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Title of Thesis: 'PORK WARS AND GREEK FIRE': REGULATING MULTICULTURAL VANCOUVER

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Abstract

'Multiculturalism' has become a commonplace in modern Canadian political parlance as the social geography of Canadian cities changes to reflect an increasingly more diverse immigrant profile. But as several critical interpretations of it contend, multiculturalism signifies more than pure diversity itself—multiculturalism is also an ideological framework that tries to contain and defuse political-economic crises among racialised immigrant communities. In this thesis I explore the circumstances surrounding two interventions by the city of Vancouver to police the production of 'ethnicised' commodities during the 1970s and 1980s. I argue this intervention was a problematic one which provoked tension between the state and a cadre of small capitalists, a struggle which was then promptly displaced onto the ideological field and mediated through the ideological framework of multiculturalism.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................. ii  
Table of Contents ............................................................................................ iii  
Introduction ...................................................................................................... 1  
Chapter 1: Theoretical Considerations .............................................................. 6  
   1.1 Introduction .............................................................................................. 6  
   1.2 First Principles: ‘Reading Capital’ ............................................................. 7  
   1.3 State Theory and the Labour-Process ......................................................... 24  
Chapter 2: Pork Wars ....................................................................................... 34  
   2.1 Introduction .............................................................................................. 4  
   2.2 In Context: the Post-War Clean Up Drive ................................................ 35  
   2.3 The Double-Nature of the Commodity Form ........................................... 37  
   2.4 Duck-hunt ................................................................................................ 39  
   2.5 ‘Multiculturalism’ as Hegemony ............................................................... 48  
Chapter 3: Greek Fire ....................................................................................... 55  
   3.1 Introduction .............................................................................................. 56  
   3.2 In Context: Greeks Bearing Gifts ............................................................. 56  
   3.3 Political Intervention and Legitimation .................................................... 59  
   3.4 Masturbatory Bodies and the Sin of Commercial Greed ....................... 68  
   3.5 Containment and Isolation ...................................................................... 72  
Bibliography ..................................................................................................... 79
**Introduction**

Scholars have long recognized since 1967—when the federal government of Canada overhauled its immigration policy—the transformation of an immigrant profile from one which had hitherto reflected the broad cultural and economic links between Canada, Europe and the United States into one which now reflected the growing significance of east and south-east Asian markets. In Vancouver this transformation can be seen in the geography of immigrant communities across the city\(^1\). In the immediate post-war years, large numbers of southern and eastern European immigrants came to the city as well as many Chinese, settling in fairly distinct transitional neighbourhoods. Following the 1967 immigration reform, increasing numbers of immigrants arrive from south and south-east Asia, many of whom were suburbanized in the growing suburbs to the south and east of Vancouver. At the same time, Canadians were beginning to come to terms with a new articulation of national identity founded on the principle of multiculturalism as enunciated by successive Liberal governments under Prime Minister Pierre Eliot Trudeau. Canadians were not only encountering a new kind of diversity in their cities, but also new experiences of ‘diversity’ in the form of new discourses and new ways of framing the problem of managing that diversity.

In this dissertation I look at two racialised struggles that took place in Vancouver during the late 1970s and early 1980s involving two very different immigrant communities—the Chinese and the Greek. Each will

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demonstrate the importance of ‘multiculturalism’ as a discursive frame of reference for the management of immigrant communities in the city. I am not the first to proceed with such a study. In her book, *Vancouver’s Chinatown*, Kay Anderson\(^2\) composes a detailed and thorough cultural geography of the various meanings and mappings of the city’s ‘Chinatown’ since its foundation as a terminus for the transcontinental railroad at the end of the nineteenth century. Anderson’s thesis is that the construction of white hegemony is effected through a process of ‘othering’ of the Chinese, who at selected historical junctures are pathologised, criminalised, but sometimes also preserved and authenticised, as the recent history of multiculturalism in Canada has shown. For as Anderson argues toward the end of her book the period from around 1967 onward constituted a dramatic rehabilitation of the city’s Chinese community. Whereas before Chinatown had been marginalised as a seedy corner of Vancouver’s urban imaginary, it was thereafter with the assistance of numerous state and private organisations lifted up as the prime exemplar of Vancouver’s multicultural populace. Chinatown was promoted by place marketers for its supposed authenticity of representation of Chinese culture. The neighbourhood—which was and is functional in the sense of being a thriving commercial community—became something of an open-air museum of ‘authentic’ Chinese culture.

In her argument, Anderson appropriates the notion of hegemony from the Marxist scholar Antonio Gramsci\(^3\). She argues that white

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\(^3\) As elaborated by the latter in his thoughts on the role of the state in modern capitalist society, the problem of Italian national unity, the struggle against fascism and the way
hegemony over the Chinese in Vancouver has been effected and maintained through the discursive 'othering' of the latter. In appealing to Gramsci she rejects much of the structuralist scholarship in geography and sociology which conceives of the cultural being in some way epiphenomenal to the economy. Thus her reading of Gramsci is intended to contribute in part to wider debates within these disciplines over the relationship between economy, polity, culture and ideology.

However, I would suggest Anderson’s thesis is deficient in several respects. First of all, Anderson does not clarify the specificity of the various class and non-class (race, gender, state etc.) forces as they are aligned at a particular juncture. For example, in Anderson’s linear historiography of racialisation in Vancouver, the reification and authenticisation of Chinese culture at the end of the twentieth century is simply seen in the context of her whole thesis as another instance in the unfolding of the logic of white hegemony that began in the settler society of the late nineteenth century. It is clear however that the alignment of class and non-class forces differs enormously. In the riots that consumed Vancouver in 1886 over the importation of indentured Chinese labour from Victoria and San Francisco to help with the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, the othering of the Chinese was effected by white European proletarian or semi-proletarian work gangs who feared the sudden devaluation of their labour in a highly competitive labour-market. The


sudden embrace of ‘authentic’ Chinese—indeed any ethnic—culture at the beginning of the twenty first century is overdetermined by an entirely different political economy with different relationships between the various class and non-class forces.

In a wider sense therefore Anderson’s evaluation of the constant racialisation and reracialisation of Chineseness in Vancouver, uniquely detailed though it is, seriously underplays the complex relationship between state and class forces. While Anderson therefore demonstrates the discursive continuity of a certain type of ‘orientalism’ in Vancouver, she fails to acknowledge the material underpinnings that lend specificity and uniqueness to the articulation of hegemony in particular concrete historical junctures. In this thesis I draw upon structuralist-Marxist interpretations that assert the centrality of class and non-class forces to interrogate two highly politicised events: the enforced withdrawal from sale of barbequed meat products in the city’s Chinatown district during the 1970s, and the regulation of Greek Day festivities in the Greek community from 1975 onwards. I argue in each case that the state intervened to police the behaviour of large numbers of petty-capitalist, immigrant entrepreneurs. By intervening however the state provoked tension with the latter who claimed, on the basis that the commodity they were selling was uniquely racialised and that to tamper with it would devalue it, that their very social existence was jeopardised and the state’s actions were racist. In order to defuse this tension the city had recourse to an ideological formation—multiculturalism—which by positioning the petty capitalists as one monadic ethnic community among a plurality of others among a totality of citizen-
individuals it was bound to serve simultaneously undermined their claim of racism but also displaced the struggle from the economic and political sphere into that of ideology.

A crucial clarification must be made to this proposition which will be developed in the theoretical chapter; I am not concerned with the interface between capital and labour so much as I am the relationship between the state and the market, however it will be necessary to show first how the former relate to one another within the capitalist labour-process so as to understand the centrality of the capitalist appropriation and control of the labour-process in Marxist theory. For as the events in Vancouver demonstrated, state intervention in the capitalist co-ordination of labour inevitably provokes tension and a tendency toward crisis. In chapter one therefore, I will outline the labour-process under capitalism and explore the importance of this co-ordinating function of the capitalist. In chapters 2 and 3 meanwhile I employ two empirical case studies to work through the various implications of the theses I develop in chapter 1 in a highly suggestive way.
Chapter One: Theoretical Considerations.

1.1 Introduction

In order to understand why the policing of entrepreneurial behaviour by two different immigrant communities in Vancouver was so problematic in the first place, we have to understand this policing was first and foremost an intervention by the state in the labour-process. By a labour-process I do not mean the simple production just of 'things' alone, but the total social relations implied of all of the participants in the labour-process—the direct producer, the non-producer; the relationship of property of the various individuals implied in the production of a commodity to one another and to the means, object and result of production.

In capitalism, the principle problem of production from the point of view of the capitalist is the problem of the \textit{co-ordination of production}. The capitalist approaches the elementary factors of the labour-process as they appear to him in the market—labour-power and means of production—and is forced to set them in motion. But labour-power exists only 'in potential', as the capacity of an individual or group of individuals (in which case it is 'variable capital'): 'Labour-power exists only as a capacity, or power of the living individual'\footnote{K. Marx (1976) Capital. Volume 1. London and New York, Penguin; p. 274.}. This potential has to be activated; surplus-value is not there for the taking but has to be realised; the capitalist has to co-ordinate production therefore to effect this end. In this chapter I want to explore the rationality of the capitalist in intervening in the labour-process to this end.
and in doing so I will have recourse to describe the labour-process from first principles as it is outlined by Marx in Capital. I want then to introduce the perspective of several pertinent theorists who have in one way or another investigated this rationality (Balibar, Braverman, Burawoy), but have left silent in their analyses the role of a second interventionist force in modern capitalist social formulations which also possess its own, idiosyncratic rationality of intervention and management of the forces of production

1.2 First Principles: 'Reading Capital'.

What is the labour-process? Marx offers his clearest explanation in volume 1 of Capital, chapter 7, as he seeks to explain to readers how the circulation of commodities in general, and commodified labour in particular, masks the extraction of 'surplus value'—unpaid labour-time—from workers. For Marx, the capitalist labour-process comprises two elements which have to be clearly distinguished from one another. First of all, there is the act of labour in general, or the transformation of raw materials into useful products through purposeful, sensuous human activity. Marx described this as a 'metabolic' interaction [Stoffwechsel] between man and nature, a process of mutual exchange and enrichment: 'Labour is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature'\(^2\). Through purposeful labour, man completes himself: he represents in a form external to him (the product) his needs and desires:

\(^2\) ibid. p. 283.
'[h]e sets in motion the natural forces which belong to his own body, his arms, legs, head and hands, in order to appropriate the materials of nature in a form adapted to his own needs. Through this movement he acts upon external nature and changes it, and subjects the play of its forces to his own sovereign power'.

The labour-process in its general form has three key elements: work itself, the *instruments* of production, and the *object* of production, or raw material. Of the latter two Marx states 'it is plain that both the instruments and the object of labour are *means of production*'; of the former, 'that the labour itself is *productive labour*'. Together these elements comprise the *forces of production*. The *object* of production might be a raw material, such as land, water, or a natural outcrop of ore; but it could just as equally be something previously worked upon, and which is therefore the product of another labour process, such as quarried ore or spun cotton – Marx's favourite example. The *instrument* of labour 'is a thing, or a complex of things, which the worker interposes between himself and the object of his labour and which serves as a conductor, directing his activity onto that object', according to Marx. Similarly, the instrument of labour can be as simple or as complex as a stone tool or modern industrial machinery.

In addition to the forces of production is the totality of social relations between individual workers and between workers and the appropriators of the social surplus – the non-producer. These are the *relations of production*. It is important, Marx argues, to distinguish these from the forces of production, for the social relations of production that

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3 ibid.  
4 ibid. p. 287, my emphasis  
5 Ibid. p.285.
govern in one instance bear no immediate relationship with the abstract and general character of the work. Or as Marx puts it: ‘the fact that the production of use-values, or goods, is carried on under the control of a capitalist and on his behalf does not alter the general character of that production’\(^6\). To Marx, the labour process in general ‘is the universal condition for the metabolic interaction between man and nature’ and is therefore ‘common to all forms of society in which human beings live’\(^7\).

The relations of production however exist only for a determinate moment in the history of the development of a given social formation; they are particular in contrast to the generalised quality of the labour process in its abstract and simplified form. In a famous passage, Marx emphasises the necessity of this analytical distinction: ‘The taste of porridge does not tell us who grew the oats, and the process we have presented does not reveal the conditions under which it takes place, whether it is happening under the slave-owner’s brutal lash or the anxious eye of the capitalist, whether Cincinnatus tilling his couple of acres, or a savage, when he lays low a wild beast with a stone’\(^8\).

