

# SUBVERSIVE ITINERARY

The Thought of Gad Horowitz



Gad Horowitz. Photo by Shannon Bell.

# Subversive Itinerary

*The Thought of Gad Horowitz*

EDITED BY SHANNON BELL  
AND peter kulchyski

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS  
Toronto Buffalo London

© University of Toronto Press 2013

Toronto Buffalo London

www.utppublishing.com

Printed in Canada

ISBN 978-1-4426-4532-5



Printed on acid-free, 100% post-consumer recycled paper with vegetable-based inks.

---

### Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Subversive itinerary : the thought of Gad Horowitz / edited by Shannon Bell and Peter Kulchyski.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-1-4426-4532-5

1. Horowitz, Gad, 1936-. 2. Canada – Politics and government. 3. Political science – Canada. I. Bell, Shannon, 1955-. II. Kulchyski, Peter Keith, 1959-

JL65.S82 2013 320.971 C2013-900424-6

---

University of Toronto Press acknowledges the financial assistance to its publishing program of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts  
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

50 YEARS OF ONTARIO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF THE ARTS

50 ANS DE SOUTIEN DU GOUVERNEMENT DE L'ONTARIO AUX ARTS



University of Toronto Press acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund for its publishing activities.

# Contents

---

*Introduction* ix

SHANNON BELL AND peter kulchyski

## **Part One: Life and Times**

- 1 On Intellectual Life, Politics, and Psychoanalysis: A Conversation  
with Gad Horowitz (2003) 3

COLIN J. CAMPBELL

- 2 The Life and Times of Horowitz the Canadianist 15

NELSON WISEMAN

- 3 The Odd Couple of Canadian Intellectual History 42

EDWARD G. ANDREW

- 4 Between Pause and Play: Conveying the Democratic Spirit 54

JASON ROVITO

## **Part Two: Fragment Theory**

- 5 The Political Culture of English Canada 73

IAN ANGUS

- 6 Canada's Regional Fragments 92

NELSON WISEMAN

- 7 Restoration, Not Renovation: A Fresh Start for  
Hartz-Horowitz 113  
ROBERT MEYNELL

### **Part Three: Spirit and Power**

- 8 Gad ben Rachel ve Aharon: *Parrhesiastes* 133  
SHANNON BELL
- 9 What's Involved in Involution? A Psycho-Poetics of Regression:  
Freud-Horowitz-Celan 156  
MICHAEL MARDER
- 10 The Sexed Body of the Woman-(M)Other: Irigaray and Marcuse  
on the Intersection of Gender and Ethical Intersubjectivity 174  
VICTORIA TAHMASEBI
- 11 The Spark of Philosophy: Hartz-Horowitz and Theories of  
Religion 194  
COLIN J. CAMPBELL

### **Part Four: Political Philosophy**

- 12 Transcendental Liberalism and the Politics of Representation: Pos-  
sessive Individualism Revisited 215  
SEAN SARAHA
- 13 From the Narcissism of Small Differences to the Vertigo of Endless  
Possibilities: Horowitz among the Levinasians 237  
OONA EISENSTADT
- 14 Adorno and Emptiness 256  
ASHER HOROWITZ
- 15 horowitz dances with wolves: inquiries pursuant to the thought of  
gad horowitz 279  
peter kulchyski

### **Part Five: Horowitz in His Own Words**

- emmanuel, Robert 293  
GAD HOROWITZ

Bringing Bataille to Justice 303

GAD HOROWITZ

An Essay on the Altruism of Nature 316

GAD HOROWITZ

*Bibliography* 329

*Contributors* 351

*This page intentionally left blank*

# Introduction

---

SHANNON BELL AND peter kulchyski

The process we label “self” is discontinuous. It renews itself from moment to moment. Almost non-metaphorically, you can say, and it has been said, that there is death every moment, that there is a gap or pause between this moment of life and the next, this moment of self and the next.

In this gap or pause one can appreciate the discontinuity of life and the possibility that this offers for liberation from the burden of insensate habit that ordinarily obfuscates the possibilities of fundamental change from one moment to the next. The speedier life gets, the more intense the illusion becomes of the continuity of self speeding through time.

Gad Horowitz<sup>1</sup>

Gad Horowitz has remained prominent among Canadian intellectuals and political theorists for close to fifty years. Horowitz, now in his mid-seventies, is most widely recognized for his early work – *Canadian Labour and Politics*, particularly his landmark essay “Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in Canada: An Interpretation” (CLS), which planted intellectual dynamite under burgeoning Canadian political culture. What is perhaps less commonly known is Horowitz’s subsequent work on Freud, Marcuse and psychoanalysis, modern political thought, Buddhism, general semantics, continental theory and post-structuralism.

Gad’s intellectual trajectory reflects his Buddhist and post-structuralist understanding of self as set out above – that a self is discontinuous and never coming to rest. What cements Horowitz’s diverse works together is that they are continuously and consistently subversive. Gad brings to political theory an incisiveness of critical thinking that

originates not from a fixed position but rather from a series of shifting locations: Canadian political culture, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, Buddhism, Judaic scholarship, and general semantics. Horowitz says “everything he has in mind”<sup>2</sup> with unnerving candour and undiluted courage. As Horowitz says in his interview with Colin Campbell in chapter 1, “My books, writing, and teaching make a statement about my attitude to academia, and that is the importance of eclecticism: the importance of being interested in and doing work in many fields, and not just one field.”

The notion of itinerary is used to mark the movement that takes place through the course of an intellectual’s lifespan: the itinerary marks stops, resting points that situate the inevitably fluid movement of thought. Within Horowitz’s writings, the itinerary is a winding path that starts with an analysis of Canadian political culture and the hidden promise it bears to both left and right on the political spectrum, that apparently leaves these concerns or submerges them in a more philosophical concern with political problems related to repression and desire, and that twists again to deploy the analysis of a structure of power and thought to the ethical implications of contemporary continental theory.

What Horowitz unleashes on each of the fields or locations at which he stops is a radical critique of hegemonic liberalism and its inherent repressiveness. This critique begins with the “Hartz-Horowitz” view of the relation between toriyism and socialism and the role of Canadian political culture as a (partial) escape from monolithic American liberalism. The second phase leaves the Canadian field, picks up Marcuse’s distinction between basic (necessary) repression and surplus repression and carries it through the rest of the itinerary, beginning with the analysis of the market/hive in *Everywhere They Are in Chains* all the way to the discussion of Levinas/Derrida in *Difficult Justice*, where Kabbalah is enlisted in the service of the basic/surplus approach. Horowitz’s present work on Korzybski produces a radical general semantics as one vehicle of a Marcuse-like emancipatory transformation of the human sensorium.

In marking Horowitz’s itinerary with the notion that it is subversive, our hope is not to fall back into totalizing encapsulation but to point to the insistent detotalizing nature of Horowitz’s intellectual projects. In the mid-fifties, to characterize Canadian political culture as potentially more emancipatory than that of the United States, and to show an affinity between a certain tendency on the Canadian political right and left, amounted to a deeply subversive reading of the political cultures

of those places. In the mid-seventies, to probe the notion of repression in such a serious and systematic manner – giving in to neither the “repression is bad” zeitgeist nor the conservative “repression is good” reactions – in a reading that worked within but challenged Marcuse’s use of Freud and Marx from an author whose work on Canada was already canonical, caught many by surprise and slowly has infiltrated intellectual work with its subversive spirit. Then, through the late eighties to the present, to engage with continental philosophy, from Rousseau to Foucault, with an elliptical yet intellectually forceful questioning of the ethical dimensions of social thought, to “discover” in the pores of a European intellectual history newly concerned with questions of language the striking work of the general semantics school, to puncture Levinas’s balloons with Bataille’s prick (and perhaps the reverse): these small challenges are submerged intellectual explosives whose effect will be felt in many years to come.

