Reading *Empire and Communications*: Above and below the Line

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Harold Innis's *Empire and Communications* is considered to be one of the classic works in media studies and the history of media, yet its origins in a set of lectures delivered at Oxford University in May 1948 have received little attention.[1] In the spring of 1946 Innis received an invitation out of the blue from W. K. Hancock[2] of All Souls College, Oxford, asking him whether he would be available to deliver the Beit lectures at the university during the 1946–7 academic year.[3] The six lectures (supported by the Beit Trust)[4] were to be on "imperial economic history." He cautioned Innis that "the fund is not large ... its originators contemplated lecturers from this country." This meant that "the fee is modest – £200 in installments: £100 when the lectures are delivered … another when the manuscript is delivered for publication" with "no allocation

1 Harold A. Innis, *Empire and Communications*, revised by Mary Quayle Innis (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

2 Sir William Keith Hancock (1898–1988), an eminent Australian historian, was at the time Chichele Professor of Economic History and a fellow of All Souls College at Oxford.

3 W.K. Hancock to Harold Innis, 25 May1946, Department of Political Economy fonds (hereafter DPE) A76-0025, University of Toronto Archives (hereafter UTA), box 6, file 6. Innis interrupted ongoing negotiations for a position at the University of Chicago to prepare for his lectures, deciding not to return to Chicago to teach during the summer quarter of 1947. He later resumed discussions, but ultimately decided to remain at the University of Toronto, becoming dean of its graduate school.

4 The lecture series was held under the auspices of the Beit Professorship of Colonial History established in 1905 by the British gold-and-diamond magnate, Alfred Beit (1853–1906). At the time of the invitation, the chair was held by Sir Reginald Coupland KCMG FBA (1884–1952); his appointment to this position ran from 1920 to 1948. The Beit Fund was "not only … an endowment for a Chair, but … a means by which the University has been able to promote work in the field of British Empire studies which has been of great value." It also provided support for visiting lecturers, whose presentations "were published in volume form [constituting] an important contribution to this field of study." Oxford University Archives, Beit Fund, UR 6/B/1, file 3, correspondence file on the Beit Fund, 1948–53.

for travelling expenses." To give Innis some sense of who had given the lectures before, Hancock mentioned Innis's former colleague, C.R. Fay,[5] whose lectures had addressed "Imperial Economy," and Sir Alan Pim,[6] who had discussed "African Problems."[7] He let Innis know that if he were to give "an encouraging answer" he would be sent an official invitation from Sir Reginald Coupland.[8] Innis did indeed receive such an invitation; he accepted it but arranged to deliver the lectures in 1948 instead.[9] Coupland assured Innis that he was "completely free to choose the subject [for his] lectures in this … wide field of the Economic History of the British Empire." He felt that it would have been presumptuous of him to suggest a topic, even if he had had one in mind.[10] Innis took Coupland's assurances at his word, suggesting that his lectures examine the relationship between empire and communications. It has been claimed that the lecture series was greeted with "general puzzlement" from the audience who had supposedly expected "a detailed examination of some aspect of British imperial history."[11] Yet at least one prospective member of the audience would not have been puzzled by what was presented in the lecture series. Hancock, who described himself as an "arch-engineer of [Innis's] coming," told Innis that he would be departing for Australia during the same term in which Innis would be delivering his lectures, and therefore he might miss them, a state of affairs that he described as a "cruel disappointment [as he] would have been the chief benefactor of [this] wisdom."[12] He also informed Innis that he had just reviewed his essay collection, *Political Economy in the Modern State*[13] for the *Economic History Review*.[14] The material covered in the review anticipated the set of lectures that Innis eventually delivered. Hancock noted that "this volume ... is full

5 C. R. (Charles Ryle) Fay (1884–1961), a British economic historian, was a professor of economic history (and a colleague of Innis) from 1921 to 1930 at the University of Toronto. He subsequently became Reader in Economic History at Cambridge University.

