision of progress, which, as we will see, proves beyond a doubt that Trudeau was not a Marxist, but a pragmatic, modern liberal. One author summarized Schumpeter’s ideas of historical political economy like so:

His most famous quotation, “Can capitalism survive? No. I do not think it can.” opens Schumpeter’s prologue to a section of his 1942 book, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. One might think, on the basis of the quote, that Schumpeter was a Marxist. But the analysis that led Schumpeter to his conclusion differed totally from Karl Marx's. Marx believed that capitalism would be destroyed by its enemies (the proletariat), whom capitalism had purportedly exploited. Marx relished the prospect. Schumpeter believed that capitalism would be destroyed by its successes. Capitalism would spawn, he believed, a large intellectual class that made its living by attacking the very bourgeois system of private property and freedom so necessary for the intellectual class's existence. And unlike Marx, Schumpeter did not relish the destruction of capitalism. He wrote: "If a doctor predicts that his patient will die presently, this does not mean that he desires it."  

Trudeau’s membership in just such an “intellectual class” in the capitalist Quebec of the 1950s, the ultimate victory of those intellectuals to gain control of the Quebec state in the 1960s, and the consequent movement of Quebec away from a strictly capitalist society, provides too striking a parallel to not have been noticed by Trudeau. Quebec, for Trudeau, had merely been fulfilling

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123 Bom, *Trudeau Revealed*, 93.
124 Leontief was famous for the development models and formulas for calculating economic phenomena, which won him the Nobel Prize. Schumpeter, on the other hand, was a political economist, writing sweeping books with titles like, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, that tied together economics and politics within a teleological framework of progress that was neither capitalist or socialist.
the prophesied destiny of Schumpeter’s theory. The prophesy had not been completed, however, as bourgeois capitalism still existed, if in a modified form.

Until 1975, Trudeau appears to have been uncertain whether capitalism had outlived its epoch, or if the Keynesian form of capitalism was still necessary for the stage of historical development Canada was at in the 1960s and early 1970s. His pragmatic, non-ideological approach demanded that current social realities always be considered first, and dealt with appropriately; he believed progress to have been inevitable—Capitalism was most likely doomed—but pushing progress could be counterproductive. Government had to act according to circumstances; if capitalism was still effective, then the government had to deal with a capitalist system. Forcing the creation of a socialist economy when society wasn’t ready was counterproductive and impractical. If the state acted appropriately to its historical situation, then progress would occur in due course:

What’s important is that I don’t try to sound as though I’ve thought up a whole lot of new ideas and brought them into government. ... But what I’ve tried to do in government is be sensitive to the institutional, ideological, and social realities, and to make sure that we were responding to them. And whether it be Galbraith or Leibbron, or Plato or Aristotle for that matter, there are certain things that I believe to be right and true, and I want to make sure that they are not neglected in the process of government.126

In 1975, it appeared that Keynesian Capitalism was indeed failing. As an ideology, it no longer appeared to be “sensitive” to the social realities of the time. Spiralling, out-of-control inflation and unemployment required that Trudeau enact government controls to prevent complete economic breakdown. Though the United States and Great Britain had already been forced to such measures a couple years before, Trudeau’s interpretation of these events was different from the leaders of those countries. For them, and for most Canadians, the imposition of controls was a stopgap measure to deal with an unprecedented, exceptional crisis (the oil crisis of 1972) to re-establish the normative operations of Keynesian Capitalism. Trudeau, however, saw these events as the latest in a series that heralded the need for a “new society” in which government

126 Bom, Trudeau’s Canada, 178.
experts needed to take greater and greater control until a fully rationalized planning state was established. Essentially, he thought Keynesian capitalism had failed; a new economy needed to be created for the requirements of the Just Society to be met. New ideas were required to deal with the socio-economic realities of the post-Capitalist age if progress were to continue. In January 1976, Trudeau began to express his belief that the old system had failed: “We haven’t been able to make even a modified free market system work in Canada to prevent the kinds of problems we are now experiencing…. The control period will not only help us to deduce the rate of inflation, but will also give us the necessary time to reform our economic institutions, our attitudes and public policies.”

