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Joseph S. Pinter,
"On the Convergence of Innis's International Political Economy and Sebald's Novels" <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol10/iss1/1>

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Abstract: In his paper "On the Convergence of Innis's International Political Economy and Sebald's Novels" Joseph S. Pinter contributes to the development of an area of scholarship on Harold A. Innis and Canadian political economy which deals with issues of representation, landscape, and memory. Pinter draws attention to a specific aspect of Innis's approach to political economy and focuses on ways in which Innis was able to represent fundamental aspects of the settlement process in Canada. Pinter argues that Innis focussed on landscape as a basic element in the European experience of North America (US and Canada) that, in turn, enabled Innis to trace the elements of Canadian economic development in a specific manner, in a way receptive to the influences of landscapes as an autonomous factor in evolution, i.e., not necessarily and always tied to staples of production and transport. The purpose is to argue for an inherent plasticity within the context of International Political Economy (IPE) that enables one to look at landscape as an independent element in economic development. It is this plasticity that makes IPE capable of appropriating aspects of the work of the novelist W.G. Sebald: in looking for convergences between the work of Innis and Sebald, Pinter seeks to bring out the centrality of landscapes in Innis's work and thought.

Joseph S. PINTER

On the Convergence of Innis's International Political Economy and Sebald's Novels

I begin with the proposition that it is useful for to consider where Canadian political economy (CPE) has been and where it might be headed. For example, Wallace Clement discusses this in his 2001 article "Canadian Political Economy's Legacy for Sociology" where he stresses interdisciplinarity in CPE as a result of fruitful interactions with sociological perspectives and issues. Yet, Clement suggests, there is a set of concerns that is very much fundamental to CPE; it is these concerns and this identity which it brings "to the table." Clement writes that "For political economy, the political includes the comprehensive state of political and civil society; that is, not only government but governance. The economic encompasses the social, political, and cultural constitution of markets, institutions and actors. Political economy … embodies a holistic undertaking to explain society from a materialist perspective. It is materialist in the sense of placing at the forefront the way a society creates and sustains itself. It is fundamentally historical and dynamic in the sense of seeking understandings of social transformation, including the agents and forces of change. Tensions and contradictions in society produce struggles and resistance to established relations and practices. As such, material relations are basic to the unfolding of social and technical changes in the labour force, households, and institutions of the state and economy, spatial relations have always been central to the way political economy is practised in Canada, including its international and regional dimensions. More recently, the concept 'space' has been expanded to include the natural environment and a greater awareness of the place of ecology in the quality of social life" (406). In an interesting anticipation of Clement, Janine Brodie has argued for a somewhat less precise formulation of the concept of "space" in relation to the concept of "region": "The politics of space is so fundamental to Canadian politics that we often think of regional divisions as natural and inevitable without questioning what we mean when we evoke the terms 'region' and 'regionalism.' In fact, the spatial dimension of Canadian politics conjures up a variety of meanings and a great deal of confusion, beginning with the term 'spatial' itself. 'Spatial' simply means pertaining to space -- in this case, geographical space. Considerations of geographical space are fundamental to human thought and communication, because the identification of things is often tied to place. We suggest, for example, that a person is different because she comes from the country, or Newfoundland or Toronto. It is another matter to suggest that these spatial designations are important politically. Why should considerations of where we grow up, work or live colour our political identities?" (241-42).

The questions of space Brodie discusses have a deep basis in CPE. As Clement points out, early political economy, what Clement and others call Innissian political economy, was differentiated by the series of studies on the staple industries in Canada. Innis's so-called "staples thesis" contended that Canada was developed to exploit a series of raw materials for export to metropolitan nations. Each of these staples had their own characteristics which imposed a particular logic on their development; but common to them all was the underdevelopment of Canadian manufacturing in subordination to foreign powers. Clement develops this question of staples further to regions and space in his comments on the work of Mel Watkins. Watkins has been an individual barometer and interpreter of the staples approach and a reconsideration of Innis's thought has been his principal contribution to the revival of Canadian political economy. As he says, "the large questions which Innis asked about the nature of Canada -- about staples bias and risks of dependency -- did not go away. Rather, circumstances, notably the nationalist New Left ferment of the 1960s and the long shadow it was to cast within the universities, put them on the agenda in an unprecedented way" (408). Clement suggests further that Watkins's interpretations of Innis helped to dislodge some of the traditional approaches to economics that were taught and developed at universities in Canada. Further, Watkins's uses of Innis helped to underwrite some of the thinking and research behind the growth of a distinctly nationalist political

