

**Peripheral Europeans:
The History of the Racialization of Slavs in
Canada**

by

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the racialization of the Slavs in Canada from the end of the 19th century until the middle of the 20th. Utilizing Michel Foucault's and Ernesto Laclau's formulations of discourse, Berger and Luckmann's social constructionism, and, broadly, poststructural theory, the principal aim of this work is to demonstrate that during this period Canadians recognized the Slavs as a distinct, homogenous, denationalized racial type. To this end, this dissertation draws on immigration, eugenic, political, journalistic, art, legal, literary, and other discourses in order to trace the discursive formation of race in Canada while considering how such a formation constructed the racialized figure of the Slav.

Historians working in the field of Whiteness Studies have established the racialization of various Europeans outside of whiteness in the United States. This dissertation suggests that Whiteness Studies' emphasis on the banishment of peripheral Europeans from whiteness, along with the trope of "becoming white," does not apply to the history of racialization of Slavs in Canada. The argument advanced here is that while Slavic identity was occasionally articulated in a strained relationship to whiteness, it is more accurate to see the racialization of the Slavs as entailing an estrangement from the positive attributes associated with an Anglo-Saxon identity and a simultaneous fitting into a complex racial discursive formation whose categories were denationalized.

This dissertation insists on a historical approach to the sociological study of race. Examining what various Canadian discourses had to say about the Slavic artistic ability, suitability for assimilation, criminal tendencies, community life, and potential for participation in democratic institutions, this dissertation historicizes race for the reader who today is not likely to recognize the Slavs as a racialized category. This dissertation also contributes to Slavic Studies, urging a move from "Slavic ethnic cultures" and an experience of "xenophobia," which are popular moves in that field, to the social construction of the Slavic race and the historical experience of racism.

Keywords: Racialization; Slavs; Canada; Poststructuralism; Slavic Studies; Whiteness Studies

To my parents, Kazimierz and Aleksandra Burkowicz

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

What counts is not parental designations, nor racial or divine designations, but merely the use made of them. (Deleuze and Guattari 1983:77)

A Sociology of a Racially Extinct Category?

A popular idea concerning Canada is that it is a land of two founding peoples. As is well known, the “charter groups” – made up of French and English fur traders, missionaries, farmers, industrialists, and manufacturers – colonized the Indigenous populations and established a country in the detached and transplanted image of western European civilization. While made up of many heterogeneous British and French cultural elements, taken together the charter categories accounted in the 19th century for the bulk of the population. Canada’s first national Census of 1871 enumerated the British at 60.5 percent, the French at 31.1 percent, and the Indigenous at 0.7 percent. By comparison, those outside of the trichotomy of British/French/Indigenous categories made up 7.7 percent of the population (Canada. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1970:19). These demographic proportions changed significantly with the fin-de-siècle influx of non-charter European immigrants.

Sociologists and historians describe the history of immigration in terms of a convention of “waves,” with the first used to designate French and the second reserved for British immigration. The third wave, coinciding approximately with the 1896 immigration policies of Clifford Sifton, denotes the arrival of “other Europeans” made up of Italian, Polish, Russian, Jewish, Ukrainian, German, Austrian, Swedish and many other European nationals. Their arrival significantly altered the demographic and social structure of Canadian society, marking a challenge to the numerical preponderance of

the British, and to a lesser extent the French.¹ Between 1900 and 1920, 40 percent of the immigrants arrived from Britain and only 0.83 percent from France. For the first time in Canada's history, the other Europeans accounted for 20.22 percent of all immigrants (Anderson and Frideres 1981:140-55). By the 1921 Census, 15.4 percent of the Canadian population was outside of the British/French/Indigenous trichotomy (Canada. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1970:19). The two World Wars and the 1930s capitalist depression halted their immigration, but by 1961 when the third wave was largely over, other Europeans made up 22.6 percent of the Canadian population, with the British accounting for 43.8 percent; the French 30.4 percent; the Indigenous 1.2 percent; Asians 0.7 percent; and Blacks 0.2 percent (Statistics Canada 1973).

This dissertation examines the racial discourses that accompanied and framed the other Europeans during the third wave. Specifically, it is concerned with the largest population of continental Europeans, the Slavs, who accounted for a substantial proportion of non-British immigrants. From 1871 to 1971, approximately 2.3 million Slavs – made up primarily of Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, Yugoslavs, and Czechoslovakians – arrived in Canada. During this hundred year period, their numbers rivaled the 154,319 Finnish; 182,041 Romanian; 191,477 French; 516,777 Scandinavian; 1 million Mediterranean (Italian and Greek); and 1.1 million Nordic/Teutonic (German, Belgian, Swiss, etc.) immigrants.² The Slavs were surpassed only by the British who, while challenged by the arrival of other Europeans, nonetheless accounted for 7.7 million out of a total of 18.6 million immigrants during this period (Statistics Canada 1961; 1974).³ *Push factors* such as the dissolution of Central and Eastern European social structures and the increase of their populations, as well as *pull factors* like a favourable immigration policy; the completion of the continental railway and the organizational expansion and lobbying activities of the major transportation companies; new developments in

¹ To keep track of the changes third wave immigration had on the Canadian population, starting in 1901 the Dominion Government begun collecting census data every five, as opposed to ten, years.

² I exclude from my calculation Austria-Hungary whose 642,692 immigrants identified variously as Slav, Magyar, and Teuton. Also, excluded are the 2.5 million immigrants from the United States whose origins are likely diverse.

³ Other European immigration would not surpass British immigration until 1961.

agriculture (Canada. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1970:22) and the “availability” of large tracts of land owing to the forced relocations of Indigenous inhabitants, can explain the social forces responsible for the immigration of the Slavs to Canada.

During the third wave as this dissertation will show, the Slavs were, for the Canadian gaze, a racially homogenous population that, while European, was markedly and even unsettlingly distinct from the founding races. The racial typecasting of the Slavs was not new nor specific to Canada. In the 1930s and 1940s the Nazi regime considered the Slavs subhuman. Adolf Hitler held the belief, explaining during one meeting with his inner circle that “[t]he Slavs are a mass of born slaves, who feel the need of a master” (Hitler, Cameron, Stevens, and Trevor-Roper 2000:33). And even in progressive circles of the previous century, the Slavs fared no better. Writing for Karl Marx’s German Daily *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, Friedrich Engels characterized the Slavs of Austria as “nothing but the *residual fragment of peoples*” (1849, emphasis in original). He warned that “the Slav counter-revolution will sweep down on the Austrian monarchy with all its barbarity”, although he had reason to remain hopeful as “[t]he general war which will then break out will smash this Slav Sonderbund and wipe out all these petty hidebound nations, down to their very names” (1849). Such views were also not uncommon in Canada. While Engels and Hitler provide a global horizon of intelligibility against which the figure of the Slav became a racial being, this work will focus on the racialization of the Slavs on the Canadian landscape. Specifically, I will consider the third wave’s racial discourses, characterized by what Richard Day identifies as “strict conformity to... Anglo-Canadian” norms and values (2000:144). The Slavs will not, as such, be read through the racial eugenics of the Nazi movement nor the dialectical materialism of Marxism but through a vocabulary belonging to Canada that distinguished the Slavs while speaking at the same time of Teutonic, French, Scandinavian, Mediterranean, and Anglo-Saxon races.

It bears stressing that as concerns the Slavs, Canada often regarded their national origins only in a secondary sense, if at all. Canadian scholar and specialist on European peoples in Western Canada, Robert England, noted the patterns of European immigration in the terms of racial terminology when he observed that “[t]he largest urban

non-Anglo-Saxon group (84,331) is to be found in Winnipeg” (1936:147). Invoking Canadian racial taxonomy, England observed that most other Europeans tended to settle in rural regions

The 800,000 of *European stock* have come some from the United States as well as from overseas. The census describes as of European stock 97,439 *French Canadians*, whose settlement in Red River Valley, at Gravelbourg and Prince Albert, needs little mention here. The *other main rural racial groups* are first, *Slavic*, over half of which is Ukrainian, less than a quarter Polish and about one-fifth Russian, totaling 273,546; second *Teutonic*, totalling 251,628, of which one-fifth is described as Dutch, much of which is Mennonite; and the third, *Scandinavian*, listed as 122,597, and divided in round numbers – 40,000 Swedish, nearly 58,000 Norwegian, nearly 11,000 Icelandic, and 14,000 Danish. (1936:147, emphasis added)

And England was not alone in such usage. A Canadian discursive formation approached intra-European populations in terms of such racial classification. This terminology spread over and characterized popular speech, newspapers, works of fiction, poetry, medical journals, government statistics, and political debates, where “Slav” was uttered as something that refers to an identity one could know, with its specific traits and recognizable features. As a category of one of the European races, “Slav” was included in what social constructionists call the “social stock of knowledge” (Berger and Luckmann 1967:41-4). It helped comprise a doxic, everyday vocabulary allowing one to describe relations between a given Canadian self and its problematic racial others.

By the mid-twentieth century, however, such European stocks would be largely forgotten and deracialized. John Porter’s sociological magnum opus, *The Vertical Mosaic* (1965), which documented the social stratification of Europeans, included the term “Slavic” just once and only, coincidentally, in a citation of another text by England. Porter preferred the term “eastern” and “central European” and was just as likely to specify particular eastern/central European ethnic identities (Poles, Russians, etc.). Today, terms used to differentiate Europeans on racial grounds – terms like Slavic, Mediterranean, and Teutonic – strike us as odd, at best as ways of describing a European region or past, maybe Europeans “over there” in Europe but “not here.” The signifier “Slav” no longer denotes a race of Europeans that once troubled and animated the imaginations of Canadian politicians, newspaper reporters, intellectuals, eugenicists, medical practitioners, art critics, and poets. We utilize the categories of Porter, not

England. As such, readers of this dissertation might rightly wonder what is to be gained by a study of a racial category that has for our purposes gone extinct. Such apprehension is legitimate given that although something like Slavic Europe continues to exist along with Slavic speaking populations who are the bearers of various Slavic cultures (and who in their diasporic disassembly continue to reside in Canada), the Slavs no longer constitute a single, coherent, and even familiar population. Today, it is not possible to say that someone is a “Slav” with the same racial certainty used to describe someone as “Hispanic,” “Arab,” or “East Indian.”

Little is known about the transformations that led to this shift in racial perception – less yet about the specific discursive contours of the racialization of the Slavs, or what it meant to be racialized this way. I suggest that the answer to the question “why study the Slavs?” can be sought precisely in the fact that the Slavs belong to a museum of races whose specimens fail to signify anything racial for us. As the historian of whiteness Matthew Frye Jacobson observes, “entire races have disappeared from view, from public discussion, and from modern memory” (1998:2), and it is this disappearance, the melting away of the term “Slav” from the Canadian racial lexicon, which presents a novelty worth investigating. Along with the equally racially distinct mulatto, Celt, Negroid, half-breed, Alpine, and Teuton, the Slav today discloses little besides its own history. We are, in light of this, left with a history that can be read sociologically as the history of the racialization of the Slavs in Canada. Uncovering this category (or any of the other empty and spent racial categories) presents us with the value of uncovering the techniques of social construction as well as the uses to which the category was placed in the service of racial discourses. Such historical sociology is the aim of this dissertation.

Besides charting the construction of a racial identity, the value of this investigation lies in the practical contribution to a much ignored subject matter. The Slavs as a racialized population have, oddly as it sounds, escaped consideration in Slavic Studies. One would expect Slavic Studies to privilege the Slavic identity and to concern itself, after all, with all things “Slavic.” Numerous papers, conferences, books, and other publications identifying an interest in the world of the Slavs certainly cater to this expectation. And yet, as so often happens in that field, the signifier “Slavic” is invoked only to be eclipsed by an interest in various national and linguistic categories

that perform the function of standing in for this racial figure of the Slav. The initial interest in the Slavs, in other words, is translated into an interest in the Byelorussians, Czechs, Poles, or Serbs. This is to say that like Porter, Slavic Studies sees the Slav only as a national, cultural, linguistic figure, seldom a racial one.

The work of one of the most prominent U.S. Slavists, Josephine Wtulich, exemplifies this treatment. Wtulich's *American Xenophobia and the Slav Immigrant* (1994) is one of the most substantial works on the prejudice and discrimination encountered by the Slavs in the US. However, her reliance on the concept of *xenophobia*, as opposed to *racism*, speaks of an unwillingness to see the Slavs as a coherent racial category.⁴ Slavic Studies scholars like Wtulich certainly offer a great deal of insight into the forms of prejudice and discrimination that confronted various other Europeans; however, they do so on the basis that the Slavs' experience was one of xenophobia where the Slavs were seen as outsiders, as strangers, as enemy aliens, as displaced persons, or just as immigrants in general, and not as members of a racially othered population. The question of whether such Europeans as the Slavs suffered from racism is largely left untouched in the field. For Slavic Studies, as for Wtulich, the Slavs were always already white and, as such, they constituted part of an unmarked, privileged whiteness – a part of what Ruth Frankenberg argues “has for the most part remained unexamined and unnamed” (1993:17), and which must continue to remain unexamined and unnamed in order to retain its privileged status. Since the Slavs were, as I suggest, for Slavists, “white on arrival,” it is assumed that their experiences and identity can be approached through the lens of xenophobia, and not racism. To do so, however, is to dismiss the fact that the Slavs *were* racialized, even though many of them appeared pale-skinned enough to enjoy white privilege.

Given that this dissertation sets out to consider the racialization of the Slavs, one could imagine that a contribution of this study lies in its uncovering and establishing the discursive boundaries of whiteness in relationship to the particular Slavic identity it excludes. US scholarship, conducted under the designation “Whiteness Studies,” has certainly covered much ground in mapping the social, historical, geographical, and

⁴ “Neither racist nor anti-Semite explain American xenophobia and the Slav” (Wtulich 1994:171).

political crossroads of whiteness (Roediger 1991; Allen 1994; Ignatiev 1995; Jacobson 1998; Guglielmo and Salerno 2003). In contrast, very little work to date has been done on the discursive coordinates of whiteness in Canada. It is not known, for example, whether whiteness was made up of the same fables, properties, privileges, and performances in Canada as it was in the United States. Also lacking is knowledge of whether the other Europeans were racialized in the same way in Canada as in the US.

It is certainly the case that Whiteness Studies makes this dissertation possible in that it spurs interest in the racial treatment of various European populations. And yet, this work also challenges Whiteness Studies as a possible approach for the study of the Slavs in Canada. I do so on grounds that Whiteness Studies' dominant trope of *becoming white* fails to grasp the chief mode of racialization of the other Europeans in Canada. While a teleology that approaches history in terms of metanarratives should give us cause for suspicion, Whiteness Studies is in error for a more banal reason. There are no factual, which is to say empirical grounds from which one could convincingly claim that the Slavs were excluded from, only to be later included into, whiteness. As such, to pursue the question of the racialization of the Slavs in terms of their eventual whitening is to assume too much. I support Eric Arensen's claim that Whiteness Studies historians approach the non-whiteness of other Europeans as axiomatic. The tendency in such scholarship is to treat *any* racialization of other Europeans as evidence of their exclusion from the protective circle of whiteness itself (Arensen 2001). Is it not conceivable, as Arensen's critique suggests, that not everyone denied the whiteness of the other Europeans, and that, as I would like to add, racialization did not necessarily involve the invoking of a white normativity? Operating without the tropes of Whiteness Studies offers the possibility of considering the racialization of Europeans without taking such racialization as an automatic de-whitening.

Whereas the historians of Whiteness Studies all-too-eagerly imagine the estrangement of the other Europeans from whiteness,⁵ Slavic Studies scholarship is unwilling to consider their racialization at all. In light of such adverse tendencies, the goal of my work is to neither take the signs of the racialization of the Slavs for their absolute banishment from whiteness (à la Whiteness Studies), nor to dismiss their racialization under the guise of xenophobia which includes them uncritically into whiteness (à la Slavic studies). My argument is that *while Slavic identity was occasionally articulated in a strained relationship to whiteness, it is more accurate to see the racialization of the Slavs as entailing an estrangement from the positive attributes associated with an Anglo-Saxon identity and a simultaneous fitting into a complex racial discursive formation whose categories were denationalized*. As I will show, the Slavs were certainly racialized. They were represented and interpreted as possessing certain identifiable and immutable racial traits which were often judged inferior and, occasionally, as desirable; however, this process took place largely without the need to exclude the Slavs from whiteness itself. The Slavs were, rather, at certain discursive junctures constructed in binary opposition to Anglo-Saxons, Teutons, and the various attributes of western civilization itself and in this process, furthermore, their national identities were rendered mute.

But how would one go about seeing the Slavs as neither conclusively non-white nor un-problematically white while appreciating the racialization that they were nonetheless subjected to? The next section identifies the methodology necessary for this task.

Methodological Considerations

In order to avoid the shortfalls of Slavic Studies and Whiteness Studies, it is best to turn to discursive processes themselves. And yet, Slavic Studies and Whiteness

⁵ In this vein, Roediger remarks, “[one] necessity in any writing of the history of “new immigrants” and racial formation is that the account must be jarring enough to keep us from slipping back into easy assumptions that all European immigrants were simply white” (2005:7). Adopting this stance, Jacobson argues specifically that “Slavic immigrants held as poor a claim to the color ‘white’ as the Japanese” (Jacobson 1998:77).

Studies often do themselves dwell in what may be called discourse. The question then becomes not where one should look, but how one should look there. This imperative takes us back to Deleuze and Guattari's dictum, stated in the epigraph of this introductory chapter, which urges the study of the uses, constructions, formulations, coordinates, and regulatory dynamics that are at the back of identity which in turn is established by virtue of a discourse that identity attempts to conceal.

In approaching identity as a process whose coordinates are better sought in the discourses (and epoch) that enable it, this study approaches the analysis of discourse through Foucauldian *archaeology*. Like Whiteness Studies and Slavic Studies, this method focuses on discourse while possessing the worthwhile property of avoiding the search for true meaning. Archaeology, in other words, abandons the search for the true Slavic identity. It does not imagine that the goal is to ask the Slavs themselves what they were nor to interpret what those who spoke about the Slavs were really getting at. It is not a hermeneutics. Archaeology is instead interested in the field that allowed such statements like "Slav," "Anglo-Saxon," or "European racial stock" to surface. It attempts to describe the space in which various discursive objects (identities) emerge. Archaeology remains at the surface level of descriptions themselves. It does not attempt to penetrate their depths, reveal and exploit their hidden meanings, or determine whether the statements make sense. "It is nothing more than a rewriting" (Foucault 2003:156) of what is already there.

On first sight my choice of method might signal an error given that Foucault himself shifted in his later work to genealogy. The choice is also not made easier by Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow's pronouncement of archaeology's methodological failure. They rightly identify it as a "quasi-structuralist" approach (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983:43) whose serious flaw is that it takes discourse as an autonomous system. The problem is that in his early work, Foucault employed archaeology in an "attempt to divorce discourse as far as possible from its social setting and to discover the rules of its self-regulation" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983:17). I am in agreement with their assessment. But there is also in Dreyfus and Rabinow an undercurrent of appreciation for archaeology that redeems it, although only as a handmaiden to Foucault's later

genealogical method.⁶ And while I recognize that genealogy is more robust than archaeology, that later more developed Foucauldian method would be unsuitable for my work on the Slavs. It is not a simple question of trying genealogy instead. The reason is that genealogy is best suited to an analysis of practices, specifically of institutionally conditioned relations as they pertain to power. Genealogy connects power and knowledge to the body. It approaches identity as a mask produced through imposed meanings and “the hazardous play of dominations” (Foucault 1984:83). As deployed by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, I understand genealogy as a method that investigates institutional histories and techniques used in knowing and disciplining the body and producing certain subjects. However, as my work is focused primarily on what was said, on statements, documents, and texts rather than techniques and practices, I find archaeology more suitable. This is because the kind of data I have gathered does not allow me to pay genealogical attention to “a particular stage of forces” (Foucault 1984:83) but rather accommodates the archaeological quest to grasp the “conditions of existence” (Foucault 2003:42) of discursive objects.

In order to get around its alleged methodological failure, I propose to reverse Dreyfus and Rabinow’s move and to treat genealogy as archaeology’s handmaiden. A leaner archaeology (an archaeology on a genealogical diet) can still lead the way here. Such an archaeology needs to give up on the search for the rules that govern discourse, as well as any attempts to isolate discourse from its social setting. Archaeology can still proceed according to the three basic principles that I will retain here from Foucault. The first principle is that *discourse forms objects*. The Slavs are, in the archaeological sense, a “discourse-object” only possible because they can be spoken about. For this reason, this dissertation will take all statements about the Slavs at their face-value, regardless of whether they appear in literary, journalistic, or political discourse. The fact that such statements appear and that they correspond to a historical being is what is of interest here. The second principle is that just as words, concepts, and ideas are to be read relationally, *identities should be treated in relationship to other identities*. The archaeologist studies the network of statements. This is really nothing more than a structural linguistic claim that maintains that words must be understood in relation to

⁶ “archaeology is still an important part of this enterprise” (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983:105).

other words. There are no Slavs without Anglo-Saxons, Teutons, or Scandinavians. The third principle is that *discourse has no centre*. While this dissertation will consider the relations of discourse to its social setting, it will not entertain anything like a central node, or point of origin in the social to which discourse can be tethered. To put it sociologically, neither the economy, nor culture, nor colonialism, nor the state are sources of origin for the discourse on the Slavs. All of them are, rather, implicated in a network of numerous relations. Taken together, they constitute a “discursive formation” (Foucault 2003) whose contours this work will map out.

While genealogy can also aid such an archaeology by supplying the latter with an incredulity toward identity⁷, it needs to be clarified that I am not pursuing here the genealogical question of how the body of the Slav was produced through exclusionary strategies. One can certainly imagine a genealogy of the Slavic body based on the examination of medical, immigration, and eugenic records and procedures. But I find archaeology is the more suitable approach given the nature of the data. It also needs to be clarified that, in keeping with the archaeological principle of the discursive constitution of the object, I do not propose a humanist method that approaches the Slavic identity by attempting to grasp it through first-hand perspectives. Such a humanism digs at the subject’s *weltanschauung* in order to approach identity, as it were, from the inside. W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki’s sociological classic *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* ([1918-20] 1958) is a key example of this approach in that it documents Polish immigrants in their own words by examining personal documents (letters, diaries, etc.) and community voices (newspaper articles, parish documents, etc.). A significant distinction in the approach taken here is that while Thomas and Znaniecki aimed at accounting for the transformation of an identity within its own ranks (a method that according to Znaniecki kept with the goal of the *humanistic coefficient*), my work investigates the history of the category – a category that pertained to the social construction of European racial identity in a number of Canadian discourses. The focus of this work will therefore be on what dominant discourses said about the category

⁷ Genealogy, remarks Foucault, “fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself” (1984:82). As concerns identity, a genealogical approach to history “will not discover a forgotten identity, eager to be reborn, but a complex system of distinct and multiple elements” (Foucault 1984:94).

“Slavs” rather than about how the Slavs described themselves. Although some data exist to validate the claim that the Slavs learned to denationalize themselves and to present themselves in terms of a homogenous Slavic racial category – as did the ad offering the services of an “experienced Slavic butcher” (*The Globe and Mail* 1937:26) – such data will be set aside here. This is because the goal of this work is not to study identity itself but its categoric configurations within discourse. Anything like a “Slavic subjectivity” is possible only because of how this category was constructed in the first place.

Relatedly, archaeology also rules out the possibility of analyzing what is not there or of “theorizing the gap.”⁸ Given that dominant discourses are sought here, the present work can only mirror what it excavates and brings to surface. Thus, what it meant to be racialized as a Slav woman, a Slav child, a bi-racial Slav, an Orthodox Christian Slav or a Muslim Slav, will only be addressed when gender, age, miscegenation, and religion are brought by the discourses examined here into focus. Admittedly, following the narratives of the powerful entails reproducing a certain erasure of the oppressed subject but this is the price one must willingly pay in order to grasp discursive formations.

In pursuing the discursive formation that allowed race to be applied to intra-European, and specifically Slavic identity, the present study has located 1566 pieces of mostly digitally archived data comprised of newspaper and magazine articles, encyclopedic entries, medical articles, immigration pamphlets, novels, poems, police reports, academic research, political speeches and debates in the House of Commons. I applied a threefold set of criteria to selecting the data. The first criterion was temporal. I searched for documents published during the late 19th to the mid-20th century. This period corresponds to the third wave when Slavs were the most numerous other European immigrant category. This period also corresponds to a certain regime of racism that allowed for the racialization of Europeans – one whose traces are more difficult to detect with the 1970s discourse of multiculturalism. The second criterion was discursive. I searched for the term “Slav,” “Slavic,” “Slavonic,” “Slavdom,” or some other variant. I excluded data that, for example, mentioned only specific identities like Russian, Polish, or Ukrainian, but included such data when they did so along with the term “Slav”

⁸ I am in debt to Jennifer Thomas for this apt phrase.

and to the extent that such cultural identities have been used in the racialization of Slavs themselves. The same holds for the “Central” or “Eastern European.” Because such categories apply equally well to non-Slavic categories (Germans, Albanians, Romanians, and Hungarians), I included them only when the term “Slav” also appeared alongside. The third criterion was geographic. I located only texts produced or consumed by Canadian sources. In practice, this means that I included non-Canadian poets or politicians whose pronouncements on the Slavs were reprinted in Canadian newspapers or whose original work was widely consumed in Canada. As a rule, U.S. based eugenicists who had a lot to say about the Slavs, but whose work was not cited or reproduced in Canada, were not included. Such a criterion will allow the present study to describe the late 19th to mid-20th century Canadian construction of the Slavs.

The Argument

With these concerns in mind, I will now turn to the outline of the argument of this dissertation. The task of Chapters 2 through 3 is to establish the theoretical approach to this project. Chapter 2 provides an overview and assessment of Whiteness Studies and Slavic Studies. This is necessary because either of these two areas could have potentially provided the framework for this dissertation. My goal is not to simply critique and move past them but, in metatheoretical fashion, to carefully consider their limits while also noting certain lines of affinity to my own approach. The chapter provides a brief overview of Whiteness Studies before focusing in more depth on the U.S. based “historians of whiteness” – a designation I am imposing on David Roediger, Matthew Jacobson, and Noel Ignatiev. While their approach has value in that it challenges inflexible materialism by entertaining how the racialization of Europeans in the U.S. was a messy affair that involved multiple mechanisms of assimilation and exclusion, in their work whiteness is still treated overwhelmingly as a strategy for economic advancement. For the historians of whiteness, racialization is, at bottom, an economic process. Furthermore, while Roediger’s *inbetween peoples* and Jacobson’s *probationary whiteness* provide new ways of thinking about racialized Europeans, this chapter argues in favour of approaching the Slavs in Canada by drawing on Victor Satzewich’s notion of *peripheral Europeans* (2000). As I show, the work of the historians of whiteness suffers from the tendency to read history according to teleological principles, where “probation”

and “inbetweenness” structure a metanarrative that assumes a trajectory of “becoming white” for peripheral Europeans – an assumption that depends on the dichotomy of whiteness/nonwhiteness. The chapter also provides an overview of Slavic Studies as a field and derives theoretical implications from it. While the tendency to approach Slavs in terms of “ethnic cultures” eclipses the attention the field should be paying to race, Josphine Wtulich provides the useful notion of the *de-ethnicization of the Slavs* which will be reworked in this dissertation as *denationalization*.

Chapter 3 accounts for the shortcomings of Whiteness Studies and Slavic Studies by fine-tuning poststructural theory for the study of intra-European racialization. Although poststructuralism is widely acknowledged as constituting a break with structuralism, the approach here emphasizes continuities along with ruptures. I consider structuralism’s ontological and epistemological commitments in order to situate poststructuralism as a theory that rejects structuralist ahistorical analysis as well as the search for meta-narratives, while along with structuralism accepting the “linguistic turn,” overdetermination, and anti-humanism. Importantly, poststructuralism refurbishes structural linguistics into *discourse* and structuralism’s relativistic holism into *relationism*. Having established the theoretical coordinates of poststructuralism, the chapter also brings into discussion Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s concepts of *empty signifier*, and *constitutive outside*, along with Laclau’s treatment of identity as being constituted by equivalence and difference. Laclau’s approach to discourse is taken here as compatible with Foucault’s *discursive formation*. Taking such concepts on board positions poststructuralism as a theory that maintains that discourse constitutes subjects and objects and that the subject has no identity as such, but is caught up in a chain of identifications that are relational – that is, dependent on other subjects’ identifications. Lastly, the chapter ends by drawing connections between poststructuralism and Berger and Luckmann’s social constructionist concept of *typification* along with the popular concept of *racialization* from the sociology of race. Defined in this way, poststructural theory allows a refusal of the teleology entertained in Whiteness Studies, designated as “becoming white” and based on the view that the racialization of Europeans meant their estrangement from whiteness. It also demands a consideration of identity that moves past the idea in Slavic Studies that the Slavs were not subject to racism and that racial identities “meant” something different back then than they do now.

Chapters 4 through 6 consider the Canadian discursive formation of race and its treatment of the Slavs. Chapter 4 makes the case that for Canadian eyes, the Slavs were racial Others. It identifies four modes of the racialization of intra-Europeans: the racialization of nationality; the placement of racialized nationality within broader, racial meta-categories; the identification of racialized nationality next to (but not subsumed under) racial meta-categories; and the denationalization of racial meta-categories. While acknowledging that all modes made up part of the discursive formation of race, my argument is that the Slavs were primarily racialized according to the last, *denationalized*, mode of racialization. That is, they were Slavs first and foremost, often without serious consideration of their national origins. As the chapter shows, the racial science of Arthur de Gobineau influenced racial thought in Canada. While he considered the Slavs a “variety” (which Canadians eugenicists would rework as “type”) of the white race, de Gobineau made a case for Slavic racial degeneracy that resurfaced in a number of discourses. Degeneracy found its way in the work of the Canadian botanist Reginald Ruggles Gates, who warned against European mixed marriages and attributed to the Slavs such phenotypical traits as concave noses and round-headedness. Peter Bryce, Canada’s Chief Medical Officer, promoted a more sophisticated eugenics – a project he called “applied sociology” – that praised the Slavs while nonetheless racializing them. Having considered the Canadian racial science on the Slavs, the chapter moves on to establish that as denationalized Europeans, the Slavs were perceived according to a number of identifiable traits. Canadian medical, journalistic, literary, scholarly, political and artistic discourses typified them in terms of languages, accents, fashion and manners, and established Slavic phenotypes along the lines of body types, facial features, and hair.

In Chapter 5 the focus shifts to the way that the Canadian discursive formation of race imagined the Slavs in Europe. The argument advanced here is that Slavic Europe, corresponding to Central and Eastern European geographic coordinates, constituted a strange, mysterious, and dangerous place. Outside of the gates of Western Civilization, the Slavs were the “Iroquois of Europe”: a race of peripheral Europeans whose home, occasionally subjected to European colonization, remained a place of strange ideals. Crucially, the Slavs repeatedly demonstrated their racial inclination toward despotism. The discursive formation of race labeled the Slavs in Europe with failure to achieve “self-

government.” Unlike the Anglo-Saxon for whom this came naturally, the Slav was racially unable to participate in liberal democratic institutions. The chapter shows how the discourse of self-government was utilized in Canada to disenfranchise the Slavs in 1901, 1902, and 1917. Relatedly, Slavic immigration from Europe was also framed as a challenge to Canada’s “absorptive capacity” – a concept that referred to the ability of the Canadian social structure to integrate and assimilate foreign races. In the last section, the chapter considers how through self-government and absorptive capacity, Canadian immigration policy facilitated anti-Slav racism. While the US imposed strict immigration prohibitions, Canada reluctantly accepted large numbers of Slavic Europeans. The immigration discourse, however, designated them as a “non-preferred” class of immigrants (below the “preferred” class of Western European immigrants and above the “excluded” class of non-Europeans), as well “enemy aliens” and “leftist radicals.”

The focus returns to Canada and its racialization of Slavic immigrants in Chapter 6. Having established that the Canadian gaze recognized the Slav as a visibly distinct racial type both at home and in Europe, the chapter theorizes race as a political category that combines phenotypical and cultural traits into a physiognomy that allows for the construction of a sovereign Self. The Slav, in other words, lacks the self-defining attributes of the Anglo-Saxon Canadian. The limitations of the Slav are, as such, constitutive for Canadian identity. The chapter considers these limits by examining how the Slavs were racially typified in discourses concerning art, community, and crime. For Canadian eyes, a Slavic school of art existed in literature, drama, music, and dance. While the Slav was a “natural artist,” given to intense cheerfulness or pathos, the Slavic school of art was denigrated for lacking depth, form, and restraint. The primitive ability of the Slavic school could, however, revive Anglo-Canadian art. The chapter draws on the work of social scientists, immigration experts, and politicians to construct an image of Slavic immigrant communities. In the work of James Woodsworth, Robert England, Edward Steiner, and C. J. Cameron, Slavic communities were depicted as clannish, patriarchal, disorganized, and unhygienic. As their observations reveal, Slavic communities themselves were a testament to the Slavic lack of self-government. The chapter also considers the criminal proclivities of the Slavs. Police records and newspapers connected Slavic phenotypes to such typified Slavic crimes as murder, robbery, theft, and kidnapping. Their inherently more criminogenic nature predisposed

the Slavs to impulsive acts that even in their basic deviant manifestation differed from Anglo-Canadian criminality.

Chapter 7 considers the role of whiteness in the racialization of the Slavs in Canada. In the archaeological interest of examining alternative discourses, the chapter makes the strongest case it can to portray in the manner of Whiteness Studies the Slavs as non-white. The social science of Edmund Bradwin in *The Bunkhouse Man* (1928) and the fiction of E. A. Taylor in “Anna Jakobovna, Jewess” (1906) are examined closely for the way in which they construct the Slavs outside of whiteness. The chapter, however, also considers data that are just as numerous and that portray the Slavs as securely white. A third possibility which the chapter argues in favour of is that as concerns the Canadian discursive formation of race, the Slavs were neither significantly differentiated from nor included into whiteness; rather, their racialization proceeded according to a difference measured against the Anglo-Saxon world. Stated differently, being non-Anglo-Saxon rather than non-white, was the basis for the othering of the Slavs. This third, more preponderant and dense mode of racialization, which I refer to as the axis of “Saxon or Slav,” is examined by discourses concerning the so called “Eastern question.” This discourse returns us to the threat of a constitutive outside – that is, of Slavic Europe rising against the West – while also measuring the Slav internally (within Canada) as outside of Anglo-Canadian norms and values.

The concluding chapter encapsulates the dissertation by providing a summary and overview of the vital themes developed herein. Drawing the various theoretical concepts together, the overview considers the role of discourse, typification, the constitutive outside, and overdetermination. The chapter also takes into account the significance of this dissertation in terms of its theoretical developments and contributions to the Slavic Studies subject matter. Lastly, the chapter provides a reflection on what this dissertation could not attend to and what future potential areas it leaves open.

Chapter 2.

Race in Whiteness Studies and Slavic Studies

The challenge... is to devise a narrative line which can take account of racial changeability – to construct a drama whose first-act Celts, Slavs, and Ugro-Finns can remerge as Caucasians before the final curtain, without diminishing either the power and the significance of that transformation for their ultimate social standing or the very real distinctions that had held sway and had structured their experience along the way.
(Jacobson 1998:275)

In 1986 it was still possible for Michael Omi and Howard Winant to make the observation that “[t]heories of race – of its meaning, its transformations, the significance of racial events – have never been a top priority in social science” (9). Today, they would no longer be able to uphold this judgment. Likely due in part to the success of their own work, a number of notable theories of race have since appeared in sociology (Miles 1993; Clifford 1997; Magubane 2001; Bonilla-Silva 2006; Banton 2008; Chan and Chunn 2014) and history (Allen 1994; Ignatiev 1995; Jacobson 1998; Roediger 1991, 2005). This chapter engages in a metatheoretical consideration of the existing terrain of racial theory. As an exercise in metatheorizing that draws on George Ritzer’s work on theory building, the work in this chapter does not aim to review the whole canon in order to provide something like an objective account of the “underlying structure” (Ritzer 2011:A-1) of social theories of race. Instead, it considers only two possible theoretical approaches to the study of the racialization of the Slavs – the work of the historians of Whiteness Studies and the field of Slavic Studies. I do so on the grounds that these two fields come nearest to my own and that either could have technically characterized my work. My argument is that although Whiteness Studies, and more specifically the historians of whiteness, open up new avenues for research that move past rigid materialist historical accounts of race, their work does not break orbit with Marxian economic reductionism. Furthermore, their work is teleological in that it presents the trope of *becoming white* as destiny for all Europeans. With regard to Slavic Studies, my

argument it that while the field presents evidence of the historic othering of the Slavs, it has failed to register racism. Slavic studies does not account for the social construction of the Slavic racial identity. Anachronistically it applies terms like “culture” and “ethnicity” to categories that were primarily racial.

While providing a review and establishing a critique, my overall purpose in this chapter is to note the sociological possibilities of the two schools of thought. By this I have in mind the various contributions that each field can make to the study at hand. In reviewing Whiteness Studies and Slavic Studies, my aim therefore is not simply to critique and move past them; rather, the goal is to establish the contours of these theories in order to advance a critique from which it will be possible to integrate a number of their themes and concepts in the next chapter.

Whiteness Studies: An Overview

Whiteness Studies is a multidisciplinary field. Since its emergence in the late 1980s, it has generated interest in sociology, history, geography, legal studies, women’s studies, literature, and education. The field received its initial thrust from academics who formulated racism not as individual prejudice nor as a product of blind social structures but as a system of differences organized around a culturally embedded hegemonic whiteness. While Whiteness Studies is difficult to characterize without undermining some of its complexity, it is necessary to provide a sketch of its hallmark principles before considering in more detail the role historians have played in it.

Broadly, Whiteness Studies upholds the scientific consensus established in the postwar period that “[there] is no evidence for the existence of so-called ‘pure’ races” (UNESCO 1951:3). As one sociologist who works in this area argues, there is more genetic variation within human “races” than can be found between them (Duster 2001:115). The first hallmark of Whiteness Studies, which results from its acceptance of this consensus, is the acknowledgment of the socially constructed nature of race (Frankenberg 1993; Lipsitz 1998; Zack 1999; Levine-Rasky 2000). To say that race is “socially constructed” is something of a ritual in Whiteness Studies. A social constructionist approach to race allows the field to strike a balance between the scientific

perspective that sees racial categories as invalid and the quest to study racial identity and whiteness. For Whiteness Studies this means that “[t]he categories that constitute references to ‘race’ have economic and political expedience, but no empirical basis” (Levin-Rasky 2002:3) – at least no empirical basis in the body. Scholars are, instead, better off searching for the coordinates of race in social phenomena. As Cynthia Levine-Rasky observes, factors like “social and economic exploitation, political disenfranchisement, and cultural and ideological repression... have produced different racial categories and definitions as well as different meanings of ‘race’ that vary significantly over time and between different societies” (2002:3). Her observation highlights that race is socially constructed and that its construction can be studied in terms of its history and geography.⁹ To take race as a social construct means to say that racial identities are never fully static, immobile, or fixed. As social constructs they are not merely products or things, but processes (Frankenberg 2001:74) that are always subject to re/articulation by social structures.

Relatedly, Whiteness Studies’ second hallmark maintains that as social constructs racial identities must be treated as being capable of producing tangible social consequences. In other words, Whiteness Studies attends to the real effects of the seemingly unreal – at least in the biological sense – racial phenomenon. For scholars in this field, racial constructs are types of “articulatory practice” *with* material effects (McLaren 1997:67). As Peggy McIntosh argues, to be identified as white implies the enjoyment of a number of daily, life-improving advantages. In countries such as the U.S., whites do not have to worry about whether their neighbors will accept them because of their race; they are not asked to speak for “their race”; and they can take work without others assuming that they got it because of affirmative action hiring practices (McIntosh 1989). In one sense, the stressing of the social consequences of a social construct is an academic move on the part of Whiteness Studies that displays solidarity with ethnic, racial, and women’s studies departments by distancing itself with the postmodern

⁹ As an example of the need to detail the historical and geographic trajectory of whiteness, Warwick Anderson notes that by the 1830s the designation “white” had taken root in America: “For centuries used as an adjective, white began to surface more commonly then as a noun connoting membership of a collective, or as a corporate type. By the 1850s, talk of the white vote and white blood abounded” (2009:67). Whiteness Studies utilizes such examples in order to remind us that racial identities do not have a pre-social ontology and are not given in nature.

suspicion of identity.¹⁰ Whiteness Studies echoes feminist critiques of postmodernism on the grounds that identity matters politically and cannot be simply relegated to a performance or theorized with recourse to such notions as “hybridity,” “difference,” and “multiplicity.” In another sense, postmodernism is also contested on the grounds that it dismisses the central problematic of Whiteness Studies: A stable and centered white identity, bringing us to its next key principle.

Whiteness Studies’ third hallmark is that whiteness occupies the invisible center of racial systems of stratification. Within contemporary constructions of race, whiteness occupies a privileged location. The key insight from Whiteness Studies here is not that the benefits of whiteness are material and social (that has already been well documented before the field emerged) but that material and social benefits are accrued by white people in part due to the culturally invisible status of whiteness. Whiteness in the West remains unracialized and unseen (Rodriguez 1998; Semali 1998). This is part of its secret, special power. The notion seems certainly true considering what a latecomer Whiteness Studies is to the Chicano/ Asian/ African Studies scene. White people, as the field points out, have (hitherto) remained unexamined as a race, and by escaping racialization they are able to imagine themselves as the unmarked, unspoiled norm by which other racialized identities are evaluated (Frankenberg 1993:198; Winant 1997:40). As the privileged, invisible center of Western racial regimes, Whiteness Studies maintains that whiteness is “hegemonic” (Peake and Ray 2001). Whiteness is accorded the property of being able to regulate other racial identities. Although he was not a Whiteness Studies scholar, it helps to consider the hegemony of whiteness with recourse to Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of “a structuring... structured structure” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:139). This concept can clarify the way in which whiteness is seen as both the result of structural arrangements and also as something that has the capacity to structure social relations. Whiteness is a social construct that constructs other social categories. As Peter McLaren observes, whiteness “displaces blackness...

¹⁰ It is worth recalling the often cited words of feminist theorist Christine Di Stefano which reflect feminism’s suspicion of the postmodern project: “Why is it, just at the moment in Western history when previously silenced populations have begun to speak for themselves and on behalf of their subjectivities that the concept of the subject and the possibility of discovering/creating a liberating ‘truth’ become suspect?” (1990:75).

into [a signifier] of deviance and criminality within social, cultural, cognitive and political contexts” (1997:67).¹¹ This hegemonic positioning of whiteness structures social relations in a way that allows whiteness to accrue the most advantages and determines on what grounds non-whites can participate in the institutional and cultural life of the West.

The last hallmark principle is an activist one: Given that whiteness is socially constructed as a hegemonic but invisible status to which privileges accrue, the antiracist gesture employed by Whiteness Studies is one of calling whiteness into the open, of marking it, and of turning it into a known object. In drawing attention to hegemonic whiteness as “the center of racial institutional power” (Warren 1999:185), the field signals a break from the traditional way of examining racism and social relations; it invites us to examine racism by shifting our focus from the margins – where non-white, racialized identities are the focus – to the center, to whiteness itself. What is assumed in this shift is that placing whiteness under the analytic gaze puts us in a better position to undermine its hegemony, since part of the special power of whiteness is that it remains unseen, unknown, and unspoken of. The very act of studying whiteness becomes, as such, a radical, antiracist gesture of “disrupting the meta-narrative of whiteness” (Peake and Ray 2001:184) that carries with it “the hope that the center will fall apart” (Warren 1999:197).

The Historians of Whiteness

The “historians of whiteness” – a designation that I am admittedly imposing on Matthew Jacobson, David Roediger, and Noel Ignatiev – account for the history of the racialization of various European populations. Ignatiev’s *How the Irish Became White* (1995) focuses specifically on one racial category, while Jacobson’s *Whiteness of a Different Color* (1998) and Roediger’s *Working Toward Whiteness* (2005) are broader in their approach, examining the mechanisms that facilitated the transformation of “new

¹¹ Taking up this analysis in the Canadian context, Lawrence D. Berg, Mike Evans, Duncan Fuller, and the Okanagan Urban Health Research Collective, Canada argue that “[h]egemonic white ideals of Aboriginality suggest that Indian Bands are the only ‘true’ representatives for Aboriginal people” (2007:404).

immigrants”¹² into members of the white race. Collectively, they work within a fairly broad timeline, spanning the 18th to the 20th century, while remaining geographically focused on the U.S.

These historians operate with the four hallmarks of Whiteness Studies discussed in the previous section. Whiteness for the historians of whiteness is a hegemonic social construct that accords its beneficiaries advantages. And the project of exposing the historical dimensions of its construction is part of the antiracist undertaking of bringing it into a clearing from which it can be dismantled. Thus, for Jacobson (1998) race is a social construct in that “[r]ace is a self-sustaining feature of the social landscape” (196) that allows for “disparate acts of perception engendered by the contingencies of political economy and power relations” (198). Complementing Jacobson’s constructionism, Roediger provides a rich account of the benefits, advantages, and privileges that European immigrants learned to enjoy (2005), while adding that this shaped up as “the white working class... began during its formation to construct an image of the Black population as ‘other’” (1991:14) – that is, as whiteness displaced blackness as a “signifier of deviance.” The ontology of race is clearly for Jacobson and Roediger historical and social. And our ability to perceive race is to be sought in social processes and relations which secure whiteness as an invisible central referent by which, in turn, other identities are constructed and evaluated.

To their credit, the U.S. based Whiteness Studies scholars have produced a rich body of work that aims at overcoming rigid materialist arguments proposed by other theorists of race. The effort to challenge Marxist approaches and New Labour History is deliberate as these theories of race have either had a “blind spot on race” ignoring it altogether (Ignatiev 1995:181) or have accounted for race only by relegating it as an epiphenomenon that derives its special character from the labour market (Omi and Winant 1986:37). U.S. sociologist Oliver C. Cox provides an example of this reductionist tradition. Cox’s analysis of racial oppression in the US is based on the assumption that

¹² As Roediger explains, “new immigrants” is a turn of the last century, U.S. based “racially inflected term that categorized the numerous newcomers from southern and eastern Europe as different from both the whiter and longer established northern and western European migrants to the United States and from the nonwhite Chinese and other ‘Asiatics’ ” (2005:5-6).

“racial exploitation is merely one aspect of the problem of the proletarianization of labor... racial antagonism is essentially political-class conflict” ([1948] 1970:333). In this formulation, race is reduced to the more fundamental feature of class, as “race prejudice” constitutes a tool for securing class interests. Workers, according to Cox’s orthodox Marxism, are fragmented by the false ideology of race, which renders them unlikely to form labour unions with immigrant and racialized minorities. As such, racism is a barrier to the realization of their common, proletarian interests. A more contemporary development of Cox’s argument may be found in Theodore Allen. In his *The Invention of the White Race* (1994), Allen avoids conceptualizing racial oppression in terms of a strict political-class conflict by focusing instead on the emerging capitalist order’s need for social control. He places whiteness and white supremacy under the microscope of a class theory that sees whiteness as necessitating an “intermediate buffer social control stratum” (Allen 1994:23) made up of small landowners, leaseholders, and members of various professions. Because white supremacy cannot be maintained by racial terror alone, Allen argues that white supremacy required intermediaries, who while subordinate to the white ruling class nonetheless reinforced its norms in their day-to-day lives (1994:105).

In treating race as a tool of class interests, classical Marxist thinkers like Cox and Allen fail to consider the “uniqueness of race” (Omi and Winant 1986:3) – something which the historians of whiteness are sensitive to. It may be said that one notable goal of the historians of whiteness is to avoid the temptation to formulate racial oppression “as a deliberate ruling-class policy” (Allen 1994:23). As Ignatiev charges, Marxist race theory has not adequately accounted for why in the US “nonslaveholding whites acquiesced either in planter dominance or its justifications” (Ignatiev 1995:185). Whiteness Studies compensates for this by accounting for white supremacy not as an ideology imposed from the peaks of state-capitalist hegemony unto the lowlands of civil society but as the cultural project of the white working class. Whiteness Studies’ historians thus go where classical Marxist theories fail to tread. This is evident in the fact that historians of whiteness are willing to dispel the myths about the inherently progressive character of the labour movement. Roediger (2005), for example, considers that while unions have functioned progressively in setting up “pan-immigrant coalitions opposing Anglo-Saxon

bias” (99), they have also at times functioned as tools of Americanization, nativism, and “anti-new immigrant racism” (80).