And further, that thirty years of experience with the mixed economy “seems never to [have been] able to cure unemployment completely without causing inflationary spurts…. Each successive wave [brought] in a greater difficulty: higher unemployment with higher inflation.” At the time, commentators accused Trudeau of being a socialist. But, in fact, Trudeau was not a socialist; he represented the third way of radical modern liberalism.

Trudeau’s modern liberal third way was a direct product of Schumpeter’s influence. His teleological ideas of how economic progress would occur were the same as Schumpeter’s. So were his ideas of how to analyse and approach social-historical reality. Overall, we receive from Schumpeter a more complete picture of the ‘economic democracy’ Trudeau sought to implement:

Among the best-known and most-provocative of Schumpeter’s ideas is one that has not gone entirely without mention in present-day debate: the eventual obsolescence of the entrepreneur and (withal) the summary mechanization of economic progress. Whereas innovation, and hence economic growth and development, was once the province of bold individual entrepreneurs, the modern age will see the passing of this form of economic

127 Ibid., 92.
128 Ibid.
organization in favour of a regime in which economic change has become a matter of routine and mechanical management. 129

Trudeau’s first order of business upon gaining power was to create the rationalist servant state, a managerial machine that would efficiently deal with unfolding socio-economic historical realities and, if necessary, smooth the transition to a post-capitalist economic order. The inevitable rational unveiling of social reality by social science would necessarily create the need for control of the economy by social science experts:

But—and here we get to the heart of the matter—conscious rationality, for Schumpeter, is in fact becoming increasingly adequate to the job of dealing with the radically new: “The more accurately, however, we learn to know the natural and social world, the more perfect our control of facts becomes; and the greater the extent, with time and progressive rationalisation, within which things can be simply calculated, and indeed quickly and reliably calculated, the more the significance of this [entrepreneurial] function decreases. Therefore the importance of the entrepreneurial type must diminish just as the importance of the military commander has already diminished.” (Schumpeter 1934, p. 85, emphasis added.) We can put the issue somewhat differently. ... Schumpeter’s story of a transition from bounded to unbounded rationality actually implies a transition from an empiricist to a rationalist theory of economic knowledge. In order to see what this would mean, we need to understand the routinization of progress, and thus the passing of the entrepreneur, in the complete context of Schumpeter’s sociological argument. "We have seen," he says, "that, normally, the modern businessman, whether entrepreneur or mere managing administrator, is of the executive type. From the logic of his position he acquires something of the psychology of the salaried employee working in a bureaucratic organization." (Schumpeter 1942, p. 156.) ... The conclusion usually drawn from it is that it is therefore a matter of indifference, from a functional standpoint, whether the productive organization is privately or state owned; indeed, state ownership would seem preferable since its motives are "public" and hence purified of the taint of private desire. 130

As we have seen, Trudeau believed the ‘empirical’ economic theories of the classic liberals lead to social injustice and economic imbalance, whereas ‘rationalist’ social science theories were needed to counter these unjust forces and to create a strong state, more powerful than any private interest. But, as has been argued, Trudeau went beyond indifference—or mild preference—for public control of the economy; his functionalism was motivated by his modern liberal ideology. The Just Society required the social and economic realms be rationally controlled. Like Schumpeter, Trudeau recognized the deeper power of Capitalism that, if lost, needed to be replaced:


130 Ibid.
To Schumpeter, the crucial fact about the modern corporation is that its managers cannot fill the strong social role played by the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs are pillars of strength, symbols of legitimacy, role models. They provide the new ideas and new blood that refresh the "bourgeois stratum." "Economically and sociologically, directly and indirectly, the bourgeoisie therefore depends on the entrepreneur and, as a class, lives and dies with him, though a more or less prolonged transitional stage—eventually a stage in which it may feel equally unable to die and to live—is quite likely to occur, as in fact did occur in the case of the feudal civilization." (Schumpeter 1942, p. 134.) Socialism will succeed because, without the entrepreneur to guard it, "the bourgeois fortress ... becomes politically defenseless." It is not the managerial class who are the plunderers; it is a New Class of socialist intellectuals and government officials. "Defenseless fortresses invite aggression, especially if there is rich booty in them. Aggressors will work themselves up into a state of rationalizing hostility—aggressors always do. No doubt it is possible, for a time, to buy them off. But this last resource fails as soon as they discover that they can have it all." (Schumpeter 1942, p. 143.) ... Schumpeter has no great love for a socialist system (or, in particular, a socialist culture); but he does see the similarities between private and state bureaucracy as smoothing the way for socialism. "Thus the modern corporation, although the product of the capitalist process, socializes the bourgeois mind; it relentlessly narrows the scope of capitalist motivations; not only that, it will eventually kill its roots." (Schumpeter 1942, p. 156.) Like Marx, then, he sees capitalism as leading to its own destruction. But unlike Marx, Schumpeter sees capitalism as the victim of its own economic success not its economic failure. This tale stands Marx on his head, its plot laced with a heavy and self-satisfied irony.131

Schumpeter’s analysis of political economy, combined with the French Personalism of Maritain and Mounier, cuts to the heart of Trudeau’s modern liberalism. A middle path between socialism and classic liberal capitalism was achieved by conceiving of the economy as a separate domain of human activity, subservient to the social and political ones. For capitalists and especially for socialists, the economic, social, and political realms are inseparable; the economy is conceived as the source of all other social and political phenomena. It is the engine of material progress, the ultimate cultural goal. For Trudeau, Schumpeter’s economic vision provided the keystone to his personalist-liberal vision of society and progress. Capitalism would eventually self-destruct, paving the way to a type of socialist economy that maintained the desired aspects of liberal culture. Thus, the modern liberal third way was achieved. It adopts the best aspects of the old systems, but is an entirely separate, liberal incarnation in its own right. In this formulation, economic material progress is not the ultimate goal for a society; it is a secondary and subservient goal to the moral goal of the creation of the Just Society. Both capitalism and socialism were merely ideological tools to be used by the state to achieve the social and moral progress necessary to create the modern liberal utopia.

131 Ibid.
Trudeau went beyond the reformist goals of the earlier generation of modern liberals. While a good start, the Keynesian (and later Galbraithian) technocratic state lacked Trudeau’s radical conception of economics. Thus, for Trudeau, the old reformist Keynesian modern liberalism was a type of reactionary ideology that would have to be overcome if it no longer served a purpose. Trudeau’s vision called for a form of high-modernist democracy that had the power to tamper with all realms of social, economic and cultural life. It was to be imbued with the personalist humanism and the scientific culture of the new modern liberalism. The high-modern state was absolutely required for the necessary re-engineering of the social and economic realities to create the Just Society. Trudeau’s Schumpeterian economics provided the key to rejecting capitalism and socialism in favour of a more pure ‘economic democracy.’ It is this vision of economics, with its rejection of capitalism and socialism, which definitively separates Trudeau’s radical modern liberalism from not only classic liberals and socialists, but from the previous Keynesian-reformist modern liberalism of the generation before.

E: Modern Liberal Hegemony and Scientific Culture

The discussion offered above does not claim to cover the great variety of thought offered by modern liberal philosophy. It only should be thought of in terms of Trudeau specifically. However, it could be useful to think of how Trudeau’s influence has changed Canadian political culture, and how these ideas have reflected and refracted in the minds of others since Trudeau’s time. At the beginning of this essay, I suggested that Paul Martin followed Trudeau’s creed, which I believe he does, at least in part. The Charter of Rights and Medicare that Martin passionately defended have gained near sacred status that can be directly connected to how political debate has been influenced by modern liberal ideology, especially Trudeau’s version of it. Furthermore, the two institutions represent the two sides of modern liberal ideology: a belief in individual rights, including the right to social equality, and a belief in the necessity of a
‘caring’ state that looks after its citizens. That both are entrenched by legislative acts, and are universal in application (i.e. forced on the population), further demonstrates the lingering influence of the paternal Just Society, or sentiments similar to it.