Marx concludes by describing how capitalist relations of production attach themselves to the forces of production through specific relations of ownership of and property in both human labour power and means of production. ‘The labour process,’ he argues, ‘when it is the process by which the capitalist consumes labour-power, exhibits two characteristic phenomena. First, the worker works under the control of the capitalist to

\(^6\) ibid. p.
\(^7\) ibid. p. 290.
\(^8\) ibid. p. 290-91.
whom his labour belongs\textsuperscript{9}. By this we can take Marx to mean that labour power is organized or co-ordinated collectively by the capitalist. This however is only a formal relationship of ownership and control, rather than a real relation of property. The second phenomenon characteristic of the capitalist mode of production is that the capitalist owns both the means of production and the product of the labour process. The worker is formally free, but is compelled to sell his or her labour power on the open market in exchange for wages with which to purchase means of subsistence that they might reproduce themselves. For the miserable time the worker is tied to the capitalist, he remains the capitalist’s property, too. Marx illustrates this deftly: ‘Suppose that a capitalist pays for a day’s worth of labour power;

then the right to use that power for a day belongs to him, just as much as the right to use any other commodity, such as a horse he had hired for the day. The use of a commodity belongs to its purchaser, and the seller of labour power, by giving his labour, does no more, in reality, than part with the use value he has sold. From the instant he steps into the workshop, the use-value of his labour power and therefore also its use, which is labour, belongs to the capitalist. By the purchase of labour power, the capitalist incorporates labour, as a living agent of fermentation, into the lifeless constituents of the product, which also belongs to him. From his point of view, the labour process is nothing more than the consumption of the commodity purchased, i.e. of labour power; but he can consume this labour-power only by adding the means of production to it. The labour process is a process between things the capitalist has purchased, things which belong to him. Thus the product of this process belongs to

\textsuperscript{9} ibid. p. 291.
Marx describes the labour-process under capitalism in these chapters but does not theorise it in all of its complexity. Neither does he talk about any other mode of production than the capitalist mode of production. Partly no doubt this is because of Marx’s didactic writing style, which by necessity was punchy and polemical – *Capital* is as much a political text as it is an economic one. Thus inevitably it has been left to others to clarify inconsistencies and reveal lacunae in Marx’s initial formulations, the better to develop and deepen them – to begin ‘with what seem the most external and formal determinations, and attempt to enrich them progressively’\(^\text{11}\), to acknowledge Etienne Balibar’s phrasing. What, precisely, for example is the relation between the forces of production and the social relations of production in a particular historical epoch – be they capitalist, feudal, or otherwise noncapitalist? How do the latter intersperse amongst the former?

Etienne Balibar performs an interrogation of these lacunae in Marx’s argument for his contribution to the much debated *Reading Capital* project. In his essay he seeks to clarify the meaning the term ‘mode of production’ and to suggest a ‘table of common elements’ for any given mode of production. Like that of his supervisor Althusser and his contemporary Poulantzas, Balibar’s work is strongly inflected with structuralist arguments and the mode of exposition of the argument is justification by first principles, which in all three cases means a ‘strict scientific’ reading of

\(^{10}\) ibid. p. 292.

Marx's 'canonical' texts. Balibar identifies from amongst the fragments of Marx's voluminous writings two elements we have already encountered — the direct producer and the means of production — to which he adds a third, the *non-producer*, or the appropriator of the social surplus ('surplus-value').

Here are the elementary forces of production. But as Balibar points out we can also discern the outlines of another element, the social relations binding individuals within production, which again can be broken down into a subset of two further elements. Between the non-worker, the appropriator of the surplus, and the direct producer, for instance, is a relation — a property relation. Under capitalism, the non-worker (the capitalist) owns the means of production and the product of labour, and for a temporary time stipulated by a contract of employment, the labour time of the direct producer. Similarly by triangulation with other works of Marx Balibar argues it is possible to discern such parameters of ownership for other modes of production:

> If we compare the results of our analysis of this text with a series of other texts, particularly those contained in Marx's unpublished draft Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, and in the Chapter in Volume Three of Capital on the Genesis of Capitalist Ground Rent', we find the same elements and long descriptions of their combinations. Then labourer is specified as the direct producer; the property relation is itself specified according to several complex forms, notably the duality of 'possession' (use, enjoyment) and 'property' (property strictly speaking).\(^{12}\)

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\(^{12}\) Balibar, 'From Periodization …', p. 214-16.
As the last line in this passage alludes to, Balibar’s ‘reading’ of Marx’s canonical statements regarding the ‘mode of production suggests a further differentiation below the category of relations of production. A distinction must be introduced between a relationship of property, defined as legal ownership, and a relation of control over the forces of production’. The difference is subtle but by emphasising it, Balibar contends, we approximate a more precise, more complex and more politically useful definition of the ‘mode of production’, and tangentially of the labour process. Thus, ‘the essential interest of these texts is that they oblige us to introduce into the structure a second connexion distinct from the first, a second relation between the ‘factors’ of the combination’. Balibar contends this connexion ‘corresponds to what Marx designates by various terms such as the real appropriation of the means of production by the producer in the labour process, or simply the appropriation of nature by man; moreover it ‘too, really is a connexion, a relation between [the forces of production]’, and ‘this connexion is distinct from the [property connection]’. In order to demonstrate empirically the existence of this connexion, Balibar sets Marx in dialogue with himself, orchestrating with great skill a tableau of key passages which amplify the existence of a lacuna. He demonstrates clearly that Marx’s intent varies when he refers to the whole corpus of relations that connect a producer to his means of production: some he intends the ‘property’ relation, formal legal ownership of the product and means of production, but other times the second relation which:

13 ibid.
14 ibid.
15 ibid.
16 ibid.
belongs to the analysis of what Marx called the 'labour process', or rather it situates the analysis of that labour process as part of the analysis of the mode of production. Nowhere in it does the capitalist intervene as an owner, but only the labourer, the means of labour and the object of labour.\(^{17}\)

The labour process therefore consists, for Balibar -- as for Marx -- of the forces of production and the relations of production, but a further conceptual differentiation within the latter must be performed between a 'property connexion' which describes forms of legal ownership within the production process (the capitalist legally owns the worker's labour-time during production, as he does the means of production and ultimately, the product), and a 'real or material appropriation connexion', or techniques of control and management which formally organise and marshal the forces of production. This latter ability to corral and shepherd the forces of production is absolutely indispensable -- as important to the capitalist labour process as private property in the means of production is. For, 'without the capitalist's control, which is a technically indispensable moment of the labour process, labour does not possess the fitness [Zweckmassigkeit] it requires if it is to be social labour'\(^{18}\). The capitalist not only has to extract surplus-value from workers in the form of unpaid-labour time, but in order to bring into existence the capitalist labour process itself he has to organise disparate elements of production and bring them together in one place; he has to bring together labour power and means of production as he finds

\(^{17}\) ibid.

\(^{18}\) ibid.
them ‘naturally occurring’, tied to the land perhaps, more often than not geographically dispersed over wide areas. Balibar points out that several key chapters of *Capital* deal with this point, notably Marx’s commentaries on the systems of pre-capitalist production which immediately predate industrial capitalism itself, such as manufacture and co-operation, and which though not technically ‘capitalist’ in nature, nevertheless prefigure what is to come by concentrating and organising labour power so it has the ‘fitness’ to behave as such\(^{19}\).

For we have to recall that when the capitalist goes to market to buy labour-power and the means of production necessary to the carrying on of production, he has bought in the former only a potentiality—labour-power is nothing more than the commodified capacity-to-labour embodied within the living sinew of a human being. That potential labour has to be realised in the new value worked up through the application of the means of production to the object over the course of a more or less extended labour-process. Or has Harry Braverman puts it,

> The coin of labor has its obverse side: in purchasing labour power that can do much, he is at the same time purchasing an undefined quality and quantity. What he buys is infinite in potential, but in its realization it is limited by the subjective state of the workers, by their previous history, by the general social conditions under which they work as well as of the particular conditions of the enterprise, and by the technical setting of their labor. The work actually performed will be affected by these and many other factors, including

\(^{19}\) See especially chapters 13 through 15 in *Capital*. 
the organization of the process and the forms of supervisions over it, if any. 20

Therefore, the continued existence of capitalist relations of production is absolutely predicated on the ability of the capitalist to bring the commodity labour-power to market, motivate it from its torpor to labour, and to labour productively so that the maximum quantity of surplus-value can be extracted from them. The capitalist not only has to be able to find labour-power existing ‘naturally’, as it were from where it was deposited by the collapse of pre-capitalist institutions. He has to co-ordinate production and wrest control of the labour-process from the workers, revolutionising it from top to toe. ‘The labour-process’, argues Harry Braverman, ‘has become the responsibility of the capitalist. In this setting of antagonistic relations of production, the problem of realizing the “full usefulness” of the labor power he has bought becomes exacerbated by the opposing interests of those for whose purposes the labor process is carried on, and those who, on the other side, carry it on. 21 ...

It thus becomes essential for the capitalist that control over the labor process pass from the hands of the worker into his own. This transition presents itself in history as the progressive alienation of the process of production from the worker; to the capitalist, it presents itself as the problem of management. 22

Braverman argues that according to Marx, the labour process in general—the act of labour, of pure, sensuous human interaction with nature—is a

21 ibid.
22 ibid. p. 58.
'unity of mental and manual labour', which in capitalism is subordinated beneath social relations that precipitate a characteristic 'separation of conception and execution'. In this anthropocentric and humanist line of argument, Braverman assumes an ideal transcendental 'subject' which is 'broken' as the labour process is subordinated beneath capitalist relations of production. For, under capitalism the worker (the direct producer) is forced to sell his labour-power on the open market in return for means of subsistence with which to reproduce himself. The capitalist (the non-worker), meanwhile, owns the means of production and the product. 'The worker enters into the employment agreement because social conditions leave him or her no other way to gain a livelihood', Braverman contends.

The employer, on the other hand, is the possessor of a unit of capital which he is endeavouring to enlarge, and in order to do so he converts part of it to wages. Thus is set in motion the labor process, which, while it is in general a process for creating useful values, has now also become specifically a process for the expansion of capital, the creation of profit. From this point on, it becomes foolhardy to view the labor process from a purely technical standpoint, as a mere mode of labor. It has become in addition a process of accumulation of capital. And it is moreover the latter aspect [capital accumulation] which dominates the mind and activities of the capitalist, into whose hands the control of the labor process has passed. In everything that follows, therefore, we shall be considering the manner in which the labor process is dominated and shaped by then accumulation of capital.\[23\]

\[23\] ibid. p. 53.
Michael Burawoy provides an alternative point of view which de-emphasises this moment of negative subordination implied in Braverman's argument. Burawoy first of all challenges Braverman's conception of the 'separation of conception and execution' in the labour process as the hallmark of capitalism. He suggests that Braverman does not specify the reasons why this separation took place with advent of capitalism rather than it being a generic feature of all social formations. 'Braverman takes his standpoint from within capitalism, alongside the craft worker – the embodiment of the unity of conception and execution'. However, 'it is not altogether clear why the separation of mental and manual labour is a principle inherent in the capitalist mode of production rather than one that cuts across all class-divided modes of production. Braverman does not penetrate the specific form of the separation of conception from execution to reach the essence of the capitalist labour process'. This means that instead of identifying the class struggle and the structuration of the relations of production as the primary mechanism of oppression in the labour process under capitalism, Braverman identifies an extra-economic, anthropomorphised power, wrought across the body of the dispossessed craft worker and invested in the faceless industrialist.

By extension, Burawoy argues there is insufficient complexity to Braverman's overall thesis. He suggests that the principle of 'separation of conception and execution' itself serves as something of a confusing conceptual bandwagon for a whole host of 'unexamined assumptions'.

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25 ibid. p. 23.
concerning “antagonistic social relations and “control”, without revealing the specific meanings they reveal under the capitalist mode of production.”

Burawoy argues that the specificity of the separation of conception and execution can only be arrived at through a consideration of the concrete conjuncture in question—the labour process under capitalism—in triangulation with other modes of production, past, present, and predicted.

'Mistaking appearances for essences stems not only from Braverman’s expressive totality and concomitant teleological view of history but also from the absence of any comparative framework that might offer some alternative patterns of development.' That comparative framework Burawoy suggests the structuralist reworking of Marxism handily provides.