One way in which the historians of whiteness overcome the reduction of race to capitalism is to theorize race in terms of multiple structural forms of oppression. Breaking with Cox and Allen, Jacobson asserts that “[economics] alone... cannot explain why... native elites again and again tried to deny peoples like Celts (and Jews and Armenians and Italians and Slavs) a full share in whiteness itself” (1998:19). Echoing this, Roediger observes that legal and scientific debates about the non-Caucasian status of new immigrants “rested not only on a political economy in which the need for immigrant labor fluctuated, but also on peculiarities of US naturalization law” (2005:60). Whiteness Studies historians thus account for the social construction of race via what may be called an interlocking analysis. That is, historians of whiteness entertain a plurality of structures as mechanisms of assimilation for new immigrants. Roediger, for example, observes that “New Deal housing policies empowered and advantaged new immigrants, but as whites, not as new immigrants”, all-the-while continuing to exclude African Americans and Mexicans (2005:230). Along with institutions like labour unions, workplaces, churches, and state based immigration and naturalization laws (Roediger 2005), such policies acted as the social structural mechanisms by which various Europeans were included into whiteness. Contributing to this, Jacobson argues that social processes such as the civil rights movement acted as a mechanism of assimilation of “the problematic Letts, Finns, Hebrews, Slavs, and Greeks of 1924 [who] became even more ‘white’ as the politics of segregation overwhelmed the national agenda” (1998:246). To the list of the social mechanisms for the inclusion into whiteness, Jacobson adds Jim Crow laws¹³, patterns of frontier settlement, the Johnson Act of 1924¹⁴, and the entertainment and

¹³ Jim Crow laws enforced racial segregation at the federal and local level. Based primarily in the southern U.S., Jim Crow laws came into effect in 1877 and were not dismantled until the mid-1960s. Representing a “way of life,” Jim Crow segregation legitimated anti-black violence, stymied integration, and relegated blacks to a secondary class status (Pilgrim 2012).

¹⁴ Also known as the Immigration Act of 1924, this federal law established an immigration quota of two percent based on the national origins enumerated in the census of 1890. It had the effect of privileging immigration from Western and Northern European countries such as Germany, Britain, Ireland, and Sweden; reducing Eastern and Southern European immigration from countries like Poland, Italy, Czechoslovakia, and Russia; and formally excluding Asian immigration, primarily from Japan and China (*History Matters* 2016).

popular culture industry (1998). In a similar vein, Ignatiev sees the Democratic Party and 19th century anti-Black race riots as key mechanisms for the inclusion of the Irish (1995). All three scholars identify a number of social institutions and social processes – some economic others, largely cultural and legal – as important determinants of the whitening of new immigrants. Keeping with the principle of social constructionism, in Roediger, Jacobson, and Ignatiev, whiteness results not from any evolutionary biological processes but from complex social mechanisms that alone are sufficiently capable of redrawing racial lines. The work of the historians of whiteness clearly represents an advance from the classical Marxist theories of race. Refusing the reductionist move to conceptualize race as the expression of the economy, while entertaining a plurality of processes and structures by which various other Europeans were assimilated into the folds of whiteness, places this new tradition on strong theoretical grounds.

Another notable quality in the work of the historians of whiteness is the development and use of novel theoretical concepts that seem to suggest a proclivity in this body of work for genealogy – that is, for non-teleological readings of history. The historians of whiteness are careful to maintain that the whitening of new immigrants was a haphazard, messy affair which did not unfold gradually towards an all-embracing whiteness. Rather, as the historians note, the new immigrants were at the outset of the 20th century simultaneously depicted as everything from “white,” to “non-white,” “dirt white,” and “off-white.” Roediger highlights this complexity with the useful concept of *inbetween peoples* which captures the fact that the new immigrants, including for him American Slavs, were “neither securely white nor nonwhite” (2005:12). To be inbetween meant that one was racialized in various ways. As Roediger observes, “[the] racialization of east Europeans was... striking. “Only hunkies”¹⁵, a steel industry investigator was told, worked blast furnace jobs which were “too damn dirty and too damn hot for a white man” (2005:49). At the same time, Roediger reminds us, inbetweenness also “carries a useful expectation of a possible change over time” (2005:13). This is especially evident in new immigrants’ relationship to categories that occupied an even lower status in the US racial hierarchy: “Inbetween’ rather than fully racialized, southern and eastern Europeans would have seen stark differences in ways in which they were categorized compared to

¹⁵ An ethnophaulism aimed at the Slavs.

Asians, blacks, and Latinos even at the nadir of their mistreatment in the 1920s” (Roediger 2005:154). As inbetween peoples they would have surely been aware of their greater political and social rights. Unlike Asians and Latin Americans, Slavs, Mediterraneans, and Jews could, for example, be neutralized as US citizens, which according to US naturalization law was contingent on their whiteness (notwithstanding their insecure claims to it). Their inbetweenness was therefore a relational concept that suggested a complex experience of racial marginalization and privilege.

Complementing Roediger, Jacobson theorizes the racial status of new immigrants with the concept of *probationary whiteness*. According to his work, such “racial distinction as ‘Mediterranean,’ ‘Hebrew,’ ‘Iberic,’ or ‘Slavic’ as they operated through the early twentieth century” (Jacobson 1998:95), denotes also something akin to what he explicitly identifies as Roediger’s “racial middle ground” (Jacobson 1998:57). On the one hand, probationary whiteness implies an exclusion from whiteness. To be “on probation” means not to have passed – at least, not yet. As Jacobson observes, some Europeans were racialized as non-white: “In her 1910 study of Homestead, Pennsylvania, the sociologist Margaret Byington broke the community down along the “racial” lines of ‘Slav, English-speaking European, native white, and colored’” (1998:5). On the other hand, to be on probation is, in a white supremacist society, much better than to have no hope of ever becoming white. In Jacobson, as in Roediger, similar analytic concepts are at work: Probationary whiteness and inbetweenness imply a promise of becoming white which is denied to even more subordinate categories. Both concepts denote a bifurcated existence that involves the paradoxical exclusion from and inclusion into whiteness. As Jacobson observes, the precariousness of probationary whiteness implied that “immigrants who were white enough to enter the country as ‘free white persons’ could also lose that status by their association with nonwhite groups” (1998:57). Probationary whiteness and inbetweenness were promises without guarantees.

A Critique of the Historians of Whiteness

While their inclusion of the multiple mechanisms of racial assimilation, as well as the development of concepts that speak to the messiness and complexity that

characterizes this process represents an advance over Marxist theory of race, two limitations must be noted in the work of the historians of whiteness. First, despite acknowledging the role of non-economic factors, the historians of whiteness are inclined to reduce whiteness to a strategy for material gains and to contemplate race and racism from the perspective of class interests. Even if they consciously refuse to see racism as a false ideology imposed by the ruling class and even if they refuse to see racism as a secondary, economically derived phenomenon, in their work the economy is nonetheless privileged as the overarching source of racism. Ignatiev, for example, challenges labour competition theory which holds “labor competition as the cause of intergroup animosities within the working class” (1995:98) but only to reformulate – not abolish – the central role of the economy. According to Ignatiev, it is not the case that capitalist labour competition fragments the working class into hostile racial camps. As he puts it, “[i]t is not free competition that leads to enduring animosity, but its absence. Race becomes a social fact at the moment ‘racial’ identification begins to impose barriers to free competition among atomized and otherwise interchangeable individuals” (Ignatiev 1995:98). Ignatiev identifies the existence of something like a 19th century “white caste” which prevented markets from operating as they should. It is to this that he attributes racial strife: “White artisans and mechanics were able to gain control of the labor market by withholding apprenticeships and training from black youth” (Ignatiev 1995:101). Part-and-parcel of these caste-like elements were labour unions, which took regressive stances on slavery and which even went so far as to attack abolitionism as a distraction from the more central struggles of “free labor” (Ignatiev 1995:108).

Roediger similarly identifies the labour movement and unions as one important source of racial strife. Unlike Ignatiev, however, he attributes this not to ineffectual competition, nor to flawed markets, but to the very logic of capitalist accumulation. According to Roediger, “employers preferred a labor force divided by race and national origins” (2005:72). Seemingly siding with the type of labour competition theory that Ignatiev rejects, Roediger argues that “work gangs segregated by nationality and/or race could be made to compete against each other in a strategy not only designed in the long run to undermine labor unity and depress wages but also to spur competition and productivity every day” (2005:73). Roediger, here following Ignatiev, points out that unions themselves reinforced the racial structure of their employers, even as they

confronted capital. Documenting numerous accounts of labour's racism, Roediger notes, "[t]he unions organized much of their critique of working-class quiescence around a critique of 'slavish' behavior that could be mobilized against ex-slaves or against Slavs..." (2005:92). Roediger, however, does not attribute any of this to dysfunctional markets or a lack of competition. The point that needs to be stressed here is that in circumscribing the debate for the cause of racism between market forces and caste-like conditions, Roediger and Ignatiev both look to the economy itself as one of the strongest sources of racial strife without specifically justifying why this should be the case. Among a rich multiplicity where other structures of racialization are acknowledged and even carefully examined, in their work one senses the economy as the chief underlying structure.

The privileging of the economy as the overriding mechanism of assimilation for the new immigrants is also evident. The titles of Roediger's various texts are suggestive: *The Wages of Whiteness* (1991), and more recently *Working Toward Whiteness* (2005) with the latter featuring on its cover blue-collar, factory workers handling industrial tools. All of this implies that the mechanisms of inclusion are primarily economic. While Roediger examines political mechanisms like political parties, legal mechanisms like courts, and cultural mechanisms like cinema, one certainly gets the impression that these are under the sway of larger, macroeconomic structures. Non-economic sites function in his work as an index for economic forms of racial inclusion. Ultimately, Roediger reduces the multiplicity that his work unleashes into a strategy for material gains. To see the identification that new immigrants displayed toward whiteness in terms of "the defense of home and neighborhood" (Roediger 2005:169) is to privilege economics as the underling factor in cultural expression of race and racism.

A similar economism characterizes Ignatiev's account of the whitening of the Irish. Even though Ignatiev charges Marxist historians and New Labour History with neglecting racism and with a tendency to see racism as false consciousness, he upholds class and economic factors as primary in racialization. One learns from Ignatiev that the Irish were subject to racial oppression in Ireland as they became the first subjects of Britain's colonial adventures and that this involved "the transfer of the land from native cultivators to foreign conquerors... on as large a scale as in any African colony"

(1995:35); that in the US a shortage of laborers created the pull factor for famine-displaced Irish immigrants (1995:38); that once in the US, the Irish were “thrown together with black people on jobs and in neighborhoods” (1995:40); and that “the assimilation of the Irish into the white race made it possible to maintain slavery” (1995:69). Just like Roediger, Ignatiev examines non-economic institutions and processes (political parties, race riots, etc.), but these are for him also indexes of the underlying economic forces. Material conditions provide the strongest explanation for the racialization of the Irish. As he decisively declares, “[w]hether in the Army or on the barricades, they [the Irish] took up arms for the White Republic, and their place in it... their stance was rooted in the desire to escape their miserable conditions” (Ignatiev 1995:89).

Ignatiev’s account of the history of the racialization of the Irish also reads oddly like rational choice theory donning historical materialist garb. The theme of “choice” and “strategy” exercised by the Irish with regard to their own racialization dominates *How the Irish Became White*. We are told that “Irish-Americans, as a group, were asked to choose between supporting and opposing the color line” (Ignatiev 1995:6, emphasis added), and that “the Irish in America chose not to go the whole hog, but opted instead for the privileges and burdens of whiteness” (Ignatiev 1995:59, emphasis added). The notion of choice is given too much credence by Ignatiev. As this dissertation will show, racialization is not an individual or group choice. It is a process that cannot be comprehended in terms of strategy. It is not the case of seeing the Irish (or any other European category) exercising choice as free subjects through a number of social institutions; rather, it is a matter of seeing institutions as sites of power-knowledge from which the processes of racialization are rendered intelligible, outside of the desires of any group or category. In the US, the Irish chose no more to become “white” or “non-white” than they chose in Ireland to be “Catholic” or “Protestant” or to be subjects of British colonialism. What is missing in Ignatiev is a history without subjects, or stated differently, a history whose real subject is race.

At first sight, Jacobson seems to avoid privileging economics, or any social structural element for that matter. As he observes, the “increasing fragmentation and hierarchical ordering of distinct white races (now in the plural) was theorized in the

rarified discourses of science, but it was also reflected in literature, visual arts, caricature, political oratory, penny journalism, and myriad other venues of popular culture” (Jacobson 1998:41). But even here it is clear that “discourses of science” are privileged as the site from which racial identities receive their content. Other sites like literature and journalism merely “reflect” what is happening at the more significant scientific level. A closer look reveals that science itself is for Jacobson embedded as a secondary realm behind other, first order sites: “The contending forces that have fashioned and refashioned whiteness in the United States across time, I argue, are capitalism... and republicanism” (1998:13). In Jacobson something like a first order of political-economic sites exists behind the second order discourses of science (and elsewhere law), which in turn exists behind a third order level of discourses comprised of various cultural sites like visual arts. It seems that for Jacobson everything can be traced back to the political-economic gravitational centre that as a foundational ground turns second and third order sites into its index.

The second criticism of the historians of whiteness is that they fall prey to teleology. Having “located” identity as a fundamental property of some specific (usually economic) social structure, the historians of whiteness encase new immigrants into a racial trajectory whose contours destine the othered Europeans toward full whiteness. Such a principle of telos leads Ignatiev to completely fail to address how a non-white Irish identity was actually produced. Regrettably, there is a lack of concern on his part to the cultural dimensions of their othering. The othering of the Irish is simply assumed rather than explained, while Ignatiev busies himself with providing an account of the racialization of the Irish *into* whiteness vis-à-vis the economy.

The tendency to teleology is also found in Jacobson. To be clear, Jacobson actually does much to unearth the racialization of his probationary whites. However, he also reads the history of the racialization of new immigrants as one involving the movement “from white, to non-Anglo-Saxon, to Caucasian” (1998:126), with each stage constituting a distinct racial regime (1998:13-4). Prior to the Irish influx of 1840, Jacobson attributes to his first stage the properties of a “monolithic character” (1998:38) of whiteness. By his second stage, the monolith becomes internally variegated along “minor” European divisions, only to be, after the 1920s reinstated as once again a

monolithic “Caucasian unity” (1998:91-3) in the final, third stage. Such a conceptual ordering of history serves to guide Jacobson’s research towards the unifying goal of whiteness (expressed, in Jacobson, as *Caucasianness*), which itself serves as origins and finality of the racialization of new immigrants. There is certainly more here than just resemblance to one of the great masters of teleology, Karl Marx. As his dialectical materialism makes clear, the last communist stage of history was a fulfillment of the first “primitive” communist period. Yet, thinking of this movement as a predestined path imposes a particular interpretation which guarantees in advance the validity of the theory that imposes it. Research findings are at risk of being read through Jacobson’s distinct racial regimes and such findings, in turn, begin to be read as expressions of the theoretically constituted regimes.

Roediger’s work is more sophisticated than Ignatiev’s in that it also provides the missing account of the production of racialized identity. However, while Roediger is aware of the need not to present “the whitening process as a linear one leading to ever greater inclusion” (2005:138) and while he does not shy away from claiming, contra Jacobson, that “no turning point can mark a definitive and universally accepted whitening of new immigrants” (2005:136), his work nonetheless also produces a linear, even if messier, trajectory of whiteness as destiny. Perhaps because the trope of *becoming white* also dominates his work, the mechanisms of racialization that Roediger focuses on are for the most part those of inclusion. Focusing on mechanisms of racial exclusion would challenge the commonsense narrative of whiteness as destiny which Roediger cannot help but reproduce. Drawing on Foucault, to read history teleologically is to “map the destiny of a people” (Foucault 1984:81). Rather than presenting a history which goes through such (pre)destined motions as origins (“from white”), development (“to non-Anglo-Saxon”), and finality (“to Caucasian”), the poststructural sociology that informs this dissertation constitutes an attempt “to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion” (Foucault 1984:81). The goal is to trace this dispersion by mapping its discursive contours and expanse, without linking it to such notions as origins or finality. This means being highly sensitive to, as Roediger puts it, “the multiple meanings of race” (2005:13). It also implies not subsuming discourses under a single banner meant to identify and exhaust an entire period and, moreover, not assuming that the other Europeans were destined for whiteness – a claim that posits them more securely outside of it.

As such, any investigation concerned about the racialization of the Slavs must not rush too quickly into an all-embracing racial rejection, inclusion, or, even, inbetweenness. In his critique of the work of whiteness scholars, Eric Arensen (2001) argues that the historians of whiteness too eagerly assume that because the Slavs, Celts, or Mediterraneans were depicted and characterized as racial others this entailed that they were seen as non-white. Arensen's view might appear too harsh given how careful the historians of whiteness are, as I have shown, to avoid a simple characterization of the other Europeans as conclusively non-white. Roediger's "inbetween-peoples" and Jacobson's "probational whiteness" after all depict "a racial middle ground within the otherwise unforgiving, binary caste system of white-over-black" (Jacobson 1998:57). And yet, despite their careful and admirable maneuvering, Arensen's critique is on point: to paint other Europeans even with ambiguous racial brush strokes as being both in-and-out of whiteness is to overstate the case. The historians of whiteness engage in selective readings that "single out one construction out of several" (Arensen 2001:19) in order to depict the problematic racial status of new immigrants. As this work will show, the Slavs were certainly racialized as Others but their whiteness was seldom subjected to serious speculation or doubt. It is not justifiable to interpret the othering of some Europeans from WASP, western, democratic, and related racial codes as an othering from whiteness itself. It would, as such, be much more appropriate to see the racial history of Slavic Europeans by replacing both the trope of *becoming white* and the related concepts of "inbetween peoples" and "probational whites" with Victor Satzewich's designation of *peripheral Europeans* (2000). A periphery can only exist in a system of inclusions/exclusions. It is produced relationally and does not assume a transformation over time.

Slavic Studies

Slavic Studies is not a theoretical but a departmental designation. Although languages such as Russian had been taught as early as 1918 at McGill University, and while even before that, as prominent Slavist Victor Buyniak observes, in a "broad sense Slavic studies in Canada began locally among the first Slavic settlers themselves" (1967:4), officially designated "Slavic Studies" departments proliferated in Canada in the

late 1940s (Buyniak 1967). Their appearance owed a lot to the post-War developments of the Cold War. As one newspaper article on the 1949 inauguration of a Slavic Studies department at the University of Toronto noted, “if a war broke out, linguists with a command of Slavic languages would be as precious as plutonium – and about as plentiful” (*The Globe and Mail* 1953:7). Recognizing the strategic value of Slavic speaking scholars in the context of the Cold War led in the late 1940s to the creation of a Slavic Studies department at the University of Toronto; the creation of Slavic Studies at the Université de Montréal; the drastic expansion of Slavic Studies at the University of British Columbia in the area of philology; additional language classes offered at the Slavic Studies department at the University of Saskatchewan; and the addition of Russian in the Department of Modern Languages at the University of Alberta (Buyniak 1967:9-11). Writing in 1965, Ivo Moravcik observed that “Slavic studies are comparatively new in Canada and have grown up largely since 1945” (59). Its development set the ground for the first Congress of Canadian Slavs, which was held in Toronto in 1950 (Chrypinski 1966:130). With an emphasis on Slavic languages and literature, demographic studies on immigrant populations, and geopolitical analyses of Europe, Slavic Studies in Canada also advanced a certain approach to the study of the identity of the Slavs. Paradoxically, it did so by largely ignoring the Slavs.

When it speaks of Slavs, Slavic Studies prefers to do so in terms of “ethnicity,” “culture,” “groups,” “nationalities,” or what Jerzy Wojciechowski calls “Slavic ethnic cultures” (1966:86). Utilizing such categories to organize research, Slavic Studies has collected and examined a rich amount of data on a number of so called Slavic identities. By 1965 it was possible for the Slavist and sociologist Elizabeth D. Wangenheim to reflect, “while I have suffered from a relative lack of historical materials, there is almost an embarrassment of riches as regards present-day publications” (1966:48). Indeed, under the banner of Slavic Studies, valuable research may be found regarding particular Central and Eastern European populations. None of the scholarship, however, satisfactorily accounts for the racialization of Slavs. Unlike Whiteness Studies, Slavic Studies it seems cannot approach the Slavs as a racial category or speak about the racialization of the Slavs in Canada. For Slavic Studies such designations as “ethnicity” and “culture” are vital in that they perform the erasure of the racialized status of the Slavs. Slavic Studies has facilitated the grouping of Ukrainian, Polish, and Russian

identities under an overarching designation “Slav” while never studying the construction of this designation itself. Thus by the 1940s, when Slavic Studies departments were rapidly germinating across Canadian universities, the Slavs were largely approached as a subject of study in terms of their linguistic and national sub-categories. The National Conference on Canadian Slavs’ multiple volumes *Slavs in Canada*, vol. 1-3 (1967-9) do not, for example, investigate the Slavic identity per se; rather, under the “Slavic” umbrella, a number of scholars investigate the conditions encountered by various Slavic categories which are defined, known, and examined on the basis of their national identity. Race escapes here the analytical gaze, in favor of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and national affiliation. Ironically, the Slavs received university departments at the expense of Slavic identity.

It is certainly the case that a number of Slavists did examine Canadian Slavs as members of a single, undifferentiated category. In their work, however, it is difficult to deny the crisscrossing axes that complicate the idea of a singular Slavic identity and which eventually overtake that identity. As Vincent Chrypinski notes, any study of the unity of Canadian Slavs must inevitably consider “conflict dividing a single, inherently cohesive Slavic group” (1966:128). Divisions have characterized the life of Slavic communities in Canada so much so that Chrypinski concludes that “[t]he oft-proclaimed early unity of Slavs hardly existed in reality. Recollection of past struggles, contradictory territorial claims, religious and cultural differences led to many and bitter conflicts even among the Slavs who left their homelands” (1966:129). Such internal divisions of Slavdom reassert themselves for most writers working in Slavic Studies. Thus, the idea that, along with 1960s “black militancy” in the US, “in Canada the French nationalist movement has spurred Slavs and others to assert themselves” (Vecoli and Kochan 1969:133), swiftly gives way to reflections, in the same essay, on how “[e]ach ethnic group is a social world with its own complicated structure of institutions and organizations” (Vecoli and Kochan 1969:138). Slavic Studies, it seems, cannot maintain its focus on whatever unifying features the Slavic identity can be said to have for too long. It sees Slavs as distinct ethno-cultures first and only vaguely, if at all, does it regard them as members of a distinctly racialized Slavic population.

Josephine Wtulich provides, to my knowledge, the only substantial treatment that deals specifically with the identity of the Slav in the United States.¹⁶ In *American Xenophobia and the Slav Immigrant* (1994), Wtulich makes a number of important observations about the various ways in which American Slavs have been marginalized. Her approach is in the vein of the time-honored sociological analyses of, as she puts it, “threats of outgroups” (Wtulich 1994:5). Specifically, she examines the way various epithets and ethnophaulisms were used by “segments of the host society such as journalists, churchmen, politicians, committees/commissions, labor leaders, patriotic organizations and associations” (Wtulich 1994:26). Just like the historians of whiteness, Wtulich uncovers nativist and popular fears regarding the assimilability of the Slav into American life. Her thesis is that “negative stereotypes of the Slav immigrants were fueled by the frequent use of three epithets and three ethnophaulisms. The three epithets are immigrant, alien, and foreigner; the three ethnophaulisms are peasant, hunky, and ‘Polack’ ” (Wtulich 1994:7). Her work advances an important account of how through the use of these, the “anti-Slav attitude” (Wtulich 1994:68) or “[a]nti-Slav bias was reflected in the many discriminatory policies of management and personnel officers, and labor officials, such as classification of jobs, hiring, firing and rehiring, determination of wage scales, occupational mobility, and union recruitment” (Wtulich 1994: 101). In addition, it helps us understand how such bias also broadly manifested itself in American culture, immigration restrictions, religious communities, and the education system. Broadly, anti-Slav attitudes seem to have been present through various parts of the US social structure. As Wtulich argues, “[t]he Slav, the new immigrant, had to overcome ... handicaps never imposed on those who preceded him [sic] and these handicaps subsequently impeded his moving into the mainstream of American life, if he ever did” (Wtulich 1994:52). While the claim that such handicaps were unique to Slavic immigrants is suspect, Wtulich must be given credit for uncovering and bringing together

¹⁶ Adele Donchenko’s essay *Slavs in America* (1976) anticipates Wtulich. However, aside from her observation that the Slavs were seen as a “growing cultural and economic threat to the established order of things” (1976:4) and that “these newcomers [were not] easily identifiable in terms of physical appearance... Physically, they ranged from typically tall, swarthy South Slavs to blonde, blue-eyed Poles” (1976:6), Donchenko does not, unlike Wtulich, devote significant attention to the study of how the Slavs were perceived and represented. Her short work is largely an account of significant figures from various “individual Slavic groups” (Donchenko 1976:4) coupled with immigration statistics.

evidence of what may indeed be called an “anti-Slav bias” and also for sustaining the focus on the Slavs in a way that surpasses the work done by the historians of whiteness.

It is also worth noting that Wtulich identifies a phenomenon that gives clues to the way in which Slavs were constructed as an out-group. She observes that between 1900 and 1968 one encounters in American film, humor, and literature what she calls the “[d]e-ethnicization of the Slav” (Wtulich 1994:133). Functioning also as a depersonalization, the *de-ethnicization of the Slav* refers to the fact that in these various depictions, “little or no attention is paid to what differentiates one Slav from another or from any other ethnic” (Wtulich 1994:133). The Slav is de-ethnicized in the sense that, for example, a Polish joke can refer to all Slavs – and even some non-Slavs such as Polish Jews, Hungarians, and Lithuanians. The Slav is also de-ethnicized in that the ethnophaulism “hunky,” which etymologically can be traced to a shortening of Hungarian, can also stand in turn for any Slav. The de-ethnicization of the Slav thus takes place whenever a depiction blurs the “distinctions among Slav groups” (Wtulich 1994:145), blending and fusing into a single powerful stereotype such qualities as “[c]rudeness and brutality, drunkenness, and violence” as well as “a loyalty that borders on clannishness” (Wtulich 1994:143). The de-ethnicization of the Slav renders any Slav into “a transferable ethnic” (Wtulich 1994:158), allowing xenophobia to establish a generalizable anti-Slav bias.

A Critique of Slavic Studies

This dissertation attempts to make a contribution to the field of Slavic Studies. It aspires to account for the gap characterizing the identity of Canadian Slavs. Nonetheless, the project here also stakes out a distance from the dominant approach in Slavic Studies. What sets this work apart is that it does not attempt the examination of particular “Slavic ethnic cultures” on the grounds that perhaps something like a composite sketch combining data gained through the investigation of such populations can lend insight into the identity of the Slavs themselves. While such research is valuable, the work of Slavists largely misses race in favor of ethnicity. There is, as I have argued, in Slavic Studies a certain aversion to examining the Slavs in terms of racial stratification and as members of a distinct Slavic race.

The unwillingness to treat Slavs as belonging to a coherent type stems from the unwillingness in Slavic Studies to acknowledge the racial exclusion of Slavs. As she examines the various anti-Slav attitudes and exclusionary practices, Wtulich for example, is careful not to claim to be examining aspects of racism but what she instead prefers to designate as “xenophobia.” For her, the terms “race” and “racism” do not apply: “Neither racist nor anti-Semite explain American xenophobia and the Slav” (Wtulich 1994:171). As do most Slavists, Wtulich regards the Slav as a victim of a generalized fear of outsiders; he or she is not a victim of racism proper. Wtulich generally finds it difficult to accept that the Slavs were seen according to even a modestly attuned racialization. For example, while reviewing Jerome Bahr’s 1937 novel *All Good Americans*, Wtulich comes across a series of descriptions. Only one is cast as objectionable with the use of a question mark in square parentheses:

As an American, the Pole comes off as second best to his neighbors. Except for one reference to a Norwegian as ‘Norskie,’ only the Pole is referred to by an ethnophaulism, e.g. Polack, but not if he is a priest, the only character that is fully developed in the book. More often, however, the Pole is a farmer, a mill-hand, and infrequently a tavern keeper, all of whom are lumped together as poor men who live in shacks and breed like ‘flies’... Their women and their offspring are characterized as ‘dumb’ but with healthy and ‘nice brown [?] bodies’. (1994:132)

In a subtle but nonetheless effectively undermining gesture, Wtulich places a question mark in order to cast doubt not on any of the novel’s facts that characterize the Poles as dumb, promiscuous, or even healthy but on the exclusion of the Poles from whiteness. The question mark, placed by the disconcerting designation “brown,” itself asks: how could Poles, who count as Slavs, be seen as something other than white? It should therefore not surprise us that Wtulich would prefer to see Slavs as perpetrators of racism rather than as its victims. The Slav is constructed and becomes for American eyes “a hunky, a blue-collar worker, and a racist” (Wtulich 1994:162) but even as he or she “feels the sting... [of] hostility, scapegoating, prejudice, [and] stereotyping” (Wtulich 1994:156) these are never interpreted by Wtulich as aspects of racism; they are “expressions of nativism and xenophobia” (1994:157). All of this betrays an unwillingness to account for the Slavic identity in terms of race, racism, and racialization.

Even though Wtulich’s work was written at the cusp of the Whiteness Studies movement, her work reproduces the Slavic Studies trope of intra-Slavic difference. For

Wtulich, “there is no such person as a Slav, rather it is a generic term used to designate the people of a number of different nationalities who are bound together by a family of languages and of cultures” (1994:19). Thus Wtulich, like so many Canadian Slavists, presents and analyzes Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and other Central and Eastern Europeans, as if they could stand-in for the figure of the Slav. In order not to de-ethnicize the Slavs, she proceeds by breaking down the identity of the Slav into distinct linguistic, religious, and national categories and generalizing from these findings back to the entire Slavic category. Her occlusion of particular cultural categories into the figure of the Slav works to break down that figure so that it cannot be marked by race. Such maneuvering toward the particular is something that this work not only deliberately avoids but also attempts to undo.

An account of the Slavs as a racial group, as opposed to a collection of ethnic cultures, would be more appropriate, if not honest. As this work will show, in many earlier Canadian discourses the Slavs were not depicted or portrayed as members of any “ethnic” or “cultural” groups. Such terms belong to our universe – that is, to late 20th century and early 21st century Canadian discourses. From the late 19th to the mid-20th century, Slavs were in the eyes of eugenicists, politicians, reporters, academics, and poets, members of a race. They belonged to a visible “Slavic type” to which corresponded a number of distinct racial traits. To refer to them as members of finely differentiated “ethno-cultures” is to engage in the historically inaccurate practice of anachronistically imposing our categories of thought onto a landscape that largely did not recognize or use them. In his careful handling of the topic, Roediger notes that there is a “striking absence of a term for ethnicity in the early twentieth century” (2005:13). The term “ethnicity” did not become colloquial until the early 1950s. And once it did enter the mainstream, ethnicity was never firmly decoupled from race. As he furthermore observes, “[n]or did all the usages of ‘ethnicity’ immediately banish the notion that southern and eastern Europeans might be different biologically. Even [the US sociologist and anthropologist W. Lloyd] Warner stopped short of allowing ethnicity to fully replace ‘racial’ division among whites, positing a division between easily assimilable ‘light Caucasians’ and the harder cases of ‘dark Caucasians’” (Roediger 2005:26). As such, is it any wonder that in the absence of the language of ethnic distinctions (the term “ethnicity” was scarcely used in late 19th and early 20th century Canada) and with ample

use of racial distinctions to set them apart from dominant categories, Poles (and other Slavs) could indeed occasionally be perceived as brown? Accepting the historical use of racial categories, terminologies, and schemas as they were applied to European populations implies that one ought not to lament, like Wtulich, the lumping together of various national and ethnic categories into a single homogenous Slavic type; it would mean treating what she calls the “de-ethnicization” of the Slav not as a lazy intellectual caricature that depersonalized the Slavs but as evidence of something else – namely, their racialization as a single, unified racial type. For this reason, Wtulich’s “de-ethnicization” will in the next chapter be re-read as *denationalization*, as the heightening of the awareness of peripheral Europeans as racial others – something of which Canadians had at least a nascent awareness – by the deliberate exclusion of their national characteristics.

Lastly, one must consider the political implications of the preference for ethnicity over race in Slavic Studies as a clue to the overall political perspective of the field itself. As a number of scholars have pointed out, the “ethnicity paradigm” (Omi and Winant 1986) or the “white ethnic immigrant narrative” (Roediger 2005), associated with the 1940s work of the American sociologist and economist Gunnar Myrdal, betrays a certain conservative stance on the part of Slavic Studies. The ethnicity paradigm is, as Omi and Winant define it, “predicated on the European immigrant model of assimilation” (1986:17). The model maintains that despite initial difficulties and obstacles, not unlike xenophobia, the “US had absorbed the immigrants, had eventually granted them their rights, and had seen them take their places as ‘Americans’” (Omi and Winant 1986:17). The Slav, the Mediterranean, the Celt, and the Jew are celebrated by this model for overcoming their barriers and taking their place in American life. This perspective is right at home in Slavic Studies. While addressing “the destruction of immigrant cultures by openly denigrating their customs and habits”, Wtulich manages in the same breath to also complain about “the slowness with which he [sic] was assimilated” (1994:55). For her, xenophobia is problematic not just because it denigrates but also because it prevents the successful absorption of the peripheral European into the social body. And assimilation is clearly the goal, even if it means letting go of one’s so-called ethnic identity:

the Americanization process was retarded at least to the extent that the ethnic language was spoken on a daily basis. In some Polish neighborhoods of Chicago, for instance, English was almost never spoken, a practice that continues to persist into the last decades of the twentieth century.... Some within the Slav community did [however] opt for public school education, for separation from the old neighborhood and its ways, changed their names, and moved upward. (Wtulich 1994: 59, 166)

The operative and damaging assumption is that if the Slavs could do it, so could the Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. The conservative contours of the ethnicity paradigm narrative consist of the fact that racial minorities are responsible for their assimilation or lack thereof and, more importantly, that assimilation is in fact desirable. As Roediger succinctly notes, the paradigm assumes that “racialized communities had to shape up in terms of habits and values, not that an oppressive system had to change” (2005: 30). Such a narrative is the wellspring for the Horatio Alger myths, the ideologies of meritocracy, and the archetype of the “melting pot.” It cannot register structural racism, preferring instead to dwell on xenophobia.

Some of this conservatism is born from resentment toward the politics and activism of non-European populations. “Aggrieved by the fact that the civil rights movement allegedly did not address *their* pain, they [Eastern and Southern Europeans] distanced themselves from it” (Roediger 2005:30, emphasis in original). In some instances, racialized Europeans believed that they were sidelined in terms of opportunity and recognition by the more vocal, more radical minorities. Wtulich once again provides evidence of this in her warning that the Slavs should not go the route of the Civil Rights movement:

In my opinion, however, the Slav’s most damaging strategy regarding life in the United States was his being seduced by the ethnic revival of the 1960s in the same manner that he had been seduced earlier by industries that left him stranded in hard times. When he discovered that he was being left behind as the Black – with whom he was often forced to compete by the establishment into competition and conflict over jobs and housing – moved ahead, the Slav opted for the revival of his ethnicity after his long struggle to establish himself. (1994:166)

One wonders how the observation that Slavs were “left behind” as Black Americans advanced passes for sociology. A cursory glance at income statistics, educational attainment, rates of incarceration, and other social life measures shows that in the U.S.

Blacks tend to endure greater inequality. Yet, the very fantasy of being outmaneuvered by Blacks is even as a basic error telling, as it betrays a certain desire for assimilation that should be achieved in a manner that does not mimic the perceived militancy and alleged success of African Americans. In line with the ethnicity paradigm, Wtulich places no onus on the dominant racial element – white Americans – or on the structure that supports and maintains white Americans' racial privileges. In the face of discrimination and racism, her approach does not call for antiracism but for the most desirable strategy with which to adjust to the existing social conditions.

These observations indicate that Slavic Studies is generally a conservative field. Since its inception in Canada, it has emphasized nation building and other colonial objectives. Without seriously reflecting on the displacement of Indigenous people, Slavists have regularly described the early immigrant Slavs as “fit pioneers to break the prairie in the remote parts of the country” (Kaye 1968:97). They have also traditionally called for placing Slavic Studies in the service of providing “systematically trained personnel to act as interpreters, not in any narrow sense, in the various fields of diplomatic, business and cultural activity” (Moravcik 1965:59), all the while assuaging any fear that Slavic Studies would promote militancy among the Slavs and possibly lead to anything resembling the movements of the 1960s. As Ivo Moravcik put it, “the Slavic fields of study on a sound academic basis will give enrichment and depth to the whole of Canadian culture without further divisive effect on our national life.” (1965:60). All of this is indicative of the inability or unwillingness of Slavists to properly appreciate the racialization of the Slavs.

Conclusion

The foregoing metatheoretical overview established a number of theoretical advances and limitations in the work of the historians of whiteness and Slavic Studies. These two fields were selected because they are the leading intellectual sites through which the racialization of Europeans and the study of the Slavs have traditionally been pursued.

The chapter establishes a number of insights and developments from these fields. The historians of whiteness extend the scope of Whiteness Studies by mapping the social construction of racial identity. Roediger, Jacobson, and Ignatiev do so specifically by identifying a number of social structural mechanisms with which they challenge the crude economic reductionism in Marxist approaches to race. As such, the historians of whiteness provide us with ample warnings that the study of racial identity should not proceed by identifying race as a contradiction of the capitalist mode of production. At its best, the work of the historians of whiteness shows that racial identity is spread out over multiple social structural sites and that the trajectory of the racialization of new immigrants leaves behind a haphazard, messy trail. To this end, Roediger's "inbetween peoples" and Jacobson's "probationary whiteness" are new terms for the study of the racialization of European populations. Finally, the field of Slavic Studies provides us with many useful glimpses of the racialization of the Slavs. Broadly, the field provides ample data that serve as evidence of othering. Specifically, Wtulich documents the existence of ethnophobias and epithets that othered the Slavs at the level of everyday prejudice as well as oppressive practices in workplaces, religious sites, education, and the state that othered the Slavs in terms of institutional discrimination. In addition, Wtulich too supplies the notion of the "de-ethnicization of the Slavs" which alerts us to the othering of the Slavs.

While the historians of whiteness present a noble challenge to Marxist approaches to race, they regrettably do not manage to break economic orbit. Ignatiev presents the racialization of the Irish primarily in terms of a strategy for material gains, while Jacobson and Roediger both account for the new immigrants by the first order site of the economy. Their work is astute and thorough, presenting us with a rich account of the multiple processes involved in the social construction of the identity of new immigrants; however, they do so ultimately by succumbing to economism. Thus, at best, their work expands and enriches Marxist theory of race rather than providing us with a new model altogether. The historians of whiteness also present the history of racialization in terms of teleology – that is, of clear cut frontiers and stages of history which see a development of identity towards a metaphysical fullness (in the case of peripheral Europeans, the full attainment of whiteness). Our goal must be to trace the dispersion of identity without linking it to firm origins or to any finality. As such, this study

rejects the trope of *becoming white* along with the related supporting conceptual baggage such as Roediger's "inbetween peoples" and Jacobson's "probationary whiteness." As this work will show, the Slavs were certainly marked as racial others, but the historians overstate the case when they equate this to an exclusion from whiteness itself. To this end, this study approaches the Slavs in Canada in terms of Satzewich's designation of "peripheral Europeans."

Lastly, while providing rich data, Slavic Studies fails to conceptualize these data adequately. Specifically, it fails to account for the Slavs as a coherently racialized category. The tendency to focus on particular "Slavic ethnic cultures" misses the processes of racialization. By presenting Russians, Ukrainians, and Poles as Slavs, the field neglects precisely what it is that made it possible to generalize them as such. In short, it fails to study the Slavs as Slavs. When it does manage to catch glimpses of this herding together or subsuming of these various identities, it complains of the "de-ethnicization of the Slav." As this work will show, the complaint is anachronistic as the Slavs were not distinguished by ethnicity; the racialized gaze which made it possible to speak of Slavs as Slavs depended on the inability to differentiate the various categories. This gaze was laid upon a horizon that made it possible to speak of a Slavic type. Therefore, instead of "xenophobia" it is necessary to admit the possibility of racism, and rather than registering "de-ethnicization" it is more fitting to speak of denationalization.

The task of the next chapter will be to offer an alternative theoretical approach. Turning to poststructuralism, the chapter will provide its overview with an emphasis on aspects of the theory that are useful for the study of race. As the chapter will demonstrate, the "antifoundationalism" of poststructuralism – drawing on concepts like discourse – allows for the theorization of identity without establishing privileged links to the social structure. Poststructuralism can aid in thinking of the Slav identity as a racial one outside of the trajectory of "becoming white."

Chapter 3.

An Antifoundational Theory of Race

The field of social identities is not one of full identities, but of their ultimate failure to be constituted. A realistic analysis of sociopolitical processes must therefore abandon the objectivistic prejudice that social forces are something, and start from an examination of what they do not manage to be. (Laclau 1990:38)

Clayton W. Dumont Jr. writes about the “strong theological hangover” (2008:61) that continues to vitiate sociology. He has in mind sociology’s ongoing faith-like quest for the objective knowledge of an objective world. Dumont argues that “the pursuit of a logically structured world of essences and patterns” (2008:52) has been handed down to us by the ancient Greeks and reworked by medieval Christian theologians, before it came to be championed by modern philosophers of science like René Descartes. While tracing the genealogy of scientific objectivity to antiquity and theology may sound counter-intuitive, there is a case to be made for the Platonic-Christian-Cartesian heritage in science and sociology that sees the evolution of the God-sanctioned dictate “purify yourself to know me” into the scientifically-approved guideline “purify yourself to know more.” Both require a whittling away of the subject, or at least the subject’s subjectivity. This is because the epistemological framework that assumes the existence of an objective factual world has only been slightly modified over the epochs. As Dumont observes, “the Christian call to renounce the sensual self (to confession of sins) in the pursuit of God’s logos is the cultural prototype of the scientific call to purge one’s rational self of all things personal, emotional, and judgmental clouding in the pursuit of the logic of existence” (2008:49). Given this bad inheritance, much of institutional sociology is in the business of securing the rules of an empirically available reality at the expense of the partisan standpoint of the observer. And even if it admits that objectivity is elusive and not easily obtained, institutional sociology is still conducted with the interest of acquiring foundational knowledge. As many sociologists readily admit, objectivity may not be

possible in the knowledge of human affairs, but we carry on with the hope of getting as close to it as possible.

With Dumont, this chapter attempts to steer a different course. It orients itself in poststructural theory, which it identifies with an “antifoundational” approach, in order to get past the hangovers identified in Whiteness Studies. The shortcomings of (Platonic-Christian-Cartesian) foundationalism are readily apparent in the work of the historians of whiteness, identified in the previous chapter, for whom the goal is to present identity as a thing that achieves fullness through teleology (read: according to the trope of *becoming white*) and which can be deciphered according to foundational sites in the social structure (usually economic). Race is thus read as something individually or collectively chosen (Ignatiev), as imposed by the operations of the capitalist economy (Roediger), or as the reflection of legal and scientific institutions (Jacobson). Furthermore, casting the narrative of the new immigrants in terms of “becoming white” shapes the contours of the work of the historians of whiteness studies. Whiteness becomes, in their work, a destiny. In the interests of approaching the Slavs without a privileged foundational structure that can account for their identity (which is the sociological task of this work) and without accounting for the evolution of their identity teleologically (which corresponds to the historical task), this chapter will turn to poststructuralism as a solution to the limits identified in Chapter 2.

It will begin by considering critiques of poststructuralism before providing an overview of structuralism that will examine its ontological and epistemological commitments. The chapter shows how structuralism paves the way for poststructuralism by considering what both have in common – namely, the *linguistic turn*, *overdetermination*, and *anti-humanism*. Importantly, as the chapter shows, poststructuralism also rejects structuralism’s ahistorical analysis, sometimes called *synchronic analysis*, as well as the search for *meta-narratives*. The primary focus in this chapter, however, is on how poststructuralism refurbishes structural linguistics into *discourse* and structuralism’s relativistic holism into *relationism*. The overview this chapter establishes of poststructuralism strives to see it as a borrowing, modifying, and realigning of structuralism. Having established the theoretical coordinates of poststructuralism, the chapter moves in the second section to position poststructuralism

for the study of race. It does so by introducing Foucault's work on *discourse* and *discursive formation*, along with Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's concepts of *empty signifier* and *constitutive outside*. The final section considers the relationship of poststructuralism to Berger and Luckmann's social constructionist concept of *typification* along with the popular concept of *racialization* from the sociology of race.

Structuralism and Poststructuralism

Common Criticisms

The poststructuralist sociologist Dumont observes that poststructuralism has been received with a "hatred of the birth" (2008:3). Attacks on poststructuralism have been launched from almost every quarter: Feminists, Marxists, philosophers, sociologists, and even natural scientists have added their voices to the criticism of this theory. Given this large chorus it is not surprising that poststructuralism has been charged with everything from initiating "a devastating trend challenging the concept of truth" (Siraj 2003) to being dismissed as "a silly but noncatastrophic phenomenon" (Searle 1990).

There are three principal objections.¹⁷ The Marxist theorist Siraj and the analytical philosopher Searle share the first one – namely, that poststructuralism undermines the epistemic base from which scientific claims to objectivity could be made. Poststructuralism is here associated with a destabilizing force (at least for Siraj) or a silly endeavor (for Searle) that frustrates our ability to know anything with any certainty. From Nietzsche to Heidegger to Foucault, the poststructural tradition equates the search for a/the hidden structure that could with some authority account for various facets of human behaviour with a totalitarian ambition. Truth claims, as Nietzsche sees it, are acts of domination. For its critics, poststructural attacks on objectivist epistemology have at least since the 1960s given energy to countercultural global movements that have opened the academy to challenges of complicity with colonialism and patriarchy. For some, this implies that a sociology that goes poststructural is a "sociology [that] loses

¹⁷ Because this chapter seeks to develop its own critique of structuralism, only critiques of poststructuralism will be addressed here.

any authority to claim that its understandings are superior to those of anyone who cares to claim anything” (Dumont 2008:3). The second objection is that poststructuralism is apolitical and nihilistic. It seems that poststructuralists undermine not only epistemic commitments to objectivity but also the subject’s autonomy and the subject’s ability to act politically. This criticism is held by the feminist theorist Linda Alcoff, for whom poststructuralists “seem totally to erase any room for maneuver by the individual within a social discourse” (1988:417). That is, by denying the Enlightenment project altogether, poststructuralist anti-humanism frustrates political projects based on identity. It even “[threatens] to wipe out feminism itself” (Alcoff 1988:419). The third criticism is that poststructuralism is deliberately obscure. Poststructuralist theory is associated with a writing style that is theoretically thick and “purposefully unintelligible” (Dumont 2008:4). In a conversation with his friend Searle, Foucault even allegedly, and now somewhat famously, referred to Derrida’s work as “terrorist obscurantism.” Searle paraphrased Foucault’s meaning of the term by stating that in Derrida “[t]he text is written so obscurely that you can’t figure out exactly what the thesis is (hence ‘*obscurantisme*’) and then when one criticizes it, the author says, ‘Vous m’avez mal compris; vous êtes idiot’ (hence ‘*terroriste*’)” (Searle 1983).