In such a brief discussion, it is difficult to establish exactly when or even if a hegemony exists. However, in addition to the Medicare and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, I can offer these basic observations that I believe indicate very strongly that modern liberalism reached hegemonic status around the time of Trudeau, and that it continues hold that status in the early 21st century, if in an increasingly weakened form. In 1960, divorce, abortion and sodomy were illegal and capital punishment was not; the immigration selection process was almost exclusively limited to white Europeans and Americans; a woman’s socio-economic role was a debatable issue, with most believing a women’s place was in the home; possessing or smoking marijuana was a serious offence that could result in jail sentences of over 15 years; old age pensions were rudimentary and restricted; publicly funded medical insurance did not exist; welfare, (un)employment insurance and other measures of social security were minimal; first nations peoples were considered wards of the state, and many were forced as children to attend church-run ‘residential’ boarding schools where the explicit purpose was to ‘acculturate’ the native children to white Christian civilization. In 2003, legalization of same-sex marriage and marijuana possession were brought under debate in the legislature; the Nis’ga Nation had achieved partial autonomy in British Columbia; Medicare and other attributes of the welfare state not only existed but were considered by many as indispensable parts of Canadian identity and society; equality between races and sexes was enforced by the constitution; Toronto and Vancouver were over 40% non-white; and more women than men attended university. The obviousness of these observations is not my proof, but that they are considered ‘progressive’ is. That a consensus of Canadians agrees these changes are progressive and good is indicative of a modern liberal hegemony existing in Canadian political culture.
As a final point, it is useful to think of Trudeau and modern liberalism within the greater context of ‘modernity.’ Though difficult to define, ‘modernity’ refers to the entire cultural and intellectual world of thought and action that came into being after the Scientific Revolution in Europe, and that was to be spread throughout the world a few short centuries later. It is a way of seeing the world shared by all modern peoples and is at heart a culture derived from modern science. While there is no such thing as a purely modern culture or society, Pierre Trudeau came as close as any to being purely modern, and his ideology reflects this. Modern liberalism, like socialism and fascism, is a modern ideology that hold as basic premises the rejection of the past, the re-creation of society and the individual (the perfectibility of Man), the total domination of nature in the name of knowledge and economic prosperity, and faith in science to achieve these ‘progressive’ goals. More than just having faith in science, these ideologies are scientific. The state is the rational subject, the natural world (including humanity) its passive subject, and the entire organization and operation of the natural world is rationalized, categorized, and catalogued. In a modern culture, citizens are given numbers, cities are built on grids, and forests and animals are managed like factories; everything is rational, efficient, and productive, all directed at ‘growth’ and ‘prosperity.’ Trudeau’s way of thinking was at heart scientific; he was a product of modern scientific culture. He adopted modern liberalism and high modernism because they were rational, scientific ways of understanding the individual and society that fit with his personal worldview.

I do not claim to have been comprehensive or even complete in my analysis of Trudeau’s thought. My only goal has been the exposition of the most important features of Trudeau’s particular form of modern liberal ideology. I do, however, believe this analysis explains to a

\[\text{\footnotesize Its key features include a subject/object relationship between the rational individual 'mind' and exterior 'body' that includes, of course, nature, but also the human body itself. It is a culture of humanism and rationalism, of exploration and experimentation; it is atomistic, linear, and mechanical; and its aesthetics are efficiency and geometry. Above all, modernity is about the creation of a newer, better world.}
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\[\text{\footnotesize High-modernism—radical modernity—in most liberal and socialist countries in the 1950s and 1960s was a concerted movement in that direction.}\]
large degree most of Trudeau’s actions in power, including the two most famous ones: his battle against modern Quebecois nationalists and the creation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. My analysis also explains why he has held such power after he retired, in the Meech Lake and Charlottetown debates especially, and why he intervened at all. He did so because he truly believed in this ideology to the extent I claim, and a huge number of people within the Canadian public did as well. It would be hard to imagine any other former Prime Minister intervening in current events with such success.  

Most of all, I have attempted to demonstrate that our political culture is not set in stone, that modern liberalism has not always existed and that the beliefs in the goodness of a scientific state, and in a modern liberal code of law, held so strongly by so many, are not indisputable facts, but the result of a deeply entrenched ideology. In the conclusion, I will offer some thoughts on why this ideology is problematic and how it has limited the ability of Canadian political discourse to offer creative ideas for the problems of the 21st century.