Horowitz is a subversive because he does overturn long-established canons of thought. Horowitz is a subversive because his thought does not stop, bounding between the philosophical, political, and anthropological, between the personal and the political, through the state and the body, suturing the laughter and the grammatical opening into the richly textured linguistic gap where meaning folds back over itself. Horowitz is a subversive because he retains a concern for the politics of social class: in his marrow he never forgets the indignities and the fundamental injustice of poverty that the established order rests upon and continually reinscribes. His work is magisterial in the command he brings to his fields of inquiry, but we refer to his “small challenges” because he belongs on the side of those who do not reap the rewards of the current world order. He is a subversive because he never forgets the destabilizing force and uncontainable pleasure of certain forms of laughter.

The words, pages, and chapters that follow engage with the subversive itinerary that has traced itself through the intellectual production – particularly writings and teachings – of Gad Horowitz. We want to separate or distinguish or problematize the relation between “Gad” and “Horowitz.” By *Horowitz*, we in proper academic form call attention to the trace of a name that authors and authorizes a series of writings. Horowitz is cited, debated, “known” as a shifting set of critical interventions into public and scholarly life. Most, though not all, of the texts here are devoted to discussion of Horowitz and his signature contributions to the world of letters. Occasionally, in some of these writings and

especially in Part One, "Life and Times," another figure puts in an appearance: Gad.

Gad, a man "of flesh and blood," as the existentialists used to say (and we are reminded of Gad's many reminders of the value of earlier traditions of critical thought, so often dismissed by the fashion-theory industry), is the Gad who once placed cigarette after cigarette on the lectern as he spoke, lighting each new one on the embers of the last; the Gad who pursues his transgressive pleasures to their inspiring ends; the sound of his voice; the way in which indignation at some or other stupidity moves his body; the Gad who shouts out in the cinema, who meditates, who pulls his body through one subcultural event after another, who sits on the witness stand and refuses to use any other word than *the pigs* to describe police officers. Horowitz does theorize the body in ways that challenge our conventional mind-body dualisms. But Gad is something more than the praxis associated with Horowitz's theory, just as Horowitz's theory is something more than a result of the body of Gad (though it is that, too). And there is the "body" of Horowitz's works, the ideas that emerge through the speaking of Gad at the lectern (or was that Horowitz who stood there?), the liberations and repressions carried by the words and the flesh in their entwined moments. Most of all, there is the childlike twinkle that emerges from eyes that have found a moment of critical playfulness.

We, Shannon and Peter, know of ourselves and suspect of most of our contributors a feeling of genuine privilege for having in the smallest of ways been touched by Gad, stung or encouraged by the sharpness of his words, by the gentleness or seriousness of his gaze, sharing food or travel or the endless series of wry black jokes and the deep friendship of shared laughter. Through his own writings and his mentorship of a diverse range of activists, intellectuals, and public intellectuals Gad Horowitz has had a significant influence upon Canadian scholarship and political discourse. This collection of essays pays tribute to Horowitz's ongoing work by either engaging his work directly or reflecting upon themes and issues inspired by his thought.

If a thinker's body of scholarship can be divided into early, middle, and later periods, then the early Horowitz would be the Canadianist whose work is engaged by Colin Campbell, Nelson Wiseman, Ed Andrew, Ian Angus, Robert Meynell, and Peter Kulchyski. His work on psychoanalysis, critical theory, and continental theory can be presented as constituting the middle period in Horowitz's scholarship. The contributors interacting with Horowitz's thought from this period are

Colin Campbell, Sean Saraka, Jason Rovito, Michael Marder, Shannon Bell, Asher Horowitz, and Victoria Tahmasebi. The later Horowitz encompasses Buddhism, post-structuralism, and general semantics, with the qualifier that always there is the defining presence of aspects of critical theory in the later work. These contributors concentrate on the later Horowitz: Oona Eisenstadt, Asher Horowitz, Shannon Bell, Jason Rovito, and Peter Kulchyski. Five contributors – Campbell, Rovito, Bell, Horowitz, and Kulchyski – straddle these somewhat artificially designated periods in our engagement with Horowitz's work. *Subversive Itinerary* consists of five parts: "Life and Times," "Fragment Theory," "Spirit and Power," "Political Philosophy," and "Horowitz in His Own Words."

Part One, "Life and Times," involves critical biography and dialogic reflection on or with Gad. It begins with Colin Campbell's "On Intellectual Life, Politics and Psychoanalysis," in which Gad in discussion with Campbell sets out the content, context, and reverberations of his work from Canadian political culture to radical general semantics. The Campbell-Horowitz interview provides the frame for the fourteen essays in this collection, drawing out the overarching themes of red torism, Canadian nationalism, socialism, basic (necessary) and surplus repression, radical general semantics, relation between self and other, Buddhism and Derridian deconstruction, Jewish philosophy, and Levinasian ethical obligation that are revisited by the contributors.

The interview is followed by Nelson Wiseman's elegant and meticulous history of Gad's engagements as a public intellectual through the defining crucible of the sixties. Wiseman interlinks Horowitz's academic and journalistic writings and his development as a public intellectual. He establishes Gad's role as a political activist and political scientist in defining the terrain of Canadian socialism and nationalism beginning in the mid-1960s. Wiseman credits Horowitz with raising "ideology to an unprecedented status in the study of Canadian politics."

Ed Andrew, in "The Odd Couple of Canadian Intellectual History," presents the intellectual friendship of two of Canada's defining thinkers: Gad Horowitz and George Grant. Andrew provides vignettes of the singularity and articulation of the two thinkers' philosophy. In Ed Andrew's view, Gad's Jewish identity, coupled with socialism, distinguished him from Grant and foreshadowed Horowitz's most recent work that brings together Herbert Marcuse, Jacques Derrida, and Emmanuel Levinas, linking these thinkers precisely through "the Jewish prophetic or messianic tradition." The Grant-Horowitz alliance is also

discussed by Angus and Meynell, later in this collection, with Meynell deeming Horowitz-Grant's friendship "an odd marriage of ideologies."

Jason Rovito, in "Between Pause and Play," presents Horowitz as educator in the context of his current seminar, "The Spirit of Democratic Citizenship." Rovito posits "Horowitz as translator" between two very different discourses, that of Korzybski and that of Marcuse. According to Rovito, it is precisely Horowitz's schooling in and work on Marcuse that enables him to find the radicalism in Korzybski's General Semantics and produce a radical general semantics.

Part Two, "Fragment Theory," contains three chapters that set out the contemporary relevance of the famous Hartz-Horowitz thesis regarding the distinct political cultures of Canada and the United States. The chapters by Ian Angus, Nelson Wiseman, and Robert Meynell take up the fragment theory to investigate it at the national level (Angus), to extend it regionally (Wiseman), and to critically re-evaluate it in the face of its latest critics (Meynell).

Ian Angus, in "The Political Culture of English Canada," situates Horowitz's writing as itself political and not simply writing about politics. The focus is on Horowitz's socialist project and its legacy today. "In the absence of socialist transformation," Angus notes, "it is remarkable to see how many of Horowitz's dire 'predictions' have come into being: internal fragmentation, subsumption within the American identity, devolution of federal powers to the provinces due to the assertion of Quebec's claim to sovereignty within the current framework of Confederation."