To the first critique this project responds “guilty”, but with some reservations. Poststructuralism certainly abandons the search for a fundamental structure (hence the title of this chapter) or for some ontological realm that holds the keys to objective truth. But it is not the case that poststructuralism lapses into an epistemic relativism from where every knowledge claim is equally valued. Rather, poststructuralism retains some authority (although this is an antifoundational, non-objectivist authority) on the ability to judge discourses as the basis from which knowledge production is possible. As this chapter will show, poststructuralism introduces a *relational epistemology* that heeds multiple structures which are implicated in knowledge production. It is an attempt to pluralize, not relativize, knowledge and to understand the relations between discourses even as we are located within them. Read in this way, poststructuralism maintains that knowledge without truth is possible and even desirable. The second charge is made only by those whose vision of political struggle necessitates truth (“speaking truth to power”), a fundamental (foundational?) oppression (for radical feminism it is patriarchy; for some environmentalists, civilization; for Marxists, capitalism), a privileged agent of struggle (a

subaltern woman, luddite, or worker), and the goal of revolution (a totalizing event aiming at the complete transformation of the entire range of social relations). For those who think of struggles beyond these values – perhaps of a politics of the Mexican Zapatista Movement, the global Occupy Movement, and the Turkish Gezi Park Protests, all with non-revolutionary yet radical, affinity based orientations – poststructuralism remains political. It remains political just as both Derrida and Foucault took up an activist orientation in their work and addressed numerous political struggles. The third charge cannot be taken seriously. Certainly there are some writers who commit “terrorist obscurantism” under the guise of poststructuralism (although more often, postmodernism). But it is disingenuous to pretend to be able to judge texts that one denounces as impenetrable or too difficult.

An Outline of the Two Theoretical Currents

Having considered the popular objections, this chapter will now strive to characterize structuralism and poststructuralism in order to consider the way in which the former has left its traces in and influenced the latter. It is necessary to begin from an observation that goes against the critics’ tendency to speak of it as a unified body of work. Poststructuralism is not exactly a freestanding theory as it is, as Chris Weedon observes, “a range of theoretical positions” (1987:19) that attempt to critique and extend structuralism. As such, any discussion of poststructuralism must necessarily begin with structuralism itself. Starting with structuralism, however, presents a similarly daunting challenge. Alan Schrift notes that “what unites the structuralists is less a shared set of philosophical theses than a shared set of methodological assumptions...” (2006:51). Speaking of such intellectual currents thus presents the difficulty of unifying what wants to remain disparate, of representing a diverse trajectory of theories and methodologies under clearly marked “structuralist” and “poststructuralist” headings. Nonetheless, Weedon and Schrift both note that such characterization is at least possible by tracing the themes that emerge in the work of the theorists of both traditions.

Structural theories are those that, broadly speaking, attempt to explain the social world by uncovering a privileged, hidden deep structure. Structuralists can be said to be in pursuit of a structure. This structure itself is presented as standing outside of history

and geography and, at times, as being capable of governing social relations. The basic idea is that uncovering it will provide structuralists with what James Williams calls “secure understanding” (2005:2) that maximizes their claims to objectivity and truth. Thus, whether one hears of the Freudian psyche and its capacity to explain the human personality or, in the Marxist sense, of the economy and its capacity to explain history, one is listening to structural explanations. More precisely, however, structuralism is an intellectual tendency that developed in France in the 1950s and 1960s (Schrift 2006:55). Curiously, the first usage of the term has a Slavic connection. As Schrift notes, “it was in Jakobson’s presentation in Prague at the First International Congress of Slavists in October 1929 that the word ‘structuralism’ first appears” (2006:43), with a reference to the structural properties of language. Structuralism, however, can be neither attributed to Marx nor Freud (though their work has been highly influential on structuralism) nor to Slavists. Its emergence, as suggested by the Slavic Congress, is more securely established in the work of linguistics. Specifically, it emerges with the figure Ferdinand de Saussure whose approach to the study of human language influenced thinkers like Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes to pursue what is called structuralism today. Structuralism begins, as such, with the “linguistic turn” – that is, with the desire to apply the linguistic insights of de Saussure elsewhere.

While de Saussure did not describe himself as a structuralist, his proposition that linguistics should not study *parole* (everyday idiosyncratic speech acts) but should rather focus on *langue* (the formal, grammatical system that makes parole possible) forms the main thrust of structural thought (Weedon 1987:21-7; Schrift 2006:50-3). Following de Saussure, linguists are structuralists to the extent that they believe that the formal system of language, and not parole, should be their concern. A sociologist would be a structuralist in this sense if they claimed that one cannot understand a social event such as a riot, strike, civil war, or economic recession just by studying the event by what it openly reveals (parole) but that one has to link that event to a structure that is submerged out of view (langue). As Jacques Derrida points out, there is in structuralism a primacy of the structure over the event (1978). This is because the structure (langue) enables the event (parole) in the first place. Structuralism, however, does not stop at associating a phenomenon to a basic deep structure.

Structuralism also requires the analysis of phenomena specifically in terms of linguistic structures (Ritzer 2011). It is in this sense that, strictly speaking, Marxists and structural functionalists are not structuralists, despite the similarities of their work to structuralism. Jacques Lacan, who applied Saussurian linguistics to the study of the unconscious, is a better candidate. As is well known, he reasoned like a structuralist when he proclaimed that “the unconscious is structured like a language” (Lacan 1998:48). Similarly, Lévi-Strauss follows structuralism when he applies Saussurian linguistics to the study of anthropology. For Lévi-Strauss, the totem pole is a metaphor that has to be analyzed like a language. It is the same with kinship relations, which he shows to be like linguistic systems. His structural anthropology proceeds by focusing on binary opposites, which he claimed can be used to understand marriage patterns among tribes. In such a way, Lévi-Strauss built a “global system” that tried to grasp all forms of relation by pairing them into binary opposites (mother:father, wife:husband, aunt:uncle, girl:boy, etc.). As such, as a structuralist, one must be at home with de Saussure’s terminology of the *sign* (the associative totality of signifier and signified), *signifier* (the basic sound or written image), and *signified* (the meaning conveyed by the sound or written image), and accept the fundamental premise that *words derive their meanings from the differential relations they establish with other words* and not from language users themselves. A chain of signifiers must therefore exist for any one of those signifiers to signify anything, and the possibility of meaning is delimited by this chain which itself allows for opposition between signifiers.

In addition to an analysis inspired by linguistic structures, three other important implications have been developed by a number of structuralists. The first is that the deep and hidden structures (whether they are the unconscious or kinship structures) are *synchronic*. That is, the structures of structuralism are frozen in time or “extratemporal” (Schrift 2006:56). Indeed, structuralism can be said to be concerned with a universal, unchanging order of things (Palmer 1998). The underlying structure that it aims to discover is permanent and immutable.¹⁸ For structuralism, universal human truths exist,

¹⁸ Marxism, by contrast, performs diachronic analysis (something it has in common with poststructuralism). Because Marxism is concerned with history and because its underlying structure is a dynamic one – dialectical materialism makes it an open structure subject to internal change – Marxism is strictly speaking not structuralism.

and they do so at the level of a structure that is unchanging. The second implication is that structuralism is *holistic* rather than atomistic. For structuralism there are no autonomous realities and no “atoms” which when added up constitute reality; there are only relationships (Palmer 1998). The holism of structuralism maintains a view of the world that sees reality as a totality of relations. As Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow explain, “what counts as an actual element is a function of the *whole system of differences* in which the given element is involved” (1983:53, emphasis added). Thus, just as a signifier is completely meaningless outside of the linguistic structure of which it is a part so too it may be said that any human identity is meaningless without a relational context made up of other identities. Structural holism implies that reality is more than the sum of its individual components and that it is only the entire range of differences permitted within any structure that allows for meaning within its parts.¹⁹ Lastly, the third related implication is theoretical *anti-humanism*. The subjects of structuralism are not autonomous, meaning-giving agents or actors. Structuralism rejects the idea that subjects “create” their social structure through interactions. This is in part a reaction to the hyper-individualistic philosophy of Sartre, but as Schrift notes it is also more than that as “the structuralists were able to develop anthropological, literary, psychoanalytic, and Marxist theories that diminished the role of the individual subject or agent while highlighting the underlying relations that govern social and psychic practices” (2006:51). If reality is holistic, and not atomistic, what matters most are the relations between subjects or between signifiers and not the subjects or signifiers themselves.²⁰ And these relations themselves are presumed to be structured by hidden, deep, and unchanging structures. Agents and social phenomena, in general, are the effects, the outcomes of various structurally conditioned relations that spawn them. For structuralists like Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, and Barthes, the subject is produced rather than producing, an effect rather than a cause.

¹⁹ One certainly sees a basic Saussurian claim at work here: a signifier can only be grasped by its relationship to other signifiers and parole can only be grasped at the level of langue.

²⁰ For Marxism this is, in some sense, the case as well. The workers constitute a proletariat only within the economic structure of capitalism. Outside of the sets of relations which they enter into with the bourgeoisie, there can be no proletariat.

Poststructuralism, which emerged in France in the 1960s (Williams 2005), must not in light of structuralism be understood as a rejection of the principles just introduced. The “post” here should not be read as “anti.” Although some poststructuralists like Dumont (2008) position it as a wholesale rejection of structuralism,²¹ the reading of poststructuralism advanced here sees it as an intellectual tendency that critiques and further develops the insights of structuralism. Instead of issuing a complete renunciation of structuralism, poststructuralism is a structuralism that accepts the basic premises of Saussurian linguistics. As such, this work accepts Williams’ observation that “[d]econstruction is still structuralism, but opened up and transformed” (2005:25). There are a number of important commonalities between the two currents. For poststructuralists, meaning also arises not from words themselves but, following the structuralist interpretations of de Saussure, from the differential relations between signs. This is to say that poststructuralists tend to analyze features of the social world with recourse to Saussurian terminology. Furthermore, whereas Saussurian linguistics provides a model for the study of everything from the unconscious (Lacan) and kinship structures (Lévi-Strauss) to myth (Barthes), it does so in the hands of structuralists generally by studying these *as if* they were language systems. It is telling that Lacan, for example, proclaims that the unconscious is structured “like” a language. Poststructuralists push this further. Not only are the unconscious, or kinship structures, or myths structured like a language but they are in fact structured within language, which gets refurbished by poststructuralists as *discourse*. The structural interpretation of language which for structuralism is an epistemological position becomes an ontological position for poststructuralism. Saussure does not just provide a model for the study of things; discourse is the site within which identities, power, social relations, and institutional practices become possible. For poststructuralism, “discourse constitutes ways of being a subject” (Weedon 1987:98) and discourses “order the world, including one’s place in it” (Dumont 2008:71).

Relatedly, along with structuralism, poststructuralism also rejects positivism and atomistic accounts of reality. Both structuralism and poststructuralism operate within a

²¹ “To be a *post*-structuralist (‘post’ means ‘after’) means to be no longer interested in searching for truths (the ‘real’ structures) contained in things themselves” (Dumont 2008:11).

linguistic relativism that states that all knowledge is possible only within the system of concepts generated by arbitrary systems of language. Poststructuralism accepts the structuralist insights obtained through the study of cultural anthropology and linguistics which tell us that these arbitrary systems are relatively ordered. Western culture, as Lévi-Strauss teaches us, is just another cultural configuration, comparable to every other cultural system. Because of this basic underlying coequality of cultural and linguistic structures, “[t]he practice of structuralism will... always at the same time imply the practice of relativism” (Broekman 1974:11). Relativism is, of course, present in poststructuralism as well. What poststructuralism modifies in structuralism, however, is the structural holism, which contains and fixes the relative play of difference as an ontological position in structuralism. In other words, poststructuralists celebrate the Saussurean principle that signs are non-essential and that their meanings are established only through the differential relations that they form with other signs within a linguistic system. The problem is not the relativism within langue but the stability and fixity of langue itself as a structure. Meanings, even if arbitrary and relational, are in structuralism too easily fixed within the linguistic system. Rather than hanging on to such a relativistic but totalizing structure, poststructuralism retains relativism as an epistemological *relationism* – that is, as a relativism without holism.

Thus, it is possible to speak of an ontological-epistemological realignment of structuralism in poststructuralism. My reading of these two currents can be characterized as follows: *Structuralism’s ontology is overhauled as poststructuralism’s epistemology and structuralist epistemology is overhauled as poststructuralism’s ontology*. Whereas for structuralism ontology is best characterized as relativistic holism (reality is a closed off, total structure whose parts produce an interplay that generates meaning, identity, etc.), for poststructuralism this becomes refurbished as an epistemological position known as relationism (reality can be known through the interplay and relations of various elements, the binary opposites they form, etc.). And whereas for structuralism epistemology is grounded in the linguistic turn (reality can be known by approaching it like a language), for poststructuralism this becomes an ontological position (reality is discourse). A trade, or ontological-epistemological realignment, thus takes place with noted modifications between the two, as shown in Figure 3.1 below.

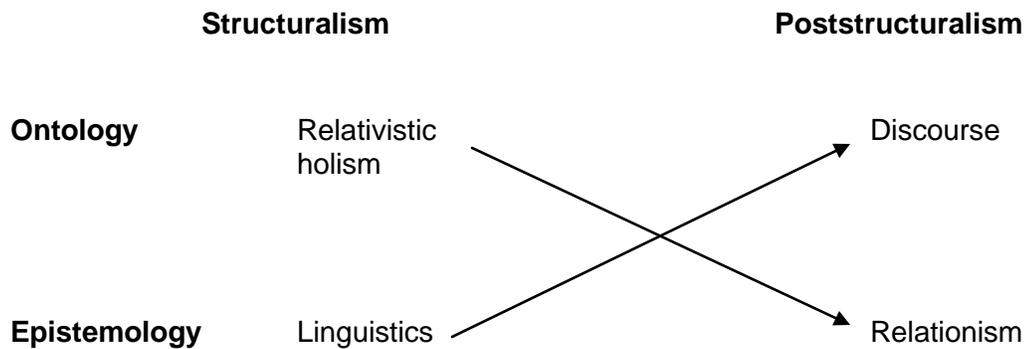


Figure 3.1 The Ontological-Epistemological Realignment of Poststructuralism

Lastly, the two intellectual movements also share a basic commitment to anti-humanism, which can be expected given their willingness to take the linguistic turn and the relativism/relationism it implies. And this position is much more securely shared by the two without any modification. Lacan’s observation that “the subject... is spoken instead of speaking” (2006:232) is echoed by Foucault who urges us “to get rid of the subject itself... to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework” (1984:59). It is not the case that subjects are the authors of their own lives, that they operate as thinking beings who manipulate language to their ends; rather, the subject is the thing needed by discourse. Following Heidegger, the operative principle is that language is the seat of being, as every status and role we can possibly hold is realized only within the coordinates of language. The catch, however, is that we develop our selves within languages which we do not author. Since discourse constructs our identities, this “implies that it [subjectivity/identity] is not innate, not genetically determined, but socially produced” (Weedon 1987:21). Stated differently, it is because of the signifier “subject” – a signifier possible only after the Enlightenment – that subjects can even come into being or possess a subjectivity. Whatever it is that we can say about ourselves is done in a language that is not ours. It is important to note that this is not a question of erasing the subject’s capacity for autonomy or reason, only of recognizing that the subject’s capacity for autonomy or reason is a social product in which the subject, at best, participates. The subject of poststructuralism is thus decentered as an effect of discourse, history, and society. Martin Heidegger provides a

useful formulation of this when he refers to the self as a “they-self” (2008:225) – a self which is at all times relational and not truly belonging to its-self alone.²²

But if poststructuralism shares with structuralism the emphasis on language (albeit as discourse), a relativism (albeit as relationism), and an anti-humanist account of the subject, there are two important ways in which it also breaks with structuralism. The first break is with structural synchronism in favor of *diachronism*. The structuralist indifference to history and the search for immutable structures are abandoned by poststructuralists on the grounds that, as already illustrated by Foucault above, one must grasp the formation of subjects historically. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari characterize “structural interpretation” precisely with this sidestepping of history and society so that structuralism may better secure the foundations of its own hidden, secretive structure. In the case of Freudian psychoanalysis, they charge that such interpretation “makes Oedipus into a kind of universal Catholic symbol” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983:52). To escape Oedipus’ imperial and timeless sovereignty, Deleuze and Guattari invite us to move from psychoanalysis toward the decidedly more poststructuralist schizoanalysis, whose “aim is to de-oedipalize the unconscious in order to reach the real problems” (1983:81). In diachronic fashion, Deleuze and Guattari burrow into and traverse the psyche rather than seeking a way to understand it from outside of history. They propose “line of flights” and speak of “stretchings, folds, migrations, and local variations of potentials” (Deleuze and Guattari 1983:84) in place of a guiding force of history, a spirit of the age, or some other totalizing, timeless force. Thus, instead of providing ahistoric structural accounts of the psyche, myth, or kinship structures, poststructuralism locates these as historically situated intellectual practices. One cannot speak of a psyche or kinship structure outside of the work of intellectuals who claim to have “discovered” them, and one must become comfortable instead with telling the history of such things as the psyche or race.

This also relates to the second break with structuralism, the *rejection of metanarratives*. If our truths have to be unearthed from within particular contexts, then

²² Although to be fair to Heidegger, he meant it as a warning against an inauthentic mode of being.

anything we can claim as “true” is invariably a reflection of that context. In fact, observations cannot escape their contexts and attain the status of a timeless, ahistoric truth. What would it mean to speak outside of context? As poststructuralists point out, anything we can say in the first place is already bound within a language that says it. And this language belongs to a location or culture that frames the very possibility of this truth. Poststructuralists therefore reject global and totalizing analyses which present themselves as asocial “skeleton-keys” to unlocking the secrets of history, language, or economic development – theories that purport to have unmediated access to truth. Unlike structuralism, poststructuralism refuses to assume “a suprahistorical perspective: a history whose function is to compose the finally reduced diversity of time into a totality fully closed upon itself” (Foucault 1984:86). History and society are instead approached as never-completed projects that strive for nothing in particular. They are directionless and discontinuous, and as such offer no single or best vantage point from which to “grasp it all.” This means that poststructuralism recognizes with structuralism the relational nature of things but it refuses to totalize these relations. As Roger Salerno puts it, “[i]nstead of some search for hidden rules and structures, the poststructuralist looks at ways in which meaning is constructed” (2004:163). Poststructuralist theory would, therefore, blush at the Marxist fantasy of recognizing history only as the result of class struggle or of the Weberian recalibration that the realm of ideas and religious practices is really what drives it. The preference is given to a complexity that can be traced while never being reduced to a single origin. Such complexity is approached with the concept of *overdetermination*, which designates an infinite plurality of effects that are irreducible to a single structure. Overdetermination, first introduced by Freud and later re-worked by Althusser, is interested in how all processes are involved in the shaping of all other processes. Thus, if structuralism is a theory which has something to say about everything because it can fully explain everything from the perspective of a single structure, poststructuralist overdetermination introduces plurality and the absence of a determining center that could secure the foundations of any truth. Rather than accord priority to one structure, poststructuralism invites us to consider a multiplicity of intersecting, multiply-determining “structures.” In this sense, poststructuralism is not a “beyond structuralism” but a multiplication of structural claims. It is a multistructuralism, albeit a self-consciously decentered one.

Poststructuralism and the Discursive Formation of Race

If poststructuralism is a kind of structuralism that takes on board and develops some aspects of structuralism while rejecting others, how does poststructuralism understand race? What does it mean to reject the foundations of the discursive formation of race? For starters, it means rejecting the structural claim that every appearance conceals a deeper reality (a structure) which once identified and decoded can account for this appearance. Poststructuralism gives up on the search of a fundamental structure, a bottom line, or “ultimate reference” (Vahabzadeh 2009) to which it is possible to secure claims to knowledge of discursive formations. As Derrida announces, “there is nowhere to begin” (1982:6). The study of any social phenomenon must not rush in too quickly to identify a central, causal structure. It must, instead, operate by seeing in any phenomenon a disunity and seeking this disunity across a multiplicity of sites. Therefore, the study of any racial category (Slavic, Anglo, white, etc.) cannot content itself by privileging, as the historians of whiteness do, a central structure such as the economy or even an abstract “social structure” that spawns the racial subject; instead, it must see particular racial categories not as reflected by these sites but as constitutive in discourse. With that in mind, this section will establish the coordinates of such a poststructural approach to the question of race by showing how through Foucault it becomes possible to understand discourse as something that constructs subject, objects, and truth and by conceiving identity in terms of identification. This section is, as such, largely an elaboration of the archaeological principles introduced in Chapter 1 as the method of this work. Throughout this attempt to account for the ways in which Foucault may have thought of race, this section will draw on Laclau and Mouffe’s poststructural approach to the study of social movements in order to import a number of concepts that may also be useful in the study of race.

According to the proponents of the approach known as Discourse Analysis, discourse refers to the world of language, texts, and signs. The term “discourse” is taken to designate “actual instances of communicative action in the medium of language” (Johnstone 2008:2) and, more openly, to “interrelated set[s] of texts” (Phillips and Hardy 2002:3). Importantly, while discourse may be seen in action in simple speech acts, in writing, and as graffiti scribbled on city walls, discourse designates something larger –

for Discourse Analysis, discourse constitutes what may be called an intertextual relation. The operative assumption here is that texts are meaningless on their own and that they can only be meaningful in relationship to other texts, with which they make up discourse itself.

Foucault (2003) agrees that “discourses are composed of signs” (54). However, his account moves past this school of thought, as he maintains that “what they [discourses] do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this *more* that renders them irreducible to the language and to speech” (54, emphasis in original). Working on Foucault’s notion of discourse, Liz Sharp and Tim Richardson observe that discourse also takes place “in policy rhetoric... institutional structures, practices and events” (2001:199). As such, it is important to guard against the linguistic seduction which characterizes discourse as solely speech-acts, communicative action, or intertextuality. According to Foucault, analysis must extend beyond language:

we must not go from discourse towards its interior, hidden nucleus, towards the heart of a thought or a signification supposed to be manifested in it; but, on the basis of discourse itself, its appearance and its regularity, go towards its external conditions of possibility, towards what gives rise to the aleatory series of these events, and fixes its limits. (1981:67)

Discourses, for Foucault, consist of “ways of speaking and seeing” (Foucault 1984:54) and they are also the embodiments of institutional practices, techniques, and a multiplicity of material practices. To get at the non-linguistic aspects of discourse and to delimit their “conditions of possibility,” Foucault offers the useful concept of *discursive formation*, to which this chapter will turn at the end of this section. Before it does so, it is necessary to specify a few observations regarding what discourse does and what it is.

Poststructuralist theory maintains that “discursive practices... have the power to form objects and subjects” (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983:84). That is, *discourses are forms of communication and practice that constitute subjects and establish what counts as truth*. What this means is that the racial category “Slav,” as such, cannot be reduced to the Slavic subjects themselves. It is rather the case that “it is the name itself, the signifier, which supports the identity of the object” (Laclau 1989:xiii). Racial identity is only possible within a certain discourse – it is, in fact, produced by it rather than by subjects. Outside of the discourses which spoke Slavs into being, there are no Slavs.

And outside of 19th century scientific racism, along with other discourses that pronounced the Slavs as a race, the Slavs were not a race. The possibility of this (or any) identity resides, as such, in discourse itself. Foucault illustrates this through his work on madness which demonstrates that the “mad” were not so much discovered but announced by a host of new institutional practices (1965). The truth of madness – madness as an object that could be studied – is only possible, or is in fact established, within certain medical and legal discourses.²³ It is important to keep in mind that discourse applies to any set of subjectivities and social orders, beyond and inside modernity. Whether one prays five times a day, takes comfort in a predetermined afterlife, avoids contact with menstruating women, looks forward to marriage with a member of their caste or nationality, covers their face, or exposes shaved body parts and applies makeup, all these subjectivities (western and non-western, ancient and modern) are governed by discourses that constitute their subjects. No cultural subject escapes this, as there is no subject outside of discourse. Therefore, the very comfort anyone takes from having a cultural way or a style is a form of discursive regulation which prescribes what can and cannot count for them as truth and what can and cannot be done, thought, or said.

The anti-humanist aspects of discourse become apparent when one considers that the way in which racial subjects are made is not through any essential properties that they may be said to possess but through *identification* itself – that is, through processes of the social construction of identity. The anti-humanist suspicion of identity that guides poststructuralism can be best illustrated here by the principle that one ought to focus on identification (the processes) rather than identity (the thing) itself. John Holloway does so from a Marxist perspective by attacking identity itself as “the

²³Similarly, consider what makes it possible for Arthur Rimbaud to write, “The white men are landing. Cannons! Now we must be baptized, get dressed, and go to work.” ([1873] 1986:19). Rimbaud could not have proclaimed the banal brutality of this kind of conquest without the discourses of Christianity and colonialism, which also produce whiteness and white men whose very identity depends on the subordination of non-white, non-Christian others. In combination, the discourses in which Rimbaud is anchored promote a linear conception of progress on two fronts: a regimented life lived in good measure under the grace of God and the steady support for colonial violence.

separation of doing and done. Identity is a space of is-ness, a time of duration, an area in which the done exists independently of the doing which constituted it" (2010:99). Identity, for Holloway, thus conceals the act of its own construction, which is an always ongoing production. Identity is a fetishized "thing" emerging out of relations from which it imagines itself severed. What it neglects is its own impossibility, as identity can never arrive at any kind of fullness, completion, or end point. Identity is thus, paradoxically, misrecognition: it is a process that takes itself for a thing. There is a quality of amnesia in all identity, as identity must, in order to know itself, forget that it is being constituted. It must instead supplant the ongoing acts of its constitution with the fantasy of a stable being, or a presence. Identity thus takes itself for a horizon of being by disregarding the acts of its own becoming. As Holloway succinctly notes, "there is no identity other than the continual struggle to identify" (2010:99). This becomes abundantly clear when we consider the price any one of us must pay for even thinking about identity in this way. If there is no identity in the sense of a stable, consistent being, but only identification whose perimeters are enabled by social conditions which must be kept out of view for identity to be taken as more than a fantasy, "the subject", as Slavoj Žižek notes, "can pay for such a reflection with the loss of his very ontological consistency" (1989:68). Grasping the conditions of the possibility of your own identity-fiction implies the possibility of losing the reified consistency of your being. The belief in a stable identity actually helps us avoid this vertigo of being.

Thus, even as an incessant process of becoming that cannot be reached or completed, as Foucault points out, a certain "regularity in dispersion" characterizes identification. A consistency coheres. Identity coheres and "protects" us from being. How is it possible to account for this semi-consistent partially-fixed identity of the Slavs within a discursive formation? What are the processes that construct them as such? The poststructuralism of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe provides a partial answer. Although they, like Holloway, offer their theory of identity for the task of the analysis of social movements, Laclau and Mouffe's work is also applicable to racial identity in general. Their reading of discourse is one of a structured totality (though never total), or of the social terrain (though not enclosed as "society") upon which certain processes of identification take place. They posit that every discourse embraces *elements*, *moments*, and *articulation* (Laclau and Mouffe 2001:105). Elements designate any differential

position that is not articulated (e.g. dormant identities like “mother,” “African American,” “Slav,” and “soldier”) while moments designate any differential position that is articulated (e.g. active identities like “Mothers Against Drunk Drivers,” “Black militant,” “Bolshevik” and “deserter”). Articulation, then, is a practice that modifies relations between elements, changing their identity. It is articulation that turns elements into moments. And it is through articulation that practices of identification take place. Crucially, articulation changes identity, revealing its non-essential status and further modifying all other elements. Once some mothers become MADD, we might very well think of all mothers as potentially being against alcoholism, or drunk driving at least, as responsible citizens and lobbyists, just as “African American” now always signifies a potentially reservoir for militancy, a rejection of “Negro” servility and second class status. The key point here is that identification is possible because no identity is essential. It is because identity is partially fixed that it can be unfixed and articulated in relationship to other elements (the Black militant is a kind of internal Bolshevik who is as good as a deserter).

This also is what secures identification from ever becoming a free-for-all. While there is nothing essential about motherhood or blackness, it is not the case that mothers and Blacks can become anything they want. All identities, simply put, are not purely particular. As Laclau and Mouffe remind us, “all identity is relational and all relations have a necessary character” (2001:106). The same Saussurian principle that holds that meaning arises only through differential relations between words applies to identification as well: we get our identities from the way we relate to and with others, and these other elements are crucial if we are to identify in the first place. Thus, any study of the identity of the Slav cannot be circumscribed to the figure of the Slav – the Slav emerges only in relationship to other elements within the discourse, which is a decentered network of difference. The Slav is only possible beside such elements as the Mediterranean, the Jew, the Mulatto, the Greek, the Black, etc. In this sense, the Slav is not “inbetween”, as the historians of whiteness suggest, but in-amongst categories whose relational difference allows the Slav to emerge.

In this sense, the Slav identity is dependent on a differential relation, as “each element of the system has an identity only so far as it is different from the others: difference = identity” (Laclau 1996:38). Laclau here speaks of the “logic of difference”

(Laclau 1996:39) as underlying all appeals to identity. There is, however, also a second principle of identity which might be expressed as equivalence = identity. Laclau calls this the “logic of equivalence” (1996:39). This second principle takes place when a differentiated element enters “into a relation of equivalence with all the other differences of the system” (38). For Laclau the collapsing of differences of certain elements is what makes the emergence of a discourse possible in the first place. Their compression into an *empty signifier* – “a signifier without a signified” (Laclau 1996:36) – follows the logic of equivalence as it may be possible to say that the Slav also = the Mediterranean, the Jew, the mulatto, etc., in the sense that all of them can be represented as foreigners, immigrants, and strangers. It is through the undecidability between the empty signifier “foreigner” and the differential signifier “Slav” that a Canadian discursive formation constitutes the figure of the Slav.

Laclau and Mouffe also introduce the notion of *antagonism* as another way of conceptualizing identification and the limits of discursive systems. Antagonism is a practice that reveals the limits of a discourse from the outside. Unlike articulation, antagonism is always external, always denying identity from its perceived outer limits. Antagonism is, in fact, the “constitutive outside” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001:127-134). It is the Orient for the West, or Islam for current day France, where wearing a Burqa is banned in public spaces. For France, citizenship is defined according to a racially antagonistic relationship with Islam, where Islam becomes the constitutive outside. Being authentically French implies not being Muslim (at least not being a kind of Muslim that conceals her face). And as this work will show, Slavic Europe was an antagonistic relation, a constitutive outside, for Canada. The notion of antagonism implies that the difference within the social is not fixed, and that identities in the system are not fixed because the system is not closed. One always needs an antagonism to define oneself and that antagonism is itself unstable. Therefore, it is best to only speak of the partial-fixity of every identity. To do so is to speak of identity in terms of poststructural anti-humanism, as antagonism is what makes any identity incapable of being complete. As Vahabzadeh observes, “since the constitutive outside becomes a part of conditions of existence of an identity, *the full constitution of identity is permanently deferred*” (2003:44, emphasis in original). Because a new constitutive outside always “threatens” to appear

and reformulate our own identities, any disclosure of one's "humanity" is always a discursive act that never achieves fullness.

By now it is possible to more satisfactorily explain how identity does not come from the subject or actor. It is not expressive but constitutive through identification itself, through such processes as articulation (which depends on equivalential and differential signification) and antagonism (which depends on a constitutive outside). The antifoundational theory of race outlined here tells us, as Dumont does reflecting on his own identity, that "the significance of me... does not reside within me" and that "my 'self' is an ongoing, social (and thereby unstable) effect" (2008:16). The self is at all times overdetermined by structures and events which it cannot exhaustively know. Such a reading of identity thus depends on Derrida's *différance*, which playfully invokes the idea that words only mean anything through their differential relations and that what they mean can never be arrived at as meaning is permanently deferred (1982).²⁴ The same *différance* applies to the racial identity of a Slav whose identity is only a relational possibility within a decentered network of differences. The Slav is surely not a Jew but what the Slav is, is something it is possible to trace with no end in sight of the way in which the signifier "Slav" becomes severed from its signifieds.

By seeing discourses as embedded within a wide array of institutions and practices, the image of the social painted by poststructuralism is radically at odds with the image painted by foundationalist theories. This is so because for poststructuralism, discourses do not emanate from a single privileged structure; rather, discourses extend across the entire social space. While they congeal in some institutions and structures, the entire range of discourses are not reducible to any one of them. In entertaining a decentred notion of discourse, poststructural theory, according to Todd May, places the "political character of social space" at stake (1994:52). In doing so it breaks with

²⁴ We know "dog" because in the negative sense it differs from "cat," and yet we can never arrive at "dog" in the positive sense because behind its "true" meaning lies another true meaning: A "dog" is a "domesticated canidae," which is a "carnivorous mammal," which in turn is a "warm-blooded vertebrate", and so on *ad nauseam*. "Dog" can even refer to the human animal, as in "a person regarded as unpleasant, contemptible or wicked." The true meaning of dog is thus permanently deferred and this delay of the full constitution of its identity (which of course never arrives) is something of a Derridean adage to the Saussurean reading of the relationship between the signifier and the signified.

foundational accounts that see racism as something imposed, either by the economy or by civil society, in order to ensure relations of domination. The Foucauldian account of power as relations of force allows one to study racism as a social construct that is always in production within discursive sites. It would, as such, be better to account for the poststructuralist ontology of social space with the notion of *discursive formation* rather than with theories where power is centralized in some special deep structure. According to Foucault, a discursive formation is *the field of regularity that produces a particular discourse*. What may be called a discourse of madness (which tells us what madness is, how we can treat it, and the fact that it demands a treatment) is not reducible to a discipline like psychiatry alone. The emergence of nineteenth century psychiatry was certainly vital for the construction of the mad subject, but as Foucault reminds us, “[t]he discursive formation whose existence was mapped by the psychiatric discipline was not coextensive with it, far from it: it was well beyond the boundaries of psychiatry” (2003:197). The discourse that makes the true knowledge of madness possible is to be located in the overdetermined formations of psychiatry and medical knowledge, “jurisprudence, casuistics, police regulations” (Foucault 2003:203) among a host of other bodies of knowledge. A discursive formation thus imposes a certain unity on discontinuous knowledges that are not necessarily logical or internally cohesive. It is a constellation made up of numerous discourses.

The concept of discursive formation allows a key poststructural claim: *discourses have no centre*. They are ramified ideological fields that produce subjects, determine what counts as truth, and are themselves sites of the constraining operations of power, but they are not reducible to a discipline, institution, or social structure. Rather than seeking their origins, the task of analyzing discourses and their formations involves the recognition that “there is actually a whole order of levels of different types of events, differing in amplitude, chronological breadth, and capacity to produce effects.... The problem is at once to distinguish among events, to differentiate the networks and levels to which they belong and engender one another” (Foucault 1984: 56). Put differently, the problem is one of attempting to grasp the dispersion of multiple and shifting discourses and to be able to see identity as a regularity in this dispersion.

Related Concepts: Typification and Racialization

An antifoundationalist theory of race needs to specify other related concepts necessary for tracking the social construction of the Slavs. At the heart of this research on the Slavs is the idea that racial categories change over time and that there is nothing necessary about them. Although in archaeological fashion this dissertation focuses only on a slice of historical time, the point in doing so is to consider what racial identity meant then precisely because it could mean something else today. Given this task, two other concepts are needed. The first will allow us a way to conceptualize how the category of the “Slav” was, to borrow from Berger and Luckmann, *typified* in all kinds of ways. As their work in the sociology of knowledge establishes, all social actors have access to a common “social stock of knowledge” (1967:41-4). The social stock of knowledge includes knowledge needed to perform routine, everyday things. For members of early 21st century Canadian society, that would include everything from taking elevators to checking email and using sidewalks. It is knowledge that is shared by all of the members of a society, at least potentially. The social stock of knowledge therefore does not include specialized or expert knowledge, like how elevators or internet servers work. On the other hand, it includes “typificatory schemes” (Berger and Luckmann 1967:31), or *typifications* that allow us to apprehend people as a “type.” As Berger and Luckmann explain,

[t]he reality of everyday life contains typificatory schemes in terms of which others are apprehended and ‘dealt with’ in face-to-face encounters. Thus I apprehend the other as ‘a man,’ ‘a European,’ ‘a buyer,’ ‘a jovial type,’ and so on. All these typifications ongoingly affect my interaction with him... (1967:31)

A typification, therefore, allows one to categorize subjects. Even for Barthes, who creates here a bridge between social construction and poststructuralism, “men exist only as ‘types’. In Spain, for instance, the Basque is an adventurous sailor, the Levantine a light-hearted gardener...” (1957:75). Typifications organize our experience of the subject. They do so sometimes by overlapping and at other times by being distinct from stereotypes. What sets typifications apart from stereotypes is the fact that the latter are inflexible generalizations that reach the status of dominant discursive constructs. Stereotypes are typifications that everyone knows and can retrieve from the social stock

of knowledge. Many typifications, however, also do not reach the status of stereotype and remain at the level of minor, alternative, and expert discourses.²⁵ The goal of this work will be to show precisely the various kinds of typifications that adhered to the Slavs in Canada. Where appropriate, this work will consider whether the typification constituted a stereotype. It bears stressing that typifications are taken here to be provided by discourses themselves, and not to emerge freely from interaction or from the bearer of the racial category.

This work will also be aided by the contemporary sociological term *racialization*. Discursive formations will be investigated here in order to uncover the typifications by which the Slavs were racialized. Racialization, however, has a richer and therefore more bewildering history than “typification.” It is, as such, necessary to specify the way it will be used here. In its first usage in 1899, racialization designated having one’s perception or outlook become more race-based (Barot and Bird 2001). As Rohit Barot and John Bird observe, racialization enjoyed widespread multidisciplinary usage only to be dropped out of circulation by the mid-twentieth century. It reemerged in the sociology of race relations, specifically in the work of Michael Banton, whose 1977 *The Idea of Race* develops racialization as the act of interpreting physical appearance and difference in accordance to established racial theories. Since Banton’s reintroduction, racialization has enjoyed a number of inflections in sociology. Tracing these, Barot and Bird observe that racialization has been used to denote a number of things: the attempt to avoid the reification of race by highlighting processes of racial construction; the stress on the shifting and unstable meanings of race established in various contexts; the relating of racial categorization to economic and class relations; the drawing attention to the ways in which race is socially constructed; and moving away “from discussions of relations between races to discussions of relations which have been racialized” (2001:608). This work will deploy racialization in line with the more social constructionist readings of the term noted above. Specifically, it will read racialization discursively as something that has the capacity to create subjects and objects, as a mode of stratification, and as a non-essentialising sociological approach to race.

²⁵ As such, this work will not adhere to Berger and Luckmann’s strict attribution of typifications to the common stock of knowledge. Typifications are located not only in the schemes of “everyday reality” but also in all the discourses that traverse it.

Following Robert Miles' treatment of the concept, this work will define racialization as *the processes of the social construction of racial categories*. However, in line with poststructuralism, racialization will be lifted out of Miles' Marxism, which fixes racialization as that which "structure[s] aspects of the reproduction of the capitalist mode of production or any other mode of production" (1993:49). This is not a question of erasing the class-based coordinates of racialization; it is a question of not prioritizing a foundational ground, which as is well known in the Marxist based sociology of racism is tantamount to the reductionism of race to the economy. The base/superstructure model that guides Marxist interpretations of racialization (whether by ideology, or hegemony, or interpellation) is, it should now be apparent, incompatible with the relational, discourse-based approach utilized here. This dissertation will thus treat racialization as a way of conceptualizing race by stressing the process of the construction of racial meaning, and the stress on the process of race making will be its notable feature. Hannah Bradby provides a useful formulation of racialization as a practice "whereby meaning is attributed to particular biological features of human beings as a result of which individuals may be assigned to a general category of persons..." (1995:408). Racialization denotes the creation of racial categories and of slating various populations into them in the social construction of identity. The concept helps us account for the ways in which the Slavic identity was constructed as a racial one. It is worth noting here, as Miles observes, that "racialised discourses can attribute negative and/or positive attributes" (1993:139). The kinds of traits and characteristics that end up being racialized could as such range from negative ones (e.g. Slavs have a propensity to drink) to positive ones (e.g. the Slavic soul is rich), as well it should be added, to seemingly neutral attributes like phenotypical observations (e.g. Slavs have round heads).

Racialization will also be used here in another closely related sense: With the construction of racial categories comes the expansion of race-based meanings and racial ideology. This work will also follow Omi and Winant who "employ the term racialization to signify *the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group*" (1986:64, emphasis added). Their observation is vital as it allows one to conceptualize racialization as the application of the idea of race to relations that at some point were outside of its markers. Racialization is thus about the extension or projection of racial meanings unto social relationships that were at some

point race-free. As a racial codification of relations which were previously seen in non-racial terms, racialization captures identity as unfixed and procedural.

In using racialization it is important to heed one caveat: It is not advisable to go so far as Miles and a number of other racial theorists who dismiss race in its entirety. It is simply not the case that “any analytical use of the idea of ‘race’ disguises the fact that it is an idea created by human beings in certain historical and material conditions” (Miles 1993:45). In dismissing race as a process and social construct, Miles does not seem to accord discourse the power to construct its subjects. He objects to the analytical use of the race concept on the basis that using race is unscientific and that doing so, furthermore, fails to recognize our implication in forms of racial domination. But there is too much of a scientific realism at work in this claim. For Miles, “[t]here are no ‘races’ and therefore no ‘race relations’. There is only a belief that there are such things, a belief which is used by some social groups to construct an other...” (1993:42). All of this, curiously, misses the point of racialization actually constructing and extending racial meanings that have currency in the social world. Counter to Miles’ approach, the typifications that will be documented here will be taken as social reality precisely because they happen to be only possible as social constructs. Miles is certainly following the scientific consensus on race here. But it is curiously un-sociological to fail to appreciate that scientific discourses on race are important not because of any independent truth-status that they bestow on race but precisely because as discourses they have the capacity to construct or obliterate racial subjects. And while it may be that today science objects to the analytical uses of race (at least in fields like medicine and archaeology), one would, however, be hard pressed to ignore that science is not the only discourse in town. Other discourses (legal, educational, and pop-cultural, etc.) do operate today with the certainty that races exist or at least that they can be identified and that knowledge about them can be produced. If we are to take social construction seriously, it becomes imperative to map rather than undermine the categories and typifications produced by these discourses. It is not justifiable to say that one prefers the sound of one discourse in order to ignore the rest. For these reasons, this study will not sequester race within an undermining set of quotation marks. One certainly does not approach “gender” or “class” in this way – when both are no less socially constructed

and no less subject to essentialization – precisely because they circulate right now in our discursive formations.

Conclusion

This chapter argues for an antifoundationalist approach to race. It has done so by staking a distinction between structuralism and poststructuralism without treating the latter as a wholesale rejection of the former. Poststructuralism shares and develops a number of important structural themes, such as the linguistic turn, linguistic relativism, overdetermination, and theoretical anti-humanism. It, however, also pushes structuralism by elaborating discourse as an ontological position and relationism as an epistemological one. In doing so it carves out its own theoretical trajectory that distinguishes it from structuralism. Importantly, poststructuralism also rejects structural synchronism in favor of diachronism, and rejects meta-narratives in favor of the recognition that all knowledge is narrated within cultural contexts from which it cannot break away. The discursive features of language tell us that language does not just reflect or even mediate reality; it is active in its construction.

This chapter also establishes a poststructuralist approach to race. It noted that poststructuralism can do so with the notion of discourse, which is defined as a decentered network of differences that has the capacity to constitute subjects and objects. Drawing on poststructural social movement theory allows one to enrich this endeavor. Holloway's notion of identification illustrates that identity is a horizon that can never be reached. In fact, there is no identity; only identification with a discursively constituted subject is possible. Drawing on Laclau and Mouffe, the chapter also showed how identification takes place through articulation and antagonism. It established that identity is only semi-fixed, allowing for its continual redefinition. The chapter ended by considering that racialization can furthermore specify how racial identity is itself potentially constituted by heeding Berger and Luckman's concept of typification.

Developed in this way, this chapter's antifoundational poststructuralism attempts to offer a solution to the limits identified in Chapter 2. As has been observed there, Slavic studies has a blind spot on race, and by extension racialization, while the

approaches of the historians of whiteness rely on teleological and foundational theories of identity. The latter account for race by hinging it to some other structure. The question of peripheral Europeans “becoming white” is misplaced as it ignores the role of discourses that racialized the Slavs without paying attention to their whiteness. The preferred poststructural alternative is to trace the dispersion of racial identity by mapping its discursive contours and expanse without interpreting racialization itself as a strategy of becoming white.

With these theoretical points in mind, the task of the next chapter is to account for the Canadian production of the Slavic category as a racial one. Applying the notion typification to discourse, Chapter 4 will show how the Slavs were racialized in Canada from the late 19th and up to the mid-20th century. Specifically, it makes the case that a Canadian discursive formation, made up of the work of eugenicists, poets, geographers, politicians, and journalists, overdetermined the Slavs as a denationalized category that contained its own racial properties. On the basis of this discursive formation, which rarely felt the need to speak of the Slavs as white or non-white, the Slavs emerged as a unique racial type.

Chapter 4.

The Slavic Racial Type

The Magyars and Slavs are simply names for people as opposite in sentiment and character as any two races in the world. (The Daily Colonist 1888:1)

A *white-on-arrival* trope persists in many accounts of European immigration and settlement in North America. During the Civil Rights Movement, in his 1964 speech “The Ballot or the Bullet”, Malcolm X addressed the dire situation of Blacks in the United States by contrasting their social exclusion with the instant assimilation of Europeans: “Those Honkies that just got off the boat, they’re already Americans; Polacks are already Americans; the Italian refugees are already Americans. Everything that came out of Europe, every blue-eyed thing, is already an American. And as long as you and I have been over here, we aren’t Americans yet” (Malcolm X 1964). He was only partially right. Blacks were and are today socially marginalized and prevented from becoming American in the full sense of the term, but the idea of a smooth and rapid assimilation that characterized the inclusion of peripheral Europeans needs to be rethought. The notion of easy intra-European assimilation is as commonplace in theories of race and racism as it is in Malcolm X’s work. Sociologist Paul Gilroy speaks of a “special political magic that transforms ‘ethnic’ Europeans into American whites once they arrive on American soil” (2000:314). The view is also held by Omi and Winant whose pioneering sociological study of race and racism refers to this transformation as the “European immigrant analogy” which in their view falsely suggests “that racial minorities could be incorporated into American life in the same way that white ethnic groups had been” (1986:12).

The white-on-arrival trope usually accompanies the view that race is a technique of social control designed by Europeans for differentiating and categorizing various non-European populations, while internal European differences are cast in terms of a lighter

ethnic difference. The belief in an instant alchemy that transformed peripheral Europeans into whites coextends with the idea that racial classification emerged out of colonial encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans. In this account, racial classification is what allowed the establishment of “a grand division of the world between Europeans in the colonial context and racially – physically – distinct European others” (Cornell and Hartmann 2007:29). Thus, the narrative holds that even if some Europeans were initially excluded, their European-credentials assured them of their rightful place at the top of the racial hierarchy. As Bannerji maintains, “[t]he category ‘Canadian’ clearly applied to people who had two things in common: their white skin and their European North American (not Mexican) background” (2000:64). Omi and Winant echo this view, when they maintain that the US actually “[stopped] short of racializing immigrants from Europe after the Civil War” (1986:65). What such scholarship suggests is that the racial line was drawn around, rather than within, Europe. As such, peripheral Europeans were either always destined for full inclusion or they were already white and included when they arrived.

Given this, few scholars pay attention to the history of the social construction of Southern and Eastern European identities by virtue of which Malcolm X’s “Honkies” and “Polacks” saw themselves marginalized and excluded. Like Slavic Studies, the scholarship on racism obscures the fact that peripheral Europeans were excluded on racial grounds.²⁶ The dominant assumption that ensures the erasure of the racial status of peripheral Europeans is that in Canada, as in the US, “Europeans continue the same solidarity of ruling and repression” (Bannerji 2000:108) as they always have since the start of their colonial ventures. An all-embracing racial inclusion thus smooths out any intra-European differences which might have otherwise been noted. As a result, for Canadian social science “race” and “racism” are analytical terms that are reserved only for the study of non-European populations, while terms like “xenophobia” and “ethnic prejudice” are applied to European experiences of immigration and difference – a technique also followed in Slavic Studies.

²⁶ While Slavic Studies shares with critical race scholarship the erasure of the racial status of peripheral Europeans and therefore participates in the production of the white-on-arrival trope, unlike critical race scholarship it heeds their marginalization and exclusion on ethnic grounds. For Slavic Studies, the Slavs’ whiteness stopped short of guaranteeing their social inclusion.