economy in Canada. Clement writes that "more recently, Watkins has settled into a more social democratic version of the staples approach" (408). For Clement, this means that the focus of Watkins's version of IPE has shifted to trade policy and politics and the mobilization of change under the umbrella of the left and the New Democratic Party.

One should point out that, according to these accounts, it seems to be clear that IPE has become adapted to a series of different political agendas ranging from economic development and nationalist concerns to social justice, ecology, and trade policy. The point that I would like to make is that the issue of staples is indeed fundamental to Innis's work. While Clement may be correct in saying that staples imposed specific and particular "logics" on development patterns, it is also true that staples themselves were inseparable from the "spaces" on which they were found. Clement is undoubtedly correct in arguing that the question of and concerns for "space" have transformed into questions of ecology and its place in the quality of social life and the quality of social justice. As we saw in Brodie's discussion, the issue of "space" itself has a decidedly marginal importance once the question of sorting out where one was born has been settled. It seems that there is very much of an ambiguity in CPE's decidedly materialist treatment of space. In fact, there is no obvious or hidden necessity to link "space" and "ecology" at all and I propose it represents a conventional association. Further, I argue that the term "space" itself is, as Brodie points out, open to multiple interpretations. But these interpretations and the issue of space as a whole need not be limited to a materialist outlook. In doing so, one runs the risk of overlooking materials that could be highly valuable in extending scholarship on Innis in new directions. Robert Cox adds to this line of argument in a 1995 article "Civilizations: Encounters and Transformations." Cox sees Innis in something of a particular context and he portrays Innis as a figure who has opened a door to the problematization of the linkages between space, economic organization, and communication. The question for Cox is how political economy, in Innis's formulation, can relate to the larger canvas of the emergence, maturity and decline of entire civilizations. Innis developed some points of view about civilization in his *The Idea File*. Cox describes this work as "a series of thought about civilizations, and particularly about the contrasting characteristics of civilizations, and the developmental movements within them" (16). More specifically, Cox suggests that the more interesting aspects of Innis's thought had to do with the numerous interrelationships between the organization of space and the ways in which this organization helps to structure time: "The space/time duality in Innis is crucial for determining the quality of civilizations. The spatial dimension he associated with the state and military power. The time dimension he associated with religions and the institutions of church. (Cox, 21) The distinction [relates] to two orientations of the human mind. One orientation is toward extension and interaction of existing structures at a given moment in time. The other is toward duration and development over time" (Cox 21).

In a somewhat related vein, James R. Taylor, François Cooren, Nicole Giroux, and Daniel Robichaud adapt Innis's thinking to organizational change. While less sweeping than a civilizational study, as Cox outlines, organizations are seen as involving dimensions of space and time. Taylor, Cooren, Giroux, and Robicahud use Innis's distinction between the vernacular and written language as an exploratory and an explanatory device to examine current trends in organization. In one respect, they claim, a new pattern is emerging in the post-modern organization, where the "vernacular" is that of the writers themselves, not the written products, with paradoxical implications for the standard theory of rational organization, enunciated by Weber and others (25). It is clear that Innis's thought did focus on a very wide and sometimes perhaps not altogether closely related set of issues. But the issues that I develop here deal more with the questions of how space and landscape are related: how does landscape become represented as space? What institutions are involved in the communication of these representations? And, if so, what can we learn by bringing Innisian motifs to the analysis of landscape and representation in writing? To provide answers to some of these questions, it is necessary for the purposes of argument to separate questions of space and landscape from the