6 Sir Alan William Pim (1871–1958) was an administrator in India and colonial adviser to the British government.

7 Charles Ryle Fay, *Imperial Economy and Its Place in the Formation of Economic Doctrine 1600–1932* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934). Alan Pim, *The Financial and Economic History of the African Tropical Territories* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940). Both were published in the Beit Lectures on Colonial Economic History series.

8 Hancock to Innis, 25 May1946. DPE A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 6.

9 As he noted in a letter to John U. Nef, "in the spring of 1948 [he was] to give the Beit lectures at Oxford which implies a substantial mortgage on time and energy." Innis to Nef, 15 November 1946 (est.), John U. Nef Papers (hereafter JUN), Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library (hereafter UCL), box 24, file 4.

10 Coupland to Innis, 18 August 1946, DPE A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 6.

11 Fay's set of lectures was more in line with the theme: Fay, *Imperial Economy*.

12 Hancock to Innis, 4 January 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 6.

13 Harold Innis, *Political Economy in the Modern State* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1946), 103–44.

14 W.K. Hancock, review of Harold Innis, *Political Economy in the Modern State*. *The Economic History Review* 18 (1/2) (1948): 113–14.

of the learning and wisdom distilled from twenty and more years of intensive research into Canadian economic history." This suggests that far from being surprised at what Innis decided to present, his hosts at All Souls College knew exactly what they were getting. Hancock drew attention to the "masterly essays on the theme of excess capacity in transport." He noted that the "local research has been as intensive and meticulous as anyone else [but has] not affected him with the taint of localism – or of nationalism…" Rather than being obsessed with the role of the frontier – as was the case with Turner and other American historians – according to Hancock,

> Innis never ignored "the metropolitan markets which make the frontiers move … [A] study of Canadian history … 'gives a crucial significance to an understanding of cyclical and secular disturbances not only within Canada but without.'" [A] second theme ... [demonstrates that] the diffusion of words since the invention of printing is a supply-and-demand history in which are interwoven technological change, business enterprise and the innate or acquired capacities of men to understand or misunderstand ideas.[15]

It was not surprising, then, that the subject Innis proposed for his set of lectures found favour with Hancock and Coupland.[16]

Arrangements

Innis and Mary Quayle Innis sailed on the Empress of Canada from Montreal to Southampton on 1 May 1948 returning via Liverpool on August 4.[17] Innis delivered six lectures (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 5:45 pm) beginning on Wednesday, May 12, with the final one on Monday, May 24. The series was advertised in the *Oxford Gazette* during the Hilary (January to March) term at Oxford.[18] While in Oxford they stayed at the Linton Lodge Hotel on Linton Road. Aside from delivering the Beit lectures, Innis was invited to visit Nuffield College, hosted by its warden, Henry Clay.[19] The latter suggested that Innis

15 Ibid.

16 Anticipating his absence, Hancock requested that Innis provide him with a précis of his lectures. Hancock to Innis, 4 January 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 6. It appeared that Hancock was not present at the Beit lectures, having gone to Australia to take up a position at the Australian National University.

17 E.F. Thompson to Miss Carnegie, 19 March 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 6. Innis was not reimbursed for the cost of the voyages, which amounted to $1132 for he and his wife. Innis to Cotterill, 8 April 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 6.

18 Henry Clay to Innis, 11 May 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 7, file 6.

19 Sir Henry Clay (1883–1954) was a British economist and Warden of Nuffield College, Oxford.

attend the Annual General Meeting of the Economic History Society held at the London School of Economics and Political Science, as well as meetings of the Oxford Economics History Group.[20] On May 21, Innis delivered the Cust Lecture in Nottingham. On June 17, he delivered the Stamp Memorial lecture at the University of London. He then spent a few weeks doing research in Paris[21] prior to attending the Congress of Commonwealth Universities held in Oxford, July 19–23. In addition, during his time in the United Kingdom, Innis received honorary doctoral degrees from the Universities of Oxford, London, and Glasgow.