Before this chapter provides evidence that challenges this reading of race, it is important to note that Malcolm X raises a crucial point – the Slav became American (and Canadian) in a way the African never could. As W.E.B. Du Bois observed, 65 years before him, “other unassimilated groups” consisting of categories like “Jews, Italians, even Americans” had undergone certain subordination,

and yet in the case of the Negroes the segregation is more conspicuous, more potent to the eye, and so intertwined with a long historic evolution, with peculiarly pressing social problems of poverty, ignorance, crime, and labor, that the Negro problem far surpasses in scientific interest and social gravity most of the other race or class questions. ([1899] 2009:54)

In raising the occlusion in sociology of the racial oppression of the Slav, this research does not dispute the intense, prolonged racial subordination of non-European populations, nor does it aim to find anything like a rightful place of the Slav in the pantheon of all unassimilated non-white populations. It is certainly the case that an entire different order of magnitude characterized (and characterizes) the exclusion of non-European immigrants. Nothing like a Slavic head tax or anti-Slav riots ever took place in Canada. And yet, it is important to be careful not to sweep away the fact that peripheral Europeans were also racialized and, by extension, that they also experienced differential racial treatment. Here careful maneuvering is required: While the denial of the racialization of the Slavs is accomplished in theories of race and racism by the white-on-arrival trope (something whiteness studies has committed itself to challenging by going the opposite route), this work does not argue that the Slavs were non-white; rather, it argues that the Slavs were racialized without recourse to whiteness. Racialization as the process of the construction of the Slavic category as a racial one certainly took place. The Slavs were not, and this point needs to be stressed, “blue-eyed things” who upon landing on Canadian shores underwent a magic transformation into an all-embracing Anglo-Canadian ethos, as many race scholars maintain. The history of racial exclusion in Canada has to include the Slavs as a category of people who were racialized as a

distinct racial – not ethnic – European “type”²⁷ without a concurrent racialization of that type as non-white. It is to this task that this chapter devotes itself.

This chapter argues that Slavic immigrants were, from the late 19th to the first half of the 20th century, constructed as a unified population that was taken to be made up of physically distinct racial others. The chapter begins by considering what I recognize as four possible modes of racialization of the Slavs. The four modes of racialization that emerged as patterns in the data collected for this project are: the racialization of nationality (e.g. the Russian race); the placement of racialized nationality within broader, racial meta-categories (e.g. the Russian race as part of the greater Slavic race); the identification of racialized nationality next to, but not subsumed under, racial meta-categories (e.g. Russians and Slavs); and the denationalization of racial meta-categories (e.g. the Slavs). Even as they employed contradictory strategies, all four modes functioned within the Canadian discursive formation of race. They made up possible ways of categorizing, knowing, and speaking about Slavic Europeans. However, the attention here and throughout the rest of this work will be on the last *denationalized* mode of racialization. Thus while all four modes of racialization undermine the consensus in the scholarship of race that fails to recognize the racialization of Europeans, it is the last mode that allows the figure of the Slav to most definitively come into focus as a racial other. Furthermore, the denationalized Slav presents a serious challenge to Slavic Studies’ ignorance of this figure (the field prefers instead at best to speak at the level of national categories). It also poses the strongest challenge to Whiteness Studies, given that if any exclusion from whiteness had taken place it would most certainly have been at this level and not at the level of nationality. After all, whiteness itself is a denationalized category.

The remainder of the chapter will pursue the denationalized figure of the Slav in the racial science of Arthur de Gobineau. As this chapter shows, Gobineau influenced

²⁷ A number of contemporary studies of race have already made certain strides in recognizing the existence of internal racial hierarchies among early settler Europeans in Canada. Scholars acknowledge that not all European immigrants were automatically accepted as members of a Canadian in-group or seen as ideal “stock” for the making of Canadian citizens (Day 2000; Satzewich 2000; Chan and Chunn 2014). No one, however, has yet examined how the Slavs were constructed as a distinct racial category in Canada.

Canadian racial science by classifying the Slavs as a “variety” of the white race that was prone to racial degeneracy. Eugenic themes inspired by Gobineau would find themselves in the work of the Canadian botanist Reginald Ruggles Gates and in Canada’s Chief Medical Officer Peter Bryce, who both racialized the Slavs as distinct racial others. Having considered the Canadian racial science on the Slavs, the chapter establishes that the Slavs, as denationalized Europeans, were perceived in terms of a number of identifiable or visible traits. Canadian medical, journalistic, literary, scholarly, political and artistic discourses typified them in terms of languages, accents, fashion and manners, and established Slavic phenotypes along the lines of body types, facial features, and hair.

How Do You Racialize a Slav?

As a way of arriving at the socially constructed racial properties of Slavs, it is worth considering whom the designation “Slav” was intended to apply to. In answering this, it is important to set aside any notions of the true content of this identity. It will not help to turn to encyclopedic knowledge which tell us that the term “Slav” applies to any member of Europe’s most numerous linguistic, cultural, or ethnic category, speaking an Indo-European language, and residing principally in Eastern and Southeastern Europe in such countries as Poland, Slovakia, Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia, Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic. This is not the Slav this research is pursuing, not because of any actual genetic or cultural discrepancies between today’s and yesterday’s Slavs but because today’s Slavs have been deracialized and are no longer defined as a “racial type.” There is nothing to be gained by upholding today’s knowledge of the Slavs as the most advanced knowledge on the subject and judging the historic accounts against this benchmark. Along with current demographic and encyclopedic knowledge, this work therefore also sets aside research published in journals such as *Molecular Biology and Evolution* which suggests that the “[c]ontemporary Slavic paternal gene pool is characterized by the predominance of R1a and I1b* (xM26) variants as well as the scarcity of E3b1 lineages” (Perčić et al.

2005:1972).²⁸ While the work of *Perčić et al.* sheds important light on what is known today about the Slavs, to uphold it as the true knowledge on the Slavs would be to have to dismiss historic discourses that “got it wrong.” Instead, this dissertation maintains that there is no true way to interpret an identity; there are only descriptions based on dominant forms of knowledge (whether in such fields as history, demography, genetics, literature, anthropology, etc.). For the same reason, it would not be productive for this study to go into anthropological details concerning the Slavic homeland debate in order to sort out whether they spoke a single language and engaged in a polytheistic pagan religion. The method of Foucauldian archaeology that informs this work is not interested in searching for the truth status of knowledge; rather it is in pursuit of “the history of a concept” (Foucault 2003:5) by tracing its “space of dispersion” (Foucault 2003:11) in the Canadian discursive formation of race during the late 19th to the mid-20th century.

This chapter will therefore begin by documenting the descriptions themselves and taking these at face value to the extent that it is possible to do so. By way of answering what a “Slavic” racial type was, two observations are necessary on the uses of “race” and “racial type.” The first observation is that the term “ethnicity” is not applicable to the late 19th and mid-20th century Canadian context on historically descriptive grounds. It must be ruled out because, as Roediger notes, the term “ethnicity” and “ethnics” did not gain currency until the 1970s (2005:18) (although the data suggest that in Canada this occurred in the 1960s). Thus, the habit of scholars like Omi and Winant, Gilroy, and Bannerji to think of peripheral Europeans as “Euroethnics” obscures the experience of racial exclusion and of the racialization of these populations,

²⁸ Current research shows that the European Y chromosome gene pool is patterned so that the R1a haplotype is more prominent among Slavic Europeans than it is among Western Europeans or non-Slavic populations like the Albanians. Occurring only among 1% of Welsh, 3.3% of (central) English, 9.8% of Albanian, and 10% of Finnish males, the haplotype is by contrast found among 24.6% of Bosnian, 34.3% of (mainland) Croatian, 37% of Slovenian, 47% of Russian, and 56.4% of Polish males (*Perčić et al.* 2005:1967). It bears stressing that while its distribution allows geneticists to speak of a “Slavic paternal gene pool,” (*Perčić et al.* 2005:1964) it does not authorize the idea of a “Slavic racial type.” The reason is that the haplotype is unevenly distributed even among the Slavs and, additionally, it can be found among non-Slavic populations. Its distribution instead “[suggests] that the historic eastward expansion of Slavs in the middle of the first millennium A.D. resulted in a substantial admixture...” (*Perčić et al.* 2005:1974).

as it anachronistically imposes such categories as “ethnicity” of thought unto a period that did not know or use them. Stated differently, there were no ethnic categories prior to the mid-20th century use of the term “ethnic.” The second observation is that the term “race” was employed in multiple ways. As I will show next, as concerns the Slavs, there was no single Canadian racial schema; there were, rather, four modes of racialization identified here as *racialized national categories*; *racialized national categories placed under racial meta-categories*; *racialized national categories placed next to racial meta-categories*, and *denationalized racial meta-categories*. Since the focus of this research is on the Slavs as a race in the singular sense – according to what I designate here as a denationalized racial category – this chapter will only provide a cursory overview of the first three uses of race before turning our attention to the last mode of racialization.

Racialized National Categories

The discursive racial field in Canada allowed for entire nations to be equated with racial statuses. In fact, national populations were constructed and represented as *racialized national categories*. One did not have to listen hard to hear the charter populations referred to as the founding racial categories of Canada. The newspaper *The Globe*, for example, reflected on what it called the “the problem of building up a united Dominion, with two races and two official languages” (1904). Politicians in the House of Commons used race in this sense. The farmer-manufacturer turned conservative politician Herménégilde Boulay did so when he described “French-Canadians” as “descendants of that glorious race”, the French (1916:1082). And Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier invoked race in the same sense when he hoped that the South African Boer War would be stemmed by “the old historic associations which, in the 16th and 17th centuries, bound together in Europe the Dutch race and the English race” (1900:70). One would also during this period encounter numerous references to the existence of a Polish race, a Russian race, an Italian race, a Chinese race, along with many other national races. The Ukrainian-born conservative MP Nick Mandziuk was still able to note in 1963, to

what would today appear as an overwhelmingly white audience, that “we have the descendants of many races in this chamber” (1963:4942).²⁹

The 1911 *Fifth Census* of Canada was the first census to categorize national demographic data according to racial origin (the previous censuses referred to “origins of the people” and “birthplaces” without mentioning race). In a discussion of origins, it established a criterion for race on the basis of patrilineal-national identity. According to that census, “[t]he racial or tribal origin is usually traced through the father, as in English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, French, etc. A person whose father is English but whose mother is Scotch, Irish, French or other race, will be ranked as English and so with any of the other” (Canada. Census and Statistics Office 1912:v). Accordingly, questions regarding racial and national identity were present on the schedule. Its charts, however, did not use the word “race” but rather “origin” while listing mostly national data. The only intimation that these national origins, listed on the charts, were in fact racial came from the introduction of the *Fifth Census* which operationalized the variables with explicit reference to race.

Racialized National Categories Placed Under Racial Meta-Categories

Racialized national categories, such as the “Russian race,” were also placed under racial meta-categories, such as “the Slavic race.” This occurred whenever national categories were established as elaborations of racial meta-categories. In taxonomic systems, nationalized categories are to species what racial meta-categories are to genus. Racial meta-categories are categories that traverse and exist beyond and behind racialized national categories. The Canadian 1921 *Sixth Census* illustrates the use of racial meta-categories such as the “British race”, “European races” and “Asiatic races”, which it pairs in this mode of racialization along with the racialized national

²⁹ While today the idea of the two “founding races” continues to haunt parliamentary debates, it does so without any reference to a specific national race, such as the English or French. Having been written into Canadian federalism, the founding races served as a basis for the allocation of political power – that is, of seats in the House of Commons – making it difficult to undo references to them.

categories and which, in turn, become specifications of the meta-categories to which they belong. Featuring this mode of racialization, the *Sixth Census* began its demographic statistics on race with the racial meta-category “British races” (which it broke down into the racialized national categories English, Irish, Scotch, Other British), before moving on to the racial meta-categories of “European races” (French, German, Belgian, Bulgarian and Rumanian, Finnish, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Polish, Scandinavian, Swiss, Other European), the “Asiatic races” (Chinese, Hindu, Japanese, Turkish, Syrian, Armenian), and the “Indian”, “Negro” and “Various” races (Canada. Census and Statistics Office 1924:353). It is important to note that there is no conflict between national and racial meta-categories in this mode of racialization. Both coexist along a single continuum, with racial national categories serving as an elaboration of racial meta-categories. In the *Sixth Census*, this can be observed for the first three groupings but not the categories “Indian” and “Negro.”

The term “Slav” functioned as a racial meta-category in this sense as well. The religious periodical *Canada Presbyterian* spoke in 1890 of “the whole of the Czech race” which it identified as comprising “a branch of the great Slav family” (1). Once again, there is no contradiction between the two terms: one race could exist within, or as an extension of, another. The Czechs were a distinct national racialized category that was included under the banner of the Slavic race. The racialized Czechs thus constituted, as another religious periodical, *Methodist Magazine and Review*, noted, “one of the finest branches of the great Slav family” (Seymour 1899:106). Using race in this way toward the end of the first World War, *The Globe* observed that “a main point of guarantees for a lasting peace would be the constitution of three Slavic states, namely the Czecho, Polish, and Jugo-Slav, comprising people of those races at present under the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy” (1918a:np). The assumption of a continuity between the racial meta-category “Slav” and its racialized national components allowed *The Globe* in the space of one article a seamless shuffling from a singular “Slavic ferment” in Austria-Hungary to the plural representation of “Slavic races in realizing their national aspirations” (1918b:np). In newspaper war commentary “Russian positions” becomes in the next breath the “Slav artillery” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1915:1); in political affairs agreements between “Polish and Czecho-Slovak governments in London” open up during World War Two “certain perspectives for the other Slav races” (*The Winnipeg*

Evening Tribune 1941:7); and “Polish... and Slovak Dancers” along with “Croatian and Slovenian orchestras” indicate, at one folk festival in Canada, “celebrations marking the 1100th anniversary of the Christianization of the Slavic races” (*The Globe and Mail* 1963:10).

Racialized National Categories Placed Next to Racial Meta-Categories

A more confounding mode of racialization existed when racialized national categories were also, occasionally, placed beside racial meta-categories. Unlike in the above example, where a racialized national category was placed within a racial meta-category, this mode of racialization introduced a serial ordering of the two – not as a seamless continuum, but as two distinct types. Thus, it was also possible to read in the *Victoria Daily Colonist* that “the Austrian Navy is manned by Germans, Magyars, Czechs, Slovacks, Poles, *Slavs*, Croats, Bulgarians, Roumanians, and Italians” (1901:4, emphasis added). Similarly, a short work of fiction examined the passengers of a ship, describing the lowest deck as those occupied by “Poles, *Slavs*, Armenians and other noisome riff-raff” (Hyne 1906:3, emphasis added), while *The Globe* informed its readers that in Pennsylvania “[p]ractically all the mine labor is foreign – Polish, *Slav*, Lithuanian and Italian” (1919a:11, emphasis added). Who exactly were these Slavs who also happened to be among Czechs, Poles, Croats, and Bulgarians? If in the previously introduced mode, racialized national categories were a continuation of a racial meta-category (so that one may think of the Russian race *AS* a Slavic race), in this mode of racialization the continuation is disrupted – instead, we hear of a Russian race *AND* a Slavic race that belongs and yet does not. At the surface level, this is inexplicable.

Since no theories or explanations were provided as to such ordering of races, and since the archaeological method at work in this research is not prepared to undertake the task of hermeneutical interpretation preferring instead to remain at the level of description offered by discourse itself, such usage will be omitted from this research. It will, however, serve well at this point to consider the discursive field which produced such “anomalies”. Given the existence of many racial schemas, races were encountered in a multiplicity that must have introduced conceptual difficulties. As the Co-

operative Commonwealth Federation MP Angus MacInnis observed, “[s]ome little time ago I was talking to a principal of one of the Vancouver schools at which there is an attendance of children of, as he told me, twenty-eight different races” (1936:378). With no hint of surprise, he went on to describe how despite this number, racial equality prevailed in Vancouver. The earlier fathers of scientific racism also could not agree on the number of races. In a 17th century anthropological essay, François Bernier had established a “physico-biological notion of race” (2) and placed its number at “four or five species or races” (in Stuurman 2000:4). Bernier had recognized only one European race, while William Z. Ripley’s 1899 *The Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* introduced a tripartite ordering of Europeans, dividing them into Teutonic, Alpine, and Mediterranean races (the Slavs were a subcategory of Alpine). These three would later be reworked by Canadian writer, John Murray Gibbon in his *Canadian Mosaic* (1938) as three classes that marked a division of the European race. Meanwhile, the French anthropologist Joseph Deniker proposed a racial taxonomy of 10 European races. The number of races, as such, shifted from one source to another, with no agreement which could close the debate for politicians, demographers, novelists, or journalists once and for all. It is possible, as such, to attribute the placing of the racialized national categories beside racial meta-categories as an overdetermination brought about by various discourses which brought race into being.

Denationalized racial meta-categories

The last mode of racialization which I will consider here is that of *denationalized racial meta-categories*. This mode, in light of the ones already reviewed, only recognizes the existence of racial meta-categories without their national content. Strictly speaking, however, it is incorrect to say that this is a “meta” category, as it does not extend itself beyond anything. It encompasses no other subcategory and discloses nothing other than a series of racialized typifications. Thus, a denationalized racial meta-category is one that racializes without any necessary reference to nationality. Instead, its use puts into play a *mélange* of cultural, religious, linguistic, and geographical features. To be clear, nationality can enter into the construction of a denationalized racial meta-category but only as an indirect reference that must recede in the presence of that category. Even culture, religion, language, and geography are subsumed by the gravity of

denationalized racial meta-categories, which specify such content only to overbear it. A denationalized racial meta-category is an empty signifier that compresses a number of qualities held distinct by the other modes of racialization. It is an ongoing effacement of these distinctions. Denationalization should be read the same way Barthes reads “depoliticized speech” where “one must above all give an active value to the prefix *de*” (1957:143). Just as depoliticized speech seeks to re-represent (that is, to represent representations) in order to overcome an initial complexity, *de* in denationalized racial meta-categories implies the overpowering of any distinctions that could be organized on a sub categorical level. In this way, denationalization robs the Slavs of their nationality. When it speak about it, denationalization is only interested in it in so far as to what it says about the Slavs as a race.

We have already come across a denationalized use of race in the example of the *Sixth Census* which did not feel compelled to break down and specify the national contents of such categories as “Indian” and “Negro” races. Even though these were placed next to other racialized national categories, the category Indian and Negro were in the *Census* denationalized. Today, when anyone says “Black” they are denationalizing the subject (“African-American” is a reversal of this). Denationalized racial meta-categories were also, however, applied to European populations. One encounters this in a work compiled by the National Council of Women of Canada, when a contributor who contemplates immigration admits to being “struck with the number of different currents which are settling steadily across the Atlantic for Canada” (Mallock 1900:413). She identifies one of these currents as “Galicians and Doukhobortsj, Slav races from Austria and the Caucasus, [which] have been, and still are, settling in Manitoba, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan” (Mallock 1900:413). With the exception of the Doukhobors who are a religious sect of Russian dissenters, Mallock offers us only regional coordinates for origins of the other three populations: Galicia, the Caucasus, and Austria, all of which contained various national, linguistic, and cultural Slavic populations and none of which are broken down and specified in her account. Although at the time of Mallock’s writing half of the Austrian population was Slavic, “though by no means Slavs of the same nationalistic group” (Hrbkova 1918:13), it is not clear who the “Slav races from Austria” are, nor whether the Galician Slavs are Polish, Ukrainian, or Russian. And that is the point: The Slav races are in the denationalized mode of racialization a medley with no

true national designations, no specific qualities. They constitute, in Mallock's own words, a single, overlapping current.

Denationalized racial meta-categories are established even more forcefully in accounts that speak of race in the singular. Unlike Mallock who speaks of a *mélange* of unspecified Slavic races, some simply spoke about a Slavic race. The English writer Thomas Hardy, popular in Canada, asked in 1899 "How long, O striving Teutons, Slavs, and Gaels/ Must your wroth reasonings trade on lives like these,/ That are as puppets in a playing hand?" (1930:79). The Teutons, Slavs, and Gaels exist side-by-side as denationalized racial meta-categories, threatening Europe with war and insurrection. The Gaels might very well be Scottish or Irish, the Slavs Russian or Serb. For Hardy, however, there is no need to specify anything beyond the races he identifies. In the same vein, in comparing holiday customs, the *Morning Telegram* observed: "the date of new year varies greatly in the reckoning of different races. Thus, on account of the old style almanac, we commence the year two days before the Slavs observe Christmas, and our Epiphany of 'Twelfth Day' is their New Year's day" (1903:13). As in Hardy's poem, the Slavs here are simply Slavs *eo ipso*. Given the discrepancy in the dates for Christmas, it is likely that these were Orthodox Christians (Russians, Serbians, etc.) and not Roman Catholics (Poles, Croatians, etc.), but none of this matters. With regard to immigration, the mode of denationalized racial meta-categories allowed the *Morning Telegram* to note that the original immigrants to North America were Anglo-Saxon and that "what is called the Anglo-Saxon race has been a blend of Germanic, Scandinavian, and Keltic blood – all North European. There has been practically no Italian, Spanish, Greek, Slav, or, excepting the Jews, non-Aryan element" (1904a:4). The newspaper observed that this racial composition was, however, changing, as "[i]n Western Canada, the Slav immigration which has been fostered for some years, forms a large part of our recent immigration and the influx still continues." (*Morning Telegram* 1904a:4). Reinforcing the denationalized racial view of the Slav, it concluded that "[t]he future Canadian, apparently, is to have a good deal of the Slav in him, according to the policy now being carried out" (1904a:4).

The racialization of the Slavs ossified to the extent that it was possible to present them as a singular, homogenous category with no significant internal differentiation. This

was a common practice carried out not only by poets and journalists but also demographers and social scientists. The 1941 *Eight Census* gave preference to denationalized categories when it described the existence of a “Slavic belt” in the following terms: “Lying across the centre of the southern half of Manitoba is a belt in which the population is comprised to the extent of about 40 p.c. of persons of Slavic origin, mainly Ukrainians who settled in these park areas in preference to the treeless prairie lands farther south” (Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1950:234). While a Ukrainian national identity is mentioned, it quickly recedes in the presence of the denationalized Slavic identity (who were the other Slavs and does it even matter if it is not specified?). This is more apparent when we learn that in 1941 the province of Quebec saw an “increase in the proportions of French and Slavic descent” (Canada. Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1950:230). The Slavic category is denationalized in the *Census* because it is used more often than specific national identities that may be said to be its constituent parts and because, as in the observation regarding Quebec, sometimes “Slavic descent” alone suffices.

Presenting the Slavs as a denationalized category was also carried out by educational institutions and government surveyors. Frontier College, a literacy organization that sent university students to various isolated work camps across Canada in order to act as “labourer-teachers,” produced a number of helpful instructional guides. In one telling photograph, it described for the would-be teacher one of the groups they might encounter in the North Pacific Railway camps, with the title, “Group of Stationmen at work. Slavs employed as railway navvies” (Frontier College ca. 1912). Another photograph, from Carl Reinhardt’s collection of his family correspondence, 1890-1901, reproduced here as Figure 4.1, identifies its subjects, featured below, simply as “Slavic immigrants working on the Ontario and Rainy River Railway” (Reinhardt 1908).



Figure 4.1 Slavic Immigrants Working on the Ontario and Rainy River Railway

Reinhardt took and titled the photograph while he was surveying in Ontario. What is telling is that he did not bother to identify the immigrants as Bosnian, Russian, Ukrainian, or by any other national, cultural, or geographic markers. Such photographs matter not so much for what they depict as for how they frame the subject matter in terms of the subject's absence. In such framing, what these pictures erase and subtract is vital for the construction of denationalized racial identities.

While Hardy's poem placed the Slavic race next to the denationalized Teutons and Gaels, a prominent practice, which introduced its ways of thinking about racial hierarchy, was the placing of denationalized Slavs next to other racialized national categories. Just as one may read today of denationalized (and deethnicized) Black and Indigenous collective racial identities in the same accounts that place them beside specific British, French, or Spanish nationalities, so too were various Slavs presented as a mass of subjects beside variously specified national categories. In a discussion of the treatment of war prisoners during World War Two, *The Winnipeg Evening Tribune* observed that "the Nazi and Japanese treatment of prisoners has been horrible, although the Nazis have differentiated between national classes of prisoners, treating Slavs abominably, French very badly, and the British better" (1942:6). The chain of signifiers that functioned as a Canadian discourse on race had a habit of placing the Slavs next to a number of national categories. It did so even as it specified the national identities of other subordinate populations. Thus, one also encounters the chain differentiating "[t]he civilization of the Jap [as one that] seems to be on a higher plane than the civilization of the Slav" (*Victoria Daily Colonist* 1904:np). And in a more amicable mood, the chain allowed for a comparison of folk festival attire – presented at the annual convention of the Women's Baptist Home and Foreign Missionary Societies of Ontario – "in which the girls appeared in the national costumes of the Slavic races, Korea, Bolivia, Japan, China, and India, and each spoke on the country she represented" (*The Globe* 1916:10). Perhaps nowhere is the denationalized status of the Slavs more apparent, however, than in the 1911 *Fifth Census* which in its surveys recorded under the column "racial origins" the Slav along with all other national categories. One learned from this *Census* that someone born in Canada and holding a Canadian citizenship (these two facts would be marked in other columns) could be classified as Slav, Chinese, Scotch, English, or Italian. Such a document produced a uniquely racialized Canadian Slav whose European credentials were lost unlike those of any other European and even non-European population.

The Case of Scientific Racism: Gobineau and Canadian Eugenicists

By taking stock of various modes of racialization, this chapter established the sense in which this work will investigate the social construction of the Slavs further – namely, in terms of their denationalization. This work will, therefore, bracket away the racialized national categories as well as their accompanying meta-categories in favour of extracting the figure of the Slav as a single, unified, denationalized one. Doing so not only allows the investigation of the racialization of a racial category (and not national, linguistic, or cultural category), but it also stakes out a space from which a criticism of Slavic Studies becomes possible. This section continues the discussion of denationalization of the Slavs in Canadian discourses of racial science by considering the published literature of one of the fathers of racial science, Arthur de Gobineau, the Canadian botanist and eugenicist Reginald Ruggles Gates, and Canada's Chief Medical Officer Peter Bryce.

The 19th century French social thinker, novelist, and diplomat Arthur de Gobineau played an important role in racial science. While not a scientist by training, his *The Moral and Intellectual Diversity of Races* played a prominent role in influencing that field and is recognized today as “the seminal tract of modern racism” (Malik 1996:83). As the son of a self-styled aristocrat, Gobineau reacted with disdain to the revolutions of 1789 and 1848. He considered their protagonist, the commoners, a distinct inferior race set against the race of the aristocracy. In his work, Gobineau proposed the idea that the world was divisible into the three “great” racial meta-categories, which he designated “by the terms white, yellow, and black” (1856:370). While he was aware of the inadequacy of such classification, as the color-coded terms did not neatly correspond to the complexion of the populations to which they were to apply, he nonetheless accepted them on historical grounds. His trifold racial schema located the Slavs – to which in this work he referred to as “the Slavons” – as a “variety” of the white race, along with the Israelites, Greeks, Romans, Teutons, Celts, and “many sub-varieties” (Gobineau 1856:370). Gobineau argued that the three races were hierarchically ordered so that it was possible to discern moral, cultural, and physical attributes in such a way as to enable him to “establish a regular scale of gradation” (Gobineau 1856:379) running from the “white” to

the “yellow” and “black” races. As concerns physical aesthetics, Gobineau observed that as “these races recede from the white type, their features and limbs become incorrect in form; they acquire defects of proportion which, in the races that are completely foreign to us, end by producing an extreme ugliness” (1915:151). At first glance, such a scale would allow us to place the Slavs in the same privileged family as all other Europeans.

Gobineau, however, also recognized what he called the danger of racial degeneracy – a danger that applied to the Slavs. By degeneracy he understood “that the people has no longer the same intrinsic value as it had before, because it has no longer the same blood in its veins, continual adulterations having gradually affected the quality of that blood” (Gobineau 1915:25). Employing numerous organic analogies, Gobineau argued that the nation was just like a physical body and that, like an organism, the nation too “can often go on for a long time, carrying within [it] the seeds of some fell disease” (1915:19). Gobineau was a racial reductionist who upheld race as an absolute factor in the development and downfall of civilization. The various calamities that befell nations, such as the French Revolution of 1789-92, were for Gobineau not attributable to bad government, excessive luxury, irreligion, or fanaticism, but to racial degeneracy – that is, to the incorporation of “heterogeneous elements” (Gobineau 1915:25) which while giving various nations an original identity, ultimately led to their decline. This means that in practice, through such processes as colonialism, “white blood” and European institutions could have an uplifting effect on non-whites. However, this for Gobineau came with the price of reducing the stock of the white race, which also could be brought down by such influence, specifically by assimilating the populations it conquered. The Slavs were for Gobineau an index of such degeneracy. He noted this by contrasting them with the negro race:

We often hear of negroes who have learnt music, who are clerks in banking-houses, and who know how to read, write, count, dance, and speak, like white men. People are astonished at this, and conclude that the negro is capable of everything! And then, in the same breath, they will express surprise at the contrast between the Slav civilization and our own. The Russians, Poles, and Serbians (they will say), even though they are far nearer to us than the negroes, are only civilized on the surface; the higher classes alone participate in our ideas, owing to the continual admixture of English, French, and German blood. The masses, on the other hand, are invincibly ignorant of the Western world and its movements, although they have been Christian for so many centuries—in many cases before we were converted ourselves! (Gobineau 1915:74)

The solution to the confusion of the masses is simple, declared Gobineau: the “remarkable negroes” and higher classes of Slavs are imitating “us” without being able to express the same kind of conviction in any of these acts (1915:74). They may look civilized, but this is just a surface appearance that conceals the lack of depth. And, even in this limited sense of imitation without real comprehension, the achievements of the Slavs are only what they are because of “us” – that is, because their higher classes have racially mixed with English, French, and German blood.

For Gobineau, the nature of Slavic degeneracy consisted of the fact that the Slavs were a mixture of yellow and white races. When it came to a number of important attributes, they were clearly at the bottom of the internal European scale of gradation. As Gobineau observed, employing the denationalized racial category for the Slavs alone,

the white races are undoubtedly entitled to pre-eminence.... But there are differences, again, among the white races, both in beauty and in strength, which even the extensive ethnical mixture, that European nations present, has not entirely obliterated. The Italians are handsomer than the French and the Spaniards, and still more so than the Swiss and Germans. The English also present a high degree of corporeal beauty; the Sclavonian nations a comparatively humble one. (1856:382)

Although the Slavs, or Sclavons, are classified by Gobineau as white, the extent of their degeneracy does not allow them to claim European superiority to other non-European races that remained less mixed. As Gobineau writes, “[it] is no less certain that a beautiful Rajput³⁰ is more ideally beautiful than the most perfect Slav” (1915:151). And even in the case of comparisons to other degenerate populations, Slav women, argues Gobineau, can claim no advantage to “the striking charm of many mulatto, Creole, and quadroon women” (1915:151). Thus, degeneracy due to “racial admixture” could be more developed in European racial varieties, such as the Slavs, than in non-European varieties like the mulattoes.

Although he was a minor French aristocrat with more diplomatic experience than scientific education, Gobineau’s influence on race was widely felt. It left its mark on the

³⁰ A member of a patrilineal clan that claims decadence from the North Indian Hindu warrior caste.

Canadian botanist and eugenicist Reginald Ruggles Gates, even if only indirectly through Gates' reliance on the work of Sir Arthur Keith³¹ and Charles Benedict Davenport.³² Born in Nova Scotia in 1882, Gates was a monarchist and loyalist. After moving for some time to London, England in 1910, Gates carried on a long association with the British Eugenics Society. Although he was never an inner circle member of that organization (Barkan 1992:169), Gates nonetheless was its longtime intransigent defender who rejected the growing antiracist scientific consensus. Most importantly, Gates's work "outlined a possible research program integrating ethnology and genetics as part of physical anthropology" (Barkan 1992:174).

Gates was an advocate of Gobineau's theory of racial degeneracy. After reviewing a number of medical studies, he concluded much like his predecessor that "intermixture of unrelated races is from every point of view undesirable, at least as regards race combinations involving one primitive and one advanced race" (Gates 1923:232). Gates argued that "[in] the newer countries, such as North and South America and parts of Africa, the cross-bred races which have sprung up through miscegenation between Europeans and more backward peoples are at a disadvantage from almost every point of view" (1923:222). While he allowed that various European races were closer to one another than they were to non-European races, he nonetheless cautioned against miscegenation among Europeans as well. Gates wondered if even "marriages between North and South European races are always wholly desirable in their results" (1923:223). He also found evidence for Gobineau's claim of Slavic and Asian miscegenation and in fact noted that Mongolians were part Slav.³³ Gates observed that "[t]he concave nose is particularly frequent in the Slavs" and concluded that the "[l]ow root of the nose, characteristic of Mongolians, appears to be a distinct condition from the Slavic concave nose" (1946:1344). And if the Slavs were also present in the

³¹ Keith (1866-1955) was a British anatomist and physical anthropologist. His theory of evolution extended Darwin by emphasizing that prejudice, loyalty, and nationalism were racially inborn traits. Keith's work also contributed the theory, now common in sociology, of in-group and out-group dynamics.

³² Davenport (1866-1944) was an American zoologist and one of the leaders of the eugenics movement. He pioneered statistical techniques in biological and population studies.

³³ Gates was not alone in making this claim. The US lawyer and eugenicist Madison Grant spoke of such heterogeneous categories as the "Slavized Mongols" (1920:xxii) in his Introduction to Lothrop Stoddard's *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy*.

Mongols, the reverse held true as well. Gates also reasoned that the round-headedness, or “the problem of brachycephalization” of the Slavs, could be accounted for, in part, by “the invasion of central Europe by the Huns, Avars, and other brachycephalic types from Asia within historical times” (1946:1372). The Orientalization of the Slavs as a popular technique of racialization is significant here because the Canadian discursive formation of race allowed it to reach well beyond scientific racism.

This is to say, themes developed in the discourse of scientific racism did not operate in isolation. From Gobineau to Gates, the themes of white blood and miscegenation structured other discourses. Without scientific racism, it is doubtful that the politician Thomas Reid could have argued in the House of Commons against immigration of unfit races on those grounds. As he reasoned:

In the past... we have permitted to enter this country certain races who can never become real, true Canadians. There is the question of blood. I do not believe you can mix Asiatic blood and our blood and make a better race. We must face these facts. We had nothing to do with making the black man, the red man or the white man, but the facts are there; and from my reading I have come to the conclusion that whenever the experiment of mixing oriental and white blood has been tried, the resulting progeny has not contributed to the uplift of the race but rather has been a retrogression. So that I say that in future we shall have to give more careful consideration to the kind of people we permit to enter our country for permanent residence. (Reid 1944:2413)

Reid did not explicitly name the race in question mixed with “Asiatic blood”, but it bears noting that he spoke of Russian communists before making this statement and went on to speak about another representative category of the Slavic race, the Doukhobors, who “do things which are contrary to our laws” (Reid 1944:2413) and whom he did implicate as a class of unfit immigrants. The Orientalization of the Slavs carried over from such discourses as the scientific to the political and artistic, and it did so by an equivalential logic which associated the Slavs with the much more stigmatized Oriental or Asiatic race.

Not all scientific racists, however, denigrated the Slavs by condemning them for being degenerate or retrograde as a result of miscegenation. From 1904 to 1921, Peter Bryce, who served as the Chief Medical Officer for the Federal Departments of Native Affairs and Immigration, expressed a contrary view. Bryce applied Gobineau’s basic

tenets to Canadian social issues, but with important modifications. The physician played a somewhat progressive role in exposing the appalling conditions of Canada's Residential Schools. His carefully collected data demonstrated that "Canadian aboriginal peoples were dying, not from alcoholism or poverty as many suspected, but from communicable disease, mainly tuberculosis" (Green 1999:72). While Bryce attacked a number of contradictions of the government's Native policy, arguing against state inactivity in the matter – something for which he was eventually suspended from his post – his views on immigration made a case for a different kind of government intervention. Warning of the biological essence of contemporary social problems, Bryce produced a number of essays that spoke in the name of "applied sociology" (1914a), seeking to combine social commentary with medical expertise in the peculiar style of eugenics. In an article titled "Saving Canadians from the Degeneracy Due to Industrialism in Cities of Older Civilization", he worried about "a situation where a population largely without capital, mostly of casual laborers, often of foreign tongue, and in ten years greater than the population of eight of our largest cities, has crowded into our urban centres..." (1912:692). Such a population of poor, foreign-speaking laborers – identified variously as Galicians, Poles, Russians, or Slavs, as well as Jews, Italians, and Chinese – raised "the problem of how we can best conserve our energies with a view to transmitting to the coming generation those high physical, mental and moral traditions of the Anglo-Saxon race which have distinguished this continent for three centuries" (1918:3).

Bryce was not, it may be said, a vulgar eugenicist who lambasted all non-Anglo-Saxon races for introducing degeneracy to Canada. His stance was not that of Gobineau or Gates, who associated the Slavs with racial degeneracy. Bryce was, in fact, careful to praise certain traits that he observed in the new class of European immigrants. Despite congested Canadian cities that teemed with new immigrants – spaces he associated with "demoralizing influences" brought on by "the rapid growth of industrialism, the congregation of immense populations of cities" (1914b:6) – Bryce had reasons to be hopeful:

And yet if one looks into the honest eyes of a Galician mother bearing her sturdy baby, suspended in a bright-tinted shawl, or observes the stolid Russian moving forward towards his goal in a free country with some small hopefulness, he becomes only convinced that it only needs the human touch to prove all men kin, and that it would be a simple matter, were our machinery at all adequate, to take

this elemental, intellectual and moral material with all its potentialities and mould it into one homogeneous and elevated ethical whole. (1914b:12)

Bryce recognized that social conditions, like overcrowding and lack of access to affordable food, played a large role in such things as tuberculosis and feeble-mindedness. In fact, he identified hereditary afflictions as being produced by “urban degeneration” (Bryce 1910:434), which he emphasized in his work as a significant factor capable of mitigating racial degeneracy. Given the role of the urban environment, Bryce also recognized that the superior Anglo-Saxon stock was itself at times more afflicted by the “degeneracies” associated with immigrants. Nonetheless, Bryce retained what was central to eugenics even as he appreciated some traits associated with peripheral Europeans and even as he wished to “prove all men kin.” As a sophisticated eugenicist, Bryce was able to maintain the idea of European racial categories, and was capable of speaking of Slavs as a distinct racial type. In a manner characteristic of his willingness to praise them, he noted that while “Teutonic peoples” such as “German and Scandinavian, have in America a high number of insane” it is “equally notable... that the Slav races whether native Russians, or Galicians, Poles... have year in and year out a remarkable low percentage of insane” (1909:149). Bryce thus racially differentiated the old Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic racial stock, who remained the proper source of what is best in the American continent and who were in fact being addressed in his work when he referred to the “welfare of our people” (Bryce 1912:686), from these “foreign” and “alien” new arrivals. His positive racialization of the Slav races remained a practice of differentiation. The principle one may glean from Bryce’s eugenics is that the praise of the other also others. Whatever sympathy he was able to muster for the Slavs, and other peripheral Europeans, still left unanswered how one would synthesize their “potentialities” into a national whole. The fact remained that one still had to mould and manage the new arrivals, as “[t]o allow such classes to congregate in congested centres, to form practically foreign communities in our cities, introducing not only foreign customs, but habits often inimical to good citizenship... is to allow to grow up dangers to the body politic, which must be viewed only with alarm” (Bryce 1906:21). In such positive accounts, the Slavs still remain a problem to be solved.

Physiognomy and Perception

In establishing denationalization as the main mode of the racialization of the Slavs, and in considering how discourses of scientific racism partook in that mode, this chapter has already indirectly considered the ways in which the Slavs were perceived. This section specifically asks, what did racial discourses say about the body of the Slav and what phenotypical typifications clustered around this body? By considering the perception that was at work in producing and outlining this figure, this section will further explore the power of discourse to produce subjects and various truths about them. Such an approach heeds the poststructuralist interpretation of race, provided by Zine Magubane, who argues that “[r]aces are not clearly demarcated and bounded groups existing ‘out there’ in the world, prior to the process of categorization” (2001:824) but that such acts as observation and categorization already construct the very identities they claim to observe. This implies that we do not perceive objects or subjects according to the naïve realist principle “as they are” but that the categories of discourse adapt our perceptions to whatever forms, figures, or shapes we observe. In short, there is no natural, objective observation; there is only a categorically contaminated perception that mediates and bestows the racial markers attributed to the Slavs by denationalizing them and associating them with degeneracy. Perception, as such, resides in discursively mediated social relations rather than in sensory impressions themselves (Magubane 2001:818). According to this understanding of discourse, perception stresses certain attributes and ignores others. It produces the real criteria by which it becomes permissible to observe something.

As a distinct denationalized race, the Slavs were made noticeable and distinct from Anglo-Saxon Canadians in a number of ways. Discourse constructed them as differentiated others according to their speech, modes of dress, mannerisms, and as is crucial for the creation of unbridgeable racial otherness, distinct bodies and faces. During a review of a play that involved Slavic actors, *The Globe* stressed their distinct features by stressing accents and body language. The newspaper noted that

in the early days of the production, the struggles of Lydia Lipkowska and Reginald Pasch with the English Language were disconcerting. Prince Danilo at times came near to being a Dutch comedy role when Sonia’s pert remarks

suffered from a Slavic slur. But the acting and singing of this pair more than compensate for any slight inconvenience which may be occasioned by their accent. Moreover the little “foreign” mannerisms, the graceful little gestures and poses which accompany the foreign accent and which are absolutely inimitable by English or American players, fit in admirably with the atmosphere of the piece and add a good deal to its charm. (1921:21)

The “Slavic burr” or accent could be rendered as “endearing” (*The Globe and Mail* 1943a:17), especially when the subject matter concerned theatre, just as well as it was described by other journalists writing for *The Globe and Mail* as “flat” (Whittaker 1960:39), “heavy” (Wills 1970:3) and full of “sounds which do not exist in English” (Dempsey 1958:12). This meant in practice that Slavs were not only difficult to understand but also difficult to accommodate. As *The Winnipeg Evening Tribune* observed, “[n]ames of Slavic origin, with entirely different vowel sounds and consonant combinations, were extremely difficult for the Anglo-Saxon tongue” (1940:14). The Slavic accent was perceived as an obstacle.

When not attempting to communicate in English, Slavic languages were in themselves portrayed as “strange” in works of fiction (Connor [1909] 2001:3) and “cacophonous” in poetry (Traill 1882:15). True to the form of denationalized racial categorization, Slavic speakers were on the basis of language depicted as one undifferentiated mass in Ralph Connor’s *The Foreigner*, which tells us that “from Central and South Eastern Europe, came people strange in costume and in speech; and holding close by one another as if in terror of the perils and the loneliness of the unknown land, they segregated into colonies tight knit by ties of blood and common tongue” ([1909] 2001:3). With the consanguine mixing of language and blood, the Slavs were interpreted by Connor as speaking a single Slavic language. Similarly, various newspapers happily lumped all Slavs together linguistically when they reported of such things as “seeing the translation of the Bible into the Slav language” (*Daily Nor’Wester* 1898a:8); of the admirable fact that Lady Ellenborough of the House of Mezrab “spoke French, Italian, German, Slav, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, and Greek” (*Manitoban and Northwest Herald* 1873:1); and of the point that “Belgrade... in Slavic means ‘white fortress’” (*The Globe* 1915:4). In the serial story “Campus Queen” readers become acquainted with “Joe Donchek [who] danced around in his stocking feet and howled in native Slav” (Bronfield 1939:9). Such perception drove the denationalization of the Slavs into a seeming

paradox: The Slav can be depicted as a native even without a nationality. The language referred to by Brondfield as the “native Slav” of Joe Donchek is anything but native; it is akin to something like the much debated ancient proto-Slavic – the ancestral language of all Slavs. Like it, “Slav” fails to differentiate nationality. One is thus presented with the specificity “national” that actually fails to specify anything at all. And this is crucial. For the Slavs who allegedly spoke Slav – an unattested language that may have been spoken between the 4th and 9th century by all the Slavs (Kortlandt 1989) – a racial identity supplants and stands in for a native one. And it does not matter much that the Slav language only existed at best in the Canadian perception; it is what makes it permissible to present Slav next to specifically national languages.

By virtue of this language, a particular singularity was accorded to the Slavs in Canada unlike that accorded to such peripheral Europeans as the Jews, Italians, or Greeks. The Slavs were made to stand out from them. Slavic speech, however, also caused native-English speakers a particular anxiety – an anxiety that made it possible to lump the Slavs with other racialized anxiety-evoking populations. Producing arguments in favor of the introduction of Arabic and Slavic Studies courses in 1957 at the University of Toronto, Dean Moffat Woodside invoked the constitutive outside of Slavic Europe with reference to language. He observed that

[t]he... shrinking of the world has brought us into close contact with millions of fellow-humans whose way of life is not ours, and who look upon us with suspicion occasionally tinged with jealousy of our material (not our spiritual) resources. They are potentially our collaborators in the construction of a finer world society; they are also potentially our enemies. Our great weakness is an almost total lack of understanding of them and their values. *We cannot speak their language either literally or figuratively.* There is no shortcut to this priceless understanding. *The peoples of Southeast Asia, or of the Middle East, or of the Slavic-speaking world are beyond the reach of our understanding until we understand their literatures, their histories, and their philosophies.* (*The Globe and Mail* 1957:5, emphasis added).

The constitutive outside of Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Slavic Europe came thus to bear on the construction of the Slavic racial type within Canadian borders. It was an antagonism through which the Slav as a member of the outside “Slavic-speaking world” was politicized on the inside – within the limits of Canadian discourses on race – as a potential ally or friend, as a relation that could turn out either way. From this it can

also be deduced that an authentic Canadian is one who, as Woodside illustrates, does not understand the language (again, in the singular) of the Slav but (one) who is in search of this understanding.

Slavic modes of dress also betray the Slavs as a homogenous mass that stands out from Canadian dress codes. The Slavs could be differentiated, as one Member of Parliament observed, as “people who came from Europe in their sheepskin coats” (Crerar 1922:2157). The sheepskin coats typified the Slavs, just as the alleged Slavic language did. As the language of politicians makes clear, they stood in for the Slavs. Thus, while Progressive MP Thomas Crerar was favorably disposed towards Slavic immigration, he indicated his position by referring to the dress and not the people. Others followed suit. On the question of “inferior races from middle Europe”, Liberal MP Samuel Jacobs proclaimed neutrality: “the fact that a person wears a sheepskin coat, in my opinion, is not something which ought to debar him from coming into this country” (1922:2518). Liberal MP Charles Stewart offered that he “would [not] be at all inclined to advise anyone, except perhaps these settlers who come with the sheepskin coat, to settle any distance from the railroad, if they are to going to make success of farming” (1922:2152), while Progressive MP Agnes Macphail announced that “I, for one, do not favour the sort of immigrant who wears a sheepskin coat unless he has a better one someplace else” (1922:2153). Given that, as Macphail noted, some authentic Canadians also wore sheepskin coats, further differentiation was required: “Of course, we have to have sheepskin coats and we all wear them at home sometimes; but by that reference I mean the class of people who go upon the land, but whose standard of living is lower than that of others who are already located there, and that is low enough” (Macphail 1922:2153). The sheepskin thus served as an icon for the Slav – a way of typifying the outsider within. If true Canadians wore sheepskins, they did so differently than the Slavs.

It is worth noting that Slavic women and men were susceptible to such marking, as both wore sheepskin coats. Slavic women, however, were perceived at times as also going barefoot while Slavic men alone had boots (*Daily Nor'Wester* 1898b; *Morning Telegram* 1898a). When not depicted as sheepskin clad peasants, the Slavs were also compressed into the image of folk in festive “traditional” costumes. Denationalizing the Slavs, *The Globe and Mail* observed the efforts of a fundraising society in raising aid

money for Russia: "Sixty men and women to act as captains of districts had to be chosen; 3000 men and women – including Russian, Ukrainian and other Slavic peoples... had to be contacted by phone and asked to act as taggers" (1943b:4). Quickly compressing these various categories into a compact Slavic mass, the newspaper cited the observations of one organizer: "We are now praying for good weather which will enable our Slavic taggers to wear their colorful national costumes... They'll wear the pretty head shawls in any case" (*The Globe and Mail* 1943b:4). Thus, just like the national Slavic language, colourful national costumes were stripped down from any specific national markers, facilitating the denationalization of the Slavs.