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134 Trudeau published pamphlets for both events, entitled “With a Bang, Not a Whimper” and “Trudeau: ‘A mess that deserve a big NO’,” systematically arguing against the proposed revisions to the charter, pointing out how those revisions didn’t conform to his ideological vision, if nothing else. These pamphlets and other public acts were credited with swaying the referendums to an unknown but significant degree.
CONCLUSION

"That's why this election is so important. It's about the values we bring with us in this new century. Do you want a Canada that builds on its historic strengths and values, such as medicare, generosity, and an unflinching commitment to equality of opportunity? Or do you want a Canada that departs from much of this history—a Canada that rejects its valued tradition of collective responsibility." — Paul Martin, from his 2004 campaign-launch speech.

Liberalism is not, despite its pretensions, an ideology-free way of thinking; it is a vision of the social, economic, and political order, and of the rules that construct it. Modern liberalism, like its classic predecessor, is a program of action, a particular ideological way of thinking that makes exclusivist truth claims. These claims, based as they are on a total belief in their core principles, ultimately make it impossible for modern liberalism to be the open, rational way of thought it claims to be. It is, like McKay said, a secular faith. Trudeau, in this sense, betrayed his Millian roots. Instead of relentlessly challenging the conventions of public opinion and of his own beliefs, he challenged beliefs that didn’t match his own, preaching his modern liberal creed to proselytize his enemies.

The same can be said of the early social sciences Trudeau so revered. Their truth claims have repeatedly been shown to be false (or at best inaccurate) in the decades since, as has the quasi-scientific nature of the discipline altogether. James Scott’s observations of high-modernism internationally hold true in Canada; modern liberal governments have held an unscientific faith in their social science theories and techniques to fix the social problems of the day. Full employment was never achieved, for example, and it could be argued that social problems—crime, poverty, economic inequality, health, and cultural alienation—were worse in 2004 than they were in 1960. Whether or not the modern liberal state has been successful as a

136 Whether or not modern liberalism holds access to ultimate truth is an interesting question that can never be definitively proven, making acceptance of that claim a matter of faith. That liberalism makes truth claims does not make it an ideology; making exclusive objectivist truth claims—superior to all other ways of thinking—that underlay a vision of political organization is what makes it an ideology.
positive instrument for social progress is purely a matter of political opinion. Social science has an ideological thrust that is concealed by its claims to objectivity, inappropriately borrowed from its big brother, the natural sciences.\(^{137}\)

Looked at unsympathetically, Trudeau’s ideology contains subtle negative implications for the liberal-democratic system. Cloaked as it was in the self-denying discourses of liberalism, science, and rationality, Trudeau’s ideology has the seeds of a possible democratic dictatorship: once elected, implementation of his ideology is required, not just for the democratic reason of serving the public will, but because those discourses of power demand it. Furthermore, Trudeau’s personalist-religious beliefs demanded action for moral reasons; a Trudeau-type modern liberal must act to ensure the creation of a high-modern state, or, if it already exists, he must act to protect it. The Just Society demands no less. In a country where a true majority is never responsible for electoral victories, vigorous implementation of radical ideology—modern liberal or otherwise—can hardly be said to be in the best interest of everyone (to serve the public good).\(^{138}\) The evident moral paternalism of his modern liberal state, based as it is on a foundation on supposed universal values, reeks of an insidious authoritarianism. Perhaps even worse, the Canada Trudeau wanted to create, based as it was on his vision of a scientific future of emotionless, rational individuals existing within a homogenous, universal culture, rivals any Orwellian nightmare.

Fortunately, Trudeau’s personalist-influenced beliefs in liberal individualism, and in a federal division of powers, provided counterweights to the immense, potentially totalitarian power of his modern liberal state. There is no question that Trudeau’s high-modernism was tempered by a profound reverence for the moral sanctity of the individual person: “The state must not infringe on the conscience of the individual. I believe that, in the last analysis, a human

\(^{137}\) See Charles Taylor, *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*.