"History of Communications"

In accepting the invitation to deliver the Beit lectures, Innis was obliged to proceed in a direction that was somewhat at odds with his broader communications project. The major point of reference for Innis's emergent interest in the subject was the "History of Communications" manuscript, running over 1400 pages in length, from antiquity to modernity with particular emphasis given to the material that was being written and printed on.[22] Given that the latter work begins with chapter 4, it has been suggested that Innis simply removed its first three chapters and used them as the Beit lectures. However, archival research has revealed that Innis had in fact written three initial chapters that had not been included in the main body of the "History of Communications" manuscript.[23] While these did not correspond directly to any particular chapters found in *Empire*, they did contain some material that was incorporated into them. This means that *Empire* should not be viewed as a fragment of the original manuscript. Rather, responding to the task that had been outlined to him by Hancock and Coupland, Innis drew on his ongoing research to examine some broader issues related to the "economic history of the British Empire."

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20 Clay to Innis, 11 May 1948. DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 7, file 6.

21 He had been awarded $500.00 from the Rockefeller Foundation to study paper production in France. Sidney Smith to Joseph Willits, 23 April 1948, Rockefeller Foundation, RG 1.2, series 427, box 17, folder 167, Rockefeller Archive Center.

22 Harold Adams Innis, "A History of Communications: An Incomplete and Unrevised Manuscript" (Microfilmed for private circulation, Toronto. Its first three chapters, edited and annotated by William J. Buxton, Michael R. Cheney, and Paul Heyer, appeared as *Harold Innis's History of Communications: Paper and Printing - Antiquity to Early Modernity* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

23 Evidently, after going through several iterations, Innis arrived at the following titles for the first three draft chapters: 1. "Feet of Clay" (dealing with Sumerian cuneiform writing and its impact); 2. "Papyrus" (dealing with ancient Egypt); and finally, 3. "Parchment" (covering the Middle Ages). Buxton et al, *A History of Communications*, 2.

Publishing

An important aspect of the Beit Lectures was an arrangement to have them published by Clarendon Press. In addition to his £100 stipend for delivering the lectures, Innis was to receive another £100 for making the text of his talks available to the publisher; it was to be submitted by the autumn of 1948.[24] In response to a letter from D.M. Davin of Clarendon Press in November 1948,[25] Innis conveyed to him that he had already sent the manuscript to Coupland, and requested that it be published by "the end of March [1949]" or preferably earlier so that it would be available to the "large wave of returned students" in their final year. They had pressing demands "in terms of library facilities and books."[26] However, having learned that a March 1949 publication date was out of the question, Innis agreed to the schedule suggested to him by Clarendon Press, namely publication in the summer or autumn of 1949.[27]

Innis revised the manuscript in the fall of 1948. To this end, he shared a draft of his chapter on ancient Greece with his colleague in the University of Toronto Classics Department, Harley Grant Robertson,[28] quite well known for his scholarship on Greece.[29] In a letter to Innis, Robertson made a number of suggestions about how the manuscript could be improved, telling him he had "enjoyed reading [his] masterly summary of the comprehensive subject." He admitted, however, that he had difficulty following some of the sections,

24 D.M. Davin to Innis, 18 November 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 8.

25 Daniel (Dan) Marcus Davin CBE (1913–1990) worked for Clarendon Press from 1945 to 1978.

26 Innis to Davin, 30 November 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 6, file 8.

27 The Cust and Stamp lectures were also published, but in a much more expedited fashion. Innis received printed copies of his Cust lecture in late November 1948. Harold A Innis, *Great Britain, the United States and Canada: The 21st Cust Foundation Lecture Delivered on Friday, 21 May 1948* (Nottingham: Clough, 1948). The University of Nottingham quite generously sent additional copies to a number of Canadian media outlets. Innis to A. Plumb, 29 November 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 8, file 3. Innis received the page proofs for the Stamp lecture (published by Oxford University Press) in October 1948. However, it appears that the finished book was not available before March 1949. Harold A Innis, *The Press: A Neglected Factor in the Economic History of the Twentieth Century* (London: University of London Athlone Press, 1949). James Henderson to Innis, 15 October 1948, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 7, folder 6; Cole to Innis, 29 March 1949. Arthur Cole Papers, HUG 4290.405, Harvard University Archives, box 4, file 6.