Nelson Wiseman, in his second essay in the collection, "Canada's Regional Fragments," injects both a regional and a materialist analysis into the Hartz-Horowitz approach. He extends the Hartz-Horowitz fragment theory regionally, drawing out the differences and nuances in five Canadian regions: Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, the Midwest (Manitoba and Saskatchewan), and the Far West (Alberta and British Columbia). Wiseman adds as a further nuance to his analysis of Canada's disparate regional fragments: the differences in the five regions' economic structures.

Robert Meynell, in "Restoration, Not Renovation," responds to the latest critics – Ajzenstat and Smith – of the Hartz-Horowitz thesis. Meynell contends that the Ajzenstat-Smith attempted correction, which replaces Canada's organic-collectivism with Lockean republicanism, is a mythology that suppresses Canada's distinctive intellectual history in favour of cultural and political continentalism.

Part Three, “Spirit and Power,” incorporates a set of theoretical chapters that engage with the psyche-body, libido, and repression and its limits. Here, the figures of Freud and Marcuse loom large in Horowitz’s thought. The four chapters engage these thinkers with theoretical interlocutors of their own: Shannon Bell with Foucault, Michael Marder with Celan, Victoria Tahmasebi with Irigaray, and Colin Campbell with Girard and Bataille. Bell’s essay begins this section and in fact introduces this and the next section with a discussion of the philosophical/theoretical turn in Horowitz’s work. Part Three explores the politics and power of pleasure and, if “fragment theory” and “red tory” were concepts developed in the earlier work, the critical distinctions between basic and surplus repression emerge here as central theoretical concepts developed by Horowitz, concepts that have a continuing urgent critical purchase.

Shannon Bell’s “Gad ben Rachel ve Aharon” identifies Horowitz as a *parrhesiastic* thinker, “a thinker who speaks truth, new truths, and in speaking new truths opens horizons in knowledge terrains.” Bell detects two forms of truth-telling in Horowitz’s work: radical political truth-telling and pedagogical *parrhesia*. She examines truth-telling in Horowitz’s writings on psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, Jewish mysticism, and Buddhism. Bell suggests that Buddhism gives way to Horowitz’s “most extreme *parrhesiastic* moment.” What she has in mind is Horowitz’s use of what he sets forth as seven Buddhist truths “to construct a political groundlessness that will hold the radical in democracy.” In the latter part of the chapter Bell sets out the pedagogical truth-telling developed by “Gad the Teacher” in his seminar “The Spirit of Democratic Citizenship: Sanity and Democracy” (1994–2011).<sup>3</sup>

Michael Marder, in “What’s Involved in Involution? A Psycho-Poetics of Regression” “breathes of the secret,” of the (un)common ground of poetic and psychoanalytic desires. Marder presents a Levinasian encounter in which each is brought into existence by the other, and what transpires is a singularity. The secret, Marder contends, when an asymmetrical encounter takes place between two singular others, such as poetry and psychoanalysis, is “that the relation to the other is forged as a teaching.” What sutures Celan and Freud is the place Celan gives to breath in his poetry – “breath as breathlessness” – and the uncanniness in Freud’s concept of regression that “undoes that which is said in the empirical systems of signification to uncover the saying that animates them in the first place.” Marder is using the breathless breath

of Celan's poem "*Lob der Ferne*" [Praise of Distance] and "the saying that animates" regression to situate the teaching of Gad Horowitz.

Victoria Tahmasebi, in "The Sexed Body of the Woman-(M)Other," shows the necessity of the between in the encounter of Irigaray and Marcuse, which would, according to Michael Marder, be an "asymmetrical encounter" taking place "between two singular others." The teaching Tahmasebi is offering is a uniquely feminist encounter with Herbert Marcuse – the thinker whose work perhaps most influenced and whose work consistently has continued to influence Gad Horowitz. Tahmasebi holds a fidelity both to Horowitz's emphasis on Marcuse's concepts – basic and surplus repression – as core to Marcuse's thought and to his own thought.

Colin Campbell, in "The Spark of Philosophy," turns to the work of two very unlikely yet ideal continental philosophers – Rene Girard and Georges Bataille – to illuminate "the religious dimensions of the pre-liberal past," showing that "a religious perspective is already inherent in Hartz's earlier 'secular' social theory of political ideology." Campbell contends that Hartz's understanding of the political meaning of feudalism already contains the theory of religion. In addition, Campbell argues that "Bataille and Girard together provide an incomparable illumination of the highly contested identity of the red tory." It is precisely spiritual values alien to liberal morality, Campbell points out, that Gad Horowitz has always argued we have in our "tory touch."

The most recent phase of Horowitz's work, the latest stop on the itinerary, and Part Four of this book, is positioned under the title of "Political Philosophy." Part Four includes four philosophical encounters with Horowitz and/or the continental, Eastern, and Judaic philosophical thinkers and schools of thought that his work draws upon – Sean Saraka (Balibar, Marx, and Derrida), Asher Horowitz (Adorno and Nargarjuna), Eisenstadt (Levinas and Kabbalah) and Peter Kulchyski (Derrida and Levinas).

Sean Saraka, in "Transcendental Liberalism and the Politics of Representation," scrutinizes the defining market-hive framework of Gad and Asher Horowitz's "*Everywhere They Are in Chains*": *Political Theory from Rousseau to Marx*, a book that emerged out of Gad's lectures in modern political thought at University of Toronto's Department of Political Science. Saraka focuses on what he contends are the "silences and reversals" driving the Horowitz project: their strategic disordering of history and their collectivist/individualist subjectivation represented through developmental anthropology. Saraka relates the Horowitz work to the

broader context of continental philosophy, referencing the work of Slavoj Žižek and Étienne Balibar, specifically in the areas of subjectivity and subjectivation. Saraka connects Balibar's critique of what he à la Balibar terms "Macpherson's unitary conception of possessive individualism" to Horowitz's more nuanced imaging of the modern subject.

Oona Eisenstadt, in "From the Narcissism of Small Differences to the Vertigo of Endless Possibilities" directs her attention to an intervention that Gad has made within Levinasian scholarship on the contested terrain of politics. Levinas supports an open regime, yet he provides no details, thus opening the political to both radical left liberation theology and classical liberal assimilation. Thinkers and activists supplement Levinasian ethics – that "owed to the other before self" – with their own politics. Eisenstadt contends that Horowitz "does suggest thinkers and positions that might supplement Levinas politically, he, however, does so only after a close reading of the passages in which Levinas points toward a politics, or declines to point toward a politics." Sections 6 and 7 of the chapter bring to Levinas scholarship what Eisenstadt identifies as "less sober strands in Judaism" – Isaac Luria and the Kabbalist Gikatilla. Isaac Luria, Isaiah Horowitz (the Shelah), along with Sabbatai Zevi are precisely the strains that Horowitz brings to bear in a radical Levinasian politics that incorporates "Marcuse's account of basic and surplus repression."

Asher Horowitz, "Adorno and Emptiness," engages a detailed discussion of the relation of Theodor Adorno's infamously difficult book *Negative Dialectics* to Buddhist thought. Influenced by Gad Horowitz's turning of continental philosophy towards Buddhism and Buddhism towards continental philosophy, Asher Horowitz turns the negative in Adorno's dialectic towards Madhyamika Buddhist philosophy, particularly the negative dialectic of Nāgārjuna's thought. The impetus directing Asher's "Adorno and Emptiness" is the same as what directed Gad Horowitz's "emmanuel, Robert" – "Buddhism could benefit from a 'Western' insight into its own condition of possibility." Asher Horowitz suggests that "Buddhism might also be able to benefit from Adorno's transposition of negative dialectics into the realm of the natural-historical, the socio-individual reproduction of samsaric suffering."