narratives of economic development. In other words, one need not reduce landscape and space to being mere accessories to development. My suggestion is that Innis developed a political economy that was malleable enough to encompass an analysis of literary work that deals with themes of landscape, memory, and travel. Indeed, his own scholarship dealt with such themes in a very real way, often exploring fur trading routes, for example. One may suggest Innis had a sense that the creation of the staples economy in early Canada involved the fundamental task of finding ways of dealing with the landscape. While exploration of the process of turning the land and its resources into commodities for sale in the international marketplace is one way of dealing with the landscape, it is also possible to suggest that there were (and are) other ways of dealing with it. The fact of landscape, its primal existence, is a precondition to economic development and growth in Canada, but the landscape is not of necessity tied into the process of economic growth. Thus, the landscape itself is the key element I focus on and while its eventual relationship to economic development is secondary in this discussion. I aim to show that the open-endedness of Innis's work allows us to utilize literature in such a way as to make it relevant to political economy and to make political economy relevant to literature. There are genres and modes of aesthetic production that are entirely at home in Innis's thought on political economy. It may be argued that flexibility and adaptability is a flaw in this political economy; that political-economic analysis needs to be true to its object -- which is the fundamental economic relationships within society, and that social relations are contingent on these. While from a strictly constructionist viewpoint there may be merit in this argument, my interest is headed in a somewhat different direction in order to develop and expand the plasticity within IPE, and within the generation of political economy of which Innis was a part.

Using these points of departure, I now turn to looking in more detail at Innisian political economy followed by the task of developing an analytic framework which would create self-evident linkages between the modes in which Innis represents landscape and the ways in which a writer such as W.G. Sebald does the same. Innis was aware of the basic tension among economists and political economists of the late 1920s and 1930s in Canada. For him, the question was phrased in a dichotomy between active involvement in the state and its capacity to channel and regulate economic activity on one hand, and on the other the capacity to stand apart from these more mundane yet necessary preoccupations to actually work on formulating a new philosophy, as he put it in his 1929 essay "Teaching Economic History in Canada" that was appropriate to a new country. In fact, one is tempted to add that this active involvement in daily preoccupations has contributed to the marginalization of Canadian political economy in the formation of a philosophy that is appropriate to a "new" country like Canada. To the extent that this is true it becomes somewhat redundant to say that CPE can present no new idea of Canada or of Canadians except as individuals who appear deeply committed to the pragmatic, the present, and the practical. Innis's suggestion, simply, is that Canada is in need of contributions to a new and unique philosophico-aesthetic expression of what it meant to exist in the northern part of North America. Innis was concerned with the development and consequences of relationships occurring between three distinct terms: 1) the organization and extension of economic activity; 2) over physical space; and 3) local political and economic cultures, that is, identity and its cultural representation. Innis suggests that there are formative linkages that can be explored between physical space and identity. Innis's insight was that cultures and cultural identity are formed as much by the interaction with geographic space as they are formed by modes of economic organization. This formative relationship between space and cultural identity is thrown into relief by Sebald's novels. It is my view here that Sebald's work actually enlarges and transforms aspects of IPE by articulating more fully a complex relationship between place and memory. I argue that Sebald distinguishes four separate categories of memory and that this elaboration of the relationships between memory and place can enhance the capacity of IPE to approach and interpret materials that were not thought to be of use to political economic analysis. The linkages Innis sketched out between organization, space, and cultural identity suggest that shifts in any of the three terms requires a reconfiguration of all three

terms. The whole structure or critical apparatus of IPE can be reframed and made to apply to new developments in areas that are conventionally of such distance from political economy as to be off the radar screen, as it were. In applying Innis's ideas to Sebald's work, and the latter's work to Innis's ideas, one can point to a significant redefinition, or re-theorizing, of spatially-situated cultural identity and its dependence on memory. As we have seen, later political economy (in Canada) does have a concern for space and for regions, but CPE is generally unable to articulate that concern clearly or develop it into a critical apparatus that can appropriate what one may be permitted to call "foreign" materials. This is why it is important to develop this area of Innis's work as something of an autonomous subfield. The question I have in mind here is how IPE might make use of some of the themes developed by Sebald. I propose an exploration of some of the original thinking behind IPE to show that, as a form of critical thinking, one can make critically effective use of literary materials as found in Sebald's novels. Simply put, Innissian political economy offers the rudiments of a critical and relevant interpretive strategy. In developing and deploying it, I argue that IPE can demonstrate how political-economic analysis may be made relevant to aesthetic productions.