28 Robertson (1892–1985), who had received a doctorate in classics from the University of Chicago, succeeded his father, John Charles Robertson, as a professor of Greek at Victoria College, University of Toronto. Ward W. Briggs, *Biographical Dictionary of North American Classicists* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994), 44.

29 Hartley Grant Robertson, *The Administration of Justice in the Athenian Empire* (Toronto: University of Toronto Library, 1924). Innis cited this work in *Empire* (p. 82). Innis conveyed his thanks to Robertson in the book's preface.

particularly the one "on the early philosophers." He thought Innis could make it clearer "how much they owed to the oral tradition and how much of their thinking was conditioned by new influences." He also could not understand why Innis treated Plato and Aristotle "out of chronological order." In terms of omissions, he felt that Innis should have included the "orators and sophists;" both, in his view, had influenced the oral tradition. Finally he called attention to what he considered to be "rather minor" matters, including "a certain dangerous tendency in the oral tradition itself," and added "some notes on some small points." These included queries on Plato's views on poetry, on differences between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* he thought necessarily significant, and on the views of their mutual colleague, E. T. Owen.[30]

The Text

In January 1949, Innis submitted his final corrections to the press, and the manuscript was sent off to the printer.[31] The 230-page book was published by Clarendon Press in the spring of 1950.[32] It consisted of an author's preface (1 page) a brief table of contents (1 page), six chapters (217 pages), and a rudimentary index (12 pages.)[33] Each chapter contained a number of footnotes. Referring to the works cited, they also contained occasional commentary on these texts along with some summaries of their claims and arguments.[34] The text was sprinkled with references to works written by persons providing general insights, such as Ernest Renan, Jacob Burckhardt, and Goldwin Smith.

Innis used the introduction and the preface to help him clarify issues related to historical enquiry and to historiography; he was concerned with our capacity to understand past civilizations from a contemporary standpoint. His point of reference was the work of previous thinkers who had studied civilizations from a nineteenth- and twentieth-century standpoint. Innis suggests that these accounts

30 Harley Grant Robertson to Innis, 23 October 1948, HAI, B72-0003, UTA, box 5, folder 12.

31 Davin to Innis, 24 January 1949. DPE A76-0025, UTA, box 6 file 8.

32 At that time, those books published by Oxford University Press in Oxford appeared on the Clarendon Press List (those published through the London office appeared on the Oxford University Press).

33 One page had been left blank. Unlike the 1972 version, which had seven chapters (an introduction along with six substantive chapters), the original 1950 version had six chapters, with the material on Egypt included as a subsection of the first chapter along with the introduction. This may have been because the book was based on the six Beit lectures that Innis had delivered at Oxford.

34 A revised version was published by the University of Toronto Press in 1972. The revision, undertaken by his widow, Mary Quayle Innis, mostly consisted of incorporating glosses that Innis had written in the margins of the 1950 version. The significance of the revisions and the review process for our understanding of the text is discussed below (pp. xxxv–xxxvii).

have largely been inadequate because of the bias inherent in examining civilizations through the lens of contemporary concerns and a failure to adequately consider the importance of communication. He noted that the machine industry of twentieth-century civilization, "has made it possible to amass enormous quantities of information." Accordingly, "the concern with the study of civilization in this century is probably a result of the character of our civilization." This could be found in the writings of Spengler, Kroeber, and Toynbee who were not able to escape the influence of their contexts, whether national or international. Indeed, Innis went so far as to claim that "since the First World War the study of civilization has been threatened by two monopolies, the first in Germany represented by Spengler, and the second in Great Britain or possibly the English-speaking world represented by Prof. A.J. Toynbee."[35] His own work, with its "bias for the oral," could be seen as a corrective to these other approaches. He emphasized that he was framing his discussion in terms of the writings of Graham Wallas[36] and E.J. Urwick,[37] claiming that his study represented an extension of their work.