Part Four and the collection conclude with Peter Kulchyski's "horowitz dances with wolves: inquiries pursuant to the thought of gad horowitz," an urgent call "to gad" to "join us in escalating the crises." Kulchyski says, "i speak not for him, as one who attempts to bear his legacy of critical thought in canada, but to him whose thinking in this

moment/conjunction is more urgent to us than ever." Kulchyski calls "to gad" – "to you i have things to say" – reminding him of his ethical obligation to share his "thinking in this moment/conjuncture" with others. The call is urgent and imploring.

Kulchyski fulfils two main objectives. He supplements Gad's early work "Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in Canada: An Interpretation," *Canadian Labour in Politics*, with indigenous rights – contending that red tory in its formation "was inflected with a certain kind of respect for aboriginal rights." Kulchyski also discloses the importance to gad of "thinking class issues" as a crucial link from his early work *Canadian Labour in Politics* (1968) to his later work "Aporiah and Messiah in Derrida and Levinas," *Difficult Justice* (2006).

Kulchyski provides an incisive concluding essay, one that returns Horowitz's late to early work and foregrounds the politics inherent in and driving it all. Kulchyski notes that Horowitz's early 1968 work "inaugurates and opens the space" for cultural politics; his middle 1977 work *Repression* proposes surplus repression as "the crucial question to ask of any particular culture and of cultural politics in general." Horowitz's later work on Derrida and Levinas warns how easily their work is co-optable by liberalism unless it is supplemented with a socio-historical understanding of surplus repression and class politics.

Giving Gad the final say, the collection closes with Part Five, "Horowitz in His Own Words," which includes three of his later essays – "emmanuel, Robert" (2006), "Bringing Bataille to Justice" (2008), and "An Essay on the Altruism of Nature" (2012).

The essays of this volume demonstrate a range of concerns and nuance that defy our encapsulations, and in this they reflect Gad's rigour and lively curiosity: Gad the scholar constructing painstaking arguments as public intellectual and as our rabbi of high theory.

## NOTES

- 1 Excerpt from Gad Horowitz, "Berlin Dharma: Motion, Thinking, Noise," a five-day interview-event, 14–19 February, 2007, interviewed by Shannon Bell. See "Berlin Dharma," YouTube, uploaded 1 June 2008, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4p9fHdjg\\_hQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4p9fHdjg_hQ).
- 2 Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson (New York: Semiotext[e], 2001), 12.
- 3 Gad's twenty-two lectures on radical general semantics are available at <http://radicalgeneralsemantics.net>.

# PART ONE

---

## Life and Times

*This page intentionally left blank*

# 1 On Intellectual Life, Politics, and Psychoanalysis: A Conversation with Gad Horowitz (2003)<sup>1</sup>

---

COLIN J. CAMPBELL

CAMPBELL: *Canadian Labour in Politics* remains a seminal text of Canadian political analysis and the history of Canadian socialism. In it you develop what has become known as the “Hartz-Horowitz thesis,” a variant of Louis Hartz’s “fragment theory” of political culture. Briefly, what was Hartz’s theory and how did it change when your name was added to it?

HOROWITZ: “Seminal” – well, you know we don’t like this word (*laughs*), but I guess, in fact, that’s something like what it was. I had my fifteen minutes. It was and remained a seminal text because it spoke to real needs of the Canadian cultural, political elite, especially at that time.

Briefly, Hartz’s theory is that the new societies that were established by immigrants were cultural fragments. In other words they represented, not the whole spectrum of political ideology in the mother country, but a fragment of that culture.

European political history has been marked by a dialectic of pre-liberal (feudal, monarchist, tory, etc.) and liberal (individualist, republican, etc.) ideologies, which eventually gives rise to post-liberal (socialist, communist, fascist, etc.) developments, which complicate the conversation further.

In the new societies founded by European settlers (New France, Colonial America, English Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa) this dialectic is absent or very much attenuated because the settlers represent only a monochromatic “fragment” of the total, multicoloured ideological spectrum of the mother country.

Hartz’s “fragment theory” begins with a close study of the founding of American society more than a hundred years prior to the

American Revolution. The first settlers left the feudal, aristocratic, organic-hierarchical conservatism of Britain behind. The American political conversation, exciting as it is, has taken place not between toryism, liberalism, and socialism, but entirely within liberalism, or what Hartz somewhat misleadingly calls "Lockeanism." Lacking the communitarian and class preoccupations of toryism, there is no possibility of a powerful, legitimate socialism developing as a synthesis of tory and liberal ideologies. The United States is "monolithically Lockean."

Whatever traces of toryism had persisted in the American fragment in the colonial period are expelled by the American Revolution. They are expelled to Canada, carried by counter-revolutionary refugees loyal to the British monarchy (loyalists who were actually called Tories).

Hartz and Kenneth McRae suggested that English Canada was another liberal fragment. Latin America and Quebec, on the other hand, were "feudal" fragments founded by emigrants from pre-liberal Spain, Portugal, and France. While the United States was an entirely liberal fragment, Quebec was a near-monolithic feudal or tory fragment until the upsurge of liberalism after the Second World War, culminating in the Quiet Revolution of the sixties. The persistence of the feudal past alongside the new liberalism helps to account for the strong influence of socialist/social democratic thinking in Quebec in recent times. Most interestingly, Hartz suggested that Australia was a radical fragment because Australia, being founded at the turn of the twentieth century by English and other British working-class people, privileged, as we might say, a very left-wing, close-to-socialist or social-democratic fragment in Australia.

People should read Hartz, especially *The Liberal Tradition in America*, and his second book called *The Founding of New Societies*, which he edited. *The Founding of New Societies* has pieces on all the fragment cultures. *The Liberal Tradition in America* was just about the United States. It's one of the most brilliant pieces of work that has ever been done, I think, in political science. It was very influential and much condemned and despised and debated in the United States, and it still is.

"How did it change when my name was added to it?" Well, I argued against McRae, who had contributed to Hartz's *The Founding of New Societies*, that in fact it was not correct to call English Canada a liberal fragment like the United States. I argued that there was a significant, let's say, "tory" or pre-liberal "remnant" in Canada, and that this is part of the reason that English Canada developed a vibrant and legitimate socialist tradition, in great contrast to the American scene. In the new

setting of the anglophone Canadian provinces this toryism, later reinforced by massive immigration from nineteenth-century Britain, becomes significant enough to enter into a conversation with British and American liberalism, robust enough to produce an impressive though never majoritarian socialism. English Canada is thus a liberal fragment with significant tory and socialist touches.

Hartz didn't mind having his theory complicated. McRae was also quite generous about it. Nelson Wiseman went on to develop an application of the fragment theory in an intra-Canadian way, so that, for example, the prairie provinces, BC, the Maritimes, and Ontario are all described in terms of fragment theory as having significant variations from the pan-Canadian perspective.

CAMPBELL: *Canadian Labour in Politics* opens with the statement "In the United States organized socialism is dead. In Canada socialism, though far from national power, is a significant political force and the official 'political arm' of the labour movement."<sup>2</sup> And then you ask, "Why these striking differences in the fortunes of socialism in two very similar societies?"<sup>3</sup> Has your analysis of the Canadian political scene changed since the 1960s?