Although Slavic speech and dress might prove to be absolutely inimitable for Canadians, they could at the very least be dropped by Slavic Canadians. In his fiction, Connor offered the criteria for successful assimilation into Canadian life in terms of the modification of speech, clothes, and ideals: "[A]s an individual member grew in wealth he departed from the colony... loving the city and its ways of business, he rapidly sloughed off with his foreign clothes his foreign speech and manner of life, and his foreign ideals as well, and became a Canadian citizen, distinguished from his cosmopolitan fellow citizen only by the slight difficulty he displayed with some of the consonants of the language" (Connor [1909] 2001:64). Yet, not everything could be shed or modified. Try as they might, Slavs could do nothing to escape a biology by which they were constructed in *The Winnipeg Daily Tribune* as possessing "heavily bearded Slav faces" (Hay 1940:1). Even without facial hair, such faces could be recognized by the Canadian gaze, typified in *The Globe and Mail*, as round (Atkinson 1960:14), with high cheekbones and deep set eyes (Wuorio 1946:3). Attesting the visibility of the Slavs, the Canadian scholar Robert England observed a funeral in a "Slav colony" which "reminds one of a scene from Eastern Europe, old men with lined, begrimed faces and uncut hair, younger men with dark moustaches and swarthy complexions, women whose visages are furrowed by the hard labour of the fields and whose figures are bowed by toil and much child bearing" (1929:91). Slavic physiology was persistently recorded, so much so that in cases of mixed racial lineage, Slavic traits could be discerned. The U.S. commentator, Dorothy Thompson, observed that Baltic Germans and many Prussians display "a strong Slavic strain, and show it in the physical type" (1941:6). Many observers recorded physical traits that made it possible for Canadian eyes to recognize Slavic typifications.

As *The Globe* put it while describing a gathering of children awaiting a Santa Claus procession in Toronto: “Almond-eyed babies, dusky-faced boys, flaxen-haired Slavic lassies and rosy-cheeked Anglo-Saxon youngsters alike all participated in the thrill of the hour” (1925a:1). In a way that is unthinkable for Canadian eyes today, a Slav could be spotted in a crowd.

In his study of Canadian “frontier” labour conditions, *Bunkhouse Man* (1928), Edmund Bradwin provided a list of visual cues by way of which Slavs may be recognized:

As workers on construction they display definite characteristics; slow and immobile, lacking initiative; rather careless of personal appearance; with but limited mechanical ability; not quarrelsome except when liquor is about; easily brow-beaten, for the foot of despotism has cowed their spirits; just plodders in the day’s work – withal, that pliant type that provides the human material for a camp boss to drive... the Slav as a campman is of medium stature, thick-set, with moustache usually, not graceful in motion, and with something of a sullen expression on his broad face. There are other things that impress one when first meeting him in the mud cut on the grade; cowhide boots smeared with gumbo reaching to the knees; peaked cap that bespeaks the barrack life not far removed, uncouth trousers and coat with old-land fastenings, unshaven face – with the dull resentment of the hard-heel showing from eyes, joyless-looking and suspicious. (118)

The Slav here is thus visibly different in his physical appearance. Definite characteristics, behavioural as well as physical, set him apart. For Bradwin, as for many Canadian commentators on the Slavs, one would in fact be justified in saying that Slavic physical characteristics went hand in hand with Slavic racial traits. That is, the Slav is a figure imbued with a proclivity toward servility, nihilism, violence, fantasy, and imbalance, and all of this can be read in his face, on his clothes, and in his stature. Perhaps following Aristotle, who unintentionally set a precedent when he attributed anger to the boiling of blood and heat in the heart, Gobineau set a particular racial precedent for the Slavs when he linked the “animal character” of the negro race to its physiology: “The animal character, that appears in the shape of the pelvis, is stamped on the negro from birth, and foreshadows his destiny” ([1857] 1915:205). So too would the ballet dancer Nureyev be described in *The Globe and Mail* in terms of “[t]he natural, animal qualities of his Slavic background” (Hicklin 1965:12).

It bears stressing that it was not only by virtue of the social location or marginalization of the Slav that certain physical features were imagined on the Slav's face. Even when the Slav appeared in a similar skill and rank level alongside non-problematic Canadians (as the example cited about the dancer above illustrates), he or she continued to stand out physically. At least in the Canadian imagination, the Slav possessed physical traits that marked them and made them undeniably a Slav. In the serial story "The Edge of Darkness", William Woods describes a schoolmaster meeting a group of soldiers for the very first time. The schoolmaster, named Sixtus Andresen, is making the rounds, when he finds his path blocked by "a burly trooper." Sixtus responds by

[tapping] the man's boots with his stick. The soldier started to laugh, but then he realized that the old man was staring at him strangely.

'Well, what's wrong?' he asked.

'Nothing. Nothing.' Sixtus said, slowly, 'but your ancestors were Slavs, were they not?'

The soldier flashed angrily and scrambled up. 'What do you mean by that?' he burst out. 'What makes you say...?'

'High, receding forehead, and flat-topped skull,' Sixtus answered, repeating every word succinctly. 'Next time you look in the mirror you will find you are a bit different from your comrades.' (Woods 1942a:10)

No amount of ability and merit, it would seem, could conceal physical Slavic attributes of the soldier. He simply fails to pass as one of his comrades even when he succeeds at finding work that is not associated with his racial category and even as he is doing his best to blend into an all-European group. He is just different enough to not fully succeed at assimilating.

The spotting of physiological Slavic difference was so commonplace that it did not require the expertise of schoolmasters, art critics, or labour scholars. In the coverage of a trial, one newspaper described all 12 jurors who sat on the case. What is striking is that while 10 jurors were simply described according to their sex, hair, facial expressions, and age, the article noted the race of just two of these: one which it portrayed as "a sensitive, young looking Negro" and the other as "a Slavic face with deep-set eyes under heavy black brows" (Wuorio 1946:3). The remaining ten jurors were left racially unmarked. Examples of this sort abound in a number of newspaper

accounts: from casual observations of “a very Slavic-looking party executive” in the Soviet Union (Schwartz 1956:17) and a Russian actress who “looks like a Slavic Audrey Hepburn” (French 1958:13) to a Ukrainian-Canadian restaurant owner who is described as “a thickset, sturdy man with a round Slavic face” (*Lewcun* 1964:5), Canadian eyes perceived the Slavs as an easily recognizable, physically distinct racial type.

Conclusion

Seeking to contest contemporary scholarship on race and racism, this chapter argued that historically the Slavs should not be regarded as either “Euroethnics” or invisible minorities. The white-on-arrival trope which supplies such themes obscures their racialization, which as the data here show, persisted at least until the mid-1960s. To establish the basis by which this research will speak of the Slavs as a racialized population, this chapter distinguished four modes of racialization. Setting aside racialized national categories; racialized national categories placed under racial meta-categories; and racialized national categories placed next to racial meta-categories, this chapter provided the basis for grasping discourses of denationalized racial meta-categories whereby the Slavs exist solely, or primarily, as Slavs.

Carrying on with the theme of the denationalization of the Slavs, this chapter considered the ways in which scientific discourse provided the basis for the differentiation of the Slavs as a denationalized race. Drawing on the European race theorist Arthur de Gobineau, the discussion established the idea of racial degeneracy. While Gobineau had little to say about the Slavs specifically, Canadian eugenicists like Reginald Ruggles Gates developed his work, providing arguments for degeneracy by considering the racial evidence of a mixing between the Slavic and Asian races. Gobineau influenced Canadian scientific discourses of race. His warnings against “race mixing” haunted, as this chapter shows, even the work of Peter Bryce who was favorably disposed towards the Slavs. While Bryce blamed urban degeneracy, shifting the blame somewhat away from race, even for him the idea of assimilation presented the problem of “moulding” various populations into a cohesive Canadian whole.

Lastly, this chapter considered the role of perception in the differentiation of the Slavs by a number of observable traits and characteristics. Just like Asian and Black populations, the Slavs were typified as racial others on the basis of their speech, manners, modes of dress, faces, and bodies. The data show that even if the Slavs learned to assimilate themselves by modifying their accents and adopting Canadian tastes, their bodies and faces nonetheless betrayed permanent markings that even upward social mobility could not mask. In the operation of medical, journalistic, literary, scholarly, political and artistic discourses, the Slavs were constructed in a way that they could be perceived and recognized. From approximately the late 19th to the mid-20th century, their racial status stuck. Such discourses produced the partially-fixed and ossified figure of the Slav.

Having established and outlined the denationalized racial figure of the Slav, the next chapter will consider the way this figure was imagined elsewhere – that is, in Slavic Europe. Utilizing the notion of the constitutive outside, the chapter will consider how European Slavs in Europe were constructed as external others, unsuitable as immigrants and entirely un-Western. Specifically, the chapter will consider how a number of Canadian discourses – spanning geography, politics, history, and immigration – constructed European Slavs as lacking a number of traits that came to define Anglo-Canadian Selfhood.

Chapter 5.

The Making of a Periphery: The Slavs as External Others

We went to build up a nation, a civilization, a social system that we could enjoy, be proud of, and transmit to our children; and we resent the idea of having the millstone of this Slav population hung around our necks... (Francis Robert Oliver 1901:2939)

As the previous chapter established, a different economy of perception operated in Canada from the late 19th to the mid-20th century. This economy allowed Canadian eyes to see a category of Europeans – namely, the Slavs – as distinct racial others whose distance from a given Anglo-Saxon Canadian self was established without any hard and fast distinctions concerning whiteness. The “hard currency” of this racial economy could be found in a number of discourses that typified the Slavs as speaking with a Slavic accent and in a single common tongue; dressing in such peasant garb as sheepskins; possessing phenotypical characteristics such as round heads, high cheekbones, concave noses, and receding foreheads; and moving about with sullen expressions and an inert, cheerless gait. Out of such a discursive formation of race emerged a uniquely singular, denationalized Slavic figure that stood out as a racial Other. Having traced the typifications of the Slavs in eugenic, medical, literary, journalistic, scholarly, and political discourses, this chapter will consider how the Slavs were constructed as the Others of Europe by paying attention to their outsider status in Europe and Canada.

The first section will employ the theoretical theme of a constitutive outside (established in Chapter 3), in order to show how Canadian discourses imagined Slavic Europe as a prelude to the emergence of a Canadian self. The excluded outside of Slavic Europe was constructed not merely to discipline and control the Slavs but to allow for distinction on the basis of which Canadians could learn to see themselves. This

section will therefore pay special attention to geography, drawing on Said's claim that "imaginative geography and history help the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away" (1994:55). Having demarcated a racial boundary in Europe, the second section considers how such traits as the Slavic inability to "self-govern" allowed for Canadians to define themselves as capable of it. A number of discourses attributed lack of self-government to the Slavs, not in the sense that the Slavs of Europe lacked actual states and forms of political leadership but in the sense that they lacked democratic, republican institutions. The lack of self-government of the Slavs denoted an incompatibility with Canadian political life which became characterized by this attribute. As the section notes, the discourse of self-government contributed to efforts to disenfranchise the Slavs in 1901, 1902, and 1917 when it also typified them as "enemy aliens." The third section examines the risk European Slavs posed to Canada's "absorptive capacity." Although they constituted a slimmer current, discourses that spoke of the inability of the Slavs to be absorbed within the Canadian social structure left their mark on the Canadian discursive formation of race. Just as allergies define people by what they cannot consume, absorptive capacity defined Canada by drawing a limit against the constitutive outside. The last and fourth section integrates the themes of self-government and absorptive capacity by considering how they shaped the discourse of immigration policy. As this section shows, in 1909 Canadian immigration policy moved unsuccessfully to restrict the immigration of the Slavs.

The Others of Europe

One way in which the Slavs were racially othered in Canada was by being cast as the racial Others of Europe. In 19th century Europe, the Slavs were, with the exceptions of Russia, Serbia, and Bulgaria, stateless and under Ottoman, Prussian, and Austro-Hungarian rule. Partitioned and occupied, they were denigrated by the Prussian king Frederick the Great (1712-1786) – who was a principal actor in the takeover of Slavic territories – as "the Iroquois of Europe." As David Blackbourn observes, "[t]he German equation of Slav with Indian was commonplace in the nineteenth century" (2007:157). While the German equation of Slav with Iroquois reached to North America

for the Iroquois metaphor, another kind of reaching-out took place in Canada.³⁴ Here the Slav was considered the savage of Europe – a native inhabitant of Europe who despite being European is nonetheless incapable of civilization or, following Gobineau (see Chapter 4), only capable of it in a limited sense and with much assistance. The Slav was something of an internal stranger in Europe breaching the order of civilization there. Even as a fellow European and as someone derived from a European type, it was difficult to know the Slav and to know what the Slav was thinking. As one book review of the work of Henryk Sienkiewicz noted, “[e]very reader of the history of Eastern Europe knows how difficult it is to get one’s self into the ‘atmosphere’ of those vigorously military people who have, in the later centuries, overrun a large part of Europe” (*Bookseller and Stationer* 1898:13). As with the Iroquois in North America, the Slav of Europe was also typified as a roaming threat, present where their presence was not desired, incomprehensible and dangerous.

Canadian discourses racialized Slavs as an out-group by drawing firm lines *within* Europe. The US labour historian John R. Commons provided a significant³⁵ justification of this inter-European racial demarcation:

A line drawn across the continent of Europe from northeast to southwest, separating the Scandinavian Peninsula, the British Isles, Germany, and France from Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Turkey, separates countries not only of distinct races but also of distinct civilizations. It separates Protestant Europe from Catholic Europe; it separates countries of representative institutions and popular government from absolute monarchies; it separates lands where education is universal from lands where illiteracy predominates; it separates manufacturing countries, progressive agriculture, and skilled labor from primitive hand industries, backward agriculture, and unskilled labor; it separates an educated, thrifty peasantry from a peasantry scarcely a single generation removed from serfdom; it separates Teutonic races from Latin, Slav, Semitic, and Mongolian races. (1907:69-70)

³⁴ Although “the Iroquois of Europe” is a rich metaphor, this dissertation uses it only here and with a sense of reservation. The reason for this is that a Prussian king uttered it, and, to my knowledge, it did not feature in Canadian discourses on race.

³⁵ The work of Commons was known and became a part of the Canadian discourse formation on race. Commons’ passage is particularly significant, being reproduced in James Woodsworth’s highly popular *Strangers Within Our Gates* (1909:198-9), which itself was a significant Canadian “study of Immigrants as *internal* Others” (Day 2000:128, emphasis in original).

The Slav, as Commons' work indicates, was defined in relationship to such undesirable elements as Latins, Semites, and Mongols. The making of such a periphery or constitutive outside is best illustrated by Laclau's principle (see Chapter 3) that equivalence = identity, which allows Commons to fuse these elements into a powerful empty signifier of racial otherness (the Slavic race is just like or equivalent to the Mongolian race). As an empty signifier, however, uncivilized Europeans could also be positioned according to the principle that difference = identity. By being associated together for their lack of literacy, skilled labour, and representative political institutions, peripheral Europeans were also collectively unlike the Teutonic races.

Geographically, Slavic Europe was variously located within Eastern, Central, and South Eastern European coordinates. As the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* put it, summarizing J. M. Buckley's *The Midnight Sun, The Tsar and Nihilism*, such coordinates were clearly outside of the geography of civilization itself: "Dr. Buckley, leaving Moscow, in bringing us home passes through Warsaw out into the civilization of Western Europe and America" (Shaw 1887:396). As people from what one Canadian politician could refer to as "that part of Europe" (Calder 1919:1947), Slavic Europeans represented a distinctly lower civilization. Along with the Latin, Semitic, and Mediterranean races, the Slavs were Europeans who are not fully European, signifying a non-Europe within Europe. And near the end of the 19th century, the threat this region posed was only rising. "The Slav element in Eastern Europe", reported *The Canada Educational Monthly and School Chronicle*, "is being gradually developed. This is scarcely so reassuring a fact from the point of view of the older surrounding States, which are watching its progress with much concern for the future" (Seyffarth 1881:38). For the Canadian political class, the presence of Slavic immigrants from "that part of Europe" was also read as the presence of Eastern and Central European ideals itself. It implied, as former Toronto mayor, social reformer, and conservative MP Horatio Hocken explained in his objection to further Central European immigration, that "there are many sections of Canada where foreign ideals, the ideals of Central Europe, predominate among the majority of the people" (1921:1378).

Much of this revolved around the belief that the Slav was the racial embodiment of the tumultuous conflicts of Europe itself. This was especially pronounced in speeches

of various members of the House of Commons. Even the first Ukrainian-Canadian MP, Michael Luchkovich, who in his 1926 maiden speech identified himself as a representative of a constituency of “many immigrants of Scandinavian and Slavic descent” (1926-7:83) declared a few years later that “our troubles can be traced directly back to Europe” (1933:3926). The rising threat of Slavic Europe was the threat of wars, famines, revolutions, and economic instability, all of which, as Luchkovich pointed out, weighed heavily on Canada’s ability to export goods there. Significantly, such instability as “the wars of Europe” was recognized, in this case by Liberal MP Edward James McMurray, as having “largely been the result of race creed and race difference” (1922:14). Canadian political discourse established that the Slavs were carriers of the germs of such conflicts and that to allow them to immigrate in large number might very well bring the dislocations of Europe unto Canadian soil.

Violence in Europe was also racially inflected in the Canadian press, which understood that Slavic aspirations for independence posed a threat to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From the 19th to the early 20th century, the press was sympathetic to Austro-Hungarian interests in Europe, designating the geopolitics of Slavic aspirations for autonomy as “the Eastern Question” or “the Slavic Question.” Supporting the cause of Austria-Hungary, which was a major occupier of Slavic territories, the *Brandon Daily Sun* assessed the situation near the outbreak of the First World War in the following terms: “At present Austria-Hungary, although more than half Slav herself, is the southern bulwark of Germanism against the steadily rising Slav tide. If she is crushed Germany, [sic] will alone be exposed to the full impact of the flood...” (1913:6). Given that the Canadian discursive formation of race widely maintained at this time that “[i]n culture, the German is greatly superior to the Slav peoples” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1913:6), sympathy lay for a long time with the occupying powers, and only shifted gradually during the two World Wars.³⁶ Canadian newspapers also overlapped with the political discourse by branding Russia – with whom at this point Britain and France were in an alliance – as

³⁶ This was the case for members of the political elite as well. In his diaries, William Lyon Mackenzie King expressed sympathy with Germany, whose interests he saw as bound with that of the British and French. As King observed, “[i]t is a tragic thing to think that men of German and British and French stocks are being slaughtered, and allowing the Slav instead of the Saxon to dominate Christendom” (1939).

“the last autocracy left on earth” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1913:6). To make it clear that Austria, and not Russia, was Canada’s contemporary, *The Globe* employed analogies illustrating various racial problems around the world, observing that “Austria has its Slav problem, England has Ireland, and the United States has its blacks” (1894:1). Supporting such ordering, the *British Columbian Daily Colonist* reported that “[t]he latest news from Bosnia is unsatisfactory. It is feared the orthodox Slavs and Mussulmans will forcibly resist the Austrians” (1878:1). The Slavs were thus constructed as European racial others. The evidence of their otherness lay in “a long series of efforts to destroy the Austrian empire by stirring up revolutionary movements in the Slavic provinces of Austria” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1914:1).

Before this chapter further examines the discursive significance of the Slavs as European Others, it should be noted that Canada and the West lacked a uniform view of racial hierarchy in Europe along with a singular response to the Eastern Question. This should not surprise us given that there were numerous theories coming out of North America and Continental Europe regarding racial classification. Debate over the stratification and ordering of these races was unsettled and subject to change given the outcome of political events, especially as concerned the so called uncivilized races. While a clearer hierarchy establishing the superiority of Northern/Western Europeans over Eastern/Southern Europeans prevailed, the details become murkier at the bottom half of this stratification system. For example, on the one hand the British poet John Payne typified the Slavs as “a race name-doomed, for drunkenness/ Theft, sloth, filth, treachery branded and no less/ Stained with a soil of lust indelible”, while he upheld the Turks as a folk that is “fair and well” (1903:103) – the latter who he hoped would prevail. On the other hand, the British statesman William Gladstone gave a different assessment. In a talk titled *The Slavonic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire*, Gladstone illustrated the situation of the Turkish Empire by comparing it to “the case of negro slavery” which he found greatly resembled “the system which prevails in Turkey” (Gladstone 1877:11). Celebrating the resistance of the Slavs, whose Christian identity he stressed against the Muslim Turks, Gladstone in opposition to Payne noted one crucial difference between “negro slavery” and the treatment of Christian Slavs in Turkey: “in the case of negro slavery... it was a race of higher capacities ruling over a race of lower capacities; but in the case of this system, it is unfortunately a race of lower

capacities which rules over a race of higher capacities” (Gladstone 1877:11). Just as the British racial formation was ambivalent as to whether it was the Turk or the Slav who ranked higher, so too would Canadian discourses on race variously place the Slavs below and above undesirable European and non-European racial Others.

Race and Self-Government

A significant way in which the Canadian racial discursive formation othered the Slavs was to construct them as a population that could not live up to the Western standard of “self-government.” The concept did not imply anything along the lines of an autonomous form of voluntary self-organization or radical, participatory democracy without a state, as it does today; rather, in a much more circumscribed way it invoked liberal polity and the institutions of representative democracy. It pertained to the norms of republican government and, more specifically within the Canadian context, “the attributes of self-government” ascribed to Canada the quality of being “an autonomous nation within the British empire” (1913:4067), as Liberal MP Charles Murphy argued in the House of Commons. Self-government, however, also pertained to something more than familiarity with so-called free institutions; it also marked a willingness and ability – often racially underpinned – to participate in them. The possession of self-government implied the possession of a racial instinct for democracy.

There was no question that Canadians themselves enjoyed self-government and that they did so on the basis of achieving a racial balance between two suitable, or compatible, national races.³⁷ In his Address in reply to the Governor General, Edward McMurray attested to the racial components of Canadian political rights:

³⁷ This was, of course, the official doctrine established many years after the British military conquest of New France. It is necessary to acknowledge that the charter categories were not, and are not, equal. The rich and complex history of their colonial aspirations cannot be addressed here in a satisfactory manner. But it bears noting that even before the Slavs, the French Acadians were themselves subject to British laws and institutions, to attempts at assimilation and, unlike the Slavs, to mass deportation. As such, they were, as Richard Day notes, the first “problematic ‘Canadian’ population that could not be eliminated or assimilated, and set a precedent that would be followed, over the next two centuries, by each new group in an expanding ethnocultural economy” (2000:107).

when we reflect on this Canada of ours, two of the world's most virile races, high in courage and proud of lineage, but with a difference in speech and religion, with the true spirit of democracy, with mutual toleration and forbearance, for upwards of a hundred years have lived together side by side, and developed the free institutions which we enjoy to-day. (1922:14)

The two virile races he referred to were of course the charter populations – the French and British – who as the founding members of Confederation alone carry credit for self-government. There was also no question that the two national races, though distinct, shared the willingness to participate in self-government. Such formulations linked self-government directly to democratic racial impulses. Race and politics readily mixed in the late 19th and early 20th century understanding of the concept.

As a constitutive outside, the Slavs had to come short in regard to self-government. Although a 1912 *Report of Royal Commission on Matters Relating to the Sect of Doukhobors in the Province of British Columbia* included the observation that “[f]rom time immemorial the Village Commune, or Mir, has been a unique Slavonic institution... and is one of the most democratic in the world” (British Columbia 1913:36), the Slavs were largely disparaged for their anti-democratic tendencies. Most Canadian writers constructed them as living an imbalanced life, as one religious magazine put it, between “the tyranny of autocrats and the tyranny of anarchists” (Shaw 1887:396). Both autocratic and anarchist politics could account for the arbitrariness and despotism of Slavic conduct. Those attempting to understand Slavic despotism observed that the Slavic race failed to develop self-government as a racial habit due to long experiences of foreign domination. The *Brandon Daily Sun* noted that “[m]ost European nations have gone through the stages of feudalism and military government. With the end of feudalism, soldiers and aristocrats are now satisfied to dwell in the same street as the merchant and professional man” (1909:2). The same, however, could not be said for the Slavs who living under the Turks, as the article noted, failed to develop in this way. They were thwarted from the usual European development, as the occupying Turkish population while “not in a majority... still stand in relation of aristocrats to the Slavs” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1909:2). Similar observations were made regarding Prussian occupation of Slavic Europe. The *Victoria Daily Colonist* reported on what it recognized as “[t]he intent of the Prussian government... to Germanise Prussian Poland” (1895a:4).

Given the paper's and the Canadian media's at large commitments to Canadian colonialism, it is not surprising that the newspaper reproduced the German trope of the Slavs as the Iroquois of Europe whose lands it described as "desolate plains [that] are being converted into populous villages" (*Victoria Daily Colonist* 1895a:4). Citing the theological periodical *The Contemporary Review*, the *Colonist* further noted that "new commercial life [had been] infused into the Polish provinces by this post of settlers, and the aptitude for that self-government which the Prussian Slavs have not been allowed to develop, but which all these Western Germans possess by virtue of long habit, and which is required under the new order of things, ought to stand for something" (in *Victoria Daily Colonist* 1895a:4). Thus, a European colonialism mirrored and overshadowed the discourse of Canadian colonialism.

Even when the Slavs showed signs of political independence, as in the pan-Slav movement in Europe, which aimed at the creation of an autonomous Slavic federation and the unity of all Slavic peoples, they were reproached for lacking the will to political independence. The Slavs were admonished in this way by the Manitoba-based newspaper, *The Voice*, which published an editorial by the British politician Ramsay Macdonald who warned at the outbreak of the First World War that the conflict

will revitalize the Pan Slav movement, and if ever Europe is to be made subject to a new barbarism this movement is to do it. I know that if the Pan Slav movements could be democratized it might be harmless. But the government of the Slav is just that which will yield last of all to democratic influences. (1914:2)

The pan-Slav movement was diverse. It had proponents who occupied many positions along the ideological spectrum – variously Russophiles and anti-Russians, a right-wing that demanded autonomy within the Austro-Hungarian Empire and a left-wing that sought alliances with the Europe-wide revolutionary democratic movements of 1848. What Pan-Slavic proponents had in common, however, was the idea of independence in the face of Austro-Hungarian, Prussian, Ottoman, and sometimes even Russian occupation. None of this was acknowledged by politicians or the media. In earlier coverage of *The Voice*, itself a moderate socialist paper, the European based Slav Congress of 1847 was simply denounced for its "fanatical chauvinism" (1909:6). The Slavs could not be trusted to their own liberation even when they attempted it, as their race made them unsuitable for self-government. Their European political structures were

too autocratic, and their intellectuals had a tendency, noted in *The Canada Educational Monthly and School Chronicle*, to “proselytize, and finally lapse into Nihilism” (Seyffarth 1881:39). The tendency to nihilism, as the monthly periodical *The Bystander* offered, “[assumes], as all revolutionary doctrines do, a more extravagant form and a darker hue in the mind of the fantastic and unbalanced Slav... [who] wages satanic war against all existing institutions, political, social, domestic and ecclesiastical, with the weapons of the assassin” (1880:32). Mirroring Said’s (1994) documentation of the Oriental, Slavic Europeans existed in the Canadian imagination as fanatical schemers and dangerous underdeveloped thinkers.

Canadian statesmen could thus appeal to self-government in order to designate a lack in the Slavs. Self-government functioned as a measuring rod according to which one could deplore the immigration of European Slavs. Reflecting on the massive influx of Slavic and Southern Europeans into the United States, Canada’s first Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, disapproved in coded language of the Slavs by observing that the United States “is a great country, but it will have its vicissitudes and revolutions. Look at the mass of foreign ignorance and vice which has flooded that country with socialism, atheism and all other isms” (in Avery 1979:40). Canadian politicians, following this view, recognized the Slavs’ inability to self-govern. And employing this typification, conservatives and liberals advanced arguments and policies with which to restrain the Slavs politically in Canada. Macdonald’s son Hugh Macdonald tapped into popular Canadian anti-Slav sentiment during his own election campaign for Premier of Manitoba, assuring as the *Portage la Prairie News and Portage la Prairie Review* informed its readers, “that he intended to guard against the danger of a sudden influx of a large number of Slavs, who know nothing of representative government or of free institutions, by enacting that they must acquire a sufficient knowledge of the English tongue to be able to speak and read it before they can vote” (1899:8). As the *Morning Telegram* noted, the meeting was “most enthusiastic” over this pronouncement (1899a:1). Invoking the familiar distinction between the good and bad immigrant, the *Telegram* observed that Macdonald “emphatically denied that he had ever suggested anything that would disenfranchise the Icelanders or other Scandinavians, and he was heartily cheered as he paid all eloquent tribute to the worth of these people as settlers” (1899a:1). As northern Europeans, Scandinavians were secure in their claim to self-government. Both

newspapers supported Macdonald's position. The liberal *Montreal Witness*, celebrated by the other two periodicals as having "humanitarian regard for these people [i.e. Slavs]" (*Morning Telegram* 1899b:4) and as providing "very fair" coverage of this question (*Portage la Prairie News and Portage la Prairie Review* 1899:8), added its own support for Macdonald:

The enactment proposed by Mr. Macdonald is within the competence of the Manitoba legislature. The only thing to be considered is the wisdom of it. Of that we think there can be no doubt for two sufficient reasons – first, the one stated by Mr. Macdonald; second, the necessity for bringing those strangers into harmony acquiring and understanding the language, laws and institutions of the country. The dangers of admitting masses of foreigners to full citizenship before they have acquired such knowledge was demonstrated in the United States, and led to the enactment of just such a law as Mr. Macdonald suggests. (in *Morning Telegram* 1899b:4)

The discursive net proclaiming Slavic inability to self-govern was cast wide. It is possible in all of this to observe the capacity for discourse to function as a form of knowledge that informs various political positions and to produce truth across a number of institutions. The caricature of good and bad immigrant, of the US experience with Slavic immigrants, of self-government, and of the peripheries of Europe itself, characterized the discursive formation of race in Canada as it pertained to the Slavs. The discursive formation enabled these perspectives to rise to the status of truth or common sense. It allowed and also demanded that the truth of Slavic anti-democratic tendencies be told in French and English Canada and by liberal, conservative, and even radical organs.

The discourse of self-government also carried with it legal implications. In 1902, Hugh Macdonald succeeded in restricting the franchise against Slavic immigrants in Manitoba – a right which they temporarily enjoyed but which was not at all available to Chinese, Japanese, Indigenous people, and women. His election reforms become law in Manitoba, establishing a requirement that one could vote only if one was able to read the provincial election legislation. This was also accomplished provincially in British Columbia in 1901, which strictly required that voting be done in the English-language alone. In Manitoba, the language test allowed for English and French, as well as the "good-immigrant" Scandinavian languages, Dutch, and German, but not Polish, Ukrainian, or Russian (*Elections Canada* 2007:57-8) whose speakers comprised

significant populations in that province – forming what was known as the “Slavonic belt” in southern Manitoba (England 1929:46). During the First World War, disenfranchisement of Slavic immigrants was also achieved on a federal level. Robert Borden’s War-time Elections Act of 1917 disenfranchised all “enemy aliens” naturalized after March 31, 1902. In doing so, it effectively stripped tens of thousands of Slavs born in Austria of the right to vote on the grounds that Canada was now at war with their country of origin (Elections Canada 2007:60) – that is, with a country that had occupied and stripped them of their political rights. The Slavs were thus subjected, as part of the discourse of self-government, to repressive political measures.

The justification for the restriction of the Slavs’ right to franchise was connected to their race which was held as the carrier of anti-democratic tendencies. The desire to restrict the Slavs’ franchise was so strong that even opposing political parties reached a consensus on the issue. During the 1917 federal election, Wilfrid Laurier who ran in opposition to Borden’s government that had passed the Act, expressed his support for Borden’s Act. In a speech in Winnipeg, Laurier reassured his audience that the Act would not affect the European immigrants he favored, since none of these have immigrated in the last twenty years: “All the emigration which has come from Europe, Austria, and there has been a good deal from Austria, are not Austrians proper, or men of German descent, but Slavs, belonging to Slavic provinces...” (Laurier 1917:4). Laurier, it bears stressing, did not support the disenfranchisement of the Slavs on the grounds, popular at the time, that they were secretly loyal to Austria. Likely given the history of occupation there and the alliance of Russia with Britain and France, he ruled this argument out as a “falsehood.” While recognizing that “their hearts lie with the Allies”, Laurier, like many of his contemporaries, nonetheless opposed the right of Slavs to vote on the grounds that

These men came from despotic countries. They and their people before them for generations have been ruined by despotic government, and what measure of freedom they have received, they have received from the application of those liberal principles of which we are the champions, and their sympathies are with the liberal party. That is the only reason why they have been deprived of their franchise. (Laurier 1917:5)

Thus, something like the mark of eternal submission was stamped upon the brow of the Slavs. Having been subjected to a long history of despotism made the Slavs poor candidates for self-government in Canada, and all of this was made evident by the Slavs' autocratic tendencies as well as by their nihilistic, social democratic, Marxist, anarchist, nationalist, and Pan-Slav responses to autocracy. Whatever may be said of the Slavs' lacking self-government, the irony in Laurier's rhetoric is unadulterated: Canadian politicians sought to restrict the political liberty of the Slavs in the name of Canadians being the champions of political liberty.

Canada's Absorptive Capacity

A less popular device with which peripheral Europeans were racialized was the idea of "absorptive capacity." Like the capacity for self-government, absorptive capacity functioned within the structure of the racial discursive formation as a way for evaluating the relationship between a Canadian Self and peripheral European Other. It was a measuring stick, or gauge, with which the Slavs were constructed and rejected for their lack of potential to become Canadian. Specifically, the notion of absorption functioned by invoking an organic analogy of social cohesion which the Slavic outsider would disrupt. The idea of absorption designated the ability of Canadian society – imagined as an organic community – to take on elements that were unlike its own constituent parts. It defined a physical limit of the social and proscribed against its breaching. Other countries too had their own absorptive capacities. Whether one read in *The Globe* of Russia's inability "to absorb a conglomeration of Slav nationalities which would never become satisfactory subjects" (1899:11) or of Hitler's lack of "desire to absorb the millions of Slavs, whom he would regard as an offense to his doctrine of racial purity" (1936:4), a tangible limit of the social body was being evoked. The limit of absorptive capacity could be established on racial grounds, as in the case of Nazi Germany, or technical grounds, as in the case of an already Slavic Russia. It pertained to the problem of the Other who could not become a Self for fear of overloading the capacity of the Self to take on, ingest, and make this Other a part of its own internal constitution.

When applied to Canada, which increasingly but reluctantly depended on Slavic immigration, the question of absorption was one of how not to incapacitate the technical

and racial ability to incorporate these immigrants. As *The Globe* cautiously observed in 1913, “Slavic and Latin immigration has increased about one hundred percent compared with a year ago, but that need not occasion uneasiness so long as Canada’s power of absorption is not overtaxed” (6). And absorption constituted the grounds on which one could accept the racially inferior Slavs, as a conditionally gradual acceptance whose limits were determined by the Canadian social structure itself. In the age of the temperance movement, absorption raised the prohibited question of knowing how much of the bad stuff could be consumed and of what the correct rate of such consumption was. Too much immigration by members of races who were unlike “us” could result in the disturbance of the racial balance of Canada, which itself teetered between the Franco and Anglo elements. The solution, as liberal MP Samuel Balcom was concerned, who given his “opinion that Canada’s absorptive capacity... is not as great as many people suppose”, was to “urge upon the government a cautious policy as to numbers, and certainly a highly selective one” (1955:82). Unlike the idea of self-government, absorption designated a criterion that seemed to turn the focus onto Canada rather than the immigrant. It pointed to Canada’s inability to accommodate while making peripheral the immigrant who could not be accommodated.

While the term “absorptive capacity” was popularly attributed to Canada’s tenth prime minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King and the first Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (1950-1954) Walter Harris, it was likely first uttered in the House of Commons in 1944 by liberal MP Arthur Roebuck who imported the term from the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. And, as has been shown in Chapter 4, the very idea of absorption as the capacity of a society to assimilate newcomers was in use prior to this date. Chief Medical officer Peter Bryce, in contemplating the relationship between immigration and public health, already felt in 1906 the need to point out “the significant fact that the United States, in recent years, have had to deal with the influx, annually, of immigrants to the extent of 1 to every 70 of the population and that for several years past, Canada has had to absorb 1 to every 30 of her population” (12). Given the stress this would put on Canada’s capacity to absorb, Bryce worked in order to find a solution to the dilemma, which he presented “in statistical form, for the consideration of every sanitary officer, every police officer, every sociologist and every legislator in both the

United States and Canada, the problem, the solution of which dwarfs every other which these two nations have to deal with” (13).

The problem of the problem of absorptive capacity was that it produced a racial dilemma that demanded a scientific or technocratic response. Unlike self-government, which was a qualitatively-normative problem designated in the immigrant population itself – a problem that was localized in the racialized body of the Slavs – absorptive capacity invoked the desire to find some kind of metrics that could ultimately not be found. The urge present in the concept was one of being able to ask and answer, as *The Globe and Mail* attempted to,

How many people do we need at the moment? How many are we going to need in the near future? And how many do we need in other occupations? A general inventory of manpower would disclose approximate answers, which could serve as the basis of a logical, sustained immigration program. It would show, we are certain, that Canada’s present and future development are creating an “absorptive capacity” far in excess of 100,000 a year. (1955:6)

This was, of course, an optimistic, pro-immigration conclusion on behalf of the paper that while questioning the concept nonetheless made hesitant use of it. But any and all use of absorptive capacity, for or against immigration, would ultimately collapse under the demand to know the type of questions raised here. Given the illegitimacy of the race concept after World War Two, the problem behind the principle that the government maintain the number of immigrants, as one Progressive Conservative MP put it, “within the bounds of our absorption capacity” (Pigeon 1959:1641), would by the 1950s already turn the notion into an embarrassment not worthy of being uttered.

Making use of the concepts of self-government and paving the way for absorptive capacity, immigration policy, considered in the next section, played a prominent role in shaping the periphery of Europe and in delineating the Slavs in relation to it.

Canadian Immigration Policy

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the primary countries of origin of immigrants to Canada were Britain and the United States. During most of this period Canada had no immigration policy. When it came into effect, the first Canadian Immigration Act of 1869

aimed chiefly to prevent the entrance, not of any national, racial, or religious categories, but of “various categories of physical, mental and moral defectives as well as persons likely to become a public charge” (“Verax” and Lasker 1944:4). Thus, paupers, lunatics, convicts, idiots, the deaf and blind, as well as those suspected of carrying diseases like tuberculosis, were categories prevented from immigrating although even some of these could get passage if they were sponsored by an immigrant family capable of looking after them (Clifford 1997:90). Should they lack sponsors, ships’ captains could under the provisions of the first Act be charged with allowing such passengers on the list. The Act specified the conditions under which immigrants could enter and established quarantine procedures. Its “open-door” policy would not, however, last long. With the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway for which the Canadian government attracted Chinese labourers, the Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act of 1885 was the first Canadian legislation to enforce restrictive racialized national immigration controls. The Act imposed a duty of \$50 on every Chinese person seeking immigration (numerous amendments raised the amount to \$500), classifying the Chinese as an excluded class of immigrants in policy discourse. Other acts, regulations, and agreements explicitly excluding racialized national categories of immigrants would also follow: The Gentleman’s Agreement of 1908 compelled Japan to restrict the number of passports it issued to 400 a year; the Continuous Journey Regulation of 1908 amended the Immigration Act in order to restrict Japanese and Indian immigration; and the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 placed even more stringent restrictions on the Chinese. Canada thus quickly and steadily imposed racial restrictions on immigration in order to fortify its state borders and manage its population flows.

At the time of the implementation of its first Immigration Act, Canada experienced difficulties balancing immigration with emigration. The country witnessed a considerable population loss that stymied its goal of territorial expansion. “From 1861 to 1871 there had been a net emigration from Canada of over 250,000, which meant that about one-third of the natural increase for that period had been lost” (“Verax” and Lasker 1944:3). With the successful incursion and annexation of Indigenous territories by 1871, Canadian politicians, newspapers, intellectuals, and industrialists perceived themselves in need of European settlers to cultivate the newly acquired resources and meet growing labour needs, specifically in agriculture. Besides facing emigration, Canada also

experienced difficulty attracting what its elites considered the most desirable of immigrants – the British. Census figures noted “a general falling off in the number of immigrants during 1890, attributable to the reduced amount of emigration from Great Britain” (Department of Agriculture 1891:86). It was during this period that large scale immigration from continental Europe began. In the 1890s, Poles, Galicians, Doukhobors, Czechs, Slovaks, and Croats arrived for the first time in significant numbers. Clifford Sifton, elected in 1896 and serving under Laurier until 1905, pursued what was perceived as an aggressive and controversial immigration policy that supplemented the slowly declining pool of “preferred” British and North-Western European immigrants with the “non-preferred” Eastern and Southern Europeans, while keeping the “excluded” classes, such as the Chinese, Japanese, and Blacks, out.

A three-tiered ranking system of “preferred/desirable,” “non-preferred,” and “excluded” classes emerged in immigration discourse. The three-tiered schema became enshrined in policy via Order-in-Council P.C. 183, which came into effect in February 1923. According to the schema, the preferred and desirable class included British Europeans as well as “citizens of Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg and Switzerland” (Rosenberg [1939] 1993:127). These countries would collectively represent the source of good immigrants. As Louis Rosenberg noted in his study on Canadian Jews, the justification for this inclusion of Western and Northern Europeans lay in the idea that “[m]en and women of this ‘preferred group’ were presumed to have similar ‘racial characteristics’ to the population of the British Isles” ([1939] 1993:127). As such, they were accorded similar privileges as the British population, specifically in that they were not made subject to immigration restrictions. By contrast, the same administrative regulation listed as non-preferred classes, “the subjects of Austria, Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia, Poland, Roumania, Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia” (Rosenberg [1939] 1993:127). These populations were subject to the restrictions spelled out by the Order-in-Council which only considered them eligible as immigrants if they were either agriculturalists of “sufficient means”, farm labourers, female domestic servants, or wives and children of those already admitted to Canada (Order in Council P.C. 183 1923). The making of this schema, it is important to note, goes at least all the way back to Sifton.

Under Sifton, the immigration policy shifted considerably in favor of the less-favored peripheral Europeans. The shift cannot be explained by Sifton's or the Liberal Party's goodwill toward the Slavs. Rather, its cause could be located in economic, geographic, political, and social conditions and on the discourses of race which articulated the Slavs as the best option under those conditions. The organization of the social which came to bear on these factors included the growth of the Ministry of the Interior which was responsible for immigration; the availability of the Hudson's Bay Company's and the Canadian Pacific Railway's large tracts of land; the looming threat of US annexation of the Canadian West; the ongoing displacement of Indigenous people and occupation of their territories; the economic growth in Britain which rendered emigration less desirable; the decrease of US migration due to the waning of the Klondike Gold Rush and the start of the Spanish-American War; and the intensifying racial restrictions against Asiatic immigrants. Such conditions forced Canadian immigration policy to strike a racial compromise. And it did so under Sifton's tenure as Minister of Interior who defended his strategy by acknowledging, in a piece for *Maclean's Magazine*, that

When I speak of quality I have in mind, I think, something that is quite different from what is in the mind of the average writer or speaker upon the question of Immigration. I think a stalwart peasant in a sheep-skin coat, born on the soil, whose forefathers have been farmers for ten generations, with a stout wife and a half-dozen children, is good quality. (Sifton 1922)

As I have shown in Chapter 4, the sheep-skin coat, as well as the image of a salt-of-the-earth peasant, typified no other peripheral European than the Slav. Sifton's view of ranking the Slav as preferred while proclaiming the British born "Trades Union artisan who will not work more than eight hours a day... and will not work on a farm at all... [as] very bad quality" (Sifton 1922) was unconventional. Along with Woodsworth's *Strangers within our gates: or, Coming Canadians* where the future leader of the social democratic Co-operative Commonwealth Federation likewise praised the "physical endurance bred of centuries of peasant life and an indifference to hardships that seems characteristic of the Slav" (1909:135), Sifton occupied the space of a counter-discourse which at this point could not fully sustain itself. It was overwhelmingly met with opposition. The disposition of immigration discourse was at best a grudging acceptance of the sheep-skin clad immigrants and not their recognition as "good quality." Sifton's successor and

fellow Liberal MP Frank Oliver lamented what he recognized as his own party's "[attempt] to people the North-west with Slavs, with people from eastern Europe who are certainly not recognized by the rest of Europe as being equal with them – people under whose nationality and government there has never been reached that degree of liberty, civilization, progress or prosperity which we expect to attain" (1901:2938). Even well into the 1920s, the official view was that such immigration was generally not good for the country. The position of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics was that

Canadians generally prefer that settlers be of a readily assimilable type, already identified by race or language with one or other of the two great races now inhabiting this country – and thus prepared for the assumption of the duties of democratic Canadian citizenship. Since the French are not to any great extent an emigrating people, this means that the great bulk of *preferable settlers* are those who speak the English language – those coming from the United Kingdom or the United States. Next in order of readiness of assimilation are the Scandinavians and the Dutch, who readily learn English and are already acquainted with the working of free democratic institutions. Settlers from Southern and Eastern Europe, *however desirable from the purely economic point of view*, are less readily assimilated, and the Canadianization of the people from these regions who came to Canada in the first fourteen years of this century is a problem both in the agricultural Prairie Provinces and in the cities of the East. (1927-28:191, emphasis added)

Given that "in recent years there has been an increased immigration of Slavs" (Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1927-28:191) from the non-preferred regions of Southern and Eastern Europe, the Canadian preference for Western and Northern European immigrants was frustrated. Sifton's perspective, as he himself acknowledged, was not widely shared, yet his policies would ultimately prevail.

The non-preferred immigrants were in the first twenty years of the twentieth century readily and widely racialized as denationalized Slavs. With the relatively large numbers of Polish, Doukhobor, Galician, and other Eastern European newcomers, newspapers and politicians referred to them simply as "Sifton's Slavs" (*Morning Telegram* 1899c:4) – a mass of denationalized racial others who would achieve the goal of populating the central and western provinces by simultaneously decreasing the standards of living, failing to assimilate, or – if they assimilated – by bringing down the racial quality of Anglo-Saxon Canada. Immigration policy, and the discussions invoking it, thus racialized the very immigrants whose migrations it sought to manage. The

Morning Telegram sounded the alarm in 1898 by reviewing the change in immigration trends. It observed that Sifton's immigration agents did very little to bring in preferred immigrants. Recording the total number of immigrants for 1897 from Ireland at 69, Scotland at 205, England at 1,519, and the United States at 712, the paper concluded that "Mr. Sifton has nothing to point to in the way of settlers as the result of his immigration policy except the hordes of ignorant and filthy Galicians he is dumping down on the prairies. Of these, he secured 4,363 last year, and the number this year will be very much increased" (*Morning Telegram* 1898:4). The newspaper maintained that Sifton's error consisted, in part, of the fact that he pays \$7.50 "a head" for Galicians and only \$2 for English immigrants: "One Galician in his eyes is worth more than three Englishmen, Irishmen or Scotchmen" (*Morning Telegram* 1898:4). The *Telegram* preferred instead the sober assessment of Frank Oliver, whose warnings emphasized the racial character of Galicians. It cited his cautious remarks that "these people are of an entirely different and much inferior race to the Icelanders and Mennonites. The Mennonites are a Teutonic, and the Icelanders a Scandinavian people, while the Galicians are a Slavonic people" (1898:4). It was only because "these Slavs are crowding out the Germans" that they were being deported from Austria, Oliver explained (*Morning Telegram* 1898:4). Sifton was thus an opportunist who was taking on the Slavs instead of the preferred Germans, and thus contributing to a situation of bringing in a population "who are not only undesirable in themselves but... [who are also] keeping desirable settlers out of the country" (*Morning Telegram* 1898:4). Anti-Sifton sentiment was vociferous throughout Canada and present even within the ranks of his own party.