Innis's approach, Eric Havelock suggested, could best be viewed as a variant of "philosophical history."[38] Throughout his writings on communications, Innis makes frequent reference to what he viewed as "the neglect of philosophical problems." This bears a striking resemblance to Hegel's view that historical work can best be understood as a hierarchical tripartite division of labour, consisting of "original history," "reflective history," and "general history."[39] "Original history," at the bottom of the hierarchy, consisted of an accumulation of factual material. Occupying the middle of the hierarchy was "reflective history," which involved an interpretation of the primary items. Finally, Hegel argued that general or philosophical history was at the top of the hierarchy. It involved an effort to make sense of the overall meaning of what has been revealed in "reflective history." As Blondheim points out, Hegel was of the view that this approach could best be applied to discrete fields that had hitherto received little attention.[40]

35 Harold Innis, "The Concept of Monopoly and Civilization," paper read at a conference under the chairmanship of Lucien Febvre, Collège de France, Paris, 6 July 1951. Published in Harold A, Innis, *Staples, Markets, and Cultural Change: Selected Essays*, ed. Daniel Drache (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1995), 384.

36 Graham Wallas, *Social Judgment* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1934).

37 E.J. Urwick, "The Role of Intelligence in the Social Process," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science / Revue Canadienne d'Economique et de Science Politique* 1, no. 1 (1935): 64–76.

38 Eric A. Havelock, "Harold Innis: The Philosophical Historian," *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 38, no. 3 (1981): 255–68.

39 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Hugh Barr Nisbet, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction - Reason in History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

40 Menahem Blondheim, Discovering "The Significance of Communication: Harold Adams Innis as Social Constructivist." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 29, no. 2 (2004): 131.

Arguably, in giving attention to communications, Innis was in line with Hegel's admonition.[41]

This accounts for the somewhat curious structure of the volume. It took the form of a seemingly endless parade of snippets from texts, accompanied by numerous brief summaries. It is as if Innis not only organized the parade but offered a running account of it from his place in the reviewing stand.[42]

Above all, his comparative approach was modelled on James Bryce's analysis of constitutional change.[43] According to Bryce, as with Newtonian astronomy, in the realm of politics, there is a "tendency which draws men, (or groups of men) together into one organized community and keeps them there," which can be viewed as a "Centripetal force." On the other hand, "that which makes men, or groups, break way and disperse," can be viewed as a "Centrifugal" force. Bryce sought to understand the extent to which political constitutions as frames of government involving a "complex totality of laws" were "exposed to the actions of both of these forces … that which draws together and that which dissevers."[44] According to Innis,[45] modernity, as outlined by Bryce, could be explained by examining modes of communication rather than constitutional forms.[46] He elaborated the perspective based on Bryce by drawing on works that provided insights into "the factors responsible for the successful operation of 'centrifugal and centripetal forces,'"[47] as well as the extent to which communication was efficient.[48]

41 Innis, unlike Marshall McLuhan, showed little interest in establishing communication as a field. Rather, he viewed communications as a way of reconfiguring economic history. It is noteworthy that he contributed a number of review essays on books in the field for the *Journal of Economic History*.

42 This account draws on the analogy suggested by Blondheim (2004); See also David McCabe, "Hegel and the Idea of Philosophical History," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 15, no. 3 (1998): 369–88.

43 James Bryce, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901).

44 Ibid., 217, 218, 220.

45 He later invoked Bryce's notions about Roman Law and civilization to examine how the "second British empire" evolved after the American Revolution. Harold A. Innis, *Roman Law and the British Empire: One of a Series of Lectures Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the University,* delivered at the University of New Brunswick, 30 March 1950 (Fredericton: University of New Brunswick, 1950).