HOROWITZ: My feelings have changed a lot more than my analysis. So I suppose I won't work too hard at separating "feelings" from "the analysis." I think that the New Democratic Party has fallen on hard times; its fortunes may improve, but I think party politics has become less important than it was, especially on the left. And that people, especially young people, are more interested in non-parliamentary or extra-parliamentary politics than they were before. I think that Canada has become significantly more Americanized than it was when I wrote *Canadian Labour in Politics*, and that both toryism and socialism have been losing a lot of their distinctiveness, have been blurring into liberalism at their boundaries.

CAMPBELL: The "red tory" was a key figure in the Hartz-Horowitz analysis. What does this term mean?

HOROWITZ: Well that's what really became famous – this notion of the red tory. First I should say that some people say I invented the term. I didn't invent the term. I think that it probably is a term that was first used in England, and anyone who wanted to do the research would figure that out. There were Tories in England who were sufficiently anti-capitalist – interested enough in what Disraeli called the "condition of the people" – to be called "red" Tories. So I defined, in the Canadian context, a red tory as someone who – Eugene Forsey is a good example – was

a socialist who was sufficiently tory in many of his views – especially about the constitution, and the power of the Crown – to be called a red “tory.” On the other hand there were tories who were sufficiently critical of capitalism to be called “red” tories – that would be George Grant, and others.

CAMPBELL: You have said in the past that the reason that George Grant lacked faith and hope in a socialist future was that he lacked faith and hope period. Where was the “red” in Grant’s tory? Has your evaluation of Grant’s evaluation of the possibility of socialism changed?

HOROWITZ: Well, he lacked faith and hope in English Canada – at least rhetorically. He would never have hoped for a socialist future. But he might have hoped for a future for an independent Canada, which put more importance, in his terms, on the “public good” than on private interests. Insofar as Grant recognized that both conservatism and socialism place the public good ahead of private interests, he would have been interested in socialism in that sense. He did contribute a chapter to the volume published by some founders of the New Democratic Party, called *Social Purpose for Canada*, edited by Michael Oliver, first president of the NDP. He had a very nice piece in there, which was as socialist as he ever got. I guess maybe I’ve said enough about where the “red” was in Grant’s tory – he was very critical of capitalism and of the control of Canadian politics by indigenous and American-based capital. He thought that our business classes had sold out the country. I don’t think he ever changed his mind about that. He had a genuine deep respect for ordinary people that was quite remarkable – which you might see shining through in that piece in *Social Purpose for Canada*. I think many of Grant’s students and disciples like to underplay this side of Grant’s thought. Certainly as a religious person he didn’t lack faith and hope. As a deeply religious person, he was all about faith and hope. But it’s a kind of faith and hope that transcends the political.

CAMPBELL: Joel Kovel dedicated his book *The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World* to the anti-globalization protestors, in Seattle and in Quebec City. What did you think of the protest in Quebec City in 2001? Did it indicate for you that socialism remains “a significant political force” in Canada?

HOROWITZ: Well it was one of the most remarkable experiences of my life. I thought it was really marvellous. And I was furious about the tear gas. I don’t think that it means that socialism remains a significant force in Canada. I think it means that the anti-globalization movement is a significant political force, and that political parties like the CCF-NDP, that

people like NDP Leader Jack Layton have to negotiate some kind of relationship between old-style political structures and the new-style anti-globalization movement. The problem is that September 11 suddenly happened, and the anti-globalization movement, which for me was a kind of “big picture,” ended up in a small corner on the right hand side.

CAMPBELL: You made a strong case for Canadian nationalism as a force allied with the emergence of socialism. Are you still, were you ever, “proud to be Canadian”?

HOROWITZ: I don’t know if I would have ever used those words. I came to this country – I was born in Jerusalem – I came to Canada when I was two years old, and I grew up mostly in Calgary, Winnipeg, and Montreal. So I am a Canadian and I always felt myself to be a Canadian. But like so many other Canadians I really became conscious of this when I left the country to study abroad – abroad in this case being the United States. When I went to graduate school at Harvard, I felt my Canadianness very strongly, and other people felt it too. I would be singled out in seminars to express the “Canadian point of view.” And, you know, my most glorious moment at Harvard was when I would jokingly suggest to my American friends that the American people should re-convene the Continental Congress, draw up articles of apology for the American Revolution, and petition to be brought back under the British Crown for their own good. And that we would find someone in Canada to go down there and act as governor general, you know, until they were ready for self-government. Americans didn’t find that funny (*laughter*). They knew that I was joking but somehow weren’t able to find it funny.

Well, you know, there’s just not that much intensity in it anymore, but my view and my feelings actually haven’t changed that much either. And I do love New York and San Francisco. Does that make me a good Canadian?

CAMPBELL: Do you have any particularly vivid memories of your early years at Harvard or McGill?

HOROWITZ: Harvard was a very interesting experience and that’s where I met Louis Hartz and Sam Beer. Sam Beer is known to many people as the former president of the ADA, the Americans for Democratic Action. He wrote a book that was important to me, *British Politics in the Age of Collectivism*. As a graduate student I did some research for him, which contributed a bit to one of the chapters in that book. I did some research on Lord Randolph Churchill, who was actually the Tory democrat par excellence.

When I was at McGill doing my MA I wrote my master's thesis on C. Wright Mills's *The Power Elite* and also on the Italian elite theorists Mosca and Michels. As a matter of fact, years later someone sent me a volume published by the Italian Ministry of Culture or something like that, which pointed out that the only Canadian political scientist who ever paid any attention to Italian political thought was the young theorist at McGill named Gad Horowitz, and it's too bad after doing that he went on to other matters. I did a liberal critique of C. Wright Mills in my master's thesis, but when I finished it I realized that I didn't agree with my critique. I had actually been turned around by Mills, who was of course one of the great names in American radicalism and still is or ought to be. His books *The Power Elite* and *The Sociological Imagination* and *The Causes of World War Three* are extremely relevant for today.

So I realized, you know, you come to criticize and you stay to sign up. This is one of the great things about intellectual work, I think, for people who are somehow not averse to this kind of thing. Whatever you study, you become. The Talmud says, "From all my teachers I have learned." So you can come to criticize something and learn from it, and find yourself transformed in a way that maybe would have shocked or appalled a previous self.

The other moment was during the Vietnam War. I was visiting Frankfurt, Germany, at the time and watching German television, and Lyndon B. Johnson appeared on the screen in a military hospital in Frankfurt, visiting the wounded American soldiers. Armless, legless, you know, shipped from Vietnam to the military hospital in Frankfurt. So when I saw Johnson shaking the arm, the one arm that was left, the one hand that was left to one of these boys, you know it just hit me. In this recent war in Iraq, it kept hitting me again and again and again. That's one thing that doesn't change for me – the anti-war position. And I've learned lately, following some of the happenings on the web in connection with the Iraq war, that you can be ferociously anti-war as a right-winger. It's not something that the left has any kind of monopoly on. Some of the most ferocious opposition to war in the United States has been coming from the followers of Pat Buchanan. So those were the moments of radicalization. Then, of course, when I was at Harvard, Marcuse hit.

CAMPBELL: Marcuse "hit"?

HOROWITZ: Marcuse hit me – Marcuse's book *Eros and Civilization*, which wasn't yet widely known, but which was published in 1955. I went to Harvard in 1959, and Marcuse's friend Barrington Moore, who was no

left-winger, was teaching a course at Harvard, and *Eros and Civilization* was on the course.

CAMPBELL: Your next major publication after *Canadian Labour in Politics* has been described by one sympathetic Canadian political scientist as a “tactical error.” *Repression: Basic and Surplus* is an intensive introduction to psychoanalytic theory, to Freud, Reich, and Marcuse. What would you say is the relation between these books? Why would a political scientist write about psychotherapy?