I suggest that the key themes to extract from Sebald's novels have to do with the relationships between memory, identity -- both individual and collective -- and landscape. For Sebald, landscape emerges as a principal character in the novels, as something to be interrogated. Landscapes in Sebald's texts are peculiar in that they have significant historical associations, often linked to the Holocaust in one way or another. It is as if the characters in the narratives contemplate these landscapes on which events significant to them as individuals occurred as historical totems or signs which should somehow open up and recount the events of that other time. There is, then, the clear sense in the stories that the landscape is all that is left of a particular time which has some pressing importance to the narrative. It needs to be interrogated, in a manner of speaking, in such a way as to reveal the record of that time. In sum, it is not necessary that landscapes be linked to economic activity: they may indeed be implicated in other "economies" -- of war and military strategy, or of imprisonment, detention, and mass murder. But the fact remains that significant events occurred on particular landscapes and in particular places. My argument is that Innis and Sebald share a focus on landscape and geography that is quite singular and that it is landscape itself that becomes implicated in the actuality of historical events.

As a momentary digression, it is useful to look at insights from the work of Mikhail Bakhtin. The issue that requires the introduction of a Bakhtin-inspired discussion has to do with *animating* the landscape itself, and removing it from the narrative structures which tie it to either economic development or contemporary ecological concerns. This means looking for ways in which one can regard territory less as a complex factor of production and more as a independent character, an autonomous other, which inspires diverse responses. With regard to Bakhtin, the central issue I focus on is the Bakhtinian concept of dialogue. For Bakhtin, the essential element of all communication breaks down into two components: one is the utterance itself, which is seen as the most fundamental unit of speech communication, and the second is seen as the inherent responsiveness of discourses (and novelistic characters) to each other within language. It is in the nature of language itself to engender a response to discourse. Is it reasonable to ask whether one can respond to landscape: can landscape represent a character, a discourse, a coherent discourse? The concept of inhabiting a landscape and responding to it in a set of identifiable ways may well have a significant influence on cultural identity. Stereotypes of the *coureur de bois* aside, there is an element of wandering, adventure, and ceaseless travel in Innis's thought on political economy. As we know, early economic history involved numerous encounters with wilderness, the place from which staples such as fur were extracted by semi-nomadic peoples. For example, Bruce Chatwin sheds light on an aspect of Innis's interest in wilderness and its exploration. In a appear called "The Nomadic Alternative," Chatwin explores the distinction between civilized life in villages, towns, and cities and its nomadic opposite, the life of the "pastoralist." For Chatwin, the nomad emerges in those areas in which agriculture is

impossible: "A nomad does not wander aimlessly from place to place, as one dictionary would have it. The word derives from the Latin and Greek, meaning 'to pasture'. Pastoral tribes follow the most conservative pattern of migration, changing them only in times of drought or disaster" (86). He goes on to suggest that there are innate tendencies towards wandering and exploration that are badly dealt with by settled civilized societies. Travel, while not being anywhere near the nomadic alternative is what modern society has allowed as an approximation of a wandering past: "It is not surprising that … a generation cushioned from the cold by central heating, from the heat by air conditioning, carted in aseptic transports from one identical house or hotel to another should feel the need for journeys of mind or body, for pep pills or tranquilizers, or for the cathartic journeys of sex, music and dance…. I prefer the cosmopolitan skepticism of Montaigne. He saw travel as a 'profitable exercise; the mind is constantly stimulated by observing new and unknown things. No propositions astonish me, no belief offends me, however much opposed to my own. The savages who roast and eat the bodies of their dead do not scandalize me so much as those who persecute the living.' Custom, he said, and set attitudes of mind, dulled the senses and hid the true nature of things. Man is naturally curious" (101).