A large segment of academic discourse was organized around the same epithets. The Dominion Archivist Arthur Doughty and Queen's University's economic historian Adam Shortt pointed out that Sifton "in setting about his task of filling the vacant prairie" (1914:308) – upholding the colonial myth of *terra nullius* to which Indigenous peoples had no claim – did so at the cost of changing the character of the British race by bringing in a non-Scandinavian and non-German people: "The only large foreign element which will seriously resist the fusion of the races that is going on in this veritable melting-pot of the nations is the Slavic", they warned (Doughty and Shortt 1914: 310). The Anglo-Canadian assessment of the Slavs charged them with being the physical embodiment of Gobineau's heterogeneous elements, which allowed them to be marked

as racially degenerate, and as Doughty and Shortt maintained, with resisting to fuse with other higher races. The Slavs were thus too mixed to be absorbed by Canada. They were assimilated with lower races and unassimilable to the higher. The renowned US scholar of immigration, Edward Steiner, whose *On the Trail of the Immigrant* was distributed in Canada, offered a similar assessment based on his first-hand observations in Slavic Europe: “These people, although surrounded by conquering nations were not amalgamated, and were enslaved but not changed. Art lived and died in their midst but bequeathed them little or no culture” (1906:19). Steiner elaborated: “[t]he Slav is not a builder of empires, because he is not a citizen but a subject – a severe master or a submissive servant. As a rule he bears oppression patiently, shrinks from overcoming obstacles, is seldom inquisitive enough to climb over the mountains which lock in his native village to see what is beyond them...” (1906:184). Steiner thus established what poor material such immigrants would make for the Canadian nation building project by utilizing a number of themes such as Slavic shortcomings of self-government and Gobineau’s idea that Slavs could only imitate but not embody civilization.

Given the order of these reigning discourses, it would not be unreasonable to conclude that the Slavs were securely embedded as a racial middle stratum. The status of being non-preferred links quite readily with contemporary scholarship, specifically to historian David Roediger’s notion of “in-between people” and therefore to the notion that as peripheral Europeans the Slavs were always destined at some eventual stage to assimilate and “become white” (see Chapter 2). Yet the question of where to draw the line in order to demarcate non-preferred and excluded immigrants was not, as Roediger readily acknowledges, at this point definitely settled. Although some scholars point the potential for upward social mobility (e.g. Matthew Jacobson’s notion of “probational whiteness”), the racial status of the Slavs was not probational but under attack. It constantly threatened to slide into the excluded category. The idea of the Slavs becoming non-peripheral or of their eventual deracialization was not guaranteed.

The potential for the downward sliding of the racial status of the Slavs can be conceptualized in terms of the influence that US racial ideology played on Canadian notions of race. From 1905 to 1925, the United States enacted a *selectively restrictive* immigration policy that “strongly reduced the number of ‘racially inferior’ southern and

eastern European immigrants” (Clifford 1997:31). Over this period, through numerous Quota Acts, the US Congress spelled out language and nationality requirements that constructed the Slavs as inferior when compared to Northern and Western Europeans, thus excluding the former. The US, as such, accomplished what many Canadians coveted: The exclusion of the Others of Europe. While, as Elizabeth Clifford (1997) argues, “Canada and the United States shared a common racial ideology at the time” (2), Canada pursued a different immigration policy in regard to peripheral Europeans – one of *selective recruitment* rather than restriction – that, as can be seen under Sifton, actually “favored southern, central, and eastern Europeans... while its few restrictions sometimes were against northern and western Europeans” (11). The Railway Agreement Act of 1925 favoured peripheral European immigration and gave greater control to Canadian companies over the recruitment of immigrant agriculturalists, thereby continuing and solidifying Sifton’s policies. Thus, unlike the US, which barred all immigration of peripheral Europeans, due in part to its loss of motivation for population growth, Canada increased it.³⁸

It is important to also consider the potential for the downward status mobility of the Slavs from non-preferred to an excluded class by following Foucauldian methodology in taking stock of a failed immigration bill – that is, by considering a type of non-event as an event. As Foucault argues, every failed attempt reveals certain conditions of possibility, and the attempt of the Conservative MP Edward Lewis of West Huron to pass the bill in the parliamentary session of 1909 illustrates how close the Slavs were to being subjected to US styled legislation. Lewis’ bill proposed, citing the example of the US, “to keep out all people except those of western Europe who have the same hereditary [sic] as ourselves” (1910:3134). In support of this, Lewis invoked eugenics-inspired fears by referencing “[r]eports [that] state that the average citizen of the United States is deteriorating physically, mentally and morally” (Lewis 1910:3134). All of this was attributable, argued Lewis, to an influx of a poor racial stock of European immigrants. Drawing a line delimiting that part of Europe which was to be kept out in order to prevent the same from taking place here, the bill proposed that “[f]rom and after

³⁸ Sifton capitalized on the closing off of the US frontier by having his immigration agents in continental Europe promote Canada as “the last best West” on posters and other promotional material.

the first day of January, 1911, natives of Europe south of 44 degrees north latitude and east of 20 degrees east longitude, and natives of Turkey in Asia, shall be prohibited from entering in and settling in Canada” (Lewis 1910:3134). Lewis’ geographic coordinates defined peripheral Europe as Mediterranean, Slavic, Turkic, and Asiatic. This was the proper dwelling place of the Others of Europe who were beyond Canada’s absorptive powers, along with the already prohibited classes of negro, Chinese, and Japanese immigrants.

Measures that proved more successful in promoting anti-Slav racism and in pushing them closer toward the excluded status followed the failure of Lewis’ bill. The Immigration Act of 1919 enforced selective restriction by aiming to keep out “[e]nemy aliens” from Austria and Bulgaria, as well as those “teaching disbelief in or opposition to organized government” (*An Act to Amend the Immigration Act, 1919* 1919:93). The latter was code for Slavs in general who were increasingly associated with labour unrest, anarchism, and by now the Bolshevik revolution in the Soviet Union. The Act should also be seen as a response to the Winnipeg General Strike of the same year (Avery 1979; Knowles 2007); an event which exacerbated anti-Slav sentiment. Such sentiment, it bears recalling, was strong even before the strike. The socialist paper *The Voice* invoked the common association of “the communist inclinations and traditions of the Slavic people” (Soltin 1918:7), while the *Brandon Daily Sun* described socialist “Slav dreamers and theorists who put faith in glowing words about universal peace and the brotherhood of man” (1917a:4). Following the strike, the image of the Slav as “the obstinate radical” (*The Globe* 1919b:2) was only further solidified. In line with such associations of Slavic inability to self-govern, the Act also targeted “immigrants deemed undesirable owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of life and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after their entry” (*An Act to Amend the Immigration Act, 1919* 1919:97). It should be noted that the latter passage was not aimed at the Slavs at large but at the particular religious Doukhor sect, which invoked for many Canadians an incongruent Christian anarchism that resembled nothing of either Anglo Protestantism or Franco Catholicism, and thus could not be absorbed by either of them. The unassimilable Doukhor qualities included vegetarianism, nude bathing, pacifism, a tradition of property destruction, and communal

living (Woodcock 1992). The Act therefore, while keeping out the Doukhobors, promoted anti-Slav racism at the same time as it allowed the Slavs to immigrate.

By the end of the Second World War, Canadian immigration policy shifted considerably once again. In part, the shift reflected its post-war economic growth, and as before it was regulated by economic cycles as well as a number of discourses. From the mid-1940s to the 1960s, Canada abandoned its openly racist restrictions (for example, in 1947 the ban on Chinese immigration was lifted) while nonetheless retaining the idea of selective recruitment and strict immigration controls. Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King articulated this balance by instituting a policy which maintained that “the people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population” (1947:2646). King made it clear that the removing of previous discriminatory clauses still meant that “Canada is perfectly within her rights in selecting the persons whom we regard as desirable future citizens” (1947:2646). Thus, in practice Chinese immigration continued to be blocked, as was the immigration of communists and other undesirable classes of immigrants,³⁹ while the immigration discourse of honest, open hostility against racial minorities waned. These trends can be likely attributed to the fall of the Nazi regime and with it the devalued currency of scientific racism. The post-war intellectual climate of the West took on an antiracist, anticolonial turn. A gradual shift toward a less openly racist discriminatory policy took place with the passing of acts, regulations, and white papers in 1947, 1952, 1962, and 1966, culminating in 1967 in the abandoning of explicit racial criteria in favor of the points system. The lifting of explicit racial quotas and restrictions marked the disappearance of the language of race from immigration policy. It was during this period that the Slavs underwent considerable deracialization, disappearing effectively as peripheral Europeans and racial subjects, and losing their former non-preferred status.

³⁹ According to Claude Bélanger, “[i]n the period of 1945 to 1963, anti-communism was a fundamental factor in Canadian immigration policy... Anti-communist immigrants were advantaged in applying to come to Canada. Left-wing immigrants were deemed suspicious and were likely to be rejected by Canadian Immigration. It has been argued that it was easier for former fascists than their victims to enter Canada in this period” (2006).

Conclusion

Even before the mass immigration of Slavic Europeans to Canada began, a discursive racial formation was already in place to receive and frame the newcomers. This formation drew variously on academic, political, journalistic, and literary discourse in order to racialize the Slavs as the racial Others of Europe. The geography of their otherness was to be found in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe – regions that collectively were held as the source of much instability in European affairs. Framed as “the Eastern Question,” it was generally acknowledged that the homeland of the Slavs was an occupied, uncertain space which threatened insurrection against the racially superior Austro-Hungarian and Prussian empires, as well as the Ottoman (whose racial superiority over the Slavs was debated). These European occupying powers, much like their Anglo and Franco counterparts in Canada, set to the task of settling and colonizing lands that were characterized as undeveloped.

As the autochthonous people of this region, the Slavs were racialized as unfit for “self-government.” Given the years of tutelage spent under autocratic masters – foreign and local – the Slavs were disqualified from citizenship by various Canadian discourses. It was widely held that as former serfs they did not possess the ability to exercise citizenship in republican, liberal-democratic polities like Canada. Even when the Slavs demonstrated political tendencies for autonomy in the European Pan-Slav movement, Canadian discourses presented such attempts as fanatical, anti-democratic, and nihilistic. The Slavs were thus either too submissive or too radical, and this imbalance characterized their inability to function within the limits of Western democracy. Such racialization was used as a pretext for stripping them of their political rights. The discourse of self-government was instituted in election reform that required fluency in English in British Columbia in 1901 and in various Western European languages in Manitoba in 1902. The 1917 War-time Elections Act disenfranchised the Slavs and racialized them as “enemy aliens.”

Lacking the aptitude for self-government was presented as the Slav’s inherent racial limit; complementing this was Canada’s own social structural limit known as

“absorptive capacity.” The latter concept constructed the idea of a technical and racial inability of Canada to absorb Slavic immigrants. Absorptive capacity stemmed from an organic view of the social structure that maintained that like a biological body, Canada was only capable of taking on so much of the foreign and potentially harmful substance. The discourse of absorptive capacity established the idea that Slavic immigration might not be too harmful if its rate was correct. Thus, absorptive capacity corresponded to the fantasy of a functionalist social science that would regulate immigration with an eye to stability and assimilation.

Given the view of the Slavs as the Others of Europe who lacked the aptitude for self-government and who challenged Canada’s absorptive capacity, the Slavs occupied a precarious place in immigration policy. The various intercrossed discourses that comprised the larger space of immigration discourse itself – political speeches; bills, acts, and white papers; newspaper accounts; and scholarly research – reinforced the peripheral status of the Slavs while nonetheless facilitating large scale immigration of Slavic immigrants. Constructing a three-tiered ranking system of “preferred/desirable,” “non-preferred,” and “excluded” classes, a 1923 Order-in-Council designated the Slavs as the peripheral non-preferred class by restricting their immigration. While politicians like Sifton and Woodsworth racialized the Slavs as desirable labour-power for Canada’s West, US immigration policies from 1905 to 1925 acted as ideological stimulus for anti-Slav racism, threatening the Slavs with the downward sliding of their racial status into the excluded class. In this specific Canadian discursive formation, Lewis’ bill of 1909 attempted to impose immigration restriction on the basis of geographic lines drawn within Europe, and the 1919 Immigration Act further racialized the Slavs as unassimilable enemy aliens and leftist radicals who could only be gradually and carefully absorbed by Canada’s social structure.

Having considered the ways in which the Slavs were racialized as Europeans posing a challenge to self-government, absorptive capacity, and Canadian immigration policy, the next chapter will consider the typifications that accumulated around the figure of the Slav once this figure was imagined as already existing on Canadian soil. This will involve a shift from thinking of the Slav as an external Other to thinking of the Slav as an internal Other. In particular, the focus on the Slav as an internal Other will be

accomplished by considering what was and what could be said about the (usually immigrant) Slav as an artist, a community member, and a potential criminal.

Chapter 6.

The Making of Otherness: The Slavs as Internal Others

The natural, animal qualities of his Slavic background can be curbed only so far by the imposition of a classical technique. (Hicklin 1965:12)

For many Canadians today, race is synonymous with skin colour or at least strongly associated with it. A closer look, however, will show that this basic association does not fully bear the weight of the race concept. The colour-coded racial groupings (that are simultaneously created and seen by the racialized gaze) generally admit to four basic categories in Canada: white/ Caucasoid/ European; yellow/ Mongoloid/ Asian; red/ Indigenous/ American; Black/ Negroid/ African (Macionis, Jansson, Benoit, and Burkowicz 2016:345). Of these, only white and Black are not considered derogatory and are freely voiced in various discourses. They form the limits of a polarity within which Asian and Indigenous identities continue to be racialized without being named as particular colours. We thus speak of white, Asian, Indigenous, and Black races in policy, crime statistics, and media coverage.

These four (originally) colour-based categories are not the only ones admitted today. The uniquely discursive Canadian category “visible minority,” established by the 1995 Employment Equity Act, defines that category as “persons, other than aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” (Statistics Canada 2012). Colour is, as such, still the key criterion in discourses that no longer dare to name colour as an easy equation of race. The preference, instead, is to speak its name only in

reference to the extreme white and Black limits of the polarity.⁴⁰ Currently, the new social construct “visible minority” admits, besides Chinese and Black, such categories as Latin American and Arab, among many others (Statistics Canada 2012). The list of categories has, thus, expanded: White, Asian, Indigenous (not legally included in the definition of visible minority), Latin American, Arab, and Black – all form a chain of distinct racial identities and categories in the Canadian discursive formation of race. The inclusion of Arab and Latin American shows that racial categories do not begin and end with skin colour alone, since many Arabs and Latin Americans are as pale as, or even paler than, some Europeans while others are associated with an unofficial and unspeakable brownness. Arabs and Latin Americans complicate the neat colour-coded racial classification system, although the system has been complicated from the very beginning. Even the father of physical racial taxonomy, François Bernier, recognized the difficulty of producing a colour-coded racial system. He argued in the 17th century that the Chinese, Japanese, and Mongols were “really white” in skin colour but different from the “first race” (a category that for him comprised Europe and such “high civilizations” as North Africa, the Middle East, and India) in physical shape and facial characteristics (Stuurman 2000:4). Race, as such, was always about and never just about colour, and the racialized gaze that produces race sees it only on the basis of being trained to see or, more precisely, of being trained to fit certain phenotypical traits into specific discursive categories.

Given this confusion over colour, this chapter offers three observations about race which will establish how this dissertation approaches the concept in its late 19th and mid-20th century Canadian context. As the chapter will show, the three ways of thinking about race help to drive the poststructural theorization of race. Immanent to these observations is the understanding of social structures as centerless discursive formations that construct their own subjects and objects.

⁴⁰ An ironic practice given that the two colours that get named are not actual colours. One theory in physics is that black is the absence of colour (it absorbs the light of all frequencies) while white is a combination of all colours (it contains the light of all frequencies). It is a peculiar reversal that characterizes our discursive formation of race allowing and even demanding that white and black be explicitly named as “colours” while barring us from using colours for categories that are actually associated with colour. Thus, race today is based on the denial of colour which in the form of denial holds together our racial typologies.

The first observation is that *the category of race has always bundled phenotypes along with cultural characteristics*. In short, physiognomy is a vital component of race as no system of racial classification was ever content with a strict detailing or listing of purely physical traits. Skin colour along with other phenotypical significations such as body type, hair texture, and eye shape, entered into the equation of race but did not exhaust it. From Bernier to Canadian eugenicists like Bryce (see Chapter 4), phenotypical traits (which here can be read as signifiers) signify behavioral traits and cultural attributes. Within the discursive formations of white supremacy a number of physiognomies confront us today: dreadlocks are phenotypical signifiers of unkemptness and nonconformity; dark skin, lack of sanitation and suitability only for menial and physical labour; epicanthic folds,⁴¹ shiftiness and cunning; and steatopygia,⁴² sexual savagery and immorality. The idea of racial essentialism functions precisely through such physiognomic associations, as it would never be enough to shun or fetishize someone on the basis of physical traits alone. And while the discursive formation of race continues to recast the visibility of various populations, what remains unaltered is the fact that race itself emerges as a signifier for culture and that the physical features of some populations become racialized. Race is thus the operation by which the freeze-drying or reifying of physical and cultural traits takes place, allowing the physical to function as an index for the cultural.

The second observation is that *race is a political category that naturalizes social inequalities*. Race is therefore something more than a discourse of physical signifiers signifying cultural attributes. To draw on Roland Barthes, race also assists in the production of myth – that is, of historically chosen speech that naturalizes politics (1957:131). Myth is a second-order discourse in which signs become new signifiers (Barthes 1957:114). The formula introduced in the first observation (*race = physical signifiers + cultural signifieds*) is therefore incomplete. Race-as-myth does not arrive once both physical signifiers and cultural signifieds have been combined; rather, the mythology of race frames the physical and cultural from the outset within a larger

⁴¹ Skin folds located in the upper eyelids.

⁴² “Large” or “excessive” fat accumulated around the buttocks.

ideological field where race functions as a signifier for the social order. As a second-order discourse, myth re-reads race in the service of political narratives. Thus, in the first-order, the physical signifier *thick Slavic build* signifies for Anglo-Canada *uncouth roughness and durability* (cultural/ behavioral traits) forming the associative sign of *the Slav whose race makes them suitable for physical labour*. In “the second-order semiological system” (Barthes 1957:114) of myth, the sign *the Slav who is suitable for physical labour* functions as a new signifier for the political fact that *Canada is an unpopulated nation of immigrant farmers*. The Slav’s racialized presence signifies Canada’s need and the two form the associative sign of *Canadian colonialism and its responsibility to introduce and civilize immigrants*. Specific physical and cultural links are recast onto a political mythology which readapts these for political use.

Racialization positions certain populations within a social hierarchy by locating them first within a racial category. In the context of late 19th and mid-20 century Canada, race can be read as the response of Western Civilization to the immigration of peripheral Europeans and the related developments in Europe. Race, as Keenan Malik observes, “expressed the perception that these processes were natural, and indeed that social differences, fixed as they were against this background of progress and regression controlled by objective laws, were themselves natural” (1996:73). Race is thus about the production of the confluence of physical and cultural traits at the same time as it produces the myth of the social and political significance of these traits. Racial identity is, therefore, not simply something that emanates from the racial subject; racial identity is needed by the politically hierarchical configuration of the social. It allowed (and allows) for the fixing of racial differences, for the slotting of the Slavs into the role of a “natural” underclass thereby defending the dominant economic and political arrangements that allow for the identification of the Slavs. This is also to say that the Canadian political structure produced race as a basis of self-legitimation.

The third observation is that *race constructs a Self through an Other*. Racial discourses construct the Other for the political task of establishing a sovereign, conscious Self. Drawing on the phenomenological tradition, Malik stresses that “[t]he concept of the Other... was conceived as the perceiving, conscious, meaning-conferring other person who helps, or forces, the conscious subject to define its own world picture

and its view of its place in it” (1996:221). There are strong lines of affinity here with the symbolic interactionist work of George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley who regard the social context as the crucial site for the formation of an individual self. Just as every individual requires a social relationship with an other in order to define and develop a self, so too do collective social formations of a sovereign, national Selfhood require a social Other. “The Other”, writes Malik, is thus “a social object, the difference against which the Self is measured” (1996:221). The category of the Other is indispensable to the formation of a Self and to the construction of a Self-identity which, in turn, reigns over its social world. We would do well here to recall Edward Said’s claim about the Occident’s relationship to its Other, which he designates as “the Orient.” As Said argues, “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self” (1994:3). The Orient in fact did not exist outside of the Occident’s construction of it:

the imaginative examination of things Oriental was based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness out of whose unchallenged centrality an Oriental world emerged, first according to general ideas about who or what was Oriental, then according to a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a battery of desires, repressions, investments, and projections. (Said 1994:8)

As this chapter will show, the Slavs were also the constructed underground basis for the formation of an Anglo-Canadian Self and the Slavs are likewise only possible as projections of an Anglo-Canadian Self.

Canadian eugenicists, politicians, journalists, and men of letters all constructed the perception of a distinct Slavic-ness which they claimed to uncover. As Chapter 4 demonstrated, Slavic phenotypical features did not centre on skin colour so much as they did on facial structure, speech, and demeanor. But this was not all that the uncovering/constructing of a Slavic subject accomplished. While racializing the Slav as a physically distinct type, the various discourses, documented in Chapter 5, recognized in them attributes (or lack thereof) as the Others of Europe who arrived in Canada to supplement dwindling immigration from Western Europe. The shortcomings that typified – specifically lack of self-government – functioned as the constitutive outside which allowed a Canadian Self to emerge. The antagonism with the Slavic Other as an

external Other was thus productive for the Canadian Self. The discursive regime of Canadian immigration policy produced the very figure it sought to regulate in order to legitimate its own institutional functions and the interests of capital and industry. The Slavs were, as such, constructed as a status designation that allowed them to be recognized and managed by the Canadian social structure. It was through such acts that the Canadian nation-building project defined and legitimized itself; it contained what it denied in the Slavs – namely, self-government, Western institutions, social order, and racial superiority.⁴³

To round out the picture of the Slavs' othering, this chapter will consider the racialization of Slavic cultural traits in the discourses of art, Slavic communities, and crime as they pertained to Slavs on Canadian soil, where the Slavs constituted an internal Other. The consideration of these discourses will further illustrate the way in which the Slavs were made into racial Others who presented a problem for Canada to solve and thus who created the grounds for an Anglo-Canadian identity. Each discourse conforms to the three observations offered above (by combining phenotypes with culture, reading these as political signifiers, and constructing a Self through an Other). The first section will consider how Canadian discourse on art concerned itself with Slavic artists and with the "Slavic school" of art. Canadian eyes observed Slavic art in such fields as literature, drama, music, and dance, where the Slav was typified as a "natural artist" who was variously given to intense cheerfulness or pathos. Even when celebrated for their accomplishments, Slavic artists and Slavic schools of art were denigrated for lacking depth, form, and restraint – the very attributes of Anglo-Canadian art and artists. The second section constructs an image of Slavic immigrant communities by drawing on the work of social scientists, immigration experts, and politicians. As these commentators pointed out, the Slavs came short of Canadian standards as regards religious practices, gender norms, and even alcohol consumption. Specifically, this section considers how James Woodsworth, Robert England, Edward Steiner, and C. J. Cameron typified Canadian Slavic communities as clannish, patriarchal, disorganized,

⁴³ Of course, the Slavs were not the only racialized category to play this role. It bears stressing that other racial categories also functioned as internal others who were racialized in ways that was constitutive for Canadian identity and for the project of Canadian nation-building.

and unhygienic – in short, as a testament to the Slavic lack of self-government (see Chapter 5). Lastly, the chapter considers the relationship of the Slavs to crime in police records and newspaper accounts. In discourse of crime, Slavic phenotypes were connected to murder, robbery, theft, and kidnapping. The inherently more criminogenic nature of the Slavs predisposed them to impulsive acts – acts that stood out from the methodical, calculated nature of Canadian criminals.

As this chapter will show, while the discourses of art, community, and crime depicted Canadian Slavs in a specifically racial fashion, the discourses were also linked in an overdetermined structure of relations. Only with such linkages was it possible to racialize the Slavs while simultaneously allowing Anglo-Canada “as a whole” to emerge and be known in opposition to them.

Art

The Slavs were readily associated with art and artists. In such associations, a primitivism was often emphasized even in the numerous accounts that employed a celebratory tone. The Slavs were thus “natural artists” whose skills nonetheless managed to betray a lack. In describing new immigrants, the *Brandon Daily Sun* observed: “Among the many races that have come in recent years from the eastern frontiers of Europe to begin life anew on the vast spaces of the Canadian prairie no one can lay claim to a more inspiring literary and musical heritage than the people of Ukraine” (1916:3). The newspaper presented them as a “picturesque and attractive people with a glorious tradition and a genius for poetic expression which has been handed down through long centuries of war, of transition, and of bondage” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1916:3). Significantly, the same socio-politically oppressive circumstances that rendered the Ukrainians and other Slavs unfit for self-government in Canada were hailed for their unique ability to mint romantic figures out of them in the world of art. As far as the *Sun* was concerned, the reason for the artistic ability of the Ukrainians was closely connected to their race and its long history of oppression. Being themselves “a people without a country, possessing scarcely an assured name and having no history save for what is preserved in their songs... the Ukrainian is a race of purely Slav, gay, chivalrous,

and made thoughtful by its own steppes – a race of poets, musicians, artists...” (1916:3). The Ukrainian here appeared only to disappear into the denationalized figure of the Slav – a figure that Canadian art discourses approached in terms of its own “Slavic school” (*The Globe* 1919c:11) which for Canadian journalists betrayed a “Slavic exoticism” (Hicklin 1967:10).

Numerous folk festivals, musical and ballet performances, and cultural exhibitions allowed Canadian audiences to construct the Slavs while consuming their art. The Radio section of *The Globe* promoted from 1929 to 1931 the program “Around the Samovar”, dedicated to broadcasting Slavic folk songs. Canadians it seems were always ready to listen to Slavic music and to attend Slavic performances. At the same time, Slavic art was also rejected by some for its crudeness. As the *Daily Nor’Wester* observed, “a people whose ideas of dancing are of so gross and barbarous a nature” for whom dancing consists of “the woman having bare-feet and the man stamping savagely as he waltzed and keeping his partner busy dodging his hob-nailed boots... is not a desirable element to introduce into the ball-rooms of this Great Western Country of Ours” (1898b:4). As is evident, not everyone was ready to consume such art. In fact, the Canadian-Slav congress in Toronto was stymied by politicians on the purported grounds that Slavic art was un-Canadian. Even as late as the 1950s, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester Pearson, remarked that “no visas have been granted to enable persons-poets, musicians or otherwise-to enter Canada for the purpose of attending this conference. They would probably supply a form of music that we do not desire to hear in this country” (1950:4349).⁴⁴

It is worth noting, however, that among those who were prepared to receive Slavic art, some claimed to have been affected by these performances to the point of re-

⁴⁴ While this work stays clear of interpreting hidden motives, preferring instead to dwell with Foucauldian archaeology on the surface level of discourse, I question that the ‘real’ motive of objecting to the Slav congress was on the grounds of music. More likely, the reason behind denying visas to Slav members was US McCarthyist anti-communist hysteria, which affected members of the Canadian political class as well. However, this “real reason” does not matter as much as the fact that music could be used as a front to prevent the arrival of Slavs in Canada. Whatever the status of the truth of Pearson’s remarks, his words show the strong associations of the Slavs with art.

thinking Canadian racial stereotypes regarding the Slavs. The cultural promoter John Gibbon remarked in his *Canadian Mosaic* that “[t]he vivacious and graceful dancing of a Polish group at the New Canadian Folk-Song and Handicraft Festival held in Winnipeg in 1928, had a marked influence on the attitude taken by Anglo-Saxons towards the foreign-born in that city” (1938:276) – so much so, according to Gibbon, that it imparted on the Canadian novelist Ralph Connor a favourable attitude towards the Slavs. Connor, who attended the performance with Gibbon, was alleged by the latter to have changed his opinion on the Slavs. Gibbon claimed that Connor regretted the description he attributed to Slavic performers in his popular novel *The Foreigner*, where he depicted them, more in line with the *Daily Nor’Wester*, as “steaming, swaying, roaring dancers, both men and women, all reeking with sweat and garlic” (Connor [1909] 2001:17). Regardless of whether one saw in Slavic dancers something garish and crude or vivacious and buoyant, the Slav was constructed as a consumable artistic Other. The discourses of art and race proceeded with the racialization of the Slavs equally well according to either favorable or negative typifications. And any re-thinking of Slavic stereotypes did not lead to deracialization but to more favorable racial generalizations and to the further entrenchment of the racialized view of the Slavs.

The artistic status of the Slavs was so firmly established that some commentators in fact reproached Canada for failing to live up to Slavic accomplishments. As one journalist noted, while “[i]n the Latin, Teutonic, Slavic and Scandinavian worlds opera seems to be as natural and inevitable as are theaters and concerts... little will be risked by the assertion that not one single work in the standard international repertoire of grand opera is by an Anglo-Saxon composer” (Mason 1935:5). Here it is possible to observe that the empty signifier of the operatic world is maintained through the *equivalential* linking of Latin, Teutonic, Slavic and Scandinavian signifiers that are furthermore *differentiated* from the signifier Anglo-Saxon. The Anglo-Saxon world is disciplined in this account not for being worse than the Slavs and Latins but for falling behind them. The real shame, which here is constitutive for the Anglo Self, is of having failed to outperform its inferior racial Others, thus failing to live up to its qualities of possession and mastery.

Two broad processes transpired in the racialization of the Slavs in the art world. The first was in discourses that utilized the term Slav in order to brand certain authors, composers, actors, and dancers. In them, the term “Slav” functioned to denationalize and hierarchically rank various artists. It allowed the Montreal based *Boucher and Pratte’s Musical Journal* to describe Antonín Dvořák sparingly as “the famous Slav composer” (1882:1) and the Winnipeg *Daily Nor’Wester* to refer to Anton Rubinstein simply as “the great Slav” (1894a:3). “Slav” was a marker of racial difference within the discourse of art. The same journals and newspapers did not always find it necessary to state the racial background of Anglo musicians, as is consistent with today’s practice of stating only minority racial statuses – a disclosure that itself constitutes a technique of othering. Significantly, the branding of Dvořák and Rubinstein as “Slavic,” rather than as “Czech” and “Russian” composers, identified them as members of the same denationalized racial category. Such categorization facilitated socio-political ordering, with the Slavs positioned among the lowest statuses of European immigrant populations. That the term Slav functioned as a denationalized racial category and a status designation could be scarcely clearer than in the description of a 19th century-themed program for a Leeds music festival in England. Taking interest in the festival, *The Globe* reported that the organizing “committee have selected thirty-three composers as representative musicians within the period to be illustrated – twelve British, ten German, five French, three Italian and three Slavonic” (1901:15). Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, and Glazunov were named as representatives of the collective Slavonic racial identity placed casually next to various distinctly named European nationalities. What is consistent in such lists is not just that the Slavs were the only denationalized racial category, but that they were usually listed closer toward the end as the last Europeans (Italians, who should be counted among the peripheral Europeans as well, were racialized without such denationalization and were usually listed before or above the Slavs).

Relatedly to the branding of certain artists, the term “Slav” also functioned as a marker that facilitated the policing of the identity of various performers. The case of the “balladist” Isa Kremer illustrates the way in which it was possible to doubt and restore the authenticity of some Slavs. *The Globe* observed that “[a]lthough of pure Slavic extraction, this black-haired, black-eyed prima-donna with her many sweeping gestures, might easily pass as a French woman” (1922:16). Kremer is like one of “us” and yet not.

In the interview that ran in the newspaper, she was said to often use French phrases as well as Western bodily gestures, granting her a type of outsider-insider status itself contingent on the outsider-insider status of Franco-Canadians. Just as with the denationalization of many Slavs in the arts, Kremer's nationality, which was noted as Russian, was problematized by the mentioning of the fact that while living in Odessa she had to change her "nationality about six times in one year" due to the instability of the region (*The Globe* 1922:16). Given the relational nature of identification, Slavs were not of course the only ones subject to such identity policing. Passing and failing to pass took place on both sides of the border. That is, if a Slav could pass for a Westerner so too could a Westerner cross the boundary into Slavdom. In discussing the American violinist Arthur Hartmann's performance of Tchaikovsky, the *Victoria Daily Colonist* reassured its readers that he was perhaps the best man for the job, as "[a] Slav of the Slavs could scarcely have invested Tschaikowsky's beautiful music with a more distinctive native quality" (1907:7). However, there is a crucial difference in the transmutations at the borders of race: in such crossings, Kremer could at best pass as French while Hartmann was said to master Slavdom better than the Slavs themselves. In such a way, the identity of the Slav helped to constitute the identity of the Western Self which crossed a boundary only to test and reaffirm itself but never to fully pass as and become Slavic.

The second way in which the term Slav functioned in the discourses of art was as a designator of an artistic style. To encounter Slavic art was to encounter an unrestrained and dangerous sensuality with folkloric elements. The imbalanced and nihilistic Slav, incapable of self-government, made for a natural artist whose Slavic quality was typified as "full of wistful pathos, having that aching mournfulness so characteristic of Slav music" (*Morning Telegram* 1900:8) or alternatively as "a bright, cheery number, full of what might be called Slavonic fire" (*The Globe* 1903:9). The Slavic style designated a primitive ability that could be cultivated into forms appropriate to the West. Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, and Rachmaninoff were routinely read and presented as examples of "Slavic rhythms and harmonies" (*The Globe* 1925:10) or as "highly pictorial, with abundant Slavic coloring" (Mason 1924:14). Their music was cast into a distinct Slavic style that was translated into a consumable product, a commodity on the shelf of high art. Slavic art carried with it the mark of the exotic, being typified as a flavorful concoction from the peripheries of Europe.

While music and dance entered into a large portion of the depictions of the Slavic art style, the discussion extended to other art forms as well. Theatre, architecture, and literature were also similarly typified. The Slavic style characterized by its intense cheerfulness and pathos was depicted across all these genres. Thus, discussion of Slavic literature sounded much like discussion of Slavic music. According to the *Victoria Daily Colonist*, Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Gogol all embodied and expressed “Slavic indolence, its fierce upheavals of passion, its dreamy melancholy” (1887:2). As the Others of Europe, they helped to define the Western Self by the contrast which it could find with these qualities: “All have traits of kinship which show the Slavic nature that underlies foreign culture and foreign influence. Nothing in modern European literature is like the work of these men” (*Victoria Daily Colonist* 1887:2). The literature of the Slavs could be as readily commodified as it was racialized. The student paper at the University of Manitoba stressed the possibility of its consumption by Western audiences in its coverage of the lectures of English professor Watson Kirkconnell. Presenting his views on Slavic literature, the paper quoted Kirkconnell as stating that

in the Russian novel, and in the poetry of all Slavs... they have erected a real monument to their greatness, and have laid bare their hearts for the world to see. That soul of the Slav has much to teach us. Woven like a golden thread through the exquisite fabric of the Slavic verse is a broad sense of the common identity of all human hearts. (*The Manitoban* 1928:1)

The Slavic style could thus offer feeling; it could infuse the Anglo-Saxon world with picturesque, gay, vivacious rhythms or, if needed, melancholy and wistful moods made possible through the long history of Slavic Europe’s turmoil and suffering. Whether in music, dance, or literature, the Slavic style was presented for the West as something the latter could master as a way of mastering its Self and its own common humanity.

Its “gift to the world” however threatened to always undermine the status of the Slavs. Or rather, the unabated downward sliding of the Slavs – characterized by their descent into poverty, a history of oppression, and the threat of racial degeneracy – was all that the Slav had to offer. Underneath the alleged profusion of feeling of the Slavic style lay a crude depth, a depravity which was condemned while nonetheless still being interpreted as something of value. This was evident by the reflections of some critics.

The US printer, publisher, and journalist Bailey Miller characterized “the wonderful Slav writers” as presenting

great difficulties to the average American reader. If there is one quality more than any other that is needed in the study of this strange, half uncouth and altogether foreign writing, it is – patience. Russian writers, including the best of them, show great crudity in their fiction, which is the work by which they are best known. This crudity is evinced in a negligence, a diffuseness and a trick of repetition which is pervasive of the whole cult. Whatever other faults English literature has, it is clean-cut, and in the work of its best authors, it is finished pen-craft. (in *Victoria Daily Colonist* 1905a:3)

Thus even in cultivated genres of literature, for the Slavs the primitive threatened to break forth. But that it had in fact broken forth for critics like Miller did not preclude it as something consumable. Even though, as he noted, no American magazine would print authors like Gorky, it would not be “until our own literature has been imbued with something of the freedom of these intense, earth-gripping European models [that] shall we recognize in it the saliency, the color, the virility of human life” (in *Victoria Daily Colonist* 1905a:3). The Slavic style could resuscitate the Anglo style from its sterile bourgeois sentimentality and rigid adherence to form. It is telling that Miller, while detesting the Slavic style, nonetheless arrived at the same conclusion as those who recognized positive qualities in it. It would be a mistake here to think that Miller was perhaps unkind or inconsistent while Kirkconnell and Gibbon were more open-minded. What should be appreciated about the discursive formation at work here is that Slavic primitiveness and crudeness went hand-in-hand with the more favorable depictions of Slavic sentimentality and mood. The various discourses concerning the artistic style of the Slavs made both possible. In fact, Slavic backwardness was a precondition for the fetishism of this style. That in literature the Slav was said to be able to “feel” the philosophical questions, while French and English authors expressed them in a strictly formal manner, was as much evidence of Slavic cognitive abilities as it was of the underlying Slav barbarism.

Community

Before considering Slavic criminality in the next section, it is worth noting that the Slav was racialized with a proclivity towards deviance in general and that this deviance was a basic element of Slavic community life. In such communities, the Slavic body and behavior violated not only legal codes, as the next section will show, but also basic codes of conduct established by Anglo-Canadian folkways and mores. Even in dancing, as the *Daily Nor'Wester* warned, “these Slav serfs” introduce a “corrupting influence of those crude Galician calisthenics by which the politeness of our company manners and grace of our social functions are being subverted” (1898b:4). Such “everyday” deviance could be noted, as this section will show, in the ways Slavs consumed alcohol, in Slavic households and settlements, and in gender norms that prevailed among them. All of this was held to be at odds with Canadian norms which were taken to be either corroded by Slavic norms or, alternatively, as the solution to them.

As James Woodsworth noted in his observations of Slavic labour camps, “in these semi-civilized communities... [d]runkenness, gambling, immorality and lawlessness are as yet prevalent” (1917:8). As concerns alcohol, those who took up the study of immigration reaffirmed the stereotype of the Slav as a frequent imbiber. Besides eating “quantities of beans, cabbage, and potatoes”, noted Steiner, the Slav also “drinks too much, but drinks economically, preferring a barrel of beer for the crowd to the more expensive glass, and he carries a bottle in his hip pocket as invariably as the cowboy is supposed to carry a pistol” (1906:202-3). The Slav’s preference for alcohol was linked to deviance in numerous accounts. One news brief made the case aridly, stating only that “A drunken Slav at Wilkessbare, Pa., ran amuck and caused death to one or two people” (*Daily Nor'Wester* 1894b:1). C. J. Cameron, the assistant superintendent of the Baptist Home Mission Board of Ontario and Quebec, observed that Slavic partiality for alcoholism stemmed from the Slav’s deviance from true religious practice. The Slav, he argued, while being “deeply religious” (Cameron 1913:36) – an observation reaffirmed by numerous observes – still manages to miss the point as “he cannot see what religion has to do with sobriety and honesty” (37).

Even without turning to the obvious outward signs of intoxication, Slavic deviance could be subtly noted in such things as dress, diet, beliefs, and community life. And even when the Slavs shared an obvious similarity, such as Christianity with Anglo-Canada, they were seemingly out of step in how they practiced it. As *The Globe and Mail* noted in what at first sight may look like a mood of neutral, detached observation, “[w]ith Christmas Day almost a memory to the majority of Toronto folks, Slavic communities are preparing to celebrate Christmas Thursday and Friday” (1938a:5). The significance is to be found here in the difference which exists even when Europeans and Christians (like “us”) engage in the ordinary cultural practices characteristic of their community life.

When it came to the difference and deviance of dress, the traveler and writer Edward Steiner provides a number of telling observations. In a chapter tersely titled “The Slavic Invasion”, Steiner recalled his observations made while travelling on ocean liners in the company of Slavic immigrants. He presented himself as someone who had made the journey with these very people in order to know them better. Such a vantage point allowed him to describe their habits and customs in particular detail. He noted in one passage that “[t]hey leave their picturesque garb at home, and lie on the deck in all sort of weather in all kinds of dress and undress, the women being barefoot even in winter” (1906:199). Paradoxically, in an earlier passage he had observed that Slavic men and women “[retain] the sheepskin coat... [of which the] skin is often coloured red, and the legs of the sheep hang over the shoulders” in both summer and winter seasons (Steiner 1906:191-2). The Slavs did not, as such, need alcohol to display the signs of deviance; even as they were arriving in the “new world,” already there was something quaint and unsettling about their disregard of Western modes of dress.

Once they arrived in Canada, their settlements further unsettled the Canadian eye. In his careful study of the subject, *The Central European in Canada*, Robert England noted that the Slavs, like many other immigrant populations, have gathered into an “aggregation of blocs differing in language, custom, and habit” (1929:12). That the English and French had done so as well, escaped him. Making use of “sociological surveys of their respective districts” (1929:xi), he lamented that “[t]here is little to suggest that life is lived in a new country. Old Country methods, practices, habits, still survive” (England 1929:78). One can, of course, also point to similar habits for English settlers:

They retained their own “old country methods” such as British common law and parliamentary democracy, British architecture and place names, Protestantism, British spelling, and even, until 1965, the Union Flag. That such habits and customs were not designated as quaint expressions of British racial enclaves is worth noting. And such British ways of life retained their “normal” invisible status by constructing the Slavs as visible.

England begins, as is characteristic of studies of immigrant Slavic communities, by noting the distinct physical characteristics of the Slavs. Since race is about physiognomy, or the confluence of physical and cultural factors, it is unsurprising that he racialized them first by describing “women and children with bright kerchiefs, dark hair gathered underneath, tightly framing, in some cases, ‘Madonna-like’ features, but as a rule enclosing wide-set eyes, marked cheek-bones, broad and snub noses” (England 1929:78) before moving on to make observations regarding their settlements. “In these Slav districts”, noted England, one would find

houses, white-washed, thatched, squat, with narrow windows, the single doors invitingly open to the farmyard... telephone poles thinning out in straight lines to the horizon, and here and there wire fences sprawling drunkenly across the virgin snow, - that is Western Canada; but inside the little sod cabin men knock the snow off their sheep-skins, talk to their women in a language we could not understand even if our tongue could follow, and women listen, obey, and bend to household work.... No newspapers, no musical instruments, few books, few luxuries, few wants, and plain food! At night neighbours come, gossip, smoke, and perhaps drink some home-made “brew.” Dances enliven the winter; saint’s-days are frequent, welcomed, and observed as holidays. There are no organized meetings and the circle round the stove in the one room remains much as it was, and still is, in Poland, so little are the home and community changed. (1929:78-9)

Slavic deviance thus was rooted in Slavic customs which were constructed as incompatible with Canadian norms. Whether regarding religion, alcohol consumption, gender relations, household, or community life, the Slavs were what true Canadians were not. A Canadian self thus came to know itself, quietly and without explicit comparisons, by setting up an opposition to its Slavic Other. And the maintenance of social distance was crucial in this endeavor.

Given the preponderance of eugenic and temperance movements, deviance was often associated with the lack of cleanliness in Slavic communities and homes. In his

1913 study *Foreigners or Canadians?*, Cameron noted that the Slavs made up the largest “stream of non-English immigration flowing into Canada” (36). While reassuring his readers that “in no Canadian city is there yet such a condition of peril as is found in... American cities” (Cameron 1913:16) where Slavic immigrants had been settling in larger numbers and for a much longer period of time, he nonetheless cautioned against this growth by warning his readers that when it came to the Slavs, “[c]leanliness in the home is usually conspicuous by its absence” (37). Steiner offered more detail, noting that “[t]he cleanliness in these Slavic homes is also of varied degrees... Dirt, I am sorry to say, is often in evidence, and certain insects which would annoy us dreadfully exist in these rooms in unaccountable numbers, but are treated with silent contempt, which does not tend to their diminution” (1906:191). In his *Strangers within our gates: or, Coming Canadians*, Woodsworth corroborated these observations, arguing that Slavic immigrants required “help and advice to lead a clean life” (1909:262). For his part, however, Woodsworth was convinced that the situation already resembled the one of American urban centers. When it came to the new immigrants, he did not hesitate to sound the proverbial alarm, as “[i]gnorance of the language, high rents, low standards of living, incompetency, drunkenness are already producing conditions as bad as are to be found in the slums of the great cities” (Woodsworth 1909:259). To support such claims, Woodsworth cited the observations of police records and mission workers on the boarding houses of Slavic immigrants. The reports, as far as he was concerned, indicated that the Slavs

endeavored to ascertain how many adults they could crowd into a given space. Selenk managed to accommodate forty-three occupants in five rooms where only fourteen could hope to find sufficient atmosphere for healthy respiration. Simok ran his neighbor close, having twenty-four in one room where only seven should have been. His rooms were too low and lacked ventilation. (Woodsworth 1909:260)

Later studies continued to cling to the theme of the unhygienic Slavic household. England, drawing on school nurses’ and teachers’ reports, observed that when it comes to Slavic communities, “[t]he health conditions cannot be other than bad owing to some of the hygienic traditions that obtain” (England 1929:92-3). This was, for England, mostly a question of bad habits being transplanted along with the immigrants. For example, he characterized unsanitary lavatories as “a habit and tradition brought from Eastern

Europe rather than a result of pioneer conditions” (England 1929:95) thus absolving social stratification in Canada while upholding the stigma that dirty outhouses were Slavic in character. Citing various eye witness accounts of Slavic households, England reminded his readers that “in comparison with an average Canadian standard, there is an appearance of poverty” (1929:83) – a poverty which in the case of the Slavs was naturalized and attributed to their racially inflected lifestyle alone. Keeping in line with the racial theories of his days, England attributed the lack of sanitation to “[t]he Slav temperament [which] manifests itself in some curious ways. There is little desire for social organization, very little of what we understand by sportsmanship, and such a thing as a *esprit de corps* in not understood” (1929:91). The Slavic inability to self-govern extended naturally, for Anglo-Canadian observers, into the Slavic inability to govern the household and to ensure Canadian standards of sanitation.⁴⁵

Slavic lack of sanitation was also illustrated in fiction. In *The Foreigner*, Ralph Connor depicted a scene in which a young doctor is being persuaded by his wife’s friend, Mrs. French, to pay a visit to a “foreign colony” ([1909] 2001:54) – that is, a Slavic community that matched the typifications of writers like England, Steiner, Cameron, and Woodsworth. There, the doctor encounters resistance from the mother, Mrs. Blazowski. In her house, the doctor is said to make his way through

a crowd of children... and passed into the evil-smelling, filthy room. For Mrs. Blazowski found it a task beyond her ability to perform the domestic duties attaching to the care of seven children and a like number of boarders in her single room. Mrs. French was seated on a stool with a little child of three years upon her knee.

"Doctor, don't you think that these children ought to go to the hospital to-day?" she [Mrs. French] said, as the doctor entered.

"Why, sure thing; they must go. Let's look at them."

He tried to take the little child from Mrs. French's knee, but the little one vehemently objected.

"Well, let's look at you, anyway," said the doctor, proceeding to unwind some filthy rags from the little one's head. "Great Scott!" he exclaimed in a low voice, "this is truly awful!"

⁴⁵ While her focus is on how early public health discourses framed the “unsanitary habits” (Davies 2005:27) of Asian communities in British Columbia, Megan Davies’ observation that civilization and sanitation were linked and used to exert social control over Asian communities applies equally well to Canadian discourses on the Slavs.

The hair was matted with festering scabs. The ears, the eyes, the fingers were full of running sores.

"I had no idea this thing had gone so far," he said in a horrified voice.