HOROWITZ: After *Canadian Labour in Politics* I hung around in the area of Canadian politics for a while. And I did some stuff on TV, for example, with George Grant and others. At some point, however, I just stopped working in that field. It wasn’t a tactical error, it was just a change in my priorities in terms of what I was interested in. *Canadian Labour in Politics* was my PhD thesis. I wrote it as a graduate student at Harvard. My supervisor was Sam Beer, and Louis Hartz had a lot to do with the first chapter.

And at the same time, as I just mentioned, Marcuse hit me. So this interest in psychoanalytic theory was there, from the start, and there was just a sort of natural swing towards developing that interest. But not so much psychotherapy as psychoanalytic theory, from a Marcusean, that is, a left-Freudian, point of view. *Repression* – it wasn’t a tactical error, but it was a tactical failure, in the sense that the reason that I wrote it was to help make Marcuse’s use of Freud more acceptable, more interesting to mainstream psychoanalytic theorists. And also to make psychoanalytic theory more interesting to people on the left. But it actually fell between the two camps and it’s really a strange book in more ways than one. For one thing, as Joel Kovel pointed out to me, for a book about Eros, it was very unerotic, (*laughs*), which couldn’t have been said about *Eros and Civilization* itself. *Repression* relied very heavily on a school of psychoanalytic thinkers known as the “ego psychologists,” who were out of favour in terms of the politics of academia. It was a tactical error to base a lot of my terminology and theorizing on their work. I was naive, I didn’t know that no one wanted to listen to the ego psychologists Hartmann and Rappaport. But it was fun, and a lot of people, you know, got something out of it. I actually had more fan mail for *Repression* than I did for *Canadian Labour in Politics*.

The relation between the books is that there is something left-wing happening in both. The fact that I published these two books makes a statement about my attitude to academia, and that is the importance to me of eclecticism – the importance of being interested in and doing

work in many fields, and not just one field. I think people who find a field or a cause in graduate school and go on mining – mining it and mining it until they retire ... You know, we probably need people like that, but I don't think they should be considered the only legitimate or genuine scholars, while people who move around and study different things, as I have, are considered somehow less professional. Or, you know, maybe that's exactly what we are. Less professional would be a good thing. De-professionalization, in other words, might be exactly what is required.

CAMPBELL: So what is to be done?

HOROWITZ: A long time ago somebody interviewed me and I found myself describing myself as politically schizophrenic. I wouldn't use that term in the way I did then. But what I meant was that I had a split consciousness. In terms of my fundamental broad outlook, I was some kind of communist, and I'll tell you exactly what kind of communist I was: I was a Marcusean communist. But in terms of day-to-day politics, I was a sort of, you know, centre-left CCF-NDPer [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation–New Democratic Party]. I argued then and I would still argue that it's very important – it was very important for me and I recommend this to everyone, that they, as Marcuse himself was always saying, don't give up on broad, radical visions for fundamental, sweeping social change, just because it doesn't seem to be on the agenda, or indeed even because it never will be on the agenda. You still don't give up on it. "Don't give up" means don't give up. It doesn't mean "Don't give up as long as you think you have a chance." It means don't give up. Period.

CAMPBELL: You teach a course at the University of Toronto, "The Spirit of Democratic Citizenship," which included assignments with names, like "stepping out of worthlessness," and "writing in sensory grounded language." What are some of the things you hope to achieve in teaching it?

HOROWITZ: I feel this is one of the best things that I've ever done. And it's hard for me to talk about it – it's hard to describe what it is. But it's really a work of eclectic bricolage that I brought together out of many different disciplines. Korzybski's "general semantics," as you know, provides the frame, and actually the idea for doing this course came to me when I rediscovered his book *Science and Sanity*, published in 1933. I had read popular versions of general semantics, like Hayakawa's *Language in Action*, when I was a teenager, and then I forgot about it. In the late eighties I came upon *Science and Sanity* and rediscovered what I think is an idiosyncratic and flawed, but in some ways very powerful approach to getting across

to people of all ages and descriptions, ways of dealing with the power of language, of discourses, of undermining the power of discourses, such as the discourse of “worthlessness” – undemocratic discourses – in their lives. I actually think that this sort of stuff is more important than therapy, and that if something like the general semantics movement could be revived that it would do more for people and for democracy than radical therapy approaches, or ordinary therapy approaches.

It didn’t fit at all well with other courses in the University of Toronto’s Political Science Department, but my department is a very “small c” catholic department, and we always have gotten along very well with one another. For example, our relations, or at least my relations with our Straussian comrades, are always generous and gentle. There was no objection to teaching a course like this.

It has three parts. The first part is about language, and about de-hypnotization – understanding the power of the “consensus trance” – breaking the “consensus trance” that all sorts of received discourses have over our lives from a very early age.

The first part is called “No One Truth.” “No One Truth” relies very heavily on general semantics and deals with cognition. The second part, called “Evoking the Other,” is about self-and-other. It has to do with understanding the relational process between self and others at both the interpersonal and inter-group levels.

CAMPBELL: “The Power of Not Understanding” is in Part Two.

HOROWITZ: “The Power of Not Understanding.” This was an article by an Israeli social psychologist about discussions between Jews and Arabs in Israel/Palestine, which could only begin to make headway when both sides realized that they actually profoundly did not “understand” the other at all. Another angle: people can talk at the academic level about how the Israeli needs to take on the Arab’s memories of oppression, and the Arab needs to take on the Jew’s memories of oppression, but to say that is very different from actually going through a process in which you do that – actually do it. The whole course is about getting people to have experiences, rather than just learn academic formulae – no matter how profound and interesting and important these formulae might be.

Part Two is about evoking the other, listening to others, to *all* others, including the others within the self. There’s a section on Gandhi in Part Two, because Gandhi is the best so far at transforming the traditional approach to the enemy, and entering into politics in a way in which you would understand the enemy and take the so-called enemy into account as much as possible.

The third part is called "The Spirit of Equality." Part Three takes it from the interpersonal to the more broadly social or political level. The part of it that I remember most vividly is called "Mapping Personal Problems in Public Space," which again, in an experience-based way, shows the connection between personal issues, personal problems, personal troubles, and the larger institutional and discursive forces that affect those problems. So that people who went through that would find it impossible any longer to focus most of their thinking about personal problems on the question of personal blame, personal guilt, personal responsibility – calling people to account, holding people responsible, and all that kind of thing. And they would be able to see the importance of action at a collective, rather than personal level.

Actually this goes back to C. Wright Mills too, because C. Wright Mills defined politics as, and I quote, "the translation of personal troubles into public issues" – so a large part of politics is keeping certain troubles personal, denying their political relevance.

CAMPBELL: How was general semantics different from a therapeutic movement?

HOROWITZ: The general semantics movement was a more general movement. Alfred Korzybski was interested in "sanity." I translated that more into "democracy." But Korzybski wasn't a therapist, he was a teacher. The general semantics movement brought people together to work together. It was more of a teaching, learning, a cooperative teaching and learning movement than a therapeutic movement. Korzybski thought that the whole culture, that the whole of civilization was insane – not insane. The problem was not to treat neuroses and psychoses but to raise the level of civilization as a whole. He was almost megalomaniacally optimistic about the possibilities for personal, cultural change that could be brought about by something like the general semantics movement. Korzybski was no conventional leftist either. The general semantics movement brought people together in a non-political way – I'm sure they had all sorts of different political opinions, although, you know, extreme conservatives would have avoided it because of its "relativism." Imagine teaching "no one truth" at Leavenworth penitentiary, which was one of the places that had general semantics groups! And it was quite influential among university students also. At places like Berkeley, kids would be walking around carrying copies of *Etc.*, the general semantics journal, well into the sixties.