\(^{138}\) Of course, short of total victory (100% of votes cast), no democratic majority can represent the public good in its entirety, only an interest group within it.
being in the privacy of his own mind has the exclusive authority to choose his own scale of values and to decide which forces will take precedence over others. A good constitution is one that does not prejudge any of these questions, but leaves citizens free to orient their human destinies as they see fit.” Despite his ideological beliefs regarding humanity’s progressive destiny, Trudeau’s philosophy is grounded on the premise of moral individual autonomy. It is up to individuals to determine what is best for him/herself and for society; Trudeau’s democracy is founded on the primacy of that premise. Ultimately, his belief in democracy conflicts with his ideological goals—expansion and entrenchment of the high-modern state as the means to create his Just Society—if the democratic will turns against him. If fascists or, more realistically, classic liberals were elected to power, then his ideological vision would suffer as much as any other under similar circumstances. Trudeau’s high-modernism was limited in that it could be rejected if the citizenry demanded it; he could never have been a Mao or a Mussolini. Trudeau’s belief in democracy prevented his ideology from being fully implemented, even though he believed democracy would eventually reveal the reality—the truth—of his ideology.

The Charter of Rights represents on a smaller scale Trudeau’s greater philosophy: it is a code of supposedly universal values sanctified by a quasi-religious morality that, if applied through the courts (the state), imposes itself at the expense of the values and ideological beliefs of other systems of thought. The notwithstanding clause grudgingly concedes over-riding power to the democratic authority of the parliament, which has been used very sparingly, most famously by the Quebec government with Bill 101. The existence of the notwithstanding clause reveals the tensions between the democratic and liberal aspects of Trudeau’s thought; his liberalism demands that the rights in the Charter be recognized as universal and sacred and

139 Pierre Trudeau, Federalism and the French Canadians, p. 11.
140 Arguments based on, say, Buddhist notions of the un-self would not hold any water in a Canadian court, as such an argument wouldn’t follow the rules of liberalism, denying as it would the core tenet of the metaphysical existence and importance of the individual ‘self,’ on which liberal law is based.
141 Bill 101 is designed to protect Quebec culture by forcing businesses to use French on all signs, and in letters twice as big as the English ones.
applied as such, but his belief in democracy demands that individuals have the right to choose their own destiny, whatever it may be. If, like in Canada, the society involved is made up of modern liberals who accept the premises of the Charter, then it is very unlikely that the democratic will of the people will conflict with the laws of the Charter. However, if a democratic society is made up of Ilongut headhunters, who accept virtually none of the laws in the Charter as universal and sacred, then conflict is inevitable.

Quebecois nationalists (liberal-nationalists) and classic liberals (liberal-conservatives) are Canadian examples of people who do not accept all the precepts of the Charter—at least in some of their implications—because they are either not modern liberals, or are modern liberal hybrids. But this does not mean they are not part of the liberal family—they are all liberals. Instead, they exist as potential challenges to modern liberal hegemony within Canadian political culture. In the 2004 election the fracture lines in the Canadian liberal family were particularly obvious, with the electorate split between the different branches of liberalism: radical modern liberal-social democrats (the New Democratic Party), radical modern liberal-Keynesian modern liberals (the Liberal Party), classic liberal-Keynesian modern liberals (the Conservative Party), and radical modern liberal-Quebecois nationalists (the Bloc Quebecois). Holding the middle ground between Trudeau-style radical modern liberalism and Keynesian-style reformist modern liberalism, the Liberal Party represented the modern liberal mainstream consensus and won the election. The radical modern liberal parties together garnered 65% of the vote, representative of the strong majority of the modern liberal consensus. But also of interest was the weakness of the Conservatives, whose strong classic liberalism was considered ‘scary’ by many for its rejection of normative modern liberal tenets, including the large interventionist state.