According to that,

A mode of production can be defined generally as the social relations into which men and women enter as they transform nature. Each mode of production is made up of a combination of two sets of social relations, or as Balibar calls it a 'double connection'. First, there are the social relations of men and women to nature: the relations of productive activity and of labour process, sometimes known as the technical division of labour. I shall refer to these as the relations in production. Second, there are the social relations of men and women to one another: the relations of distribution and consumption of the product of labour and the relations through which surplus is pumped out of the direct producers, sometimes known as the social division of labour. I shall refer to these as the relations of production.

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27 ibid.
28 This is of course by no means problematic and lends to Burawoy’s method the similar sort of critique advanced of many structuralist scholars that their work is too formalist.
29 ibid. p. 27.
30 ibid. p. 29.
By constructing this apparatus of comparative reference Burawoy is not only building complexity around the notion of the labour process but providing a different perspective on the co-ordinating function of the capitalist. Capitalism, for instance, consists of the elementary forces of production – the worker, the non-worker and the means of production bound together in a double relation of control) and property:

In capitalism, workers are dispossessed of access to their own means of production. For reasons of survival they have no alternative but to sell their labour power to a capitalist, in return for a wage with which they can then purchase the means of their existence. Whereas it appears the workers are paid for the entire time that they work for the capitalist, say eight hours each day, in reality their wage is equivalent to only a portion of the working day, say five hours. These five hours constitute necessary labour time (necessary for the reproduction of labour power), while the remaining three hours are appropriated by the capitalist as unpaid or surplus labour time and later realised as profit through the sale of commodities on the market.\(^{31}\)

In contrast, feudalism consists too of the elementary forces of production, the worker, the non-worker and the means of production, but both the relations of production (of property and of extraction of surplus value) and the relations in production (the labour process, the real material appropriation connexion) are indexed differently. 'At the most general level, and as a first approximation, we can regard the feudal relations of production as defined by particular mechanisms designed to expropriate surplus through rent, while the feudal relations in production are

\(^{31}\) ibid. p. 30-31.
characterized by the ability of direct producers to set the instruments of production in motion autonomously. ... For a portion of the work-week, say four days, serfs work on land that they 'possess' or hold at the will of the lord; during the remaining two days they work on the land of the lord, the lord's demesne. While the former labour is necessary to meet the subsistence needs of the serf's family, the latter constitutes surplus labour in the form of rent, which is appropriated by the lord. What this essentially means is that the worker retains control over the labour process and the means of production, but in return for this autonomy and the right to government must provide customary services to their overlord in the form of agricultural surplus, taxes, or military service. Burawoy contends that the index of the difference between the two modes of production allows us to distill a richer understanding of the nature of the co-ordinating function of the capitalist:

Under the feudal mode of production surplus is transparent. Furthermore, it is produced neither automatically nor simultaneously within the cycle of subsistence production. It is produced outside this cycle. As a result, the lord has to appropriate surplus through extra-economic means. This has many implications for the nature of feudal law, politics and religion, and so forth, since it is in these realms that we discover the mechanisms for ensuring the continuous appropriation of the surplus.

However, it is otherwise for capitalism. Unlike feudalism, where the performance of necessary labour and the extraction of surplus are clearly

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32 Ibid. p. 29-30.
33 Ibid. p. 30.
visible and separated in time and space and where the worker is compelled
to yield a surplus through extra-economic means, under capitalism the
moment of 'obscuring and securing' surplus value is united in the labour
process itself:

We find that under the capitalist mode of
production the very act of production not only
contributes to the making of a commodity (a
use value), but also produces on the one side
the capitalist (surplus value) and on the other
side the labourer (necessary labour). The
transformation of nature as defined by the
labour process – that is, by the relations in
production – reproduces the relations of
production and at the same time conceals the
essence of those relations. ... The dilemma
of capitalist control is thus to secure surplus
value while at the same time keeping it hidden. 34

Whereas Braverman had considered the problem of capitalist control of the
labour process in negative terms as the subordination of human social
labour to a means of allocation 'alien' to it—the market—and had thus
emphasised the moment of repression and terror directed at the worker,
Burawoy wanted to show that the labour-process under capitalism forms an
axial node around which the labourer is tied to capital and shaped by it,
rather than simply subordinated to it. He argues first of all that capitalism
tends toward a gradual universalisation of a free, self-regulating market for
human labour power, whilst slowly stripping labourers of the means to
procure subsistence in any other way but through the market. In this sense
he but echoes Marx's distinction between the formal and the real

34 ibid. p. 31-32.
The subsumption of labour to capital. Second, and simultaneously, the worker—realising the utter absence of any alternative but to sell her labour-power on the open market in return for wage—adapts herself to the job emotionally, psychologically and behaviourally, masking the loss of freedom with a veneer of personal agency exercised ‘on the job’, as it were. It is through this mechanism, Burawoy argues, that capital simultaneously obscures and secures surplus-value and the co-ordinating function of the capitalist fulfilled.

In this way, according to Burawoy, the labour-process under capitalism consists of three levels or ‘moments’ which are united in a structural interplay; the economic moment of exchange of use-values (the buying and selling of means of production and labour power by the capitalist), the political moment of subordination to the relations of production (the co-ordinating function of the capitalist), and the ideological experience of the latter (imagined as immediate ‘local’ or ‘on the job’ gratification or compensation).

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35 Marx argues in a separate essay originally intended as a supplementary chapter to Capital on the labour-process and now appended to the Penguin edition of Volume 1 that the universalisation of capitalist social relations undergoes two distinct ‘moments’; the formal and the real subsumption of labour to capital. Formal subsumption is predicated solely on the existence and availability of the various forces of production as they appear naturally occurring and typically the commencement of production requires some despotic oversight on the part of the capitalist. ‘Real’ subsumption refers to capitalist appropriation of the labour-process and its revolution, in terms we have described above, along lines determined exclusively by the exigencies of capitalist production. See K. Marx (1972) ‘Results of the immediate process of production’, appendix to Capital. Volume 1. London and New York, Penguin.
1.3 State Theory and the Labour-Process

Burawoy's analysis is compelling and thorough and leaves few stones unturned. He emphasizes the ideological moment of production and the hugely important role it plays in the coordination of the capitalist labour-process, and thus the reproduction of social relations of production which subordinate the working class to the capitalist class. But in modern capitalist society the state also intervenes at a multiplicity of points to contain crises and diffuse tensions, frequently intervening thereby in one or another labour-process and usurping the right of the capitalist to coordinate production in its entirety. To 'obscure' the moment of usurpation and 'secure' consent to its intervention, the state resorts to a matrix of ideological formations that reflect its heterogeneity.

For it has to be recalled of course that the state is not a monolithic entity which is in any way 'possessed' or 'strategically held' by any one class or fraction of a class. In this Nicos Poulantzas' substantive Marxist theorisation of the state is especially relevant. Poulantzas argued that the model capitalist state—and in this generalisation lie many of his deficiencies, to be sure—constituted a nexus of practices and institutions that are 'relatively autonomous' from the sphere of production. This is so because under capitalism the social surplus in society is extracted from the direct producer strictly by economic means alone, which is to say the transfer of surplus-value to the capitalist is mediated in free and consensual fashion through the market rather than as a result of an application of force,

or extra-economic means of extraction of surplus-value. The ‘political’ is therefore extruded as it were from ‘the economic’; the modern capitalist state enjoys a degree of institutional autonomy and effectivity with regard to the moment of production within society. Insofar as the state enjoys this relative autonomy, it behaves according to Poulantzas as a lightning rod for all of the class contradictions within a given social formation; it becomes the point of crystallisation of class contradictions. The capitalist state therefore does not act in the interest either of capital or labour but in the interest of mediating the manifold instances of social rupture and displacing them into the realm of politics:

In this way the capitalist state constantly appears as the strictly political unity of an economic struggle which is in itself a sign of this isolation. It presents itself as the representative of the ‘general interest’ of competing and divergent economic interests which conceal their class character from the agents, who experience them. As a direct consequence, by means of a whole complex functioning of the ideological, the capitalist state systematically conceals its political class character at the level of political institutions: it is a popular-national-class state, in the truest sense. This state presents itself as the incarnation of the popular will of the people/nation. The people/nation is institutionally fixed as the ensemble of ‘citizens’ or ‘individuals’ whose unity is represented by the capitalist state: its real substratum is precisely this isolating effect manifested by the CMP’s socio-economic relations.

If the state does not intervene in the capitalist labour-process to advance the interest of any one class or fraction of class, then why does it do so? Why does the state overturn the traditional right enjoyed by the capitalist to direct

39 Poulantzas, Political Power and Social Classes. p. 133 my emphasis.
the labour-process to his own ends and back this up with a variety of ‘repressive’ apparatuses; what higher purpose does the state serve above and beyond the objectives of the direct producers or the non-producers, the appropriators of surplus-value?

Karl Polanyi40 developed something of a similar logic to Poulantzas, though he rejected Marx’s labour theory of value and Poulantzas would have found his proof and mode of exposition thoroughly historicist. Unlike the latter, who begins from theoretical first principles, Polanyi constructs an argument about state intervention in the labour-process in reverse, beginning with the actually-existing economic history of eighteenth and nineteenth century England—the birthplace of capitalism. There he identifies the expansion and growing interconnection of self-regulating markets for land, labour and capital as the motive force of the age. Polanyi realised however that if the production of human labour-power were left to the market alone, humanity would struggle to survive; human labour to Polanyi is a commodity but is embodied in living flesh and sinew, and has particular needs not the least important of which is the requirement it be reproduced on a daily basis, which means that human labour is not a real commodity at all, but a ‘fictive’ one. The state therefore must develop a specific rationality—at times progressive, at times reactionary, at all times considered, limited and conscious of its own boundaries—with regard to the ‘management’ of this ‘fictive’ commodity, one that preserves the sanctity of exchange while ensuring the reproduction of the labour. For

Polanyi this intervention by the state in the labour-process of reproducing labour-power itself constitutes a key axis of modern liberal government.

Polanyi’s notion of the ‘fictive’ commodity can easily enough be translated into strict Marxist concepts. What he would then mean is that under capitalism, human social labour appears as a commodity—as a thing which can be bought and sold—hence as an exchange-value, but this exchange-value is inseparably linked to the extra-economic body in which it resides. By extension, in a class-divided society where the dominant organising principle of human labour is exchange there must inevitably be produced alongside the market all manner of non-economic ‘threats’ to its viability as the mechanism of allocation of human labour—such as the imminent starvation of the workforce or the threat of industrial unrest. This thread of argument is strongly developed by Claus Offe. Working from within the regulationist problematic, Offe begins with roughly the same precepts as the structuralist tradition in western Marxism regarding the state in its ‘relative autonomy’ and insulation from the market. ‘[T]he ideological and state power systems’ in capitalist social formations, Offe argues, ‘are related to the capitalist economic system in such a way that they are limited by, and insulated from this economic system without, however, being able to substantively contribute to its ability to function’.

Offe then argues that the buying and selling of human labour power has to be regulated because the commodity in question is a unique commodity insofar as it is attached to a non-economic body which needs to be reproduced on a continual basis. This is especially so in the era of the

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42 ibid. p. 39.
mature welfare state because of the preponderance of decommodified mechanisms of reproducing human social labour that threaten first the legitimacy but ultimately the structural viability of the capitalist system. ‘The course of development of capitalist industrial society’ he argues ‘seems to cumulatively produce phenomena and structural systems that are not determined by the interest of individual capital units in the creation of surplus-value, and that can be linked to the interest of capital as a whole only in a highly ambivalent way. These phenomena and structures contain the seeds of non-capitalist organisational forms, and for this reason are of interest to capital primarily from the negative standpoint of how their independence can be restrained’\(^{43}\). The state in modern capitalist society has to develop therefore a self-regulating rationality of limited intervention in the labour-process of producing human labour-power in order to displace the systemic conflicts that arise between the commodified and decommodified aspects of wage labour; Offe calls this ‘negative subordination’. ‘Successful negative subordination’, he contends ‘consists of the protection of the sphere regulated by exchange against overlaps and interferences, which are possible developments of the normative and political subsystems’\(^{44}\).

Offe’s language betrays an underlying functionalism, but the fundamental conclusion remains to be drawn that the state intervenes with its ambivalent rationality in the reproduction of labour-power for ends not immediately clear. This ambivalent movement of the state which moves seamlessly between different regulatory fields—from social insurance to

\(^{43}\) ibid. p. 41-2.  
\(^{44}\) ibid. p. 39.
welfare, public sanitation regulations to ethno-cultural funding—itself
betrays the ceaseless self-regulatory oscillation of the ‘political and
normative subsystems’—the state—in patrolling the bounds of the ‘exchange
subsystem’—the labour-market. The overall ‘equilibrium’ between the two
and hence the ‘equilibrium’ of the system overall depends on whether ‘the
boundaries between the respective systems can be stabilised ... [O]ne
would have to characterise processes as crisis-prone if they made the
demarcation of the economic system from the other two systems more
difficult’\textsuperscript{45}.