"What is it?" said Mrs. French. "Is it--"

"No, not itch. It is the industrious and persevering eczema pusculosum, known to the laity as salt rheum⁴⁶ of the domestic variety. " (Connor [1909] 2001:55-6)

The accounts reviewed here illustrate that whether in "isolated foreign colonies" or urban centres, Canadian racial discourses typified the homes of Slavic immigrants as unkempt, festering abodes that fell short of Canadian standards. Their lack of sanitation was a concern that spurred various "solutions" ranging from suggestions for stricter immigration controls (Woodsworth 1909); the breaking up of the block settlements of "Slav colonies" (England 1929); to Protestant missionary outreach among such communities (Cameron 1913).

The community life of the Slavs was also typified as deviant in terms of gender relations. It was not so much that the Slavs were patriarchal that was the problem but that the Slavs practiced an outdated form of patriarchy, one in which Slav men acted as *patresfamilias* – that is, venerated heads of the family to be found even in the work of Slavic writers such as Pushkin, Aksakov, Turgenev, and Tolstoy (Maslenikov 1971:35). The term "pater familias" is not Slavic but Latin, and is used here to stress a distinctly Slavic patriarchal order in which social statuses like *gospodar*, or "the ruler of the state, the master of the household and the master of apprentices" constitute "overlapping lexical fields centred on the family, on the *pater familias*..." (Witzenrath 2015:18-9). In other words, a Slavic *pater familias* was understood as a legal entity synonymous with the *gospodar*. As evidence of this non-Western, non-Canadian patriarchy, England argued that the following eight conditions prevailed in Slavic settlements:

1. The man considers himself the head of the house and the women are obliged to obey him implicitly.
2. Women and children do all the work in the gardens; herd, milk, and feed cows; do most of the "chores" and often work on the land, in addition to their household work.
3. The men go frequently to town, to one another's [sic] houses and to anything that promises recreation. The women do not seem to get much freedom or time to enjoy themselves.

⁴⁶ An inflammatory disease of the skin, such as eczema.

4. Men wear boots – the women and children often go barefoot out-of-doors in summer, and always barefoot indoors. Men are never seen barefooted in public.
5. Too little consideration of women in the bearing of children. No adequate medical attention and too short convalescence are the general rule.
6. Women thought of as chattel, rather than a wife, in the marriage relation. Men accept marriage as a kind of bargain, and when widowed marry again as soon as possible.
7. No organization for the women.
8. The children are given a bad start. The newborn infant is usually swaddled tightly for seven days so that movement of arms or legs is impossible. (1929:90)

Steiner made similar observations, typifying Slavic men as a *patresfamilias* who established a ruthless tyranny over their families. While he praised the Slavs for strong family bonds, he found the treatment of women “abhorrent.” Treading carefully, he reserved his observations for Slavs in Europe: “To avoid the charge of prejudice,” he proposed to “quote a few proverbs current among the Southern Slavs – a few out of many hundreds: *The man is the head the woman is grass. One man is worth more than ten women. A man of straw is worth more than a woman of gold. Let the dog bark, but let the woman keep silent. He who does not beat his wife is no man*” (Steiner 1906:187, emphasis in original). For Steiner, such proverbs provided direct evidence of Slavic gender codes. While he admitted that “it would, of course, be unjust to charge every Slav with beating his wife... it is the rule rather than the exception among the peasants” (Steiner 1906:188). His maneuver of advancing a stereotype cloaked in a complex account of Slavic peasant life was typical for an academic study of the subject. The solution he offered, however, was unusual. According to Steiner, the excesses of Slavic patriarchy could be overcome with immigration and assimilation. Slavic immigrants would only, if at all, improve with time; they would not, however, improve on their own. At the very least, Slavic women would benefit simply by immigrating to countries like Canada, Australia, and the United States. As far as Steiner could see, “the lot of the Slavic women grows better only as the Slav is further from Eastern barbarism and nearer to Western civilization” (Steiner 1906:188). Thus, Western gender norms, which were for Woodsworth, Cameron, and England under attack by Slav customs, were in an unusual move offered by Steiner as the solution to Slavic gender norms. In Steiner one encounters a firmer faith in the West than in the works of many eugenicists and nativists – a faith that constructs the Western Self as durable and capable of assimilating.

Crime

Wendy Chan and Dorothy Chunn argue that “racialized men and women are widely perceived as being more criminogenic and thus as more credible perpetrators of crime than are white men and women overall” (2014:28). In support of the first part of this claim, this section will examine the ways in which the Slav was racialized by being constructed as inherently criminogenic. Notably, the Slav was racialized without whiteness entering into the discussion. Headlines, such as “Rancher Stabbed, Slav Set Fire to Prairie and Police Tried to Make Arrest” (*Morning Telegram* 1906:5), singled out the Slavs in a special relationship to crime, as did the observations of politicians that “unpronounceable [Slavic] names appear so often in police court news, they figure so frequently in crimes of violence that they have created anything but a favorable impression” (Woodsworth 1909:134). Many such statements and headlines established a pattern of the types of crimes the Slavs would be associated with. At the same time, a profile of Slavic criminality was constructed by media coverage. This was accomplished by more probing analyses that attempted to get at the “pathless intrigue and black psychology of the Slavic mind” (1924:1), as did *The Globe* at length in the case of a murder trial in Hamilton that involved a wife killing her husband over his losses at a race-track. Besides documenting the othering of the Slavs within the discourse of crime, this section shows how various discourses on the Slavs overdetermined the discourse of Slavic criminality. Observations made about the Slavic temperament, artistic style, and community dynamics informed the perception of the Slavs as criminals. The natural Slav artist made a ready criminal and a number of discourses established the propensity of Slavs toward crime by drawing on the various ways in which the Slavs were racialized. As late as 1955, a journalist could quote someone identified only as an “Empire Loyalist” as stating that “[a] rash of violent murders of passion have been committed recently by Polish, Ukrainian and Yugoslav DPs” – that is, by “displaced persons” denationalized by the Loyalist as “Slavic and other non-British immigrants” (McAree 1955:1). Associating

displaced persons – a term from immigration discourse⁴⁷ – with “murders of passion” branded Slavic war-time refugees as inherently more criminogenic and unpredictable than Canadian criminals. Canadian discourses of crime thus continued in their own way to pose the Eastern Question – of thinking about the internal outsider. And they did so by drawing on the typifications established by other discourses.

As the “Iroquois of Europe” and as non-preferred immigrants who tested Canada’s absorptive capacity, Slavic settlers were already cast as deviant Others even before they had the opportunity to commit any crimes. The passage from passionate artistry to crimes of passion was therefore largely seamless. Sometimes it is difficult to tell the two discourses apart, as constructions of Slavic art and crime meld into nearly indistinguishable accounts. When Miller spoke of the crudeness and depravity that characterized Slavic literature he was not far off from the insights of the Annual Report of the North-West Mounted Police. According to Superintendent R. B. Deane, the Slavs were also crude and without strategy when it came to crime. His report depicted a number of facts to support this: “A Slav, who left town in the spring bewailing his inability to pay his butcher and grocer was found after his departure to have carried off \$700 in hard cash. His grocer managed to make him disgorge before he got entirely out of reach” (1895:91:2). Deane also described unthinking crimes of passion “wherein a Hungarian was wounded by a Slav... as the former had invited himself to a Slavic wedding where his presence was not desired” (1895:94). That the Slavs could be depicted as uncouth in art and crime and as violating the high forms of literature and family life, means that both discourses reinforced each other. Sometimes both discourses could be found overlapping in the same place. For one reviewer of Henryk Sienkiewicz’s literature, violence was endemic to the art of the Slavs: “The wars between Pole, Cossack, Tartar, and Slav present a picture of continuous bloodshed and strife. You are made to understand the nature of the races, which slaughter each other

⁴⁷ A genealogy of the racialization of the Slavs – something that is beyond the archaeological thrust of this work – should take into account the history of the terms by which they were othered. From the 1917 War-Times Election Act which designated the Slavs as *enemy aliens* (see chapter 5), Canadians continued to designate the Slavs as Others by rebranding them as *displaced persons* in the post-World War Two climate. Thus, from enemy aliens to displaced persons, the Slav was othered by a host of discourses that changed over time.

ruthlessly with the name of the Prince of Peace on their lips” (*Bookseller and Stationer* 1898:13). Slavic literature revealed the inherent violence and instability of the Slavic race either by direct depictions of Slavic life or by its own crudeness of style.

Of particular interest are the discourses of deviance that I have just examined that characterized Slavic community life. These extended themselves, it is tempting to say, almost naturally into discourses of Slavic crime. Thus, the figure molded in criminal discourse was not just of the Slav artists motivated by an uncanny “black psychology,” but of the Slav pater familias, the Slavic community, and the intoxicated Slav who presented difficulties for Canadian law enforcement. The *Morning Telegram* depended on these typifications when it reported:

In an attempt to wipe out his entire family today, John Dolowich, a Slav, aged 45 years, hacked his wife with an axe, and cut his son with the same weapon, attempted to kill his own children and finished by sticking a bread knife into his own throat, dying instantly. The man was crazed with drink and fought with his wife over domestic affairs. (*Morning Telegram* 1904b:1)

A lengthier account in the *Daily Nor'Wester* illustrates how these various typifications combined into a signifier of Slavic crime. In a piece titled “A Shooting Slav” (1894c), the coverage informs us of “a mining village of Wyoming, six miles from here, [where] a drunken Slav last night ran amok with a shotgun, killing one person” (1894c:4). While one is told that the individual was a “Pole” by the name of Michael Paloski, the piece quickly drops references to his nationality preferring instead to call him a Slav, thus denationalizing him. According to the report, “the murderous Slav started a quarrel in a saloon” (1894c:4) which resulted in him being thrown out. Angered by this, Paloski attempted to return with a shotgun. One learns that someone named David Ryan, standing outside with his wife and two other “young girl[s]... stopped the Slav and advised him to go home” (1894c:4). This “advice enraged the drunken brute” who in turn raised his gun and “poured the load of shot into the little crowd before him”, injuring Ryan, his wife, and the two young girls (1894c:4). When someone from the crowd attempted to arrest Paloski, the Slav fired at him as well. One also learns that “[t]wo of Paloski’s countrymen came to his assistance, and with revolvers covered a retreat to a Slav boarding house... [where] the men barricaded themselves in and defied the crowds” (1894c:4). After the Slavs shot a teenage boy down, the paper tells us that “the

crowd fled and the Slavs made their escape to the open country” (*Daily Nor’Wester* 1894c:4). The accounts variously employ the deviant typifications of Slavic community life: the Slavs are prone to crimes of passion and act impulsively when angered; they are alcoholics or “drunken brutes” who unleash indiscriminate violence at men, women, and children; they have strong bonds of mechanical solidarity and their communities, represented here by “Slav boarding houses,” are places where they understand and help one another in defiance of Western laws and customs.

In the same year, another piece in the *Daily Nor’Wester* drove the theme of Slavic masculine domination further. It told of the kidnapping of an “Australian girl” by the Slav miner Spiro Laczarovich. Drawing on the recollections of the abductee Victoria Wagner who was identified as “the mother of Olga Brandon, the beautiful actress” and as the daughter of a man who at the time worked in Australia’s interior labour camps, the paper quoted her as saying:

Among those who visited the camp were many of a notorious band of Slav miners, who terrorized all the region, and their chief, who was destined to be Olga’s father, almost terrified me when he made grimaces at me and gave me presents. Yet when he was gone I used to think of him and rather liked him because he was so big and bold and had such fiery black eyes – they were blacker and bigger than Olga’s are – and such a fierce looking black beard. (*Daily Nor’Wester* 1894d:3)

When Wagner turned 13, she recalled how she was kidnapped by Laczarovich:

He rode into camp on horseback one morning when my father was down in the mine. I was at play with my sister. He caught me up and sped away, and though the alarm was soon given and chase made after the kidnapper he was never caught. He and his band knew the bush too well for that.... Almost immediately I was taken to an interior town and married to my captor. Then began a life for me the horrors of which are still fresh in my mind. My husband was poor and a wandering vagabond, and there was no possible escape for me. Before I was 14 years old my first baby was born. In the next nine years there were six more children, and during most of these years we were either roving about the bush or I was forced to go down in the mines and work with the men. (*Daily Nor’Wester* 1894d:3)

Wagner’s recollection remains loyal to the stereotype of the excessively passionate and patriarchal Slav who threatens the security of the Anglo/Teutonic family. As is the

standard in contemporary depictions of racialized men, the Slav is presented as being sexually threatening as well. The combination of themes makes it possible to present Laczarovich as both a traditionalist and an outlaw. By kidnapping Wagner, the Slavic peasant contravenes Western legal and cultural norms. In doing so he is clearly a deviant. And yet, he remains committed to traditional ideals of marriage and domesticity, however perverted these may be by his nomadic lifestyle and the requirement that his wife work along his men.

Laczarovich's band of Slav miners invoked for Anglo-Canadian readers the image of a nomadic, tightly-knit, and organic Slavic community. Like Cossacks of the Eastern European steppes, the roving band of immigrant labourers was presented as a colourful, threatening, homogenous mass. They stuck to the land ("knew the bush too well") and to each other (terrorizing the camp as a "band"). The idea that the Slavs were bound by ties of loyalty and that their very communities were centres of crime was well established by such naturalistic assumptions of land and kinship ties. To get at individual acts of Slavic criminality, law enforcement officials even argued that it was the Slavic community that would have to feel the pressure of Western legal norms. Just as racist discourses today assume the interchangeability of the racialized individual with the racialized community, where the racialized individual can speak for all the members of the category, the notion worked also well in reverse: The racialized Slavic community could be spoken to, in fact had to be spoken to, in order to reach individual Slavs. Reporting on an event in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, the *Victoria Daily Colonist* observed:

In order that they may go among their countrymen and impress upon them the enormity of the crime of murder, and the terrible punishment the law of this country calls for, a large number of Slavs, Hungarians, Italians, and Russians and other foreigners were invited to attend the execution here today of Saus Felix Sadizius, a young Pole convicted of the murder of a woman and her child... The idea of having present representatives of the various foreign elements in this section of the coal region originated with Sheriff Evans, who thought the story of the execution as told from the lips of the foreigners will have a salutary effect in curbing the tendencies of some of the lawless element. (1908:5)

As can be seen from these accounts, the term "Slav" designated a type of criminal. Police records, literary fiction, and media accounts readily employed it as an identifier. In the *Prince George Citizen*, one encounters, for example, the racial

description of a victim (and implicitly also the criminal) but not of the agent of law: “Provincial Constable Hilton and Gumbo Melnik, a Slav, are in hospital here from gunshot wounds... It is alleged that the shots were fired by Fred Mekosky when the constable and Melnik were talking outside the latter’s house at Michael” (1921:1). Often, discourses of crime, just like discourses of art and community, linked various types of crime with the physical features of the Slavs. Once again what is striking in these genres of discourse is the physical visibility of the Slavs and the way in which Canadian eyes were trained to see such Slavic features as Laczarovich’s size, black eyes, and “fierce” beard. Well into the 1960s, *The Globe and Mail* partook in such racialization when it reported that a man in his 40s attacked a drug store with a butcher knife. According to the police, “the man... spoke with a Slavic accent... is six feet tall with close cropped brown hair and has high cheek bones” (*The Globe and Mail* 1962:3). In another piece, the paper characterized a Ukrainian-Canadian restaurant owner accused of war crimes as “a thickset, sturdy man with a round Slavic face...” (Lewcun 1964:5). There is no reason to trust that these are authentic Slavic features any more than one should believe that Native Americans really have red skin. What matters is that features were singled out this way in the first place, and that race as a second order of discourse interpreted them into its mythic structure. What, however, makes it possible to specify in the first place any Slavic phenotypical traits?

Once again, the possibility of such depiction is best approached through the notion of the overdetermination of discourse. Between the discourses of law and newspaper journalism, Slavic physicality was constructed to signify a recognizable criminal type. A discursive layering took place whereby typifications established by journalists and police officials could migrate back and forth, contributing to the racialization of the Slav as an Other. With stocky built, a round head, and high cheekbones, the Slav was a partially-fixed and stable figure in both journalistic and criminal discourses. The physiognomy established by these discourses communicated that such Slavic features belonged to an unstable but highly traditional type with a penchant for violence and impulsive action. Fiction should also not be underestimated as a structuring mechanism for discourses concerned with “the real.” Fiction too supplied building blocks for the physiognomic order within which the Slavs were read as criminogenic racial Others. William Woods’ popular 1942 novel *Edge of Darkness*, which

was serialized by *The Winnipeg Evening Tribune* and in 1943 turned into a film starring Errol Flynn, offers a firm image of Slavic deviance and physicality:

The men came toward him slowly from all sides. The soldier he had called a Slav was at the head of the group, that came from the steps, dark and heavy, with a broad mouth and narrow eyes. His head was thrust forward, lips drawn taut, showing the large teeth.... They were all watching the one he had called a Slav. "You don't like us very much, do you?" the Slav asked.

The old man smiled with his bloody lips. "That's right."

The soldier lashed out and struck him in the face. The blow came like a signal. Their heads all lifted. One or two winced and turned away. The Slav struck him again....

They closed in with kicks and blows, like animals long pent up... (1942:18)

It does not matter that the description offered here is less "realistic" than the high cheekbone, round-face type of identifications circulating in the Canadian press. The "dark and heavy" figure with "large teeth" and "narrow eyes" (a likely reference to the Asian qualities of the Slavs) works equally well to establish the Anglo fantasy of the Slav. Even if the image presented here fails to capture the "real" features of the Slavs, and even if it seems somewhat exaggerated, it succeeds in establishing a discursive space for the legitimate claim that there are such things as Slavic phenotypical features. In being "wrong" it still manages to say that the very thing it attempts to describe poetically and metaphorically can on some other plane be described biologically and physically. In so doing, fiction contributes in its own way to the construction of a racial category.

Conclusion

In discourses concerning art, community, and crime, the Slavs were constructed as racial Others. As this chapter has proposed, there are three possible observations of race according to which various discourses produce their subjects. The first observation, that Slavic physiology was associated with specific cultural and behavioral traits, is readily observable in each. The physical linking of the cultural shows itself in the discourse of art by the eagerness with which certain artists who hailed from Eastern and Central Europe were branded as "Slavs." In the policing of individual racial categories, in the idea that some Slavs could pass for Westerners while others could not, physical markers were being laid bare. Slavic physiology could be noted in direct observations concerning Slavic accents and gestures and the links established between these

physical characteristics and the “Slavic school” of art. In the discourse of community, the physical was established as much by the “crude”, sheepskin clad bodies that moved through them as it was by the “overcrowded” and “unhygienic” dwelling spaces and block settlements. Here the appearance of the Slav is the “appearance of poverty” (England 1929:83), where in imitation of their inhabitants even “wire fences sprawl... drunkenly across the virgin snow” (England 1929:78). It is in the discourse of crime, however, that Slav physiology is most explicitly laid bare. Newspaper coverage of crime and police records provided an impetus then, as they do now, for the specification of physiological signs by which criminals could be identified. The resulting physiognomical ordering linked such Slavic phenotypes as high-cheekbones, black beards, round heads, and stockiness with such violent crimes such as assault, murder, and kidnapping.

The second observation, that the branding of peripheral Europeans as Slavs functioned as a political move within a larger mythical structure, can be observed in the discourse of art in the persistent pattern of the denigration of Slavic art to secondary status, well below the artistic achievements of Anglo-Canadians. In the discourse of community, inferior urban housing, unsanitary outhouses, and block settlements which could be attributed to the policies of Railway Companies were instead naturalized as Slavic in character. By seeing the Slavic communities as reflections of Slavic racial traits, Canadian scholars could thus ignore the way in which they were modes of adaptation to such features as the Canadian labour market, immigration policies, and more broadly, anti-Slav racism. In the discourse of crime, the Slav was naturalized as an inherent criminal with a propensity toward impulsive, violent crime rooted in the tight-knit Slavic community life. The political dimension of such racialization presented the Slav as inherently more criminogenic and, in turn, as more deserving of legal control and policing.

The third observation, that the construction of the Slavs enabled the construction of a Canadian self, also characterizes the art, community, and crime discourses examined here. In art, the Slav was variously a source of inspiration and a disciplinary tool that motivated Anglo outperformance. Slavic art, even when depicted as lacking depth, was still consumed by Canadians in the hopes that it could provide a breath of fresh air that could resuscitate rigid Anglo art forms. In the discourse of community, the

Slav was chiefly someone who defined a lack that Canadian communities would either avoid and eliminate, or succumb to. Slavic housing and settlement blocks were interpreted as a challenge for various Canadian reformers. In the discourse of crime, Slavic criminality reinforced a number of Canadian norms: chiefly, that impulsive violence was un-Canadian; that patriarchy had to be measured; that law and order were the domain proper of Canadian colonialism; and that there was a correct Anglo-Saxon way to consume alcohol.

By showing how newspapers, politicians, agents of law, writers of fiction, and scholars produced the figure of the Slav as the Other, I have outlined the discursive contours of their racialization within Canada – that is, as the racialization of the Slavs as internal others shaped up on an imagined Canadian soil. In order to consider the dimensions of this racialization further, the next chapter will consider how the figure of the Slav thus produced related to whiteness. It is worth recalling that Chapters 4–6, which considered the social construction of the Slavs, found scant evidence that such discourses racialized them as non-white. Chapter 7 will provide a special focus on the absence of whiteness in the racialization of the Slavs. The Chapter will demonstrate that the identity of the Slav was racialized in explicit opposition not to a white Canada but an Anglo-Saxon one.

Chapter 7.

Non-White or Non-Saxon?

European in his outward appearance, he is an Asiatic in his heart, a double-faced person, new in his recent culture, old in his Tartar barbarity. (Victoria Daily Colonist 1891:6)

The preceding chapters have established the existence of what I have called the denationalized racial categorization of the Slavs. My tracing of the ways in which a Canadian discursive formation constituted the Slavs as singular, homogenous racial Others has so far demonstrated the Slavs were attributed with distinct phenotypes (see Chapter 4). They were visibly recognizable by such traits as deep-set eyes, receding foreheads, and round-headedness. These traits, furthermore, signified politically the Slavs' inferior status within Europe. As most discourses operating in Canada were physiognomic, the deep-set eyes of the Slavs were not just a curious marker of difference but the signification of a lack of joy, and the joyless eyes of the Slavs were also suspicious eyes which were really the eyes of those for whom trust was an issue and who, in turn, could not be trusted. Read politically, all of this signified the Slavs' inability to self-govern, as well as the likelihood the Slavs could not be assimilated and would, in fact, present a serious challenge to Canada's absorptive capacity – a metaphor that evoked the organic inability of the Canadian nation to ingest or integrate Slavic immigrants (see Chapter 5). Additionally, I have considered how the documented inferiority of the Slavs was established in discourses on art, community life, and deviance, which collapsed the physical traits with social attributes, thus further entrenching the Slavs as an inferior racial type (see Chapter 6). While paying attention to phenotypes and physiognomy, I have until now deliberately sidestepped the question – raised in my reading of the various theoretical and historical approaches to peripheral Europeans (see Chapter 2) – whether such racialization meant the Slavs were still white

or whether discourses of racialization operated by excluding the Slavs from whiteness. It is to this question that this chapter turns.

Going against the view in whiteness studies that treats all peripheral Europeans as non-white, as well as against the perspective in Slavic Studies that sees them instead as Euro-ethnics who were/are subject to xenophobia but not the real antipathies of racism, this chapter advances the argument that *the Slavs were racialized without being excluded from whiteness and that their racialization proceeded instead as an othering from all things Anglo-Saxon*. To develop this argument, it will be necessary to conceptualize the racialization of the Slavs according to two modes: white/non-white and Saxon/Slav. This chapter will show that while the Slavs were racialized in numerous discourses according to the two modes, *the Saxon/Slav mode of racialization prevailed over the white/non-white mode of racialization*.

With that argument in mind, the first section will entertain in the style of the historians of whiteness studies the possible case that could be made for viewing the Slavs as non-white (according to the white/non-white mode of racialization). It will, however, not do so on grounds claimed by whiteness studies scholars but in the interest of establishing the poststructuralist principle that history is made up of uneven, haphazard, sometimes linked and sometimes discontinuous events, and that discourses operate somewhat like the multiverse theory in physics.⁴⁸ All processes and discourses, including parallel discourses like the non-white racialization of the Slavs which actually diverged from the Canadian discursive formation (characterized by the Saxon/Slav mode of racialization), are involved in the shaping of all other processes and discourses. Multiple discourses collide, or at least touch and influence each other. There is certainly evidence of alternative discourses that attempted to constitute the Slavs as non-white. The social science of Edmund Bradwin in *The Bunkhouse Man* (1928) and the fiction of

⁴⁸ The multiverse theory maintains our universe is not the only one, but exists in parallel relationship to other universes, all with potentially different physical constants. So too will a case for parallel discourses help to establish the principles I have outlined in the antifoundational theory of race (see Chapter 3) such as the rejection of metanarratives (for this study, this means rejecting the idea that there is only one, true discourse of race or mode of racialization) and the acceptance of the principle of overdetermination (meaning, parallel discourses work on one another and even overlap).

E. A. Taylor in “Anna Jakobovna, Jewess” (1906) will be examined closely for the way in which they construct the Slavs outside of whiteness. They will be considered even if they played only a marginal role in the historical trajectory of the racial identity of the Slavs. The second section shows that the non-white mode of racialization was also equally balanced with discourses that racialized the Slavs as white. There is as much evidence for the racialization of the Slavs as white, and to this end discourses that explicitly proclaimed the whiteness of the Slavs will be briefly considered. Ultimately, however, the white/non-white mode of racialization recedes before the preponderance of discourses that racialized the Slavs by setting them apart from a racialized Anglo-Saxon Self. The argument advanced in the last section is that in Canada an overwhelming number of discourses bypassed the question of the Slavs’ whiteness in favour of a racialization that proceeded in terms of the differentiation of the Slavs from Anglo-Saxon racial codes. This third possibility will be fleshed out as a racialization that proceeded according to a difference measured against the Anglo-Saxon world by considering the lectures of David Mills who did much to popularize the “Eastern question” in Canada.

The Case for the Non-White Racialization of the Slavs

According to Marilyn Lake, although their legal strategies differed, “[t]he defensive project of the ‘white man’s country’ was shared by places as demographically diverse as the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Kenya, South Africa, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Australia” (2003:352). Until roughly the mid-twentieth century, Canadians defined Canada as a white country (Ward, 1978; Roy 1989, 2003). Although no official “white men’s country” immigration policy ever existed as it did in Australia, it was well understood that Canada was *de facto* a white men’s country without the need to inscribe the fact into law. Thus, manufacturer and Unionist MP Herbert Clements reported that in Northern British Columbia “mill owners have been endeavouring to keep the country, a white man’s country...” (1918:975) without having to explain what he meant by this phrase. And Social Credit MP Walter Kuhl could argue “that provision should be made for the term ‘Canadian’ as a description of racial origin in Canada” (1939:3522). He proposed that “[u]nder the heading ‘racial origin’ in the census book of Canada, the term ‘Canadian’ should be accepted from those persons of white extraction whose fathers for three generations have been born in Canada” (Kuhl 1939:3522). Such

parliamentary speeches indicate that for many the idea of Canada as a social body was traceable to the racialized bodies of white settlers who were the proper bearers of a Canadian identity.

Would Clements or Kuhl consider the Slavs as the right building blocks for a white settler Canada? It is hard to tell. But what is clear is that against the current of thought which sought to make Canada white, the Slavs occasionally turned up short as far as their racial capital was concerned. The racialization of the Slavs as non-white continued to trickle well toward the middle of the 20th century. As late as 1940, Social Credit MP Anthony Hlynka (the second Ukrainian Canadian to be elected as a federal politician) felt he had to make the case for the inclusion of central Europeans into the white race. Hlynka drew attention to a “serious statement”, made by relief officer G. W. Parker, cited in the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix* to the effect that “[t]here should be two scales of relief, one for central Europeans and one for ‘white people.’” (1941:380). Hlynka objected to Parker’s proposal, retorting: “[t]his, I submit, Mr. Speaker, is a vile form of racial discrimination. I challenge the authority upon which Mr. Parker bases his classification of people, in saying that central Europeans do not belong to the white race” (Hlynka 1941:380). Liberal MP W. A. Tucker, who self-identified as “a Canadian of British origins,” supported Hlynka’s position. Tucker also challenged Parker’s proposal, offering

of the first two young men from my constituency to give their lives in this war in the service of their country, in the sinking of the *Fraser*, one was of Ukrainian origin. Then, in almost the same issue of the newspaper that announced his death, we had the statement referring to these people of Ukrainian origin as not being “white”. That Ukrainian mother laid her most precious possession upon the altar of freedom; then, after making that sacrifice she had to hear that statement made by a fellow-Canadian of British origin. It was cruel. (1941:382)

The separate classification of central Europeans and white people was inconceivable for Hlynka and Tucker; for them, the two identities were synonymous. That Hlynka and Tucker even had to make a case for their conflation, however, signals the possibility of viewing the Slavs as non-white – a possibility exercised by the ex-soldier and relief officer Parker. This section will consider how the racialization of the Slavs as non-white was accomplished by three discursive techniques: the differentiation of the Slavs from other white immigrants in Canada; the differentiation of the Slavs from white Canadians;

and the differentiation of the Slavs from other white Europeans/Canadians and non-whites abroad.

One way in which the Slavs were rendered non-white was by comparison to other white immigrants. The whiteness of Northern and Western European immigrants could be secured by the lack of whiteness of Central, Eastern, and Southern Europeans. In a letter to the editor of a Winnipeg based paper, one reader raised concern over the fact that the columns of the paper had previously described “the Icelanders, Mennonites and Belgians as *something apart from white men*”, and that they were, furthermore, connected “with atrocious murderers and as being people for whom it would be necessary to build jails and court houses” (*Morning Telegram* 1899d:2, emphasis added). Seeking to correct this impression, the writer reassured readers of the paper that this was an erroneous position. As the writer made known, these categories of immigrants were unfairly associated with a Galician who committed

murder at Stuartburn... [of a] man and his family of four innocent helpless little children in cold blood without any provocation whatever to obtain possession of the small sum of \$60, and that from the start they had made it would be advisable to build court houses and jails for them. I do not think that the person who is responsible for the paper which circulated such an unfounded statement derogating by comparison Icelanders, Mennonites, and Belgians, people from northwestern Europe, who differ from us but in language, with Slavs of Russia and Austria, should be allowed to go uncorrected. (*Morning Telegram* 1899d:2)

From this account it is clear “Slavs of Russia and Austria” were the real problematic immigrant element. And their whiteness, unlike the whiteness of “northwestern Europeans,” could be doubted. The author objected to racial derogation while relying on it, and his account illustrates that racialization can facilitate the construction of a Self through the construction of an excluded Other. Icelanders, Mennonites and Belgians became more securely white when compared to the Slavs.

A second technique of racialization involved questioning the white credentials of the Slavs by distinguishing them from already assimilated *bona fide* white Canadians. Reporting on an inspection carried out by two immigration branch officials, the *Morning Telegram* placed the Slavs in opposition to white settlers in Yorkton, Saskatchewan:

W. F. McCreary and F. Pedley of the immigration department were here last week. They drove out to the nearest Doukhobor village and now deny the reported stories of starvation. Mr. McCreary says the Devil's Lake Slavs will be removed next spring, which action proves that the *strong complaints coming from white settlers* in that district were well founded. (1899e:2, emphasis added)

When the *Morning Telegram* describes one category of the population as Slav and the other as white, there is evidence of the distantiation of the Slavs from whiteness. The Slavs, as this newspaper made known, while perhaps not undergoing starvation were still to be relocated in order to accommodate white settler Canadians. The crucial point, however tempting it is to students of race and racism, is not that conflict existed between these two racial categories (Slavic-immigrant and white-settler) but that these categories could be spoken into being in the first place and they could be listed as distinct racial categories. Even if white-settlers did not object to the Slavs, even if they desired them as neighbours, the fact remains that they could be categorized as a racially distinct and implicitly non-white population.

Such placing-next-to of the “Slavs” and “whites” constructs racial categories. The listing of racial categories is a potent technique of distantiation, a power exercised over the racial imagination in that it names, groups, and distinguishes racial difference as it organizes and ranks it. Edmund Bradwin, who was a “labourer-teacher” employed by Frontier College (see Chapter 4), dedicated his life as the inscription on his plaque attests, “to the education and social well-being of transient workers” (Clarke 1959). Bradwin employed this technique in a way that achieves both techniques of racialization considered so far – the differentiation of Slavs from other white European immigrants and from white Canadians. His 1928 *The Bunkhouse Man* (based on his dissertation) provides, as one book reviewer noted, “a first-hand sociological account of the men who did the heavy work in the northern work camps at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century” (Porter 1973). In the work, Bradwin constructs the Slavs as non-white by placing them as a distinct category next to genuine white-settler “Canadian-born” subjects and, furthermore, by comparing the Slavs to other “foreign-born” white Europeans, in the manner of the first technique of racialization. *The Bunkhouse Man* is thus as much a study of “frontier” working conditions in railway camps as it is a primer of racialization.

In Part I, titled “The ‘Whites’”, Bradwin begins by delineating the racially stratified ranks:

Among the whites are included always the Canadian-born, both French-speaking and English-speaking, as well as the new arrivals from the British Isles, and Americans from different states of the Union, engaged on the work. The term foreigner is not applied always simply as a sobriquet for non-English-speaking workers; included with the whites are usually the Scandinavians also, and sometimes the Finns, and in fact any other foreign-born nationals who by their intelligence, their skill as workers, or sheer native ability, have earned a recognition on their individual merits. (1928:100)

Whiteness for Bradwin is to be understood as separate from colour. It excludes but sometimes includes “foreigners.” It depends on national origins and also on merit. Bradwin thus links a number of signifiers in a great chain of whiteness. Race is a demonstrable quality, established by class and occupational hierarchy as to “the white-man falls most of the positions which connote a ‘stripe’ of some kind, officials in one capacity or another – walking-bosses, accountants, inspectors, the various camp foremen, cache-keepers, as well as clerks who perform the more routine work of checkers and time-keepers” (1928:100-101). What his logic demonstrates, as Roediger observes in his own study of whiteness and labour in the U.S., is that “[t]he race of the workers could define the race of the work” (2005:74). Because white men are typically managers, management becomes white work. Management is, in this sense, a racialized profession. The same holds for all work.

Labour and class thus construct and maintain racial hierarchy, but this social process is not labour’s own. Race does not emanate solely from the relations of production. Racial hierarchies have to be known, visualized, and interpreted, and to this end the intellectual efforts of Bradwin, an outside observer of the daily activities of camp work, are themselves implicated in discourses of race making and in the policing of the boundaries of partially fixed racial identities. To be precise, the author who occupies a position within the discursive formation, establishes racial boundaries through Laclau’s principle of equivalence = identity, which operates in Bradwin’s linkages of the equivalential chain of whiteness, comprised of Canadian and American born French and English speakers, the British born, and Scandinavians who all perform more prestigious, higher-ranked work. But this principle also depends on elements that cannot be linked.

Equivalence = identity, in other words, depends at the same time on the principle difference = identity.

In Part II, titled “The ‘Foreigners’”, Bradwin moves to the second rank of racial stratification which encompasses the principle difference = identity. This category, which here constitutes a fundamental exclusion of certain racialized workers, imposes an internal limit on the discursive system. It is by virtue of the differentiated empty signifier “foreigner” that whiteness can come into being. As argued in Chapter 6, the foreign, excluded Other is a measuring rod against which a self-conscious, sovereign racial Self emerges. It is the undercurrent of being against which an overarching Self becomes possible.

This excluded category of “foreigner” also contains its own internal linkages, its own principle of equivalence = identity. “Among such groups, men of Slav races greatly predominate” (1928:118). As Bradwin notes, eastern Slavs, specifically Ukrainians, “were particularly in evidence.” These he regarded as “the best type of Slav groupings among the navvies on the National Transcontinental Railway” as they “took so readily to the hard manual work of the grade” (1928:121). In the second tier belonged “the western Slavs, now comprising largely the countries of re-established Poland and Czecho-Slovakia” (Bradwin 1928:121). The western Slavs “entered Canada during the third period of railway construction... [and] were commonly listed as Slovaks, Bohemians, Poles, Austrians, Lithuanians and, in some cases, Ruthenians” (Bradwin 1928:121). This tier was less reliable and hardworking. As Bradwin observed, “[m]any thousands of these people came and went on the line during the ten-year period of construction. Less purposeful in their plans and life, they shifted frequently from work to work” (1928:122). The third tier was made up of “southern Slavs, including Serbs, Croats, and other mountain races, now known as the Jugo-Slavs” as well as Bulgarians and “a few Macedonians” (Bradwin 1928:122, 123). Curiously, in a palpable move of de-whitening, Bradwin differentiated this Slavic sub-set on the basis of colour: “These are a darker people than those already noted among the other Slav divisions” (1928:122). As the lowest ranking Slavs, the southern Slavs were prone to discord “springing from rivalries of race and accidents of geography” and while they could be characterized as “industrious plodding workers and aggressive, they suffer from a lack of English, a

working knowledge of which they are not always willing to acquire. There are men of middle age among them, more accustomed to the use of arms than of tools for useful pursuits” (Bradwin 1928:122). Besides the various Slavs, the category “foreigners” also included “pure Austrians, or Hungarians, as they preferred to be called”, Italians, and small numbers of “[m]en of the Levantine peoples – Turks, Syrians, and Armenians”, Jews, Germans, as well as a few members of “the yellow races” – the “Orientals” who “are not numerous in the Canadian camps” (Bradwin 1928:122-9).

For Bradwin, equivalence = identity in that eastern, western, and southern Slavs, Italians, Jews, Laventine peoples, and “Orientals” could be subsumed under the empty signifier “foreigner.” This arrangement allows the second principle difference = identity to establish the identity of the “whites” against the distantiation of the “foreigners.” As a compact category, the “foreigners” were mostly made up of Slavs. And although the Slavs were differentiated into three tiers, all such diversity ultimately receded; for Bradwin, the denationalized racial category of the Slav characterized the “foreigners.” Any differences he established between them, as well as between other equivalential racial categories, were poured into the singular figure of the Slav worker, whose definite characteristics were that he was “slow and immobile, lacking initiative; rather careless of personal appearance.... of medium stature, thick-set, with moustache usually, not graceful in motion, and with something of a sullen expression on his broad face” (Bradwin 1928:118). For Bradwin, denationalization was the way in which he achieved his racialization of the Slavs. As he noted, while the Slavs can be differentiated nationally, and while whites often refer to them pejoratively in national terms as “Russians, Bohunks, Galicians, Douks maybe, and occasionally Hunkies”, the Slavs themselves do not differentiate: “[t]oo often fellow-workers in camps neither know nor care enough to note any differences” (1928:120).

The third method of racialization involved the casting of the Canadian gaze unto Europe, the Middle East, and Asia (see “constitutive outside” in Chapter 5). According to some accounts, as concerns the history, politics, geography, and demographics of Europe, the Slavs were clearly non-white in their own homelands – that is, outside of Canada as the Others of Europe. In “Anna Jakobovna, Jewess” published in 1906 by the Toronto-based *Methodist Magazine and Review*, E. A. Taylor racializes the Slavs by

contrasting them with the Japanese, Jews, and with white Canadians. In the short story, Taylor describes the Japanese takeover of the Russian-held city of Port Arthur. In the transition, Port Arthur descends into chaos as marauding Russian troops stormed various buildings in search for vodka. A young Canadian soldier and Red Cross worker, Frank Worth (who also goes by the surname Ivanovitch), endowed with “a love of adventure” and “instinct to serve his fellow men” (Taylor 1906:551), has the unenviable task of defending the city’s hospital against the riots. When he asks the doctor in charge, a Jew named Lazarus, whether the hospital is in any danger, he receives the following reply:

“When men of your nation get drunk, Frank Ivanovitch,” he said, “they want to smash things, and fight every man they meet, but when the Russian peasant, who is a torpid tow-headed beast at the best of times, is mad with drink, all he thinks of is more drink. You know how many white women have taken refuge under our flag to-night, and I do not think any sentimental regard for the Red Cross will save the hospital, if the rioters really come this way.” (Taylor 1906:551).

The Russians are variously described as Slavs, peasants, imbibers, and anti-Semites. They are spared no insults, as one of them is depicted as having a “childishly stupid savage face” (Taylor 1906:553). By contrast, the Jewish doctor’s face is described in one passage as “haggard” while, in another, Frank’s face is said to be “lined, and its skin strangely dark” as he slept (Taylor 1906:551). One can attribute the descriptions of Lazarus’ and Frank’s faces as being temporary aberrations. The darkness and weariness of their visages expresses their dedication and service during war, while the faces of Russians are simply an index of what the Russians themselves always are – childish, stupid, and savage. There is no hidden depth as concerns the Russians; these are the Russians’ normal traits. The hospital, a symbol of a nurturing femininity that restores health, is itself in need of protection when no strong authority can overawe the rioters. A Jewish nurse and the hospital staff are threatened by Slav peasants.

In this account, the Russians plainly stand outside of civilization. As far as Frank is concerned, “they have no business to call themselves white men” (Taylor 1906:554). When the Russian soldiers overrun the hospital and demand that the Jews who work there be handed over on grounds that they betrayed the Russian cause as well as Christ, Frank intervenes. He saves Lazarus’ sister, Anna Jakobovna who is also a Red

Cross worker, by brandishing a gun and imposing his authority on the mob (“for ten minutes he explained to the crowd what he thought of them in vigorous Anglo-Saxon”) (Taylor 1906:554). After saving Anna, Frank scolds her for taking on such a dangerous assignment, revealing another racial lesson: “I know we may not be all that we should be, but a good woman, a woman like you, Anna Jakobovna, and wearing the Red Cross badge, could go anywhere among our soldiers or mobs, and there doesn’t live a man who would not reverence you. These men are beasts” (Taylor 1906:554). Anna agrees, also adding a religious point to Frank’s account: “The Saxon to-day reverences all women and believes the unpardonable sin is one against a child, but then he questions everything in the religion of his fathers and often scoffs at his church, but the Slav does just the reverse” (Taylor 1906:554).

In Taylor’s fiction, Russian Slavs are constructed as direct opposites of Canadian Anglo-Saxons and whites (more on how this piece can be said to employ both modes of racialization – white/non-white and Saxon/Slav – will be offered in the third section). By absorbing, as it were, traits unbecoming of Canadians and by being banished from whiteness, the imbalanced Slavs provide the ground for the construction of a stable Anglo-Saxon Canadian self. Different norms guide their lives. Slavic physiognomy combines distinct phenotypical traits with such cultural characteristics as the inability to self-govern, patriarchy, religious zealotry, alcoholism, clannishness, violence, and lawlessness. As possessors of these traits, Russian Slavs are outside of whiteness, and this is evident by the threat they pose to white women (Anna who is Jewish is presumably included) and by Frank’s blatant disregard for their whiteness (“they have no business to call themselves white men”). As Anna reveals, white Anglo-Saxons are chivalrous, protecting women as one would children, while also being intellectually independent enough to challenge Church authority (even though she chides Frank for this). The Russian Slav, by contrast, is patriarchal and religiously submissive. Furthermore, the Russians reveal they are unsuitable for free and democratic self-government. As Frank observes, “all this talk of Russia needing a freer Government is nonsense; what the mass of the Russian people I have met need is a Government that will put them down – and keep them down” (Taylor 1906:554). The virtues of self-government do not require that one extends them the way today democracy is extended,

often forcibly, as a universal good. Racial doctrines, in fact, prescribed that what would be typically good for the Anglo-Saxon would ruin the Slav.

As I have already indicated, such racialization of the Slavs outside of Canada continued well into the period of the Second World War. Journalist Dorothy Thompson entertained it by introducing Stalin to her readers as a white man and not a real Slav. Depicting the Big Three – Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin – at a meeting “around a small table”, Thompson presented them as reasonable men whom experience taught that “there are limits to their power” (Thompson 1943:6). Only Stalin’s whiteness had to be secured in order for him to be seen as a legitimate member of the circle:

Born in the home of a Georgian cobbler... [h]e neither belonged to the dominant class of his country nor even to the dominate nationality. He is neither Russian nor Slav, in the greatest Slavic country. He was born in the tribal society in the remote Caucasian mountains, which they say, were the cradle of the white race. (Thompson 1943:6)

That mountain range, which extends in part over Russia is the mythical home of whiteness. Unlike Stalin, Russian Slavs are listed as next-to but not quite as sharing in these origins.

The three techniques of racialization reviewed here serve as evidence for the fact that for some Canadians, the Slavs were non-white or at least, following Jacobson, that at best one could speak of Slavs in terms of a “probationary whiteness” (1998). Whether compared to immigrant populations from Scandinavian countries; to already white Anglo-Saxon Canadians; or to other Europeans and non-Europeans outside of Canada, one cannot deny that certain discourses denied or threw doubt on the whiteness of the Slavs. This exclusion from whiteness is precisely what Whiteness Studies’ scholars like Jacobson attempt to bring to the surface. It is a fascinating and daring interpretation of history to maintain, as Jacobson does, that “it was not a foregone conclusion that the hierarchically ordered white races ever would become a single, consanguine race of Caucasians in popular estimation” (1998:201); that whiteness excluded and therefore did not have to eventually include categories like the Slavs. And yet, even if “the racialization of new immigrants was messy” (Roediger 2005:134), at least as concerns the Canadian discursive formation of race, one cannot speak of how the Slavs “became” white (or

Caucasian) or how their whiteness was probationary – to invoke the guiding tropes of Whiteness Studies – as *the discourses that excluded the Slavs from whiteness occupied a marginal position*. It is telling that the character Frank advises us that the Russians should not call themselves white. If their non-whiteness was widely established, why would he have to say it? And does his saying it not reveal the fact that even in fiction the author, Taylor, could only go so far as wishing we would stop thinking of the Slavs as white and not that the Slavs actually were not white? It is likely the case that rather than transgressing the limit of actual lived experience, fiction establishes limits in discourse and discursive formations by which lived experience proceeds.

Autobiographies and memoirs play a role similar to fiction in that regard. In his memoir *I Remember*, Major General of the Canadian Armed Forces and prominent Alberta-based conservative politician W. A. Griesbach expressed what this dissertation takes to be the dominant racial view of peripheral Europeans in Canada. Writing under the period that falls within the scope of this research, Griesbach provided an altogether different account from what is typically advanced in Whiteness Studies when he remarked that “[o]ur people seemed quite to understand that Negroes, Chinese and Japanese could not be assimilated, but the majority of our people seemed to think that because the Ukrainians were white there was no reason at all why they should not at once understand our social customs and our political methods and become good Canadian citizens” (1946:215). Griesbach contradicts the account I have just provided of the non-white racialization of the Slavs. It is not the case that historical amnesia overtook Griesbach, as his brief observation attests to racial conflict where Ukrainians fail to become “our people.” Griesbach’s expectation of the assimilation of the Ukrainians into the Canadian social structure – an expectation that reveals that peripheral Europeans were seen as European and white enough to be assimilated – is an important acknowledgment of the fact that the Ukrainians could also be seen as white. Their otherness chafed against assimilation, not whiteness. Taking a lead from Griesbach, the remainder of the chapter argues for a second possibility – namely, that the Slavs were also white in a number of Canadian discourses.

Weighing the Data

Before considering just how the racialization of the Slavs operated in terms of the distantiation of the former from the Anglo-Saxon race, it is necessary to note that there is equal evidence to suggest that the Slavs were also, as Griesbach attests, viewed as white. In reviewing, as this dissertation has done, 1566 pieces of data comprising newspaper and magazine articles, encyclopedic entries, medical articles, novels, poems, police reports, academic research, political speeches and debates in the House of Commons, this research located only eight sources where the Slavs were explicitly racialized as non-white – that is, where whites and Slavs were held as incompatible categories. In fact, the previous section has been arranged to reflect as thoroughly as possible the evidence obtained from those sources. As concerns most social research on national questions, this one is based on a sample that cannot be considered as the definitive reflection of the racial discursive formation but as a representation of its tendencies. It is highly likely that many more occurrences of the distantiation of the Slavs from whiteness took place. It can be safely assumed this distantiation reflects the existence of a real discourse of Othering, but one that must be considered a slim undercurrent in the racialization of the Slavs.