It fell apart because of the polarization of American society around the psychedelic revolution and around the Vietnam War. This split the

general semantics movement because it proved to be impossible to keep people working together who had very different political views.

Gregory Bateson is also an important figure here. He became much better known than Korzybski. Bateson was one of the heroes of the American counterculture. Bateson had some association with general semantics. It was very important to Bateson, as a sort of polymath intellectual, especially in his famous work *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, to undermine individualist presuppositions in life and in culture.

CAMPBELL: In "Groundless Democracy" you wrote, "It has been said many times: poststructuralist radicalism, having given up on Truth, is groundless in its opposition to the status quo: it is incapable of offering reasons for wishing to replace one 'regime of truth' with another."<sup>4</sup> What, if anything, do Marxists, or anyone else, have to learn from post-structuralism?

HOROWITZ: That was from a piece that I wrote that was actually a Buddhist critique of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. I wrote it before becoming a serious student of post-structuralist radicalism. So there I am offending one of my own rules, which is not to criticize anything without having worked really hard at trying to understand it from the inside. Because part of my eclectic position ... it's a fanatic eclecticism. It's not a shallow eclecticism. I believe in many truths, and I think there's too much destruction of straw men in academia, and I think that too many people are familiar only with their own orientation and aren't capable of understanding different or opposing orientations from within. So it's always been my ambition, although I'm sure I've fallen short, to understand what I criticize from the inside. So after having written that, you know, I studied Derrida, especially, a lot more carefully, and then Levinas. It's quite clear to me now that there are strong possibilities in post-structuralism for rationalizing a desire to replace one regime of truth with another. I don't think that Derrida, or especially Levinas, wanted to be identified strongly with any identifiable political movement.

I think Marxists have a lot to learn, not only from post-structuralism, but from many other schools of the habitually ignored. And Buddhism – I maintain an interest in Buddhism, I am not a Buddhist. I'm a student of Buddhist philosophy and of certain Buddhist practices. There is a problem, you know, in Buddhism, in saying "I am a Buddhist." I know that Buddhists say "I am a Buddhist," but from my Buddhist point of view I don't think I want to say that. So I think you can already see a sort of connection between Buddhism and Derrida's deconstruction. One of the problems, one of the big problems in the world, is the West's failure to respect – and by *respect* I mean to really get to know and study

closely – non-Western forms of thought. And for me that turned out to be primarily Buddhism. Buddhist theories of the self have been developed for two thousand years, in intricate detail and in many different forms, in ways that could only enrich post-structuralist approaches, if they wanted to pay any attention to them. I don't know if I would criticize Derrida himself for ignoring Buddhism, because I think Derrida is a very important figure in the history of thought. And in the history of thought, people sometimes choose to ignore certain things in order to be able to develop their own thought.

But my friend Robert Magliola, who started out as a Catholic teacher in English literature in the States and ended up at the University of Taiwan, studied Buddhism, and wrote a book called *Derrida on the Mend*, which seeks to bring together Derridean deconstruction and Madyamika Buddhism. His book was either trashed or ignored. My book *Repression* just fell between two schools, but Magliola's attempt to teach Derrida something from the Buddhist point of view, and teach Buddhists something from a Derridean point of view, was worse than ignored.

Then, when Levinas comes along, I write a short Levinasian critique of Buddhism, which is addressed to Magliola. Basically the notion there is that the Levinasian, or you might say Judaic, notion of the primacy of ethical obligation answers certain questions that Buddhism has always been accused of not dealing with effectively. I point out that when the Buddha arose from his seat under the bo tree, and was struggling with the temptation not to tell anyone about his Enlightenment because no one would understand, he came to the conclusion that he was obligated to teach – that he had an obligation to teach people how to achieve liberation, spiritual liberation, for themselves. So the question is, where does this obligation come from? Who theorizes this obligation? Levinas is the theorist of ethical obligation. I began to take this into Buddhism.

## NOTES

- 1 A version of this interview was originally published on Ctheory.net, 29 October 2003, <http://ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=397>.
- 2 Gad Horowitz, *Canadian Labour in Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 3.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Gad Horowitz, "Groundless Democracy," *Shadow of Spirit: Postmodernism and Religion*, ed. Philippa Berry and Andrew Wernick (London: Routledge, 1992), 156.

## 2 The Life and Times of Horowitz the Canadianist

---

NELSON WISEMAN

In the mid-1960s, Gad Horowitz and his ideas became prominent in both the academic and real worlds of Canadian politics. He appeared in and then departed Canadiana like a shooting star: a luminous flash that leaves an indelible mark on the mind. This chapter traces Horowitz's career as a Canadianist and connects his academic and related popular writings with his personal development as a Canadian public intellectual. It looks at how the Canadianist corpus of his work came about and was received and how it fit with and fuelled Canadians' evolving identity and sense of their country's ideological heritage. It examines Horowitz as a political activist and political scientist.

When "Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in Canada: An Interpretation"<sup>1</sup> was first presented at the 1965 annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, it created an unusual stir. At twenty-nine, Horowitz was a newly minted Harvard PhD and his paper soon made its debut in print in the old *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*.<sup>2</sup> Shortly thereafter, it was reproduced in the Canadian Political Science Association's exclusive reprint series. It was the first chapter of his dissertation, and a revised and extended version of it appeared in his *Canadian Labour in Politics*.<sup>3</sup> "CLS" challenged and exploded the staid conventional wisdom among political scientists such as R. MacGregor Dawson and J.A. Corry about the role of ideology (they discounted it) in Canadian politics. Under the influence of political analysts and historians like Frank Underhill – then the foremost scholar of Canadian political thought and parties – the Liberals and Conservatives, notwithstanding their origins and British namesakes, came to be depicted as having evolved into pale muted versions of America's Democrats and Republicans. Underhill had turned from

the social democratic CCF (whose *Regina Manifesto* he co-authored) to the Liberals and embraced and vindicated an omnibus brokerage role for Canada's parties. He saw them through the eyes of American political scientists.<sup>4</sup> As he wrote to Horowitz at the time, "Our two parties in spite of their names – Liberal and Conservative – really remained right down to the present typical American composite, non-ideological parties."<sup>5</sup>

Horowitz's contrarian interpretation of Canadian politics contrasted Canada's parties and party system with their American counterparts. He raised ideology to an unprecedented status in the study of Canadian politics. The nub of his thesis was "that the relative strength of socialism in Canada is related to the relative strength of toryism and to the different position and character of liberalism" in Canada and the United States. The very last sentence of "CLS" was no less notable for its prescience: "The 'antagonistic symbiosis' of Canadian liberalism and socialism probably cannot be ended even by the magic of a charismatic leader."<sup>6</sup> Soon after, Pierre Trudeau ascended to the apex of the Liberal party and Trudeaumania swept the land, but the social democratic NDP neither faded nor ended its mutually advantageous but hostile relationship with the Liberals. It propped them up in the early 1970s on the heels of a campaign in which it had denounced them as agents of "corporate welfare bums."