143 Ibid.
Though an overwhelming defeat, the Conservative Party’s showing actually represents a weakening of modern liberal hegemony: the collapse of the modern liberal Progressive Conservative Party in 1993 opened the way for a classic liberal resurgence through the vehicle of the Reform Party. For the first time in 30 years, a classic liberal party was represented in the federal parliament.\textsuperscript{144} With the absorption of the Progressive Conservative remnant in 2003, the Conservative Party was formed, and a far stronger voice for classic liberalism entered the fray, changing the tenor of the 2004 election from disagreements between brothers to a polarized split between distant cousins. Modern liberal hegemony had its first serious challenge since Trudeau’s symbolic victory in 1968.

This is not to say, however, that Trudeau’s ideology will be undermined or that its dominance is seriously threatened, only that the potential exists. Modern liberalism has been accepted as faith by two (or even three) generations of Canadians; the modern liberal consensus that makes up the vast majority of the population ensures that Trudeau’s vision will propagate itself for the foreseeable future.\textsuperscript{145} The universalist discourses of science, rationalism, and moral liberalism that animate modern liberal ideology are too powerful to disappear any time soon. Indeed, they have barely begun to be questioned. As a basic starting point, a post-modern, post-liberal political environment in Canada would require open discussion of the ideas within these discourses, if not the discourses themselves.\textsuperscript{146} Without that debate, it is inconceivable of any

\textsuperscript{144} The Social Credit Party was the last true classic liberal party to sit in the federal parliament, in the late 1960s. At the provincial level the situation has been somewhat different, at least in British Columbia and Alberta. Classic liberal Social Credit parties formed governments starting in Alberta in the 1937, and in B.C. in 1950, the latter of which continued to hold power almost continuously until 1991. In Alberta, Ernst Manning ruled the province for decades and similar populist, classic liberal Conservatives still rule today under the leadership of Ralph Klein. In B.C., however, the party began to become dominated by Keynesian-style modern liberals under Bill Bennett in the later 1970s and 1980s, with its hybrid classic-reform modern liberal hybrid party, the BC Liberals winning power back from the New Democratic Party in 2000.

\textsuperscript{145} The past two decades have seen a resurgence in classic liberal and especially classic liberal-reform liberal hybrid ideologies, partly because of the failings of Trudeau’s high-modern state—its high costs and supposed inefficiencies. However, while the high-modern state’s viability is increasingly in question, the ideological goals have an overwhelming resonance. The un-touchability of public funded healthcare—Medicare—in the 2004 election is a case in point.

\textsuperscript{146} In philosophy and cultural studies, this process of critique is already well developed. However, these new ideas have yet to filter into normative Canadian political culture in any significant way, the one major exception being the
significant change. Modern liberal hegemony cannot be seriously challenged without the central
tenets of its secular religion being questioned. I can only hope that my analysis of Trudeau, its
most powerful and influential intellectual/politician, aids the formation of that debate.

anti-atomistic, anti-humanist, anti-materialist, and thus profoundly un-liberal environmental movement.
Furthermore, these ideas are specifically critiques, not alternative ideological programs of action. Four political
philosophers who have offered different paths that look toward a post-liberal world in Canada are George Grant,
Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor, and Charles Blattenburg. (Jurgen Habermas, in the forefront of the philosophical
examination of issues and problems of modernity, leads the way internationally on ideas of how to rescue the
modern project and why indeed it should be rescued at all. In my opinion, he may be the first post-liberal who isn’t
also a post-modernist). Though very different in style and in their arguments, and not necessarily anti-liberal, they
tend to agree on major points of critique against the current Canadian liberal order. Overall, they appear to agree
that the modern world is going through an identity crisis, brought on by a failure in our culture and philosophy to
give meaning to modern life. Deficiencies in contemporary liberal thought are a source of the problem, which the
authors combat in their different ways (though Kymlicka argues that the modern liberal tradition of Mill in fact does
hold the necessary philosophical strength for a rejuvenated philosophy, it has just been ignored or suppressed by
authors unsympathetic to liberal positions, i.e. Marxists). The self-interested atomistic rational individual has been
largely rejected by these authors for a culturally situated, community connected, selfless individual focussed on the
creating and/or maintaining of what is good in life, for the individual and for the community. Progress,
rationalization, social science, individualism and materialism are roundly criticized as ways of thinking that have
hindered as much as helped the creation of a healthy culture and society that gives every person security, purpose,
and happiness.
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