Chatwin's distinctions between settled and nomadic are in themselves interesting. But, one may also consider Innis's explorations of early Canadian economic history in this context, as a forerunner of restlessness in modern capitalism. These explorations did not only involve arriving at an understanding of a nomadic and wandering native civilization whose energies were eventually chained to a colonizing power and its mercantile economic system. Innis himself explored the very territory through which this pastoral nomadic existence occurred. One becomes suspicious that there is, in his work and thought, a complex and unarticulated distinction between nomadic life with its simplicities and harshness and the civilized version of the same. And I propose it is for this purpose that we can make use of Bakhtin's notions of autonomous "characters" who possess the self-awareness of their potential in narrative structures. My point here is to show that it is through being attentive to themes dealing with the territory and landscape that one can begin to draw out from Innis's work, some of the more fundamental suggestions may be useful in re-orienting political economy to newer concerns. As I suggested previously, one of the ways to do this is to consider themes in Sebald's books. Sebald's novels deal primarily with post-war themes, specifically the Holocaust and its consequences in the lives of his protagonists. The key point in Sebald's texts is that the sense of placeless wandering is not echoed in the construction of the narrative as a device within which memory is created and revisited. The rootlessness of the ghostlike narrators and the ruinous nature of their present is not coupled with a similar rootlessness in terms of time. Sebald's narrative creates a certain order and predictability in the transitions from past to present while tonly surprising thing is that the movement happens at all; once Sebald's narrative begins to create this movement through time, the reader comes to anticipate it as an antidote to the unrelieved dullness and monotony of the ruined presents that we are shown all thoughout. While the present as a place seems to be possessed of a deadweight materiality, the present as a time linked to the past incorporates a much more complex and nuanced material presence.

A review by Philip Landon in *The Review of Contemporary Fiction* echoes this distinction between the ruined present and the predictability (or even utility) of the more organized travel through the past. Landon writes of *Austerlitz* that it is a novel which "records the life of Jacques Austerlitz, an eccentric architectural historian born in Prague and raised in Wales. Battling the alienation that has wrecked his life, Austerlitz eventually reclaims his origins, aspiring to a kind of historical metaphysic: bringing remembered events back to life … Sebald's narrator shudders to think how the world is … draining itself, as it were, in that the history of countless places and objects, which themselves have no power of memory is never heard, never described or passed on. Sebald employs an old-fashioned scholarly manner to fresh ends, fusing learning and sensitivity into a kind of neurotic sublime … The repressed memories of Austerlitz serve to indict the entire postwar age of denial through forgetting; identity is fragile" (196). The sense of this interpretation of the novel is of a novelist who seeks to

create a space out of the past, an affirmation out of time rather than space. Space cannot be recovered, in the sense that what has been destroyed cannot be rebuilt. Yet, time can serve as a basis for the affirmation of identity against the material forces that can be arrayed against the individual, the family, or even an entire culture itself. Returning to the theme of nomadic travel or pastoralist wandering, we might say that for Sebald time becomes the field through which one wanders in search of existential sustenance and affirmation of identity. I identify in Sebald's work four distinct responses to landscape and its discursive utterances: 1) Architecture, buildings, plans, maps and sketches; 2) individuals connected to historical events; 3) documentary photographs, including pictures of writing, that are inserted into the text; and 4) paintings. But above all, the reader notices that the stories deal with the ever present aspect of wandering and ceaseless travel and displacement. It is as if the context for the complex responses to landscape is the act of wandering through it, not as a nomad would, but as an individual denuded of cultural references would. Together with displacement, the reader notices as well an attempt to reclaim an intact identity: the fractured past becomes the language though which identity is pieced together: the narrator serves to bring the past into the present and thus, create the possibility for its survival as memory Curiously, it is as if the interrogation of landscape itself points to the limit of looking only at space as the fundamental element in the playing out of historical eventuality. By looking so closely at it, one only realizes that it is impossible to detect anything from it. As a character, to use Bakhtin's idea, landscape reveals only that which one ascribes to it: it is a perfect mirror which points only to the necessity of witnessing the historical sweep of "ways of dealing" with it. What matters is the history of the dialogue that is created between those who encounter and interrogate.