But this notion of a specific ‘rationality’ of the state in modern
capitalist society needs to be unpacked still further. Is this rationality,
ambivalent in its wanderings though it is, exclusively directed toward the
end of reproduction of society—more specifically, of the relations of
production? Foucault’s remarks on ‘governmentality’ are instructive in this
instance\textsuperscript{46}. He also thought the capitalist type state developed in its infancy
a characteristic institutional autonomy from the market, but also a specific
rationality concerned at safeguarding the self-regulatory properties of
‘economy’. Foucault calls this will toward the management of things,
bodies and spaces embroiled in exchange relations ‘governmentality’, and
contrasts it with the mode of execution of sovereignty of the feudal prince,
whose sole intent was to defend the simple unity between ruler and ruled
and the territorial integrity of the realm from all threats internal or external.
In the absolutist states of sixteenth century Europe, for instance, the

\textsuperscript{45} ibid. p. 39.
[eds.] The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality. Chicago, University of Chicago
Press, pp. 87-104.
monarch acted to contain and confine threats posed to its existence by the rise of markets, the growing abundance of itinerant agricultural labour-power and the explosion in the population of the cities: Louis XIV sought to confine the indigent 'mad' who roamed the byways of rural France in a series of edicts which impounded them in great *hopitaux générales* erected on the sites of the old lazar houses adjacent to the towns.47

From about the time of the ascendancy of capitalism onwards however, we can detect symptomatically in political discourses of the time and concretely in the shifting basis of state power a move toward a systematic a new state rationality less concerned with the defence of sovereignty and more with the management of things, commodities and people, a rationality founded on the principle of 'good government'. Crucially, this new rationality which arose was a limited rationality however, consciously aware of its boundaries, a result of its being the amalgamation and reworking of many older types of executive powers including many pre-modern religious protocols. The intervention of the state in the labour-process under capitalism was justified therefore by the limited claim of the State towards the restoration of 'equilibrium' within 'society'—compare with Poulantzas' notion of an abstract people/nation—which overrides the particular claims of the individuals in whose name it governs.

Hence, with the generalization of self-regulating commodity markets and a free market for human labour power comes the generalization of the problem of management into 'an entire series of interventions and

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regulatory controls: a biopolitics of the population...the old power of death that symbolized sovereign power’ gave way in the classical period, Foucault argues, to the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life. During the classical period, there was a rapid development of various disciplines—universities, secondary schools, barracks, workshops; there was also the emergence, in the field of political practices and economic observation, of the problems of birth rate, longevity, public health, housing, and migration. Hence there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of “biopower.”

For Foucault, the specific rationality of management that was beginning to emerge with the rise of capitalism and its crystallization in various agencies of the modern state took as its object of governance society as a whole which was now to be ‘defended’.

One figure in particular was central to Foucault’s argument: the rational, self-regulating bourgeois individual. Surely this is the very same bourgeois individual that Marx described with such biting satire in the opening chapters of Capital—a certain ‘Mr. Moneybags’ who was forced to go to market and there procure for himself the means of production, raw material and labour-power, only to find an extra labour of coordinating the labour process is now required of him. What is at stake for the state is not the profit margin of the capitalist however, but his ‘competency’ at

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managing the labour-process upon which the reproduction of 'society' depends.

Finally it remains to be understood why the state invokes race in intervening in the labour-process. In this respect Foucault’s lectures on race are suggestive⁴⁹. Foucault once again explores the transition from sovereign power to disciplinary power and governmentality, arguing that the former was characterised by the principle of ‘let live and make die’, which is to say the sovereign maintained his power through the violent and public death of anybody who threatened it while suffering his or her subjects to live. Governmentality meanwhile inverts this formula into ‘make live and let die’, investing in the social body all of its power and energies in the defence of life and the continuation of the species and population, while marginalising groups deemed perilous to the health of the population. While the sovereign state historically waged war against external enemies characterised by ‘race’, the modern nation-state Foucault notes instigates a ‘State racism’ which incorporates within the framework of discrete racial categories the various problematic elements of the population.

Foucault’s thesis requires a qualification in the case of those nation-states today that have constructed some sort of ‘liberal multiculturalism’ as a discursive frame of reference for the management of diversity in the immigrant profile. For in liberal-multiculturalist societies like Canada, immigrant cultural identities are frequently valorised and invested with productive potential by the state. Yet still it must be borne in mind

multiculturalism remains for all that a form of subordination which
'obsures' multiple moments of intervention in the labour of cultural
production in order to 'secure' a more complete cohesion of racially diverse
society. We shall see in more detail how liberal-multiculturalism has been
deployed in this way in the following chapters.
Chapter Two: Pork Wars

2.1 Introduction

Between 1972 and 1978, the city of Vancouver—in association with various agencies of the provincial and federal governments—waged a protracted campaign to regulate the conditions under which barbecued meat was produced by butchers in the Chinatown district of the city. The struggle—the latest in a series of confrontations between the health department and the city's food industry—ended in a victory of sorts when in 1978 federal authorities in Ottawa shifted the emphasis that hitherto been placed on strict food handling and temperature controls to a more flexible and realistic program of controls based around ensuring the microbiological acceptability of the meat. While it lasted however the episode represented a sudden intrusion of the state in the coordination of the city's perishable food sector. What is distinctive about this intervention is the series of overlapping and contradictory racialisations, deracialisations and re-racialisations which it generated.

This episode has been briefly touched upon before by geographer Kay Anderson in her historical geography of the meanings and mappings attached to the idea of 'Chinatown' in this city1. According to Anderson, one of the pre-eminent leitmotifs 'white', Anglo-Canadian Vancouver has used to 'other' the city's Chinese and thereby reinforce their hegemony has been the taint of insalubrity. From the very earliest days of Vancouver's

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1 See chapter X in Anderson, Vancouver's Chinatown.
existence as a British colonial entrepôt on the westernmost edge of North America, insidious metaphors of dirtiness, uncleanliness and unhygienic behaviour have been inscribed onto the bodies of Chinese subjects. In the earliest days of incorporation, shortly after the Canadian Pacific Railroad had been extended to its terminus at the now thriving townsite, the city’s population of indentured Chinese railway workers were orientalised as opium-smoking, degenerate vagabonds—in exact opposition to the supposed purity of lifeblood incarnated in the labour of the European railroad worker, logger, or agricultural husbandman. Anderson’s thesis underplays, however, the class bases upon which many of these discursive-ideological structures are founded. In this chapter therefore I want to pursue and extend Anderson’s thesis that the ‘othering’ of the Chinese in Vancouver and the maintenance of European hegemony takes place through the medicalisation, pathologization and ultimately the criminalization of certain acts of labour deemed ‘unsanitary’—barbeque meat production. Moreover however I want to emphasise this is a state intervention in a capitalist labour process which involves the political regulation of economic exchange, and a corresponding ideological interpretation of the politics of that intervention through the lens of ‘official’ Canadian multiculturalism.

2.2 In Context: the Post-War Clean-Up Drive

The city of Vancouver has long taken an active interest in the sanitary standards of its cafés and restaurants. Beginning in the late 1940s, the city health department launched a campaign composed in part by educational
initiatives, in part by repressive intervention and prosecutions, aimed at enforcing adherence to city health by-laws among fashionable West End eateries, a practice which had fallen into abeyance during the war years.  

Into the fifties and sixties the council took an active interest in maintaining the social and moral respectability of its dining rooms, too. Topless waitresses were banned from all city eateries in 1966, while the following year council ruled in favour of the proprietor of a popular west-side diner who had attempted to bar ‘hippies’ from eating alongside ‘normal patrons’—because of their ‘offensive’ and ‘frightening mode of dress’, as Nat Bailey, civic worthy and manager of the West Broadway White Spot had it. And in a portent of things to come the following decade, a 1966 fiat from the council, later overturned by the federal health department in Ottawa, attempted to have restrictions placed on the sale of whole poultry—that is, without having been decapitated and eviscerated—in the Chinatown district, a tradition which, it claimed, violated the rigorous standards set down both in provincial and federal statutes. The barbecue meat controversy was not without precedence in the city, therefore, though arguably the inflammatory combination of two unrelated events toward the end of the nineteen sixties helped stimulate the health department to action in this particular instance.

In May, 1967, the city health department appointed Dr. Gerald Bonham to the post of city medical health officer. Selected from a shortlist of seven candidates, Bonham was a visionary. His emphasis in public

2 'Union says city cafés “Unsanitary Disgrace”'. Province, Jan. 24 1946, p. 9.
5 'It’s Year of the Horse, not year of the chicken', Province, Feb. 7 1966, p. 19.
health was, as the Vancouver Sun reported it, to be on education and prevention: “Our program is geared to the prevention of illness through improvements in the control of communicable diseases, and preventative programs in mental health”, Bonham is quoted as saying. Then, in 1968 in Spokane, Washington, five fatal food poisonings grabbed headlines across the Pacific northwest, deaths which authorities in the U.S. later determined were linked to the consumption of Chinese barbecue meats. Spurred into action by his new brief and the sudden threat to public health, Bonham and the city health department rushed through a new health ordinance that would ensure the storage of all perishable foods at ‘safe’ temperatures, which were determined at the time to be either below 40 degrees Fahrenheit (4 degrees centigrade), or above 150 degrees Fahrenheit (about 60 degrees centigrade).

2.3 The Double-Nature of the Commodity Form

The regulations were applied equally to all perishable food products sold in the city of Vancouver in order to protect the health of the population. The health department intervened in order to regulate the entry of a particular commodity into the marketplace. The state constituted the exchange-value of the commodity as a legitimate domain of intervention and regulation. It would do well at this point to unpack the notion of ‘exchange-value’. According to Marx, ‘exchange-value’ is simply the capacity of a commodity to be bought or sold on the open market – irrespective of the

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6 ‘Dr. Gerald Bonham named city medical health officer’, Province
7 Vancouver Health Bylaw #4387 (1968), sec. 30.
particular qualities invested in it or the particular needs was designed to satisfy. It is like a ‘passport’ into the marketplace, allowing the commodity to circulate freely amidst others, and to be bid for according to competitive market forces. Two consequences follow from this. First, because ‘exchange-value’ designates the potential of a commodity to be bought or sold, and thus enter into a property relation, it indicates the presence in the background of social relations between human beings. Any intervention on this plane thus constitutes a political intervention to the small capitalist entrepreneurs in their capacity as coordinator of the labour-process, one which is more than strictly economic in its scope. In other words, the state by intervening deliberately politicizes—as we shall see racialises—the sphere of production insofar as it can disenfranchise from the marketplace any capitalists who exceed the parameters laid down in law for their operation.

Secondly, intervening politically to police the boundaries of ‘exchange-value’ inevitably exceeds itself because ‘exchange-value’ can have no existence unless it is attached to a useful object—‘use-value’. A ‘use-value’, for Marx, is the other facet of a commodity, the particular use it is designed to serve or the material want or need it fills. ‘Use-values’ can exist without being ‘exchange-values’ or having values at all (that is, without their having been mediated through human labour). A thing may posses usefulness without being a commodity—without being enmeshed in social relations between human beings. An ‘exchange-value’ cannot exist apart from a particular thing or quality however because a thing can only be

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brought to market to if there is a desire for it. Thus, when the state intervenes at the level of ‘exchange-value’ it interposes indirectly into the ‘use-value’ of the commodity, the particular means by which the commodity is procured and refined and the human need it is destined to serve and sate. Intervening to police the labour-process of ethnic cookery, municipal government in Vancouver was destined from the beginning therefore to encounter all manner of problematic practices and customs.