Casting the net as widely as possible, this research also located eight sources where the Slavs were explicitly racialized as white (in the manner of Griesbach, for example) – a perfect counterbalance. Even as they immigrated in large numbers, provoking the racial animosity detailed throughout this dissertation, the *Victoria Daily Colonist* reluctantly but authoritatively described them as white: “these three clearly outlined families of the whites are the Hamites, of whom the Egyptians are the best known type; the Semites, as presented by ancient Babylonians and modern Jews and Arabs; and the great Aryan or Indo-European family, once called the Japhites, and including Hindus, Persians, Greeks, Latins, the modern Celtic and Germanic races, and even the Slavs or Russians” (1905:1, emphasis added). Similarly, M. M. Mallock concluded her essay “A Sketch of Canadian Immigration” by noting that various European races were really part of one great Caucasian race: “Celt and Teuton, Latin and Slav, these are all of them branches of the great Caucasian family tree, but branches which have been separated from one another in Europe since prehistoric

times" (1900:414). Citing the racial science of her times, she optimistically concluded that "the finest mixed races are those which spring from related, but not too nearly related, stocks", which indicates "the future mixture here should be a good one" (Mallock 1900:414).

And while Bradwin's *The Bunkhouse Man* attested to the existence of a two-tiered "white" and "foreigner" system of racial stratification in Canada's work camps, it is worth asking, would the Slavs be eligible to take up work with the Canadian Pacific Railway when the company advertised its "New Schedule of Wages for White Labor" in an 1882 issue of *Daily Colonist* (2)? Significant Slavic immigration would not begin until the 1890s. However, even once they arrived, "white labor" was a racial code not against peripheral European workers but against Asian labourers. The Slavs were likely included in the wages for white labour, while being relegated, as Bradwin rightly observed, to its lower-skilled occupations. "White man's country" and "white wages" were typically invoked not against the Slavs but against the immigration and labour of such racial categories as the Oriental, Hindu, Negro, and Indian. An article on mining in the North West Territories which appeared in *The Winnipeg Evening Tribune* supports this claim. The article described the Eldorado mine in Port Radium by opining that "[t]o the Indians, the whole procedure is just another demonstration of the white men's folly" (*The Winnipeg Evening Tribune* 1939:5). The colonial humour at work is there to convince us that the real folly is on the part of the Indians who do not understand the wisdom of industry. White and Indian are the only racial categories mentioned in the entire piece. Among the "hundred tough white men" who were "all mixed up – and all valuable", the article identified the speakers of "English – and French, Italian, Ukrainian, Finnish, Norwegian, German, Rumanian, Slav, Spanish or Gypsy" (*The Winnipeg Evening Tribune* 1939:5), thus racializing the Slavs as white. Following the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The Globe and Mail* also lumped Slavs with whiteness while distancing Latins, when it observed that "[t]he presence of Slavic technicians and troops is so widespread on the Island [i.e. Cuba] that anyone who appears to be a Nordic-type foreigner is assumed to be Russian or Polish" (Warson 1963:7).

At this point, it is worth noting that there is a significant difference between the white/non-white discourses on the Slavs. Although both are limited in their numbers,

discourses that pronounced the Slavs as non-white operated in a self-conscious claims-making manner. Claims such as “Caucasian mountains, which they say, were the cradle of the white race”, and that Slavs “have no business to call themselves white men” are arguments that stake out a claim. On the other hand, *discourses that pronounced the whiteness of the Slavs spoke in a more matter-of-fact style.* The claim that “the great Aryan or Indo-European family” includes “even the Slavs” speaks from factual authority declaring the world to be a certain way. This distinction – if it can be called that, given that only 16 cases have been examined – is not always the rule but it does bolster the idea that the Slavs were more securely white than non-white, even as they were constructed as racial Others.

Although on first sight the eight results confirming their whiteness could be dismissed as scant data from which to conclude the Slavs were definitively seen as white, this is not the point this dissertation wishes to defend. The claim here is not that they really were categorized as white (or non-white for that matter). Rather, the point is that the whiteness/ non-whiteness of the Slavs was not a significant component in their racialization. Racial discourses that spoke of categories like the Oriental and Indian invoked whiteness more readily than did discourses that spoke of the Slavs. The racialization of the Slavs proceeded by invoking the notion of a “Slavic type” which did not require its distantiation from whiteness. In light of the data, it is necessary to conclude that there was some doubt about their whiteness. But the Slavs were neither significantly differentiated from, nor included into, whiteness not because they were not racialized (the preceding chapters dispelled this notion) but because their racialization proceeded according to a difference measured against all things Anglo-Saxon. Put differently, the Slavs were overwhelmingly racialized as being non-Anglo-Saxon rather than white/non-white. It is to the Saxon/Slav mode of racialization that the notion of a “Slavic type” lends itself.

This research located 54 sources where the Slavs were racialized by explicit differentiation from the “Anglo-Saxon”/ “Saxon type” and, relatedly, 42 sources where Slavs were differentiated from the “Teutonic type” (from which the German stock was derived). This more preponderant type-based mode of racialization is the focus of the next section.

The Eastern Question: “The Saxon or the Slav?”

The question of whiteness largely bypassed the Slavs. The Slavs were not Saxon and this was the more fundamental axis on which their racialization as Others pivoted. A large number of works appeared bearing some variant of the pithy title “Saxon or Slav?” These sources will be examined here. This section will consider the external racialization of the Slavs (in terms of Laclau’s constitutive outside) as the others of Europe, often framed by the accompanying discourse known as “the Eastern Question.” This section will also briefly consider the discourses of internal racialization (in terms of Laclau’s formulation of discourse) that saw the Slavs as non-Saxon within Canada.

In the context of late 19th and early 20th century European geopolitics, the Slavs as external Others represented for Anglo-Canada a threatening race in Europe. Already one such example of racialization has been noted in Taylor’s “Anna Jakobovna, Jewess”, where Frank Worth not only upholds the claim-making discourse that maintains the Russians ought not to refer to themselves as “white” but where the Russians-as-Slavs are contrasted explicitly with Frank the Canadian-as-Saxon. The Slavs are ruthless and barbaric, rampaging through a city which lacks a central authority, while the Saxon defends Jewish minorities, upholds the norms of civilization, and succeeds in keeping the Slavs at bay.

The Eastern Question addressed the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the future prospects of various European powers, as well as the fate of many Slavs who resided in a number of non-Slavic states. Considering the destiny of Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Turkey, the *Manitoba Free Press* observed the Eastern Question had as much to do with the geopolitical maneuvers of various nation states as it did with the Slavic populations that resided in them:

Geography has an immense influence in politics; and geography imposes upon Austria and the Turks various limited intersections between the two peoples and their multiple populations. Again, the Austro-Hungarian Empire exercises its authority over an immense multitude of Slavs, just as Turkey does – Slavs of Bohemia, Galicia, Croatia, and the whole of ancient Illyria. (1876:7).

While naming distinct regions, the discourse of the Eastern Question often presented the Slavs as one indivisible, denationalized category – or in this case as an “immense multitude.” It framed the debate by raising the likelihood of the formation of “a strong Slav state” (*Daily British Colonist* 1878:np) – again, in the singular – that would usher a deluge over European civilization. The “East” of the Eastern Question was thus a constitutive outside. It pertained to an imagined realm which did not belong to Canada but against which Canada could define itself. In the discourse of the Eastern Question, the Slav represented variously the Austrian, Ottoman, and Russian Slavs as well as the only two Slavic states: Bulgaria and Russia. For the most part, however, the Eastern Question functioned as a *mélange* that blurred any serious national distinctions by the use of such homogenizing phrases as “Slavic dynamism” (*The Globe and Mail* 1946a:1), “Slavic aspirations” (*Belford’s Monthly Magazine* 1877:833), and, as the first U.S.-based *Slavonic Encyclopædia* observed, a so called “Pan-Slavonic danger” (Rouček 1949:vii). Even with Russia and Bulgaria in the mix, the Eastern Question constructed the Slavs as a racially threatening denationalized category.

The racial formation which posed the Eastern Question and upheld the Slavs as the answer, achieved more than just political analysis. Drawing on Laclau, the various Eastern Question discourses that brought the Slavs into being transformed them from passive elements (the Slavs as “peasants,” “religious,” “anti-Semitic,” etc.) into politicized moments (the Slavs as “dynamic,” “aspiring”, and aiming to form “pan-Slavic” blocs). This is what Laclau typically calls the process of *articulation* (see Chapter 3). As he points out, it is a practice that modifies not only the identity of the Slavs, but relationally the identity of the Saxon observer. However, because this process is shaped up by imagining the Slavs in “their parts” of Europe and not “at home” in Canada, Laclau designates such racialization as *antagonism*; that is, as a practice that allows for the formation of identity by invoking a constitutive outside (in this case, the European “East”). The Eastern Question was therefore an antagonism which conceptualized identity by imagining that the Other to which this identity related was outside the limits of the discursive system itself. Of course, as poststructuralist theory maintains, there is no real outside – all externalities are at the moment of being uttered, described, and imagined, already subject to internalization.

The implications of the Eastern Question were Europe-wide. As far as the magazine *The Bystander* was concerned, “[t]he Eastern Question is... the central vortex round which the political maelstrom whirls” (1880:33). The outcomes of late 19th and early 20th century European geopolitics involved continental Europe, ranging from England and Spain to Russia and Turkey. To account for the prospects of these nations, one had to consider the racial dynamics lying underneath their national foundations. These racial dynamics animated the national conflicts taking place in the so called “East,” and any outcome concerning war, revolution, or colonial administration had to be assessed in terms of the substrate of European racial dynamics. Such understanding of race meant that even when “Slav inspiration” for unity had, to the optimism of Western commentators, “been buried by Austria-Hungary... it is not destined to perish” (*The Victoria Colonist* 1909:10). The reason? Because politics are a reflection of racial temperament and character. So long as the Slavic bodies remain physically intact within the borders of Austria or Turkey, a Slavic aspiration threatens to undermine the stability of Europe and the West itself.

In Canada, the antagonistic Eastern Question was answered primarily in terms of a global conflict between the Saxon and the Slav. In fact, the former could not have been asked without the latter. Or stated differently, the Eastern Question presupposed the racial antagonism of the Saxon and the Slav. Even the moderate socialist Winnipeg-based paper *The Voice* framed it in terms of “Anglo-Saxon freedom and trade against continental militarism and Slavic despotism” (1899:6). On the more pro-Empire side of the spectrum, as *The Daily Colonist* saw it, the Eastern Question could be phrased in the following terms featured in one of its headlines: “Is This Preliminary to a Bloody Controversy Between the Slav and the Anglo-Saxon?” (1891:1). As *The Literary News* explained, in a piece titled “Slav or Saxon”, “a great struggle for supremacy is immanent between England and Russia.... The outcome of the struggle between the Slav and the Saxon depends... on two things. First, the scope and strength of disintegrating forces in the British Empire, and second, on social and political changes in Russia which may possibly remove aggressive motives” (*The Literary News* 1888:69-70). The periodical *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review* entertained the Eastern Question by asking what allies England still had in Europe in the late 19th century. After noting that Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Germany had variously cast England off, it

considered a singular Slavic race as posing for England the “constant danger of dissolution... [as] the growth of young nations in her neighbourhood, especially of Slav nations, will further shake the crazy edifice of her empire, and precipitate her doom” (Smith 1878:741). The struggle between the Saxon and Slav was thus sometimes left denationalized, being asked and answered in solely racial terms, and at other times specified in terms of the principal national actors, Russia and England. What is pertinent, however, is not how the question was analyzed but that it could be asked in the first place – and moreover, that it was asked by elevating and sharpening the incongruity of the Saxon and Slavic races.

Perhaps the most prominent case for answering the Eastern Question in terms of the opposition between Saxon and Slav was made by politician, lawyer, judge, and author, David Mills. His essay “Saxon or Slav: England or Russia?” was meant to be read as a lecture at the Political Science Club at the University of Toronto. Mills had delivered lectures on this theme at the University before; the club, however, could not secure a room in the University on the night scheduled for the lecture, and the lecture was instead published in *The Canadian Magazine*. Mills’ account of the opposition between the Saxon and Slav was popular, not only generating discussion in *The Globe* (1895:12; 1898:6) and *Daily Nor’Wester* (1898c:4), but even many years later finding a place in the diaries of William Mackenzie King.⁴⁹

Mills argued that every nation had a unique personality “which is seen in its art, industry, religion, philosophy, and government” (1895:519). To England belonged such attributes as commerce, self-government, human rights, and scientific and literary progress. Mills did not have a sociological conception of national character; he was a racial reductionist, as “the life of the State is dependent mainly upon the moral stamina of its people” (Mills 1895:519). Whatever qualities belonged to England were a reflection of its racial substrate. England thus had democratic and market-based values because its members as “a race may preserve those habits of simple virtue and unwearied energy” (Mills 1895:520). Furthermore, because race gave a nation its identity, and

⁴⁹ “I recall at the university of Toronto, in 1894, remarks by David Mills to the effect that the great future question would be whether the Slav or the Saxon was to dominate. With domination by the Slav, we shall have, after this war is over, to face world revolution” (King 1939).

because Canada and the US were at their core as Saxon as England, the Saxon race necessarily drew these countries into a racial confederacy: “The United States have, in the highest sense, no independent existence. They are a part and parcel of the Anglo-Saxon race, at the head of which is the United Kingdom... we are all one people, having a common aim, a common origin, and a common destiny” (Mills 1895:521).

For Mills there was no question that as members of the Anglo-Saxon race, Canadians could partake with England in “leading the march of humanity” as “[a]t this hour we belong to the dominant race” (1895:518). Speaking in terms of a “we”, Mills claimed the uniqueness of the Canadian chapter in the Anglo-Saxon saga is to be found in “the universality of our environment and in the numbers of independent centres of racial life” (1895:520). He did not elaborate on what was meant by those centres but his work indicates that he was imagining Canada as a node in the Anglo-Saxon confederacy whose national independence was manifested in institutions and norms of self-government. And should anyone doubt this, Mills invoked not only racial theory but also “a Divine purpose in history” (1895:518-9). According to Mills, a “leading State” (1895:519) gets such designation in history not just by appeals to divine purpose but because it makes a significant contribution to humanity. Its arts, science, commerce, and governance provide the necessary evidence.

Mills’ optimism had limits. He wondered whether this was going to last: “An epoch is complete when its historical development has unfolded everything wrapped up in the idea of progress which it represents” (1895:519). Progress can cease when “national energies are exhausted” (Mills 1895:519) and – suggesting Comte’s and Durkheim’s influence – when certain parts cease to play functional roles. All empires and civilizations will, according to Mills, outlive their usefulness. Mills thus entertained a thoroughly modern conception of history. He accepted progress as well as decay, which he simultaneously read racially and nationally. And, as a modern thinker, he evaluated the present in light of its future trajectory.

As it turns out, for Mills the gravest threat to Anglo-Saxon civilization was not racial degeneracy and decline but antagonism of the constitutive outside: “A large portion of the earth’s surface is to-day held by three races, which exhibit distinct habits of

life, distinct conceptions of government, and distinct types of thought. These are the English, the Russians, and the Spaniards” (Mills 1895:521). Spain, as Mills saw it, while dominant in terms of territorial control, was racially in decline. It was Russia that was poised to overtake the Anglo-Saxon world. And Russia would do so through ignoble means, evident by the rule of the last Tsar when, as Mills observed, “during his short reign more than a million of square miles were added to his dominions by shocking butcheries, concealed by audacious and shameless lying, such as has marked the diplomacy of no other country” (1895:522). Russian appetite for territorial expansion was a tendency that could be uncovered in the fact that “Russia had, in recent history, defeated Napoleon, dismembered Poland, acquired Finland, and extended her territories at the expense of Turkey” (Mills 1895:523). For Mills, given its Slavic racial substrate, Russia was necessarily autocratic. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, the Slavic lack of self-government – of the capacity to participate in open, democratic, republican institutions – was evident for Mills: “Look at the government of Russia, look at her policy of administrative exile, her police espionage, her prisons, her disregard for personal rights, and say whether these things can mean anything to us?” (1895:528). He also pointed out that in Russia no care was shown for the mad and that justice was arbitrary. While Russia was a Slavic power, and while there was a European Russia, for Mills “Russia is not a European power. Its government is Asiatic. All its conceptions are Asiatic. It is an Asiatic power, wielding the forces of modern civilization for the maintenance of an Asiatic despotism” (1895:529). Mills Orientalized the Slavs, as did a number of discourses not to render them non-white but to render them non-Saxon.

Given his racial theory of nationhood, the role of Divine purpose, and his assessment of the present situation and geopolitical prospects, Mills believed that the crucial question is “to consider whether the civilization of England or of Russia is to be the civilization of the next century” (1895:522). As an Anglo-Saxon country, Canada was already implicated in asking and answering the Eastern Question:

It is sometimes asked, what have we in Canada to do with a war between England and Russia in Central Asia? We have everything to do with it. Whenever that contest comes, it will involve the supremacy of the race to which we belong. It will be a contest to decide whether Russia shall dominate the world, or whether freedom of commerce shall still remain in the ascendant, and political freedom be the heritage of any portion of mankind. (Mills 1895:528)

Beyond Mills, echoes of the Eastern Question could be heard even after World War II as in the writing of a journalist who argued that Britain's "balance of power" was threatened and the country "may never again be able to recover it – unless Slavic dynamism greatly subsides" (*The Globe and Mail* 1946a:1). But not everyone shared Mills' analysis. There is no doubt that the Eastern Question was asked and that it was answered racially, but the assessments varied. Some held the Anglo-Saxon world did not possess the same racial features as the Slavic world and that the two were not comparable. The Slavic bloc was sometimes held to be more racially homogenous, with the West lacking any kind of complementary racial confederacy. At the outset of the Cold War, when as *The Globe and Mail* saw it,

Russian propaganda, which originally concentrated on preventing a Western bloc, now concentrates on splitting what it characterizes in line with its borrowed Pan-Slavic racial ideas, as an 'Anglo-Saxon' bloc. But there is no 'Anglo-Saxon' bloc, racial or otherwise. There are in it no specially trained and indoctrinated commissars sent out by a super-power... On the contrary. This is a fraternal association of two equal nations [the US and Britain] *which are showing increasing racial, political and economic differentiation, but which have a common bond in a common dedication to the ideals of human freedom and human dignity...* (1946b:1, emphasis added)

At best, *The Globe and Mail* maintained that as concerns the US and Britain one could speak of a cosmopolitan solidarity, not racial unity. And even prior to the Cold War, there was no consensus on the balance of power in the Eastern Question. In an article titled "The Races of the Future," *The Voice* (1902:8) inquired about what "lessons of Comparative Sociology" may be learned. It agreed with Mills' thesis that those races survive that are of most use to human progress, underscoring that such survival was owed not just to warfare but to the "intellectual unification of mankind... by means of railway, steamboat, telegraph, telephone..." (*The Voice* 1902:8). It, however, argued that the contest was actually between "the Anglo-Saxon, Slav, and the Chinese" (*The Voice* 1902:8). *The Voice* distinguished Slavic and Asian racial traits (without Orientalizing the Slavs as was common in Canadian racial discourse). In an attempt to celebrate their differences and contributions, while nonetheless denigrating and racializing them, *The Voice* observed that "John Chinaman's brain-pan is admittedly the most capacious of the Genus Homo. And the Slav's grand contribution to the 'common good' of the Peoples will be the 'Mir' of which the Princess [sic] Kropotkin, in the current New Liberal Review,

discourses with such admirable ludicity [sic]" (1902:8). According to the newspaper, from the Chinese, the Anglo-Saxon world stands to learn intellectual prowess; from the Slav, socialist organization as exemplified by the Mir. The difference between the socialist account of *The Voice* and the liberal accounts of Mills and *The Globe and Mail* concerned how they answered, and not whether they recognized, the Eastern Question. Both accounts racialized and both assumed a racial struggle, even as *The Voice* proclaimed in its pages the doctrine of socialism over that of race.

As the Others of Europe, the Slavs were the Others of the Saxons in England and Canada alike. The constitutive outside thus came to bear on the Canadian discursive formation of race, where articulation would modify "immigrant," "alien," and "foreign" Slavs (see Chapter 5) variously into "artists," "criminals," and "clannish" community members (see Chapter 6) with no ability to self-govern or desire to assimilate to Anglo-Saxon cultural norms. This dissertation has already documented this mode of discourse, especially as concerns conflictual relations (the Slav as deviant, non-suitable, etc.). The preceding chapters recited in various ways Bailey Millard's poem "The Red Folly", which urged us to "cheer on/ the little men/ Who smite the giant Slav..." (1904:24).

Some, however, maintained a more cautious, middle-ground approach. In the House of Commons, J.S. Woodsworth, for example, claimed to "have protested as vigorously as anybody against the influx of immigrants to Canada" while objecting to the deportation of "foreigners" who had committed crimes (1932:2595). He proclaimed sympathy with immigrants who had "left their old homes in central Europe" and reminded members of his political class "that almost half of our population west of the great lakes is non-Anglo Saxon in origin" (Woodsworth 1932:2595). To treat them differently would be to "allow racial discrimination", thus transforming "that part of Canada into a regular Balkan country" (Woodsworth 1932:2595). Similarly, Hlynka warned against proposed legislation targeting foreign language schools on grounds that even discussing this would "throw an unfair suspicion upon our loyal Canadian citizens who happen not to be of Anglo-Saxon extraction" (1941:379).

It is also worth acknowledging that internal accounts could also say positive things about the Slavs. Keeping such accounts in mind reminds us that racism need not always engender antipathy or even caution; it can be light and reassuring. Even when ostensibly extolling the virtues of its subjects, racial accounts can reaffirm difference (Taguieff 2001). In the spirit of *The Voice's* praise for the Slavic Mir, there were a number of more optimistic voices that retained the Saxon/Slav dichotomy. One newspaper article titled "Santa Claus Visits Church" and subtitled "Slavic Children Enjoy Festivities According to Julian Calendar," maintained that while the Slavic Santa Claus spoke Russian, he was "as jolly and as generous as any Anglo-Saxon St. Nicholas" (*The Globe and Mail* 1938:2). And even when serious affairs such as the administration of colonial policy were concerned, racism as optimism was still possible. One could find it in the 1901 Presbyterian General Assembly in Ottawa where Reverent Dr. J. T. Reid claimed that "[t]o argue against their [the Slavs'] coming would be as useless as for the redmen to argue against the coming of Columbus. The Anglo-Saxon brought a high civilization to this continent and who can tell but the Slav is being led to Canada by God to be enlightened" (*The Voice* 1901:4). As Reid recognized, there was work to be done and one could in the peculiar Canadian version of white men's burden find a joyful calling in the work "to civilize them" and to give the Slavs "Christian Souls" (*The Voice* 1901:4).

The last example of optimistic racialization depending on the Saxon/Slav dichotomy that will be considered here is that of an account of a Russian prince who married a "Canadian girl", featured in *The Globe*. The single sentence in the newspaper of concern is the one that described the prince approvingly by noting that "[h]e is tall, fair, and of clean-cut features, of the perfect Anglo-Saxon, rather than the Slavic type, to an observer" (*The Globe* 1933:1). In this case one sees the presence of the discourse that held the Slavs to be white/non-white (the prince is "fair"). But this discourse is secondary, overlapping only in a way that allows it to deposit a trace onto the more prominent discourse that sees the prince favourably, not because he is fair but in a larger part due to his similitude to "the perfect Anglo-Saxon" type. As this dissertation argues, the discursive construction of the Slavs as white and non-white certainly operated and could be detected in descriptions concerning the Slavs' "swarthy" (recall Bradwin's characterization of southern Slavs as "darker people") or "fair" skin tone. The

principle of overdetermination reminds us that one would be amiss, however, to treat this as the basis of their racialization. Parallel discourses exist, but this does not imply all discourses are equal in measure and amplitude. In the case of the prince, both discourses touched on each other, while it remains clear that “fairness” is to be read alongside “clean-cut features” which are the proper attributes of the thing being esteemed – Anglo-Saxon and Slavic racial types. And it is the Saxon or Slav mode of racialization that dominated and subsumed the white or non-white racialization of the Slavs. This is evident from the sheer number of Saxon or Slavic accounts and of the way in which whiteness was parenthetical whenever it appeared next to them.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that the Slavs were racialized in numerous discourses – ranging from political and journalistic to literary, scholarly, and poetic – according to two modes. I identified the first as white/ non-white and the second as Saxon/ Slav.

As concerns the first mode, the Slavs were occasionally depicted as non-white according to three techniques. The first involved differentiating the Slavs from more securely white northern and western European immigrants (i.e. Finns, Icelanders, and Belgians). Bradwin’s *The Bunkhouse Man* (1928), which provides a first-hand account of life in work camps, sets the Slavs against the previous category of white immigrants as well as, utilizing the second technique, against genuinely white Canadian labourers (i.e. British, French, and Scottish workers). While he distinguished three tiers among the transient Slavic labourers, for Bradwin the distinction ultimately recedes into a denationalized non-white figure of the Slav as foreigner. The third technique racialized the Slavs as non-white by depicting them abroad. Taylor’s “Anna Jakobovna, Jewess” (1906) is a grim story of survival where in the absence of military discipline, marauding Russian troops demonstrate their lack of whiteness. There they encounter an authentic white man, Frank, whose Western qualities lay bare their Eastern Slavic barbarism.

Such accounts should not, however, be accepted as dominant. Their mode of racialization constituted doubting, claims-making discourses that operated alongside

discourses that also saw the Slavs as white. And the latter, upon a surface inspection, were more matter-of-fact and doxic. As this chapter has demonstrated, the discourses that racialized the Slavs operated in overlapping currents, constituting overdetermining structures of intelligibility. The data here suggest that while it was possible to see the Slavs variously as white/non-white, such seeing attests to the existence of another possibility – namely, that such discourses made up an undercurrent of a more preponderant mode of racialization which was here characterized in terms of the discourses of Saxon/Slav. The weight of evidence obtained in the data suggest that when the Slavs were being spoken about in explicit racial terms, Saxon/Slav was more likely to appear than white/non-white, thus making up the more preponderant mode of racial differentiation.

As examined here, Mills' lecture "Saxon or Slav: England or Russia?" (1895) is one of the earliest Canadian examples of the Eastern Question. It provided the framework for thinking of the Slavs in a denationalized singular light, carrying over into numerous discourses in terms of a "Slavic aspiration" and "dynamism." Mills argued that all nations expressed a racial character. Citing examples of Slavic barbarism, he warned that the principal conflict of the next (twentieth) century – which the Eastern Question attempted to ascertain – would be one between the two principal powers, England and Russia. What is crucial about his account is the absence of any discussion of whiteness. Along with Mills, numerous commentators posed their own version of the Eastern Question, racializing the Slavs while pronouncing their difference, incompatibility, and distance from the Anglo-Saxon race. (Even Taylor's "Anna Jakobovna, Jewess", which is discussed as an example of the racialization of the Slavs as non-white, proceeds in terms of its own version of the Eastern Question where Frank is as much of a white man as he is an Anglo-Saxon). Internal accounts, which cast the gaze back to Canada, further racialized the Slavs as non-Anglo-Saxon, and did so in variously disparaging, neutral, concerned, and even positive terms.

Chapter 8.

Conclusions

The Romanoffs and their Slav subjects will... have further opportunities for gratifying those ambitions whose fulfilment was interfered with by those who had fewer fears of Anglo-Saxon influence than of Muscovite domination and its attendant tyranny. Where is it not possible that we may some day see the principles of the much vexed and many sided Eastern question presenting themselves? (Victoria Daily Colonist 1895b:4)

This concluding chapter will encapsulate the dissertation in three sections: The first consists of a summary and overview that sketches out the vital themes of this work, specifically the role of discourse and concepts such as overdetermination, typification, and constitutive outside. The second section considers the significance of this dissertation theoretically and in terms of its contribution to Slavic Studies. The third section is a reflection on what this work could not attend to and what future potential studies on this topic should consider.

Summary and Overview

The central chapters of this dissertation demonstrated that from the late-19th to the mid-20th century, during the third great wave of European immigration, a number of Canadian discourses regarded the Slavs as racial Others. This work sought to understand the process by which the Slavs were turned into peripheral Europeans by arguing that racialization constructed the Slavs as a singular, homogenous, denationalized racial category. Casting the net widely in search for evidence of such racialization, I employed Foucauldian archaeology in order to show that the discourses of literature, eugenics, politics, art, crime, and immigration, among many others, made up a discursive formation that spoke of the Slavs as racial rather than national subjects. Thus the culturally and nationally specific Poles, Czechs, Russians, and Ukrainians were, as has been shown, occasionally sidelined by a range of discourses that spoke of

them without regard to their particular cultural or national characteristics. Employing poststructural theory, this dissertation considered how the Slavic racial type existed in the Canadian imagination by approaching the Slavs as a relational category whose identity must be sought in discourse and not in the subjects themselves.

A key concern addressed by this project is in providing evidence of the racial denationalization of the Slavs. Any theorization of race and peripheral Europeans depends on addressing this first concern – namely, to show how the Slav was in fact a racial Other. The archaeological bent of this dissertation identified numerous racial discourses that competed or existed in parallel, working to overdetermine the figure of the Slav. To delineate these discourses, I identified four modes of racialization. The first three consisted of the racialization of national categories (some Canadians spoke solely of the Ukrainian race, the Polish race, and the Russian race); the placing of racialized national categories under racial meta-categories (others also spoke of a combination of the Ukrainian race within the larger Slavic category); and the placing of racialized national categories next to racial meta-categories (others yet spoke, somewhat paradoxically, of a Ukrainian race existing alongside a Slavic race, as if the latter designated something distinct and other than a Ukrainian race). In the interest of distilling the purest figure of the Slav, this dissertation set these three modes of racialization aside in favour of a fourth mode – namely, discourses that spoke of denationalized racial meta-categories (Canadian discourses also had a habit of speaking of the Slavs without any national qualifications, where Slavs-as-Slavs were said to be present). It is this last mode of racialization that formed the substantive object of this dissertation.

Selecting evidence only of the denationalized mode of categorization, this dissertation made the case that the racial otherness of the Slavs ought to be approached discursively. The Slavs were here grasped as subjects produced in a Foucauldian “space of dispersion” that by naming them brought them into being. This is to say in poststructural anti-humanist terms, the Slavs did not exist in and of themselves – they were constituted discursively by the 1911 *Fifth Census* that under “racial origins” recognized as legitimate the category “Slav”; by the 1941 *Eight Census* which described certain communities in Manitoba as making up a region known as the “Slavic belt”; by

Gobineau's influence on Canadian eugenicists, like Reginald Gates, who typified the Slavs with concave noses and warned against miscegenation; and by numerous *Daily Nor'Wester*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Winnipeg Evening Tribune*, and *Morning Telegram* accounts which typified the Slavs by stressing their "endearing," "heavy," and "flat" accents, their dress in terms of sheepskin coats and shawls, their "broad" faces, "round" heads, "sullen" expressions, and "thickset" builds. For a discursive grasp of the subject, the accuracy of these details are of less concern than the fact that the details could be provided in the first place. As this work has shown, a space for the denationalized Slav was opened in numerous Canadian discourses that produced and reproduced this racial type all while claiming to uncover and document it.

Throughout this work I have also been careful not to privilege any one discourse but to attempt to grasp the Slavs in terms of the overdetermined discourses of politicians, journalists, art critics, eugenicists, and others. The main question guiding this dissertation has been not which discourse was the most important one but how much noise was generated by their interplay. Given that overdetermination points to the plurality of effects generated by discourses within a discursive formation, how did such discourses intersect and influence one another? To this end, Berger and Luckmann's notion of typification aided in a twofold sense: typifications organized the perception that made it possible to experience subjects constituted by discourse (the Slav, for example, was typified as broad faced and joyless) and typifications link, or are shared, across discourses (the same typification could be found in two or more discourses) that are presumed to form an overdetermined network that is not reducible to a single centre. In this secondary sense, typifications aid in mapping the space of the dispersion of the discursive formation of race. To the extent that a newspaper, a poem, and a politician all could speak of coarse Slavic manners or the foreign, odious customs of the Slavs, such shared typifications provide evidence of the coherence and stability of a discursive formation. Typifications, in other words, allow the tracing of this formation.

Having established the ways in which a Canadian discursive formation made it possible to perceive the Slavs as distinct racial Others, the work attended to a number of related racial problems. Entertaining the questions of immigration and assimilation, the political instability of Slavic Europe, and the influence of Slavic customs on the Canadian

population, this research considered not how such problems were actual, which is to say empirical, for the Canadian social structure; rather, the point in addressing such concerns as they stemmed from various discourses was in support of the theory that the racialization of the Slavs as Other functioned as a prelude for the production of a Canadian racial Self. Utilizing Laclau's concept of a constitutive outside, this work examined the ways in which Slavic Europe was constructed in the Canadian imagination as an outside – that is, as a foreign, outlandish space – and the ways in which such a construction allowed for the self-knowledge or self-constitution of a Canadian Anglo-Saxon Self. The work of such racially animated imaginative geography drew strong racial lines within Europe, creating an intra-European understanding of race. Slavic Europe, framed in terms of Eastern, Central, and South Eastern European coordinates lay outside the pale of Western Civilization. The *Brandon Daily Sun*, the *British Columbian Daily Colonist*, and *The Globe* all typified Slavic Europe as the hotbed of autocratic, radical, nihilistic, and violent tendencies. “[T]hat part of Europe,” to draw on one politician's phrasing, represented a peripheral Europe marked by a lower order of civilization. The threat that this part of Europe constituted was so doxic that even in the words of Michael Luchkovich (who self-identified as an MP of “Slavic descent”), Slavic Europe was synonymous with wars, famines, revolutions, and economic instability. Such typifications show the remarkable power of discourse to shape thought across various positions.

As this dissertation has demonstrated, such typifications also amounted to the portrayal of Slavic Europe as lacking in self-government. The Slavs were in political and journalistic discourse said to be unable to govern themselves according to parliamentary, republican, democratic, and other popular Western political conventions. As such, Slavic inability to self-govern functioned as a constitutive outside that allowed the West to produce and imagine itself as an inverse of this lack. In observing how Slavic Europe was not sufficiently democratic, the West could be said to have a surplus of self-government. Racialization, as this work showed, functioned to marginalize and naturalize political inequalities at the same time as it provided a basis for the Self that relies on this inequity. Thus, Robert Borden's 1917 War-time Elections Act disenfranchised the Slavs on the grounds that as “enemy aliens” they were carriers of anti-democratic, despotic tendencies at the same time as it assured racially legitimate

Canadians that they were the rightful bearers of political liberty. And this too was taken as given across numerous political positions across the Canadian political spectrum.

Testing Canada's absorptive capacity – which referred to the ability of Canada to integrate foreigners – the Slavs were also an internal problem to be confronted in terms of their immigration to Canada. Numerous political speeches, bills, acts, white papers, newspaper accounts, and scholarly publications drew on the themes of self-government and absorptive capacity and typified the Slavs as peripheral Europeans in Canadian immigration policy. In 1923, a three-tiered schema was ordained via Order-in-Council P.C. 183. The schema typified the Slavs as a “non-preferred” class of immigrants (below the “preferred” Western/Northern Europeans but above the “excluded” Asians and Africans). Such designation speaks to another property of discourse utilized by this research: discourses operate through chains of identifications that are relational. This is to say, identities must be treated in relationship to other identities. Drawing on Laclau's formulation of identity as difference and equivalence, the research here demonstrated how racialization proceeded in terms of these two features. For Order-in-Council P.C. 183, the Slavs were equivalent to such peripheral Europeans as Lithuanians and Latvians while being differentiated from preferred and excluded classes of immigrants.

In using and linking such concepts as discourse (which constitutes subjects and operates relationally), overdetermination (which points to the networked nature of discursive formations), typification (which provides a frame for racialization), and constitutive outside (through which a racial Self finds some of its bearings), this dissertation sought to fine-tune poststructural theory for the study of race as much as it sought to understand the Slavs as racialized Others within a Canadian discursive formation. Pushing for the further integration of the theoretical perspective outlined here along with the thematic focus on the Slavs, this research showed that the constitutive outside was in some sense ingested and internalized. Cultural questions concerning the Slavs on Canadian soil in terms of art, community, and crime became cultural questions for Canadians to ask about themselves. The Slavic Other was thus not only a peripheral European but also at the same time an internal Other who lent further coherency to a Canadian Self. By observing and studying the Slavs in literature, drama, music, and dance – by constructing as it were a Slavic art school – Canadian artists could be said to

possess what the Slavs lacked: depth, form, and restraint. Slavic art was something to be consumed, taken in, and even enjoyed. Moreover, it was to be mastered by a Canadian Self. The *Victoria Daily Colonist* celebrated Arthur Hartmann's violin performance by declaring that "[a] Slav of the Slavs could scarcely have invested Tchaikovsky's beautiful music with a more distinctive native quality." Slavic communities were likewise typified by features absent in proper Canadian communities. They were unhygienic, disorganized, prone to drunkenness, and centred on Slavic patresfamilias whose patriarchy was out of bounds with Canadian norms of masculinity. As the community expert, England, observed of Slavic communities: "[t]he man considers himself the head of the house and the women are obliged to obey him implicitly." In crime too the Slav ruptured, and thus reinforced, the bounds of regular Western deviant behaviour. As this dissertation showed, specific crimes like kidnapping, robbery, and murder were typified as Slavic. In carrying them out, the Slavs further displayed their racial qualities for spontaneous, unplanned, and ruthless violence and disregard for social order.

Significance of the Research

Besides demonstrating how the Slavs existed as denationalized racial others and attending to the specificity of this phenomenon as it shaped itself in Canada, the present study has also identified and utilized a number of poststructural theoretical concepts for the study of their racialization. As such, the present work contributes to the work of scholars like Magubane (2001) and Dumont (2008) who treat race not only as a social construct but as a discursively produced form inhering in social relations. The treatment of race presented here remains true to poststructuralist form in that it chronicles and references the racialization of the Slavs without linking such evidence to an ultimate foundational discourse; Slavic identity is dispersed among numerous discourses, which sometimes competed and often collaborated to produce such a racialized figure.

This dissertation, furthermore, has contributed to the broad theorization of Slavic racialization by engaging Slavic Studies and Whiteness Studies. As is well known, Slavists devote themselves to the valuable study of various national, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural Slavic populations. There seems to be no shortage of social scientific and

historical material as concerns “Slavic ethnic cultures” of the Poles, Ukrainians, and Russians in Canada. Canadian Slavic Studies has the noble property of alerting us to the immigrant experience and to the way in which various categories of Central and Eastern Europeans were socially marginalized and othered by the Canadian social structure. However, such focus somewhat paradoxically misses the Slavs themselves – at least in the denationalized racialized sense. This dissertation accounts for that blind spot.

In doing so, this dissertation challenges Slavic Studies’ preference for grasping the Othering of various Slavic ethnic cultures in terms of such notions as xenophobia. The evidence presented here suggests that the Slavs were viewed as racial Others and not simply as fellow Europeans whose culture was a problem that could be overcome with exposure to Canadian norms and values. The Slavic experience in Canada was a racial experience. As this dissertation demonstrates, the typifications of the Slavs as essentially inert, lazy, violent, passionate, suspicious, joyless, imbalanced, and disorganized were linked to a physiognomy that recognized the Slavs as racially visible. Canadian eyes perceived the Slavs and through a number of discourses attributed such qualities to them. All of this proceeded on explicitly racial grounds, whether in eugenics, journalism, or poetry. By bringing racialization into focus, this research creates an opening for a potentially “new” research area in Slavic Studies.

On a more minor note, in providing the evidence of the racial otherness of the Slavs, this study also asks the reader to rethink the way in which European race history is understood even among theorists of race and racism. From Malcolm X to Gilroy, Omi, Winant, and Bannerji, many scholars of race assume that an all-embracing European racial solidarity included the Slavs from the very beginning. Such scholarship flattens out the differences among Europeans by presenting Europeans as unified in their sense of superiority over non-Europeans. This dissertation did not dismiss the latter claim but

suggested that before Europeans dominated non-European Others, they first learned to dominate each other.⁵⁰

This research was however careful not to overstate the racialization of the Slavs. Going against the current of Whiteness Studies, which interprets peripheral Europeans in terms of their estrangement from whiteness, this dissertation argued that the Slavs were radically at odds not so much with whiteness as with the Anglo-Saxon understanding of the Canadian racial Self. That distinction is crucial. If the whiteness of the Slavs was of minor importance – as this research indicates was the case – then this suggests racism can proceed without colour differentiation and that such a thing as intra-European racialization was and is possible. Relatedly, this dissertation has suggested that tropes like “becoming white” – popularized by the historians of whiteness studies – are not applicable to the Canadian racial treatment of the Slavs. To be clear, occasionally the Slavs were seen as non-white or as inadequately white. E. A. Taylor’s fiction and Edmund Bradwin’s prominent study of transient workers explicitly racialized the Slavs as non-white. But such discourses formed an undercurrent that could be easily countered by discourses that also explicitly recognized the whiteness of the Slavs.

A more probable theory, for which this dissertation provides evidence, is that more discourses racialized the Slavs by imagining them as non-Anglo-Saxon (and relatedly, non-Teutonic). To this end, this work examined the racialization of the Slavs in terms of the “Eastern Question” which was more prominent and which held that the real conflict was between the Saxon and the Slav (rather than the whites and the Slavs). Out of its engagement with Slavic Studies and the work of U.S.-based historians of Whiteness Studies, the central contribution of this research is to offer support for the argument that the racialization of the Slavs should be seen as a distantiating and estrangement from an Anglo-Saxon identity and a simultaneous fitting into a discursive formation that left its categories denationalized. Such a move entails a reconsideration of Roediger’s “inbetween peoples” and Jacobson’s “probationary whiteness” in favour of

⁵⁰ I am in debt for this observation to Malik, who notes that “[t]he sense of racial superiority that European elite classes felt over non-European society cannot be understood outside of the sense of the inferiority imposed upon the masses at home” (1996:82). To my knowledge, Malik’s work makes one of the most significant contributions to the study of the history of race among Europeans in Europe, while my work seeks to do so among Europeans in Canada.

Satzewich's notion of *peripheral Europeans*. Likewise, Wtulich's "de-ethnicization of the Slavs" has been here refurbished into the *denationalization of the Slavs*.

Reflections and Future Areas of Research

One limit of the study attempted here is that it has selected from too wide a range of sources and too broad of a timeframe. The 201 pieces of primary data (out of a total of 1566) presented within these pages in order to account for roughly half a century paints a sparse picture. As such, this research involved selecting and distilling disparate descriptions of the Slavs that have here been re-grouped, pressed-near, and condensed into a single study. It can therefore be said that I have constructed something that I claimed was already constructed. Like Kafka's burrowing animal, I have created a dense labyrinth out of my own desires, anxieties, and fears – namely, out of the need to see the Slavs as racial Others. This work itself can, as such, be critiqued as partaking in the very social construction it attempts to depict. Luckily, this is not a unique shortcoming. As Vahabzadeh observes, social scientists have since the dawn of sociology constructed the very things they claim to be studying. Modernity, as he astutely observes, was not the precondition for sociology; modernity was invented by sociology as sociology's own foundational ground (Vahabzadeh 2009:453). As Vahabzadeh remind us, "all theoretical fixities are only products of our discipline" (2009:455). So too does capital become intelligible from the vantage point and fixities of Marxism, and heteronormativity from the vantage point of feminism. So too the racialization of peripheral Europeans from this vantage point. The facts that have been selected here are value-laden, reflecting theoretical concerns as much as objective reality.

No "methodological magic" (Vahabzadeh 2009:454) can definitively separate ourselves, our theories, our methods from the objects/subjects that we study. Rather than wish for such separation – for the keys that will unlock foundational doors to knowledge of the real – the poststructuralist perspective employed here reminds us that this dissertation, like every other attempt at sociology, is just another interpretation grounded in a number of discourses. With this in mind, future research could attend, aided by poststructural theory, to the question of the extent of the racialization of the Slavs. One way in which future research could do so is by comparing their treatment to the treatment of such peripheral European categories as the Italian/Mediterranean race,

the Jewish/Semitic race, and the Irish/Celtic race. Was there a racial hierarchy among peripheral Europeans and, if so, what did that hierarchy look like? Another way in which such research could proceed is to ask the question to what extent were Central and Eastern Europeans racialized as Slavs as opposed to, for example, as Poles or Ukrainians. To that end, the four modes of racialization identified here should prove useful, especially the distinction drawn between racialized national categories and denationalized racial meta-categories.

Two other research vistas are suggested by this dissertation. The first is the study of the theme of the Orientalization of the Slavs. While it has been noted here, the topic deserves a more detailed and far-reaching treatment. I mean by Orientalization the linking of Slavic immigrants to Asian immigrants in order to evaluate both. Comparisons of the two categories were rife, as in the case given by MP Angus MacInnis, who observed that “[i]f it is a pernicious and iniquitous principle to deprive the law-defying Doukhobor of the franchise, how much more so is it so with regard to the law-abiding oriental?” (1936:373). Slav morals and standards of life were also on other occasions treated as equivalent to those of Asian immigrants. It can be said that the Slav was, as such, anchored to the Oriental who was already cast overboard. The theme of the Orientalization of the Slavs also suggests the typification of the Slavs, to borrow from *The Globe*, as a race already “half-Oriental” (1914:4). That is, the Slav was not only like the Oriental but was in fact Oriental. As concerned the Eastern Question, the “European Soul” was said to be “endangered by the hordes of snub-nosed Slavs” whose presence threatened “Asiatic barbarism” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1917b:4). And as concerned the art of Rimsky-Korsakov, it could be said that “[t]he subjects of his operas are Russian. The color of his symphonies is Slavic, and to this he adds oriental color” (*Brandon Daily Sun* 1908:4). The association of Slav and Oriental was a recurring theme in the Canadian discursive formation of race.

The second broader topic suggested for future research concerns the pursuit of the obverse of racialization – namely, deracialization. This dissertation defined racialization as the social construction of racial categories, involving the extension of the signifiers of race unto a category that was previously not defined by them. Deracialization suggests the opposite movement: the withdrawal of racial signifiers from

a category. It implies that a category that was previously understood as a racial one has lost its racial qualities possibly by becoming redefined by non-racial markers like culture, nationality, or ethnicity. The Slavs are still around but no longer as a denationalized racial category. One still hears about Slavic linguistics, Slavic Europe, and Slavic cultures, but not a Slavic race. Significantly, one is no longer a Slav first.

Numerous discursive transformations can be identified in the deracialization of the Slavs. By 1945 many in the House of Commons, like MP Alistair Stewart, denounced race as a “stupid superstition” (1945:137). The notion that race was unscientific (UNESCO would proclaim this as a basic scientific consensus in 1951) worked to strip away the legitimacy of the discourses that could previously speak unabashedly of the Slavic racial type. Eugenics, championed by Nazi Germany, gradually fell out of favour (although Alberta’s Michener Centre would continue to perform sterilizations until 1972) and it was no longer, for obvious historical and political reasons, possible to proclaim that “Canada’s affinity is with the German people” (*The Globe* 1914:4). The Nazi regime’s views and treatment of the Slavs became known and often referenced in popular discourses. Other factors like the 1963 establishment of a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which hesitatingly “[accepted] the words ‘race’ and ‘people’ only in their traditional sense” while preferring instead “to emphasize the facts of language and culture” (1970:7) also signaled a shift. One also would do well to consider the impact of the fourth wave of immigration, which marked an increase in Asian and a decrease in European immigration, the gradual overhaul of the three-tiered categories of preferred, non-preferred, and excluded, and the introduction in 1967 of the point system where applicants’ racial categories were not supposed to be considered.

Among these factors, Slavic Studies departments also played a role. Their rapid expansion across universities in Canada, noted during the onset of the Cold War, could also help account for the deracialization of the Slavs. While I have claimed that Slavic Studies has “paradoxically” ignored the Slavs, given these transformations the paradox makes sense. Slavic Studies was caught in the increasing intellectual tendency to define the former racialized Slavs, along with all Europeans, as various ethnic cultures. This was its role in the Canadian discursive formation of race. The consequence of the redefinition of the Slavs in terms of their ethnic identities was their deracialization. For

while race cannot normally be exited – as a category it is persistent and difficult to undo – ethnicity speaks to choice. Unlike race which offers only the reified boundaries of a biologically framed difference, ethnicity can be taken, performed, and abandoned. By being recognized as “ethnic Others,” the Slavs, as such, obtained the freedom not to be ethnic or racial Others. Through ethnicity, they likely found a mode of exit from race.

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