Some of the interesting accounts of institutional building in Sebald's text are the accounts of the fortress at Breendonk, the archives in Prague where Austerlitz endeavours to find records of his family during the Holocaust, and the concentration camp at Theresienstadt. Sebald's narrator describes the chain of Belgian fortifications, of which the fortress at Breendonk is a part, at great length. The paradoxical nature of such fortresses is that the larger they are, the longer they take to construct, and the more likely it is that any attacking army will have developed a strategy to make the fortress quite useless, either learning how to go around or above it. But there is a crucial point that the narrator introduces in his recounting of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century military fortification theory: the point is that the larger and more complex the building, the less like a dwelling it actually is: "Someone ought to draw up a catalogue of types of buildings listed in order of size, and it would be immediately obvious that domestic buildings of less than normal size -- the little cottage in the fields, the hermitage, the lockkeeper's cottage, the pavilion for viewing the landscape … and the garden -- are those that offer us at least a semblance of peace, whereas no one in his right mind would truthfully say that he liked a vast edifice such as the Palace of Justice on the old Gallows Hill in Brussels. At the most we gaze at it in wonder, a kind of wonder which is itself a form of dawning horror, for somehow we know as if by instinct that outsize buildings … are designed from the first with an eye to their later existence as ruins" (*Austerlitz* 18-19). The point that this description seems to make is that buildings themselves recall a distinction between living and dwelling. But it also leads to another observation, namely that while buildings like the fortress at Breendonk presage their existence as ruins, it is also the case that these buildings exist in a particular aspect in the experiences of those who were imprisoned there. Their dwelling now becomes more of a historical speculation: "Even now … when I look back at the crab-like plan of Breendonk and read the words of the captions [on the visitors' map] -- former office, printing works, Huts -- the darkness does not lift but becomes yet heavier as I think how little we can hold in mind, how everything is constantly lapsing into oblivion with every extinguished life, how the world is, as it were, draining itself in that the history of countless places and objects which themselves have no power of memory is never heard, never described or passed on" (*Austerlitz* 24). The significant connection here is the relationship between place, memory, and "extinguished lives." So, in a way that parallels Innis's discussion of the civilizational contact that

occurred in the early settlement of North America, Sebald suggests that the way to actually appreciate the historical significance of place and building (dwelling and building) is to seek for and consider the lives that were lived there. Yet, these are all but gone.