2.4 Duck-hunt

Vancouver health department lost no time in fact implementing an educational program designed to smooth the transition – which it already anticipated would be troublesome – in the case of the Chinatown meat merchants, where the tradition was to cook large batches of duck, suckling pig and chicken early in the morning and then hang it on display in the open air for perusal by customers during hours of business. The health department recommended the installation of heating cabinets and refrigeration units, as well as modifications in the cooking process to speed up the lag between the production and sale of the meat. Meanwhile, inspections were carried out from the summer of 1972 onwards to establish how closely the Chinese merchants were following the guidelines, which turned out to be not very closely at all. A 1975 inspection of the Kwong Hing Company on Pender Street, in the heart of Vancouver’s Chinatown, revealed a damning catalogue of unsanitary practices. Summarising his findings, public health inspector R. Wong noted that his
'study indicated that the heated food cabinet failed to maintain products at the required minimal temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit', that insufficient heat was attributed to the use of "flood lamps" in place of heat-type bulbs and to the use of only one element instead of two. As indicated by the meat left over at the end of the day, some of the food, e.g. soya sauce chicken, cooked in the morning was displayed in the cabinet throughout the rest of the day until closing when the meat is then transferred to a refrigerator. Furthermore, an undesirable practice of returning to the warming cabinet cooked meat which was refrigerated overnight was revealed by this investigation.

Another example occurred in October 1977, when a health department inspection team visited the premises of Majestic Barbecue Specialties Ltd., also on Pender Street, a particularly recalcitrant establishment which had consistently dragged its feet over the enforcement of temperature requirements, and which now found itself at the centre of a food poisoning furore brought about by the identification of a batch of barbecued ducks purchased from the merchant with five cases of salmonella diagnosed in diners who had eaten the meat in a suburban restaurant. Before the inspection took place, a separate memo had been attached to the report detailing the movements of the problematic ducks between the butcher and the restaurant, where they were consumed. It had been observed here that the 'transportation time from Vancouver to Rickshaw'—the restaurant

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9 City of Vancouver, internal memorandum 'Study of Barbecue Meat Operation at Kwong Hing Company', June 13 1975. Vancouver Health Department fonds., City of Vancouver Archives, files 129-F5-f18 through 129-F6-f6.
where the poisonings had taken place—'was three quarters of an hour'.

The report then goes on to describe conditions at the butcher itself: 'An inspection of the above premises [Majestic Barbecue Specialties, Ltd., 274 E. Pender Street] was conducted by myself on October 17, 1977', it begins. 'In attempted to follow the route a duck would take from its entry into the premises in its unprocessed state to the finished product offered for sale'. The report then outlines the full list of procedures which contravened, or threatened to contravene, the requirements of the city’s health statutes.

In the 'rear receiving storage area

4 ducks [were] observed here laying on top of a box. ... While I was observing them an employee removed them to a walk-in freezer saying they were partially thawed as they were soft to the touch.

There were 'no ducks' in the 'food preparation and barbecue area', but in the 'retail area ... 2 ducks were hanging in the showcase'. Their temperatures were observed to be around 120 degrees, and thus in violation of the city health by-law. Moreover the temperature of the case was recorded at 101 degrees, manifestly insufficient to kill any bacteria which may have survived the cooking process. And 'the doors were permanently open with no attempt by employees to close them'.

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10 Boundary Health Unit, letter 're: Food Poisoning—Rickshaw Restaurant, 10522 King George Highway, Surrey', Oct. 4 1977, Vancouver Health Department fonds., City of Vancouver Archives, files 129-F5-f18 through 129-F6-f6.
11 Vancouver Health Department, internal communication 're: Majestic Barbecue Specialties Ltd, 274 E. Pender Street', Oct. 18 1977, Vancouver Health Department fonds., City of Vancouver Archives, files 129-F5-f18 through 129-F6-f6.
12 ibid.
13 ibid.
14 ibid.
And though the emphasis was firmly on the barbecue meat industry and the unsanitary practices which attended it, other aspects of the production of Chinese and Japanese food came in for special scrutiny now that Chinatown had been targeted. One round of inspections conducted in October 1976 at three downtown east-side establishments where bean curd products were sold—the Sunrise Market and Yet Cheong Companies on Powell Street, Vancouver's Japantown, and the Shimbo Tofuten Company just around the corner at 450 Alexander Street—provided several examples of suspect food-handling practices. Having described the nature of the problematic products, the report goes on to outline how

the last step in both The Sunrise and the Yet Cheong is to arrange the tubs [of bean curd] in tubs or trays which are then transported to the restaurant or grocery. ... all three producers deliver their product to the retailer. The Sunrise and Yet Cheong do not cover the product but orders have been issued on this matter by the district inspector. On Sundays, the cakes are often delivered before the stores open and they sit uncovered, unrefrigerated on the ground until the store opens. To date, bean cakes have left on counters, some refrigerated most not and all unprotected if from Sunrise or Yet Cheong. The consumer chooses which bean cake he wants by picking it up with his bare hands. To use any tong or lifter would damage the delicate product thus leaving it unsaleable. ... [Furthermore,] customers have been noted washing fingers after handling other products.\textsuperscript{15}

So clearly although the city was intervening with the objective purpose of withholding from entry into the marketplace a particular commodity which it deemed harmful to the wellbeing of the population, it did a lot more. The

\textsuperscript{15} Vancouver Health Department, internal memorandum ‘Bean Cake Production and Handling’, Oct. 25 1976, Vancouver Health Department fonds., City of Vancouver Archives, files 129-F5-f18 through 129-F6-f6.
'exchangeability' of the commodities the small capitalists produced—their exchange-value—was united in the body of the commodity with a whole host of extraneous, racialised use-values which the city had no interest in policing and which it therefore hived off as something separate and uninteresting.

But this introduced a dilemma for the butchers. For though they repeatedly stressed their willingness to conform to the law, the temperature requirements as they stood were so restrictive—effectively, either to maintain the product at temperatures hot enough to prolong the cooking process so long as the meat remained unsold, or to refrigerate it immediately and so reduce the meat to a tough, gelatinous mass—that no-one would want to buy their product. For by separating out the exchange-value of the meat as an object of governance whilst in the eyes of the Chinese butchers simultaneously regulating the particular, unique qualities of the labour-process involved in its production, the state attempted to institute a split in the commodity form; it was attempting to forcibly 'deracialise' production at the same time as leaving the Chinese some rope to 'racialise' themselves. Bonham was unintentionally asking the Chinese butchers to substitute for their existing commodity something quite unlike it for which there would be no market and which would hence spell their commercial demise. The 'crackly texture' of the meat, wrote Douglas Jung, lawyer for the Chinese Barbecue Meat Merchant's Association, 'is much liked for and demanded by the Chinese consumer'\(^\text{16}\). And when Kuo Ten Jew, proprietor of the Majestic Barbecue Specialties Ltd. testified in

mitigation of sentence at his trial for public health violations in October, 1978, he articulated a similar sense of exasperation:

The fact is that when I turn [the heating cabinets] to that temperature [140 deg F., the temperature required by law the taste of the pork and meat would change. And they would dry up and it’s like eating tree bark and the customers don’t like them. ... we have just got together and formed an association and put [the new heating equipment] to trial and got a cabinet so that we can reach the required temperature. When we try the cabinet and turn the temperature to a hundred and forty the meat became dried up and the customers did not want it and our business failed.\(^{17}\)

To the small capitalists, whose very social existence was under threat by this usurpation of their right to coordinate the labour-process, the health department’s actions seemed unnecessarily harsh and arbitrary. As one member of the public put it in correspondence with the health department, ‘why not ban the automobile instead, hundreds of people are killed or maimed for life by it?’\(^{18}\) The health department’s regulations threatened to disrupt the Chinese food and beverage industry’s carefully crafted equilibrium and destroy a highly localised niche market within it, and to this extent it smacked of racial harassment. If an ideology is an experience of politics and economics in the imagination, as Althusser

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argues\textsuperscript{19}, might we not consider the low-level, commodity racism and its justification to be the experience of political intervention in the labour-process of producing barbeque meat products? In consequence might we also reflect that any resistance to this political intervention has to mediated through ideology? Arguably the state was better able to impose its will on the butchers in this regard. The butchers began their defence by emphasising that they were for the most part law-abiding citizens who paid their taxes and shared in the rights and responsibilities of any other Canadian. ‘Let me say at once’, wrote Douglas Jung of his clients\textsuperscript{20}, ‘that the attitude of these individual merchants has always been that they are prepared to co-operate with your Department and that they understand the reasons for the regulations’. But they publicly challenged Bonham’s isolation of food-handling from the rest of the cooking process and its constitution as a domain of intervention and legislation. ‘We have no objection to the role which you have to play as a civic official,’ Jung continued, ‘but we do question whether or not the temperature requirements are necessary or enforceable’\textsuperscript{21}. They wanted to exclaim for all in the public sphere to hear their practices in preparing barbeque meat products were culturally sacred and ‘authentically’ Chinese. Moreover they wanted the state to shift the burden on to the ‘sovereign consumer’ outside of the market, on the other side of the ring, browsing the commodities for sale and fingering his or her pocket-change:

\textsuperscript{21} ibid.
Health departments at all levels of government are concerned that unless cooked meats are kept at either above 140 degrees or below 40 degrees, there is a danger to the consumer. On the other hand, even if the minimum temperature requirements were maintained, and the food product handled under the most sanitary conditions, there is no guarantee that the consumer would not suffer from possible food poisoning because food poisoning can result from improper handling and storage on the part of the consumer. I suggest that to put the entire onus on the Barbecue Merchants’ meat is unfair and impractical. For example, a person can buy cooked meat that has been prepared according to regulations, but what happens if the person who has bought the meat does not go home right away and carries the meat around for a long period without refrigeration? What happens if after the meat has been taken home, the consumer leaves the meat out on the kitchen table where it is susceptible to temperature changes, or where a consumer uses a knife to cut the cooked meat and which knife has been used to cut raw meat?22

The Chinese community envisaged a different matrix of racialisations. They wanted to re-assert and protect the use-value embodied in their commodity so as to protect the barbecue meat industry from overregulation and avert a significant threat to their livelihoods. For, the affair was ‘more than a matter of meat’, as one correspondent to the Sun put in October 1972. ‘The decision passed by the government is stupid, superficial and ignorant. The sudden panic of food contamination seems quite laughable when one considers the fact that the Chinese have existed on this “potentially lethal foodstuff” for a few thousand years and yet

dominated world population. The writer is suggesting barbeque meat was not a threat to the health of the population or the equilibrium of the market, as testified to by several thousand years of Chinese history. Simultaneously though, the butchers accepted the need for some sort of regulation within the confines of the law, since they appealed to the health department for clemency on the grounds of 'good citizenship'. Their solution was to advocate for the de-racialisation of 'consumption', and set up the 'sovereign consumer' as a legitimate target for intervention, thus shifting the burden of responsibility for an acceptable economy of public sanitation away from the butchers and onto the purchasers of the meat.

Eventually, in 1978, the city of Vancouver backed down and relented in its attempts to ban the sale of barbecue meat where cooking methods do not permit it to be stored at legislated temperatures. Their jurisdiction was overruled at a higher level—by the federal Health Department in Ottawa—and the butchers were for the most part given leave to carry on the practice within even more closely medicalised parameters. The foodstuff was now to be issued with a health warning instructing customers of the need to re-heat the food thoroughly if not consumed at the point of sale; meanwhile the city health department did not relent on issues other than temperature controls, insisting the butchers dramatically reduce the overproduction and hoarding of food from one day to another. While the affair lasted however, it demonstrated the tendency of the terrain on which the struggle begins—the political-economic—to shift gradually to the ideological. From the very beginning the Chinese community leaders who

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spoke on behalf of the butchers portrayed their patrons as a discrete and subordinate ethnic collectivity, one amongst a plurality of such collectivities that together constitute the liberal-multiculturalist state.

2.5 Multiculturalism as ‘hegemony’

Gramsci’s notion of ‘hegemony’ helps us here to understand the complex racialisations invoked in the stand-off. For Gramsci, hegemony is a means of continuation of the art of war in the realm of politics, where its function is no longer to destroy and expel but to contain the ‘enemy’ internally. Gramsci developed his ideas with reference to the proletarian struggle in Italy after the Great War, where the problem of hegemony presented itself in vivid terms as the reality of fascism. He argued the totalitarian regime represented merely the political expression of an underlying hegemonic bloc uniting against the urban proletariat the industrial bourgeoisie of the northern Italian towns, the petty-bourgeoisie and the mass of the southern peasantry. The theoretical task at hand for the intellectual—Gramsci—was to forge a counter-hegemonic alliance between the proletariat and the southern peasantry in order to break the matrix of power that allows the industrial bourgeoisie to maintain its hegemony.