46 His analysis mirrored his critique of constitutionalism as a leitmotif for Canadian economy history: Harold A. Innis, *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1929); review of *Documents Relating to Canadian Currency, Exchange and Finance during the French Period*, Adam Shortt, ed. *The Canadian Historical Review* 8, no. 1 (1927): 62–5.

47 Innis, *Empire*, 7; Thomas Raynesford Lounsbury, *The Standard of Usage in English* (New York; London: Harper & Brothers, 1908).

48 Innis, *Empire*, 6–7.

The cyclical approach found in *Empire* dovetailed with Innis's 1948 "Owl of Minerva" paper, which provided the overall point of reference for the volume's narrative, with ancient Greece as touchstone.[49] Indeed, the structure of *Empire* mirrored that of his Royal Society presidential address.[50] He starts by sketching out the normative narrative, beginning with the cultural flourishing that occurred upon the fall of ancient Greece. He then traces the subsequent trajectory of the Owl of Minerva's flight, as a metaphor for subsequent periods of cultural effervescence. After outlining the developments that preceded Athens' golden age, he examines what succeeded it, with particular attention given to modes of communication and the social and political forms they engendered. In *Empire*, Greece is retained as the normative point of reference in the volume's middle chapter. It is followed by a chapter that is nominally about the Roman Empire and the written tradition but is actually more about Graeco-Roman civilization and its decline. In his Minerva's Owl presentation, following his account of the Roman Empire and Writing, he abandons the civilization-centred narrative in favour of one grounded in forms of media, particularly parchment and paper. This approach is largely retained in *Empire*.

Empire and Communications can thus be viewed as the "Owl of Minerva writ" large. Its scope is ambitious covering some five millennia of history from (2900 BCE to the twentieth century) and ranges widely geographically from Asia (India and China), to the near East (Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Near East), to Europe, and finally to North America. In fleshing out this historical trajectory, Innis did not make use of primary sources as had characterized his earlier staples work. As Watson observes, this "shift from primary to secondary-source material was dictated both by the pressure of time and availability of material."[51] Since communications were yet to emerge as an object of study, there were few signposts available about what primary sources were available and where they could be found. Innis was not in a position in this stage of his career to be able to gain the mastery of languages necessary to read scripts written in the ancient languages. Moreover, undertaking "dirt research" through visiting contemporary versions of staple production was out of the question, as modern equivalents of earlier media practices did not exist. Innis proceeded by drawing on texts that directly discussed printing and written media, as well as more general texts that dealt with these phenomena more indirectly as part of a broader narrative.

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49 The paper, which had originally been presented in 1947, was published in a slightly revised form in Harold A. Innis, *Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951) (hereafter *Bias*).

50 His presidential address, in turn, built upon a course entitled "Social Fluctuations" that Innis had given at the University of Chicago during the summer quarter of 1946.

51 Alexander John Watson, *Marginal Man: The Dark Vision of Harold Innis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 264.

The points of reference for *Empire* are ancient civilizations – as well as city-states – that by nature were rather fluid and loose entities. Innis pointedly noted that the book would not address the British Empire, but rather "focus attention on other empires in the history of the West, with reference to empires of the East, in order to isolate factors which seem important for purposes of comparison."[52] The text moves between synchronic (comparative across space) and diachronic (tracing changes over time) analyses. The first two substantive chapters (2 and 3) compare the civilizations of Egypt and Babylonia, respectively.[53] Since river systems were critical to the development of each, Innis was able to contrast the extent to which the somewhat different fluvial circumstances of each served as backdrops to civilizations that were centralized (Egypt) and dispersed (Babylonia).[54] The middle two chapters (4 and 5) are called "The Oral Tradition and Greek Civilization" and "Written Tradition and the Roman Empire," respectively. It is noteworthy that unlike the previous two chapters, the middle two explicitly paired particular forms of communication with specific civilizations. While the titles of the chapters suggest that Innis considered Rome and Greece to be discrete entities, he eventually came to the view that they merged into what he called a Graeco-Roman civilization. The final two titles for chapters 6 and 7 abandon reference to distinct areas; they refer rather to a succession of paired media, namely "Parchment and Paper" (chapter 6) and "Paper and the Printing Press" (chapter 7). Most notably, Innis was now placing media front and centre in his discussion. The final chapter could be seen as a transition from examining ancient civilizations and early modernity to addressing the industrial age, initially dominated by the British Empire, which, as Innis notes, had gained pre-eminence in the 19th century. No separate conclusion for the volume was provided (although chapter 7 has some concluding remarks for the material it covers).