To deal with the fact of lives that have been or are about to be extinguished, Sebald introduces several episodes. For example, see his description of the hall of records in Prague: "I took a taxi to the Karmelitska in the Lesser Quarter, where the state archives are housed in a very peculiar building going far back in time if not even, like so much in the city of Prague, standing outside time altogether" (*Austerlitz* 143). The hall of records is significant in the novel since it contains information on the missing and presumed dead parents of Austerlitz himself. The significance here is that the hall of records exists in a city which is located, as it were, outside of time altogether. It is the place in which one locates evidence of those whose memories and histories have lost the power of being heard altogether. Again, to parallel Innis's ideas on communication, the differences between oral and print cultures are significant. Those who are no longer able to make themselves and their histories heard may be in a position to have their written histories examined. It is a characteristic of Sebald that the analogic constructions between buildings, records, and people are strewn throughout his writing. The description of the arrangement of papers in the hall of records that Austerlitz visits is re-written in a later account of his visit to the concentration camp at Theresienstadt. Of interest here is the closeness Sebald constructs between landscape, building, and people: "When, towards the end of the day, the museum guardian came up to me and indicated that she would soon have to close, said Austerlitz, I had just been reading, several times over, a note on one of the display panels, to the effect that in the middle of December of 1942, some sixty thousand people were shut up together in the ghetto, a built-up area of one square kilometre at the most, and a little later, when I was out in the deserted town square again, it suddenly seemed to me, with the greatest clarity, that they had never been taken away after all, but were still living, crammed into those buildings and attics, as if they were incessantly going up and down stairs, looking out of the windows, moving in vast numbers through the streets and alleys, and even, a silent assembly, filling the entire space occupied by the air hatched with gray as it was by the fine rain" (*Austerlitz* 201). We are shown "living documents" as it were: thousands of Jews thrown together seem just as much alive now in the narrator's description as do the records in their crammed spaces. Innis, too, may be said to have a penchant for referring to individuals as living documents. In sections of *The Cod Fisheries*, for example, there are descriptions of the fishers as living records of the industry and the methods and rules of its establishment and operations. Sebald constructs similar relationship between documents and people: living documents, as in the hall of records in Prague; or, people whose lives are about to be made into objects of record-keeping. There is a clear continuity here which Sebald follows to its logical destination. While touring around another exhibition in the museum at Theresienstadt/Terežin the narrator says that he "could not believe my eyes, and several times had to turn away and look out of a window into the garden behind the building, having for the first time acquired some idea of the history of persecution which my avoidance system had kept from me for so long, and which now, in this place, surrounded me on all sides … I saw pieces of luggage brought to Terežin by the internees from Prague and Pilsen, Würzburg and Vienna, Kufstein and Karlsbad and countless other places; the items such as handbags, belt buckles, clothes brushes, and combs which they had made in the various workshops; meticulously worked-out projects and production plans … I saw balance sheets, registers of the dead, lists of every imaginable kind, and endless rows of numbers and figures, which must have served to assure the administrators that nothing ever escaped their notice" (*Austerlitz* 198-99). Thus, we are brought back to the point made in the meditation on the fortress of Breendonk: the world seems to be "draining itself … [into] the history of countless places and objects which themselves have no power of memory" (*Austerlitz* 24). It is now only places and objects -- records and evidence -- which represent memory, and these are incapable of expressing anything but their own identity.

I would like to expand my analysis briefly: there is victimology here and the narrative brings the reader to an encounter with victims. That is, the people to whom Sebald refers in his stories to have a connection with the landscape and buildings which they inhabit but they have also been erased and partially effaced from this landscape and these buildings. Sebald does talk, of course, of living people. But these as well contain some aspect of having had their last traces of memory wiped away. There are two stories in Sebald's collection *The Emigrants* which illustrate this victimology of memory: "Ambros Adelwarth" and "Max Ferber." Adelwarth is the narrator's great uncle and a character who has had a life as a servant and companion to a fabulously wealthy man, Cosmo Solomon. He also had an infallible memory: Adelwarth was totally devoted to Cosmo, so much so that after Cosmo died, in a sanatorium in upstate New York, Adelwarth himself becomes increasingly lost and bereft. He moves into a house provided for him by the Solomon family. He then develops a condition which the narrator refers to as Korsakov's Syndrome (*Emigrants* 102). This is apparently an "illness which causes lost memories to be replaced by fantastic inventions." (*Emigrants* 102). Adelwarth undergoes psychiatric treatment, including electroconvulsive therapy, voluntarily. The shock treatment was administered by a psychiatrist named Fahnstock who has a belief that such treatment represented the new miracle cure for depression and the emergence of unwanted memory. This was referred to as the "annihilation method" (*Emigrants* 114). Adelwarth apparently knows (or has been brought to believe via Fahnstock's theories and experiments) that his mental health depends on being able to tell the difference between what is a real memory and a fantastic invention. The treatments fail, but Adelwarth persists with them to the end. After the last session, we read that one of the attending doctors could see from Adelwarth's "face that he was now destroyed, all but a vestige of him. When he came round from the anaesthetic, his eyes, which were now strangely glassy and fixed, clouded over, and a sigh that I can hear to this day rose from his breast" (*Emigrants* 116). The issue here is whether Adelwarth sought to remove memory altogether or whether the damage brought on by the therapy was not intended by Adelwarth. As sometimes happens in Sebald's stories, the reader cannot be certain about whether the patient employs the doctor's strategies to bring about a desired situation, or whether the doctor's strategies implicate the patient in his own demise. Further, we are introduced in Sebald's text to Max Ferber. Ferber is a painter in a deserted and abandoned industrial area of Manchester, near the docks. The area is described as being so silent and desolated that "I could hear sighs in the abandoned depots and warehouses" (*Emigrants* 159). The description continues in such a way as to convince the reader that the painter Ferber is both a true reflection of his surroundings (erased from current usage) and one who transforms the debris of disused places into memory: "docks kilometres in length branched off the Ship Canal as it entered the city in a broad arc, forming wide side-arms and surfaces on which one could see nothing had moved for years. The few barges and freighters that lay far apart at the docksides, making an oddly broken impression, put me in mind me of some massive shipping disaster" (*Emigrants* 160). Ferber's technique of painting consists of applying thick layers of paint onto canvas and then erasing the layers until virtually nothing is left except a patched and scarred canvas. This process continues until Ferber is satisfied with the work or is too exhausted to keep working on it. The distinguishing feature here, however, is the dust and the ruined condition of the studio in which Ferber works: "It seemed as if everything in that space, which measured perhaps twelve metres by twelve and was impenetrable to the gaze, was slowly but surely moving in upon the middle. [The studio's entire contents] was advancing millimetre by millimetre upon the central space where Ferber had set up his easel in the grey light that entered through a high north-facing window layered with the dust of decades" (*Emigrants* 161).