This idea has been reworked by critical scholars of multiculturalism who have compared that particular ideological apparatus of control and regulation to an instance of ‘hegemony’. Lisa Lowe argues that cultural

representations of diversity in the modern United States tend toward what she calls a ‗forgetting‘ of the complex material settings out of which such neat representation are distilled26. The contemporary experience of ‗diversity‘ has now become a pastiche of discrete national forms and ethnic signifiers arranged in governable formations and spaces—she takes for an example the 1990 Los Angeles Festival of the Arts, with its variously static or mobile cultural creations from around the world. Multiculturalism, therefore, is an inflection of a type of hegemony which deflects real material struggle among immigrant communities into the realm of ‗culture‘. It ‗is central‘ she argues, ‘to the maintenance of a consensus that permits the present hegemony, a hegemony that relies on the premature reconciliation of contradiction and persistent distractions away from the historically established incommensurability of the economic, political and cultural spheres .... The production of multiculturalism at once forgets history and, in this forgetting, exacerbates a contradiction between the concentration of capital within a dominant class group and the unattended conditions of a working class increasingly made up of heterogeneous immigrant, racial and ethnic groups‘27.

Canadian scholar Himani Bannerji explores these contradictions as they have unfurled in the process of nation-state building in Canada. Bannerji argues that multiculturalism constitutes an ideological ‗coping mechanism‘ to contain the contradictions within the political economy thrown up by the opening of immigration channels to many east and south-east Asian nations as well as to existing immigrant cohorts and newcomers

27 Lowe, Immigrant Acts, p. 86.
from elsewhere around the world\textsuperscript{28}. This ideological settlement requires the
construction of a discursive space of ‘diversity’ in contrast to the
‘homogeneity’ of an abstract Anglo-Francophone white Canada, one which
transcends and masks material inequalities and contradictions and
transforms political-economic crises into ideological froth. ‘It rests’ she
argues ‘on posing “Canadian culture” against “multicultures”, marking the
difference between a core cultural group and others who are represented as
cultural fragments’\textsuperscript{29}. But this rationality of divide-and-conquer by the
Canadian state with regard to its numerous immigrant others has a wider
object as its aim. ‘The larger function of this multiculturalism not only
takes care of the legitimation of the Canadian state’, she continues, ‘but
helps in managing an emerging crisis in legitimation produced by a
complex political conjuncture evolving through the years after the second
world war’\textsuperscript{30}. The construction of a hegemony of ethnic diversity was
necessary to the degree that ‘[t]he Canadian state had to deal with a labour
importation policy which was primarily meant to create a working class. ... It also had to contain the mobility drives of workers otherwise compliant,
but wanted to get a secure economic niche in the country’s labour and
consumer markets’\textsuperscript{31}.

An ideological coping mechanism becomes
urgent in view of a substantial third world
immigration allowed by Canada through the
1960s up to recent years. This new practical
and ideological/discursive venture, or an
extension of what Althusser has called an

\textsuperscript{28} H. Bannerji (2000) \textit{The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender}. Toronto, Canadian Scholars’ Press Inc. See especially chapters 1, 2 and 3.
\textsuperscript{29} Bannerji, p.
\textsuperscript{30} ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} ibid.
ideological state apparatus, indicates both the crisis and its management. After all, the importation of Chinese or South Asian indentured labour, or the legally restricted presence of the Japanese since the last century, did not pose the same problems which the newly arrived residents do. As landed residents or apprentice citizens, or as actual citizens of Canada, they cannot be left in the same limbo of legal and political non-personhood as their predecessors were until the 1950s. Yet they are not authentic Canadians in the ideological sense, in their physical identity and culture. What is more, so called authentic Canadians are unhappy with their presence, even though they enhance Canada’s economic growth. Blue Ribbon Hong Kong immigrants, for example, bring investments which may be needed for the growth of British Columbia, but they themselves are not wanted. But they, among other third world immigrants, are here, and this calls for the creation of an ideology and apparatus of multiculturalism (with its discourse of a special kind of plurality called diversity) as strategies of containment and management.\(^{32}\)

It will be noted as Bannerji herself concedes in this quote, that not every immigrant necessarily ends up a proletarian. While not exactly Blue Ribbon Hong Kong investors, the Chinese remained petty capitalists who were in charge of their own labour-process. Thus the racial antagonism that Bannerji and Lowe describe does not map exclusively onto the conflict between labour and capital. While multiculturalism can serve as an ideological displacement for class conflict, the Chinese butchers, though capitalists, found themselves on the ‘wrong’ side of the racial antagonism. In the eyes of Anglo-Canadian hegemony, Chinese butchers were

\(^{32}\) ibid. p. 42
effectively racialised as 'incompetent' to properly manage the labour-process despite all disclaimers. The ideological cover provided by multiculturalism was not to mask conflict between capital and labour, but to mask the state's appropriation of the labour-process from the capitalist.

The contradictory racialisations which followed in the wake of the city's intervention in the barbecued meat controversy indicate therefore the defusing of the manifold class interests of one particular immigrant group—the small capitalists—and their displacement into the realm of multiculturalist ideology, according to which no one particular ethnic group has the right to transcend the rights and responsibilities of any other or of society as a whole. In particular, this absence manifests itself in an unconscious refusal by the plethora of institutions and agents spanning the city council, the health department, and the provincial legislature to acknowledge the class basis upon which the butchers' appeals for clemency are founded—their prerogative as capitalists to coordinate the labour-process. Foremost amongst the discursive elements introduced to contain them instead were the vague and indeterminate concepts of the 'public' and 'taxpayer': 'your argument that the consumer also has a role to play in the care of food is accepted', Douglas Jung was told by Dr. Bonham in 1973.

'We have evidence of sanitary breakdown in the household resulting in food poisoning, but the public, through our department, expect some safety in products sold, and it would be unwise to permit a serious level of bacterial growth prior to sale which would only further be compounded by poor

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domestic practices. The ‘Chinese’ figure in this economy of antagonism as one discrete racial group set among a plurality of others, interspersed within which lie numerous non-racialised ‘nodal’ points – such as food handling in the catering industry—opposed to which in a fundamental manner are the ‘public’, the representative of which is ‘the state’. But Bonham feels no compulsion to identify these elements as the representatives of white, Anglo-Canadian class hegemony, and consequently they remain hanging as abstract, monolithic entities to which the butchers will never have an adequate response. ‘The barbecue merchants are responsible citizens and taxpayers’, Jung went on to tell Bonham. ‘Admittedly, the barbecue merchants are taxpayers’ came the reply, before he was curtly informed that

the costs of Health Inspectors, Medical Health Officers and laboratory personnel are consuming an enormous amount of tax money required for the supervision of their unsanitary practices. ... I wish to assure you that there is absolutely no basis of racial persecution in this matter, but I am so concerned about the situation that I am now forced to do absolutely everything necessary in order to resolve it. The public in Vancouver pay me for this responsibility and I do not take it lightly.

Meanwhile, at the sentencing of Kuo Ten Jew in October 1978 for infringement of the city health code, the presiding judge declared that while he was ‘well aware of the situation’ and ‘somewhat aware of why you’re here’,

\[34\] ibid. p. 2-3.
I hope you understand my position that I will enforce the law, although it may seem harsh to you I will enforce the law. It is—*it must be the same for everyone*, you want the same benefits, your community wants the same benefits as the white community or the occidental community, you've got to be under the same laws and that's the only way that your client can operate.\(^{37}\)

Chapter 3: Greek Fire

3.1 Introduction

At the same time that health inspectors were busy inspecting the conditions of butchers in the Chinatown district of Vancouver, other city officials were busy policing the annual Greek Day festival held by members of the city’s Greek community on the West side of town. Each July from 1975 to the mid 1980s, the Hellenic Community of Vancouver staged an open-air cultural festival designed to showcase the traditions of the Greek community. This festival became a sphere of regulation and intervention on the part of the state from 1977 onwards, when numerous instances of petty law-breaking attended that year’s event. The intervention of the state to regulate the event thereafter led to a similar skein of racialisations and deracialisations that accompanied the dispute over barbequed pork.

In the previous argument the intervention of the state to secure adherence to sanitary standards of the various butchers was the sole rationale of the state, clearly yet narrowly defined. In the case of Greek Day festivities, the state was charged with more than one duty to fulfil: it had to police public order at the same time as it discharged its new responsibility to foster good will and promote cultural understanding between Vancouver’s citizenry and its minority populations. While in the case of barbeque pork multiculturalism meant the passive acceptance of Chineseness, in this case multiculturalism meant the active promotion of
Greekness. A second differentiating point to the policing of Greek Day festivities concerns the ambivalent status in which Greek ethnicity is regarded. It has been noted by scholars\(^1\) that whiteness is not a monolithic entity but comes in many shades that reflect subtle differentiations in the hegemonic construction of whiteness itself. In particular Southern and Eastern European ethnicities have often in the history of modern capitalist society been located in an ambiguous no-man’s land sometimes enclosed within a discourse of degeneracy and indiscipline, other times—as with Greeks—reimagined as the blond-haired blue-eyed figure of Classical antiquity. In a sense the ambivalency of Greek ethnicity further helps to understand why the state so closely policed and ultimately reinforced in a positive way the cultural content of much of what was ‘produced’ during Greek Day. Thus whereas in the case of the Chinese an inscrutability and unknowability persists with regard to the behaviour of the small capitalists, in many ways the behaviour of the city’s Greeks was all too knowable and identifiable as a stain on whiteness.

3.2 In Context: Greeks Bearing Gifts

There had been a Greek presence in Vancouver almost since the city’s inception—including a scion of the Pantages family of theatre and music hall fame in the United States\(^2\). It was in the immediate post-war

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\(^2\) The Pantages family are best known in Vancouver for their initiation in the early twentieth century of the Polar Bear swim, a dip for the foolhardy in the chilling waters of English Bay at dawn on January 1\(^{st}\). They are best known to me through the stories and
years however when jobs were plentiful and the economy was booming and Canada’s immigration restrictions were loosened to admit a steadily rising influx of southern and eastern European migrants to enter the country that most Greeks arrived in the city. Greek families and their extended kin networks were to be found all across the Lower Mainland, though by far the largest concentrations were in Vancouver and of those, the largest was to be found in Kitsilano, a run-down neighbourhood close to the industrial lands around False Creek liberally populated with rooming houses, which towards the end of the sixties became a haven for ‘hippies’. Traditions established in the homeland remained strong within the expatriate Greek community: families were tightly bound by extended patriarchal kinship networks; the rite of marriage within the Orthodox Church was still highly valued; and the Greek language was preserved and taught to new generations.

In 1975 Greco-Canadians from the Hellenic Cultural Association of Vancouver plus local merchants and restaurateurs united to plan a day long celebration of Greek culture that would take place on West Broadway in the heart of Kitsilano. The intention was to showcase the best of Greek custom and tradition in the new spirit of multiculturalism that prevailed to foster understanding of and goodwill between different cultural groups within the

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anecdotes communicated personally through my Kitsilano landlord, George Pantages, to whom I am grateful for imparting a sense of context to many of the events I describe hereunder.

1 Hiebert, ‘The Changing Social Geography...’
4 Vancouver Sun, 1952. See also ‘Where Greek meets Greek’, Vancouver Sun, June 28 1980: ‘In order to preserve that community spirit and sense of tradition, the children attend Greek school two hours a day, four days a week, to learn the language, religion and customs. There are nine schools in the Vancouver area and children are expected to attend for six years’.

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city. The proposal was initially welcomed, with plaudits from both the press which reported on the event and the city council which had provided matching funds to defray the costs of street cleaning and policing.

Reporting on the second annual Greek day in 1976, a similar success to the preceding year, the *Vancouver Sun* described it as 'a delightful bit of urban playtime...The Hellenic Community Association, the festival organizers, is owed the community's applause.'

Echoing the prevailing spirit of multicultural harmony meanwhile, alderman Jack Volrich—who opened the event—said 'Vancouver has come to know its ethnic groups as never before and that Greek Day would lead to a better understanding of the city's citizens, and especially its growing Greek community,' the Sun further reported.

The following year however, 1977, Greek Day festivities were attended by numerous small criminal incidents—brawls, trespassing, and above all public urination. As a result the state in addition to its positive support for the multicultural content of the day's festivities began also to turn a legislative eye toward certain activities and practices it deemed inappropriate by the standards of general 'public decency.' In September of that year city engineer Bill Curtis drew up a report which was then submitted to the council in which he strongly and publicly criticised the organization of the event, suggesting it was set up almost entirely for the benefit of Greek merchants on West Broadway, whom he further intimated had lax standards when it came to enforcing liquor controls and who contributed in large part to the general rowdiness, the bill for which

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7 'Greeks bearing gifts', *Vancouver Sun*, June 29 1976, p. 4.
8 'Happiness is Hellenic as Broadway goes Greek', *Vancouver Sun*, June 28 1976, p. 35.
eventually surmounted $2000 when the costs of smashed barricades and extra street cleaning were taken into account. "To a very great extent, Curtis' report concluded, 'the unrestrained sale of beer and the attitude of the merchants caused many of the problems...[T]he event was conducted almost totally as a commercial venture by participating businesses'. The report caused a schism in the way the city council approached subsequent applications for approval of Greek Day festivals. A distinction was drawn between those positive aspects of the festival the state was prepared to reinforce and those negative elements it wanted to subordinate and destroy.