"CLS" was neither written nor received as an ideological or partisan piece, but it provided the theoretical infrastructure and a scholarly platform for Horowitz's normative orientations. Those were expressed in his closely connected polemical writings in *Canadian Dimension* magazine. They and "CLS" informed each other. "CLS" and its offshoots came to be caught up in the politics of the time. In this sense, the story of Horowitz the Canadianist is one of the relationship between one individual's stream of thought and the way it coincides with larger movements and streams of thought in various contexts. "CLS" "was written by Canada, not by me. Had I written it at a different conjuncture, it would have sunk like a stone."<sup>7</sup>

"CLS" did more than shake established verities; it took root and proved enduring. It came to be cited in innumerable places but it was also subjected to withering criticism. It proved pedagogically potent as teachers used it in survey courses in Canadian government and politics as well as in more specialized courses on parties, political culture, and ideas and ideologies in Canadian politics. Researchers across a range of fields have deployed it in a host of ways, from throwing light

on the politics of Montreal's Ukrainian immigrants to accounting for differences in educational financing in Canada and the United States.<sup>8</sup> Among the virtues of "CLS" are that it is well written, is engaging, and addresses big ideas. It fuses political theory with the behaviour and policies of parties in a comparative context. References to it and its "red tory" formulation continue in standard textbooks in the field.<sup>9</sup> "CLS" has been reproduced in at least six anthologies.<sup>10</sup> It persists as a staple in Hugh Thorburn's long-running collection, *Party Politics in Canada*. Having first appeared there in 1968, it is still there in the eighth edition in the twenty-first century. The sweep, nuance, verve, and panache of "CLS" proved to be fertile and disputatious. One book came to be constructed around it and another around demolishing it.<sup>11</sup> Two decades after its appearance, "CLS" was subjected to an anniversary assessment, one hurling broadsides at it only after noting, "It is one of the few things in the field that practically everyone has read and remembers."<sup>12</sup>

In building on and extending the work of Louis Hartz and Kenneth McRae, "CLS" placed the Canadian experience in the context of the political culture of new societies. Compared to Hartz's brilliantly dense and elliptical style, "CLS" was relatively easy to follow. Its comparativist complexion offered something for those outside the field of Canadian politics and outside of Canada itself. A study of why socialist labour movements arose in some industrialized states and not in others, for example, drew on Horowitz's connection between Canada's "statist and collectivist tradition" and Britain's nineteenth-century "aristocratic ideology" and its Canadian representation by the Conservative party.<sup>13</sup>

## Genesis

"CLS" contributed to looking at Canadian politics in a new way and it also contributed to the very language and conduct of Canadian politics with its introduction of the "red tory." Horowitz did not coin the term *red tory*, but he minted its Canadian usage in "CLS." No one in Canada had used the concept before or developed the idea. Its appeal lay in its appearance as a curious paradox, a truth standing on its head: he linked the "red" of the left and the "tory" of the right. "At the simplest level," he wrote, "a red tory is a Conservative or NDPer who preferred the other's party to the Liberals." "At a higher level, he is a conscious ideological Conservative with some 'odd' socialist notions (W.L. Morton) or a conscious ideological socialist with equally 'odd' tory notions (Eugene Forsey)." George Grant was presented as the quintessential

Canadian red tory, one preaching the protection of “the public good against private freedom.”<sup>14</sup> For both Grant and Forsey, spiritual values impelled political engagement,<sup>15</sup> a dimension of their thinking that Horowitz appreciated but did not pursue (although a reviewer of his book in the organ of the Christian Labour Association divined “a sense of religious commitment” in it).<sup>16</sup> Grant’s affinity for social democracy was demonstrated in his later contribution, in the reddest of his red tory moments, to Michael Oliver’s *Social Purpose for Canada*.<sup>17</sup> That book was a conscious effort to replicate for the fledgling NDP what the CCF’s brain trust, the League for Social Reconstruction, had done with its *Social Planning for Canada*<sup>18</sup> in the 1930s.

Since the appearance of “CLS,” the “red tory” has become pervasive in the lexicon of Canadian politics. It is popularly used, misused, and abused by politicians, journalists, and the public as well as academics in various disciplines. John McMenemy catalogued the “red tory” and “red toryism” in *The Language of Canadian Politics: A Guide to Important Terms and Concepts* and attributed the idea to Horowitz.<sup>19</sup> The red tory has become an apparent permanent fixture in the day-to-day combat of Canadian politics. In every federal election and Conservative leadership race, journalists identify and differentiate red tories from their mirror image “blue tories” or classical free market liberals. “Blue tories” are not ideological tories at all because they are detached from the tory notion of noblesse oblige, the obligation of the privileged to provide for the welfare of the less fortunate classes. Toryism is anchored in the belief in an organic inherited intergenerational social order where class harmony prevails, bonding a community of hierarchically differentiated unequal classes. It is an order where priority is given to the public’s collective welfare over the ambitions and aggrandizement of possessive individualism.

But where did the “red tory” come from and how did it find its way into Horowitz’s political cosmology? He almost certainly first encountered the term in a graduate seminar at Harvard that provided the research infrastructure for *British Politics in the Collectivist Age*, authored by his PhD supervisor, Samuel H. Beer.<sup>20</sup> Horowitz is thanked in the acknowledgments, and the book is cited in “CLS.”<sup>21</sup> Beer was no socialist, but he was a leftist – a one-time president of the Americans for Democratic Action, the progressive ideological yeast in the Democratic Party. Horowitz wrote a major research paper for Beer in 1960 on late nineteenth-century British conservatism titled “Tory Democracy.” It dissected the thinking of Disraeli and Lord Randolph

Churchill. Red tories such as Disraeli accepted noblesse oblige and also championed the masses against bourgeois elites. He legalized trade unions, and his friend John A. Macdonald followed suit. Horowitz prominently cited Disraeli's *Sybil*<sup>22</sup> and noted that one of the novel's themes was that if forward-looking aristocrats failed to rally to the defence of the masses, then the masses' leaders would arise from within their own ranks. Britain's nineteenth-century liberals linked socialism with toryism by accusing anti-individualist socialists of wanting to regress to an older feudal order. Beer's book gives voice to the tory-socialist axis in highlighting the connections between British toryism, as exemplified by Disraelian Conservatism, class divisions, and social reform. J.R. Mallory, one of Horowitz's teachers, and later a colleague, may be the only one who connected Horowitz's thesis – both with respect to toryism's organic element and the Liberals' successful classless centrist appeal that worked in Canada but not in Europe – with Beer's work.<sup>23</sup>

If red toryism helped to mould Britain as Beer demonstrated, then the leap Horowitz made to Canadian red toryism was fathomable. English Canadians in the nineteenth century were overwhelmingly of British stock – British subjects in British North America as their constitution proclaimed. Beer was less sanguine about Horowitz's assertion of "a stream of Tory democracy in Canada ... [but] You know far more about it than I do."<sup>24</sup> English Canadians looked to Britain as their ideological progenitor for political and cultural models; their imperialist minds saw the British Empire as a "providential agency."<sup>25</sup> They and their Loyalist forebears considered themselves Britain's pre-eminent colonists.<sup>26</sup> Ontario's provincial motto, *Ut incepit sic permanet fidelis* (As it began, so it remains, faithful), gives voice and symbolic testimony to the tory legacy.

As Horowitz was reading in British politics, Grant's *Lament for a Nation*, a national bestseller,<sup>27</sup> appeared. A Loyalist scion, Grant was pessimistic about Canada's prospects of maintaining some of its historically non-American values. Horowitz, as a socialist, was optimistic. He thought Canadian socialists could draw on their country's tory legacy to critique capitalist liberal America: "A tory past contains the seeds of a socialist future."<sup>28</sup> Where Grant looked kindly on socialists but saw them as hopelessly utopian, Horowitz considered socialism and Canadian nationalism as in need of each other if either had a future in North America. Horowitz parted with tories like Grant, Morton, Donald Creighton, and Roger Graham, whose analyses were even more