It seems that in the protagonist Ferber Sebald has produced there is not only a figure who is shaped by the actual debris that surrounds him, but Ferber is an artist whose technique lies in creating seemingly out of nothing but dust, the possibility to connect a human figure with landscape. There is a long passage in which Ferber's technique is outlined and it contains the idea that the canvas actually represents the physical space inhabited by characters whose portraits Ferber engraves. Ferber

seems to combine elements of a Schumpeterian creative-destruction with a Nietzschean vision of a child creator who builds up mountains one day, only to destroy her creation the next: Ferber "drew with vigorous abandon, frequently going through half-a-dozen of his willow-wood charcoal sticks in the shortest of time; and that process of drawing and shading on the thick leathery paper, as well as the concomitant business of constantly erasing what he had drawn with a woollen rag already heavy with charcoal, really amounted to nothing but a steady production of dust, which never ceased except at night. Time and again, at the end of a working day, I marveled to see that Ferber, with the few lines and shadows that had escaped annihilation, had created a portrait of great vividness. All the more did I marvel when the following morning … he would erase the portrait yet again, and once more set about excavating the features of his model … from a surface already badly damaged by the continual destruction … [Ferber] might reject as many as forty variants, or smudge them back into the paper and overdraw new attempts upon them; and if he then decided that the portrait was done, not so much because he was convinced that it was finished as through sheer exhaustion, an onlooker might well feel that it had evolved through a long lineage of grey, ancestral faces rendered unto ash but still there, as ghostly presences, on the harried paper" (*Emigrants* 161).

In sum, I postulate that Innis's concept of economic development includes the mutability of landscape and territory as a basic and unstated assumption. One may go further and argue that we see in these convergences between Innis and Sebald a vivid clash between existential and material representations of reality. In fact, it is through the particular approach that is developed here that one can see the distinctions being drawn between material and existential representations of reality. Sebald's texts, as I have argued, contain representations of memory that effectively bring a reader to ask what the effect of the elimination of existential (identity-shaping) elements of memory can be. Clearly, materiality, in itself is fundamentally mute to questioning. It is the existential overlayering that is more significant. Innis's brand of interrogation of the landscape and the staple products so readily capable of being exploited in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century technologies does not articulate the existential concern with landscape a writer such as Sebald does, but it certainly anticipates this direction of thinking. In the end, I argue that what we have here is not landscape as social construction, as environmentalism, or even as ecologism, in the sense that Clement or Watkins would have it. Instead, what we have here is an interrogation of the interior dimensions of landscape, the anticipation of response, and the cultivation of memory.

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