Speaking after the city council gave the 1978 Greek Day festival unanimous approval, alderman Mike Harcourt said: 'If it was as cantankerous and with as much hooliganism as last year, we'll have to stop it or send it to Burnaby'. Fellow Alderman Harry Rankin said: 'Last year was a disgrace. It may have been a commercial success, but from an ethnic point of view it was not successful'.

3.3 Political Intervention and Ideological Legitimation

For 1978 and subsequent Greek Days the city openly intervened in the planning, organisation and execution of the event—in short the labour-process, the unity of mental and manual labour—in order to isolate and eliminate inappropriate practices. Festival organizers were advised to install more public lavatories on the festival site and provide more adequate

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9 'Curbs on ethnic fetes seen after Greek Day incidents', Vancouver Sun, Sep. 10 1977, p. 10.
11 ibid.
event-marshalling. The city unloaded more and more of the financial responsibility and risk incurred by the event onto the organizers themselves, posting several bonds which would be redeemed only if street furniture was left unmolested in the aftermath of the festivities. After the general rowdiness in 1977, the city paid special attention however to the sale and consumption of beer by private vendors in public places. Beer sales were restricted to within certain hours, those hours gradually receding as the years went by; patrons were forbidden cans or bottles, were advised they could only purchase liquor with food, and could only consume alcohol while sat down. There remained by the end of the 1970s very few aspects of the Greek Day festival which had not been tampered with by one city agency or another.

The posed a dilemma for the Greek merchants, many of whom were restaurateurs or greengrocers along the busy West Broadway—Kitsilano strip. As small proprietors of family businesses they were for the most part masters of their own labour process. The incursion of the state into the organization of the labour-process alone therefore was problematic enough for the Greek merchants involved. But because the product involved was their own ethnicity—because so much of what the restaurateurs were trying to produce was ‘Greekness’—this intervention became doubly problematic insofar as by intervening, the state once again tried to effect a partial and temporary disaggregation of the component

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12 See for example the detailed list of 25 measures to be followed for the 1978 celebration summarised in City of Vancouver Engineering Department, manager’s report, June 8 1978; and City of Vancouver Council Committee on the Arts, report to council, June 7 1978. V.H.D. fonds., C.V.A., files 129-F5-f18 through 129-F6-f6.
elements of a commodity—a cultural commodity, yet no less a commodity for that.

For the cultural commodity in question was the totality of practices, performances and activities which together constituted Greek Day—a celebration of ethnic identity, but also the reproduction of that identity and in it and through it the reproduction of Greek social and economic life. To the Greeks, Greek Day represented an indivisible unity of cultural and economic practices. The very existence of a ‘Greek identity’ was tied in large part to the uneven temporal and geographical dynamics of this material substratum of Greek life. The restaurateurs and the Hellenic Cultural Association emphasized this point in later dealings with the city council. They argued strenuously—but ultimately unsuccessfully—that because the evening period and the restaurant constituted the principal time and place of social reproduction among Greek immigrants, the festival ought to be granted special provisions for extended liquor licenses well into the late evening period; a free reign to vend alcoholic beverages openly on the street; and extend the space of the Greek ‘family hearth’ out from the commercial space of the restaurant onto the public thoroughfare outside. As the minutes at one council discussion in 1978 confirm, ‘[The Greek community representatives] felt quite strongly that sale of alcoholic beverages should be permitted until 8:00pm and that the time of termination of the celebration should be 10:00pm. Their points were based on a premise that evenings were a recognised Greek ‘family’ time’. George Bonnis, 1975 festival organizer, said in his comments to the press covering that

13 City of Vancouver Engineering Department, ‘memo for record purposes’, June 1 1978, p. 4. Culture, Health and Recreation fonds., City of Vancouver Archives, file 33-G-2 f.2
year’s successful debut event: ‘We’re trying to show the European culture, how to be happy, drink and have fun. We’re supposed to shut down at midnight but if we did the Greek way we’d stay open to four a.m.’. The stage is then set for the elaboration of a common urban myth: ‘the typical success story begins with a new immigrant who takes a job dishwashing, works up to a cook, and by scrimping, working and determination becomes owner.’ Part-myth, part-truth in many respects no doubt, this formula repeatedly played itself out again and again in the Vancouver restaurant industry from the nineteen-seventies onwards, as the audience for Greek cuisine widened from a niche market to the mainstream. ‘Vancouver Greeks have a reputation for possessing a Midas touch,’ the article goes on, ‘and Broadway is lined with testimonials to a creed dictating both hard work and plenty of play’.

They could also point to the success of similar sorts of events held by the city’s large Italian population in the Grandview-Woodwards neighbourhood on the east-side of the city. There, representatives of Italian businesses and cultural organizations had successfully lobbied for and

16 ibid.
received funding and institutional support from the city as well as widespread acclaim for the organization of several events, including the official Italian Day celebrations which migrated periodically between Commercial Drive and a huge new cultural centre the community had constructed for themselves further east toward the suburb of Burnaby. At one event held in 1978—dubbed *Carnivale Italiano*—the 2800 square-metre cultural centre was transformed into the setting for a magnificent Italian banquet replete with a guest list of local dignitaries (Premier Bill Bennett and Vancouver Mayor Jack Volrich), a fundraising presentation during which over $30,000 in provincial grants was disbursed to the sponsors of the centre and a masked Italian ball to top off. 'The wine booth dispensed so much wine that it temporarily ran out of plastic glasses', the *Vancouver Sun* nonchalantly reported. 'From then on, it was difficult to locate anyone in the shoulder-to-shoulder crowd without either a dish of food or a glass of wine in his or her hands...inside, all the servings, whether of food or wine by the glass, cost 50 cents'. And yet hardly an incident worthy of note was reported at this or at any of the other events sponsored by state-community linkages like this.

The arguments of the Greek representatives were to no avail, however. Beginning in 1978 the state began to separate out and police

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17 Demonstrating their clearly more developed institutional ties with movers-and-shakers at the top of municipal government, Italian community leaders had in fact proposed as early as 1967 some sort of 'ethnic' centre for the sizeable east-side community (See 'Italians plan ethnic centre', *Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 13 1967, p. 25. Backers of the 'Centro Culturale e Ricreativo Italiano' outlined in a half-page spread in the *Vancouver Sun*, Feb 1st 1978, p. A12, their idea was 'to bring to Italians and Canadians a closer identity of traditional Italian culture'. See also "A day in Italy" celebrated at newly-opened centre*, Vancouver Sun, June 5 1978, p. A16.


20 ibid.
various ‘problematic’ practices, as previously alluded to. The state sought a sort of temporary strategic separation of various practices associated with the reproduction of Greek social life, their reification, isolation and disbandment. Furthermore the state deracialised its activities, arguing in the first instance it was intervening to protect the social well-being of all Vancouverites and in the second instance that its motivations were not racially motivated against one cultural group in particular because the state’s remit was now explicitly to promote and foster good will and understanding between different immigrant groups. In the meantime, the state racialized those activities it perceived to be authentically Greek and sought to positively reinforce them.

In attempting to positively reinforce the cultural content of the Greek Day festivities the city was now engaged in defining Greek culture within closely monitored and racialised parameters. Greek representatives pointed out in discussions with the city prior to the 1978 event that their cultural and ethnic displays ‘would be substantially increased over previous years and that it was their intention to have one cultural booth alongside each food outlet. Further, that these displays would be augmented and spread out more evenly throughout the entire area. It was mentioned’, the minutes of the meeting go on, ‘that these points were basic to the approval of the event, and the committee was pleased to hear of the proposal’21. The organizers of the festival were eager to prove their willingness to adhere to the recommendations at first. Writing to the city in 1981 to outline the program of cultural events foreseen for that July’s Greek Day, Nick

Zapantis, the coordinator of the organizational committee, wrote that besides a giant float to sail down West Broadway through Kitsilano, various events were scheduled to take place evenly across the same four block stretch 'in order to best represent the Greek traditions, customs and folklore', including 'two stages for dance performances', 'outdoor café's (Greek style) which would serve food and drinks', a 'display of handicraft to be set up alongside sidewalks, 'an outdoor barbeque as per Greek custom', and finally 'dancing on the streets'.

Evidently these assurances of a minimum level of cultural content were not sufficient for the city which after another bad year for police incidents in 1981 bluntly told the Hellenic Community to increase the number of cultural and ethnic events yet further in order to better fulfil the remit of the festival to promote and foster goodwill toward and cultural understanding of the city’s minority populations. ‘During discussion’, minutes record of a 1982 council report, ‘there was general agreement that more food and entertainment and less overselling of liquor would create fewer problems on future Greeks Days’. The Greek community were instructed to register with the police and the city and communicate their intended schedule of events, ‘indicating the complete description and location of each cultural and ethnic event and the proposed restrictions for liquor licenses’ to both well in advance so that a multicultural festival could be put on not solely for the benefit of the Greek merchants but to

24 Ibid.
enhance understanding of and meaningful interaction with immigrant cultures for the widest possible audience.

The Greek Day festival laboured on under these constraints for several more years until the mid-eighties. By then the closing time had receded to 6 pm and the closing time for the supervised beer tents that the council had insisted be set up to replace sales from the restaurants themselves to 5 pm. The space allocated to the Greeks on West Broadway grew smaller and with public sentiment turning increasingly against the organizers of the festival it was eventually decided to abandon an open-air event in favour of a smaller and more intimate gathering at the Hellenic Community Centre on Arbutus Street. To summarise thus far, the state had come into conflict with a loosely associated network of producers, and had intervened to usurp from these small capitalists their traditional right to co-ordinate the labour-process, one which was a conscious unity of cultural, social and economic practices. It had wrenched control of this process of production away from the producers themselves and had manifestly transformed it. It effected a separation between the use-values produced during Greek Day—the manifold performances of cultural authenticity it deemed the signatory characteristics of this particular ethnic group—and the-exchange values—the manifold instances of the entry into, circulation within and eventual withdrawal from the market of commodities. But this split can only ever be a temporary and unstable disequilibrium which requires substantial ideological elaboration. Thus, the former it racialised as authentically Greek; the other it deracialised entirely. The state began to displace the struggle away from the political-economic juncture and onto
the discursive terrain of multiculturalism. With its strategic monopoly over the Greek community representatives—insofar as it was not only in control of the purse-strings but also had sole power to bestow official imprimatur on large public events such as these—the state was soon able to manoeuvre into a position of outright hegemony, and subordinate the production of Greek culture to its own ends. Moreover it was able to do this in the most public fashion possible; by slowly erasing public assembly and celebration in the open air.

We might stop to consider at this juncture how this situation relates to Burawoy's contention that the labour-process is a structural unity of at least three moments: the economic; the political; the ideological. The conflict between the Greek community and the state certainly constituted a political-economic moment for as we have seen Greek Day involved a public celebration of the production of Greek immigrant culture. The specific labour of cultural production and social reproduction entailed a production of commodities—the sum totality of all the practices and activities enacted in the labour of organizing and executing Greek Day—and those commodities possessed use-value and exchange-value. The political moment is constituted through the intervention of the state to divide use values from exchange values. But we know from Burawoy also that there is an ideological relationship constituted through the labour-process also which is indispensable to the articulation of the whole as a structure in dominance. In the relationship between the non-producer and producer, Burawoy argues ideology plays a very important role in compelling the worker to abide by the capitalist co-ordination of
production, but it also plays an important role when the state intervenes to police the labour-process.

3.4 Masturbatory Bodies and the Sin of Commercial Greed

If we consider ideology for a moment in concrete terms like ‘attitudes,’ it is clear that the attitude of the city and the police department especially toward the Greek community was to regard them as difficult and uncontrollable. Bill Curtis’ manager’s report commissioned in the aftermath of Greek Day 1977 charges, according to the Vancouver Sun, ‘that the merchants did not cooperate with police in attempts to control the situation…. The report concludes: “To a very great extent, the unrestrained sale of beer and the attitude of the merchants caused many of the problems.”25 Others interpreted this uncontrollability in more moral terms. The Reverend George Anastasiades, pastor of the local Greek Orthodox church, concurred with the city and bemoaned the departure of self-governance from his fellow immigrants when he wrote that ‘freedom that cannot be appreciated, respected and used wisely leads only into destruction and misery of self and society.”26 Others chose not to mince their words so; one local resident, a Mr. T. Petruic, promptly wrote the council shortly after the 1976 event to complain of the ‘mounds of garbage not being picked up, people wading through it stepping on broken beer bottles, short plastic cups,

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25 'Curbs on ethnic fetes seen after Greek Day incidents', Vancouver Sun, Sep. 10 1977, p. 10.
it was *one big pigsty*\(^\text{27}\). From an early point therefore, masturbatory and animalistic metaphors abounded in general public intercourse regarding at least the supposed 'negative' side of the event.

Certainly in addition there soon came about an abiding suspicion that the event was just a commercial venture. The city’s attempt to appropriate and transform the merchant’s right to co-ordinate the labour-process and part the use-values and exchange-values employed therein had gained momentum and become something of a self-fulfilling prophesy, as more and more taxpayers began to question the indivisible sanctity the Greek merchants placed on the unity of cultural and economic practices in the moment of production. Letters began to pour into city hall: ‘I am not objecting to the Greek Day’, one local resident equivocated, ‘but I think it should be strictly a cultural presentation rather than a day of uncivilized, massive unpleasantness. As I see it, a few people wanted to make a profit in any way possible\(^\text{28}\). ‘I thought we were celebrating Canadian day not Greek businessmen’s day’, wrote another\(^\text{29}\). The letter writers had inscribed the sin of commercial greed on the Greek merchants. Recalling the history of anti-Semitism past and present, the wider Greek community quickly began to bear the alleged sins of this small merchant minority. In discursive terms the struggle quickly cleaved along sharp racial antinomies: Greeks vs. everybody else. ‘Presumably Greek Day is to foster good will between Greek ethnic groups and citizens of the country in which they now live.

Whatever the purpose it certainly was not evident or highlighted Sunday 26

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\(^{28}\) Anastasiades, letter.

June [1977] on West Broadway', Mr. and Mrs. L.E. Sashaw wrote the Hellenic Cultural Community Centre planning board shortly after that year's event.30 ‘People of other than Greek ancestry [sic] to whom we have spoke [sic] agree that the Greek Day event is intolerable for nearby residents and that it should be discontinued.31

To excuse themselves from the sin of commercial greed, the Greek community made their own case to the city council, arguing that the sale of lots of beer, wine and souvlaki together was absolutely essential for them to be able to afford to pay for the event, thereby reinscribing the unity of use-values and exchange-values in the commodity form. ‘Attached to this letter,’ wrote Peter Capadouca to the festival committee in 1978, ‘we have a budget for an average booth that a society may have. We also have attached the proposed programme and the budget for Greek Day as set out by the Greek Day Committee. This is to show you that the societies do not make piles of money as some people suspect and that the costs are substantial.32

In fact, ‘at least seven hours of operation for liquor sales (from noon to 1900 hours) were absolutely mandatory to justify the time, effort and expense required for this very large event’, a Mr. Hurmuses, the chair of the 1982 Greek Day organizational committee, assured the council committee on community services.33 The organisers of the festival were caught in a double bind. On the one hand they were forced to yield effective control over the organization of the labour of organizing and executing the festival

31 ibid.
to external forces—the cultural content of the event to assume a certain form and the compliance of the merchants and vendors to be assured in all instances through the posting of security bonds, such as the $5000 sum the Hellenic Community was told to pay the police department for patrolling Greek Day in 1983. On the other hand, in order to reproduce their own social existence and do so openly, publicly and in this sense geographically, they had to maintain an intimate link between spontaneous cultural exhibition and the ability to make money. Nick Panos, president of the Hellenic Community Association, wrote the council that year to exclaim: ‘We fully realise that your new policy demands such a fee [the $5000 security fee], however the costs of putting on such an event have drastically increased and we find ourselves in the position of barely breaking even financially’.

Other opinions that came to light as a result of the publicity surrounding the general rowdiness that occurred at Greek Days during the 1970s was more obviously and plainly dismissive of any grounds whatsoever on which to hold a Greek ethnic festival. Intolerable was the word Mr. and Mrs. Sashaw had used to describe the event in 1978. ‘Why intolerable?’ they asked before they went on to relate a few happenings of ‘that great, disgusting, wasted day’. The whole affair was ‘nothing but a noisy [sic] drunk table [?] loaded with [illegible] over beer, children guzzling left over beer, all the same kind of food’, one West Fifth Avenue resident tartly expressed in a contemptuous dismissal of all things Greek: ‘No entertainment worth watching but a few men and women playing ring

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35 Sashaw, letter.
around a roses\textsuperscript{36}. The irate letter writer goes on: ‘I feel for some reason they are allowed to get away with these disgraceful celebrations. For what reason? … Just how come these people are so privileged? Vancouver has great Jewish, Ukrainian, Polish, Chinese groups, who [two words, illegible] so much confusion and drunks and ??? [sic] drugs?? Let’s stop this nonsense!’ In this double-play, the author reduces the rights and privileges of the Greek community to those of any other community within the greater civic polity while dismissing the ethnic group in question almost as beneath contempt—lacking as it were a certain degree of ‘competence’. The metaphor of the masturbatory body is recalled here again, for in this dialogue cultural expression becomes formless and amorphous nonsense without the rigours of a strictly deracialised and rational principle of organisation and governance. ‘We and many others who have had to bear the brunt of these “Days” are prepared to organise and to circulate a petition to stop this nonsense unless assured that the activities will be of short duration and held under strict administrative and police supervision\textsuperscript{37}.

3.5 Containment and Isolation—the Spatiality of Multiculturalism

So how to deal with this menace? Many petitioners to the council argued it ought to be moved on—and cited other cases in their support. One Kitsilano resident declared:

\begin{quote}
[t]he feeling around the neighbourhood is rather hostile toward the whole thing—we have noticed that other ethnic groups held
\end{quote}

their days that weekend but were considerate enough to hold them in parks about which we are always hearing as becoming needed as more ‘people places’. They were apparently orderly and went off beautifully while this fiasco held on Broadway was a total disaster what with traffic jammed tight on the side streets and cars driving over lawns on 8th Avenue to escape the tie ups and the brawls that went on during the whole thing. ...

Please, if they have to have their ‘days’ issue permits only for parks and let us have our quiet Sunday with no inconvenience and noise and also so we are able to get to bed before midnight for those who must work the next day.

A similar sort of point was made in equally ‘eloquent’ fashion, minus however the not so subtle substratum of contempt, by another local. ‘The logical spot for such an ethnic event is the Greek Community Centre—much in the same way that the Italians held theirs at their Cultural Centre. Another place is Connaught Park where a most successful Kitsilano Day took the limelight during the early seventies. There were no problems there and ten thousand people thoroughly enjoyed a family day in the park.

Nevertheless the general thrust here as well is to isolate and enclose and remove from the general public—moreover it is the Greeks’ responsibility to police and govern themselves in this respect and exercise their rights and responsibilities as an ‘ethnic group’ the same as any other. For, wrote R. Mayer of West 5th Avenue in Kitsilano in 1980, ‘[o]ther ethnic groups celebrate in their own centres in a very respectable way. Why can’t they?’

‘Why can’t’, in fact, ‘vacant parks nearby be used for this kind of thing?’

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40 Mayer, letter.
argued one petitioner who thought she had a sure-fire case. ‘They are disobeying Canadian liquor laws, they should use Carvon [sic] Park or Tatlow Park if they want to dance and Booze, the street is no place for this kind of thing’.

Thus there was a spatiality also to the regulation of the labour-process. The difference that had been precipitated through the cleavage the state had effected between the use-values embodied in a commodity and the exchange-value—the authentic cultural practices and traditions which were plainly, obviously and commonsensically ‘Greek’ were to be accepted, even positively reinforced under the state’s guidance; but this difference was to be heavily managed and to some degree bracketed off and held in geographical parentheses. There was open support from many quarters within the city to remove the Greek Day festival altogether from West Broadway. Alderman and later Premier Mike Harcourt had said tongue in cheek in 1978 he would rather send Greek Day to suburban Burnaby rather than keep an event tainted by hooliganism in Vancouver, but his off-the-cuff opinion curried favour in the ears of more earnest bureaucrats; Ian MacGregor, of the Liquor Administration Branch—a disproportionately powerful agency of municipal and provincial governance—pointed out to council in 1980 ‘that a number of licensed premises were taking advantage of this event. He suggested that the Greek Day Committee consider transferring their event from a public street to a park area. Various suggestions were Connaught Park or the Greek Community Building and its

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adjacent area. Municipal action fell short of executing a removal such as this though it would do well to note here the dark side of representing difference in the modern multicultural city—that so many of the premeditated cultural forms, experiences, tastes, smells and sounds we associate with the authentic and in particular the authentically ethnic, are predicated on a degree of isolation and geographical containment, or as Trinh T. Minh-Ha observes, the banal re-creation of colonial Bantustans in the heart of multi-ethnic neo-capitalism. In fact this act of exclusion of difference and its simultaneous re-inscription within the bounds of a contained territory is a peculiar hallmark of capitalist spatiality, Poulantzas earlier argued. Under capitalism,

[t]he direct producers are freed from the soil only to become trapped in a grid - one that includes not only the factory but also the modern family, the school, the army, the prison system, the city and the national territory. We may verify this by looking at the modalities through which the capitalist State exercises power. Thus, concentration camps are a peculiarly modern invention, because, among other reasons, both they and the national territory concretise the same spatial power matrix. Camps are the form of shutting up non-nationals (or, more precisely, 'anti-nationals') within the national territory. They internalise the frontiers of the national space at the heart of that space itself, thus making possible the modern notion of 'internal enemy'. The exact configuration and topography followed by this territory will, of course, depend on a whole series of historical factors (economic, political,

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linguistic and so on). But what matters here is the appearance of territory and frontiers in the modern sense of the terms. The territory becomes national and, by means of the State, constitutes an element of the modern nation.\textsuperscript{44}

In conclusion we can in a preliminary way define the general field of ideology girdling the state's intervention in the labour-process of producing ethnicised commodities in terms of three key narratives: the opposition between the commercial sin of the merchants and the cultural 'authenticity' of Greekness, which the state first precipitated by intervening in the labour-process and which was then taken up by the general public and rehearsed as an entirely natural opposition; the individualization and atomization of the many interwoven social, political and economic networks that constitute the totality of immigrant communities in Vancouver—of which the Greeks are firmly embedded—into discrete ethnic groups divided along premeditated racial boundaries in which the myriad intricacies of class, gender and other power relations are utterly erased; and the ascription of responsibility for self-governance to these ethnic groups—responsibility for properly adhering to the rules and protocols, the specific degree of 'competence', required by the state in its capacity as a gatekeeper for funding and a final arbiter of license approval. Together these elements delimit the ideological field of play. Their more or less coherent articulation into a system of discursive hegemony over the Greek Day organizers and the merchants defines the ability of the state to cement its political intervention.

\textsuperscript{44} N. Poulantzas (1978b) \textit{State, Power, Socialism}. London and New York, Verso, p. 105, original emphasis.
Furthermore, the opposition between the cultural authenticity of ‘Greekness’ and its commercial sinfulness resolves into a debate about whom ‘culture’—in this case authentic Greek culture—is for precisely. Here it is most certainly not envisaged as the sole preserve of the Greeks themselves but is treated as the common property of all Vancouverites; or in other words it is treated as a racialised object of consumption for an unnamed and unracialised majority. Indeed this was affirmed in very concrete terms at the highest levels of municipal governance. The city had a charter to fund and license events that facilitated the fostering of goodwill and cultural understanding between minority immigrant groups and the rest of the city’s population. The Greek merchants recognized this and sought to improve their case strategically by appealing to this noble sentiment. ‘As you must realise’, a savvy Nick Panos wrote in his 1983 letter to Mayor Mike Harcourt, ‘Greek Day is not a private party, but a city event which benefits both the cultural and entertainment needs of this city. Participation is not eclectic, but open to every person in the Lower Mainland. Therefore we hope you will seriously reconsider the decisions you have taken and we look forward to hearing from you in the very near future.’ Panos’ plea went unheard however, demonstrating in a very real sense that the Greek community’s culture was not their own to do with as they pleased.

45 Panos, letter.
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