Unattributed Statements

The main text – particularly in the later chapters – is sprinkled with unattributed statements. These usually consist of a sentence or two and appear to mostly refer to very well-known excerpts that Innis may have gleaned from the secondary sources in which they were mentioned.[55] He may have assumed that

52 Innis, *Empire*, 5.

53 Given that the Sumerian civilization by most accounts preceded that of Egypt, Innis ignored their chronological order in examining the two.

54 Innis used Babylonia as a catch-all term for the various political organizations that emerged in the Mesopotamia region during antiquity. Because river systems were central to each, this suggests that Innis did not view geography as narrowly determinant of civilization. Graeme Patterson, *History and Communication: Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan, the Interpretation of History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016.

55 Most of the sources have been tracked down and included in the bibliography.

they would be familiar to the reader and that a more detailed reference was unnecessary. However, it may have been the case that he came upon them late in his revisions and did not have enough time to provide complete references. He made a point of referencing classical sources such as Euripides, Solon, Aristotle, Horace, Cicero, Quintilian, and Julius Caesar. Some of these were from recognized authorities such as Walter Bagehot, Jacob Burckhardt, Henry Hallam, and Hastings Rashdall. A cluster consisted of works related to law (A.F. Pollard, Frederick Pollock, and C.H. McIlwain). He also appeared to be making an effort to bolster his discussion of 17th century thought with references to figures such as John Smith, Robert Hooke, John Amos Comenius, Thomas Hobbes, and Thomas Jefferson. A number of French-language sources were also included: Antoine de Rivarol, Étienne Dolet, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Broader Cluster

Commentators have continually remarked that *Empire* represented a departure from his assigned task for the Beit lectures, namely, to address some aspect of the economic history of the British Empire. However, if one regards the original Beit lectures as part of a broader cluster involving Innis's presentations and interventions in Britain during the spring and summer of 1948, it becomes possible to discern the extent to which his presentations did address issues crucial to British Empire economic history. The Beit lectures can only be understood in relation to three other interventions made by Innis in Great Britain around the same time: the Stamp Memorial Lecture at the University of London,[56] the Cust Foundation Lecture at the University of Nottingham,[57] and his presentation and commentary at the Sixth Congress of the Universities of the British Commonwealth held at Oxford University[58]

As revealed in *Empire*, Innis was able to barely broach issues related to the twentieth century in his Beit lectures. To be sure, he did allude to how "the impact of large-scale mechanization in North America on Great Britain and Europe became significant with the new journalism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries."[59] However, he was largely unable to provide much detail about the implications of this claim, aside from a few general remarks

56 See p. x above.

57 Ibid.

58 Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth and Association of Commonwealth Universities, eds., *Report of Proceedings: Sixth Congress of the Universities of the British Commonwealth, 1948* (London: Association of Commonwealth Universities, 1951). The report contains a number of comments made by Innis, mostly related to the state of higher education. An abbreviated version of Innis's paper was later published as "A Critical Review" in *Bias*, 190–5. See also Innis, *Empire*, 163–70.

59 Innis, *Empire*, 163.

about how monopolies of knowledge developed in a number of different national contexts and within earlier empires.[60] By contrast, the Stamp Lecture provided much more nuance and detail about what Innis had in mind as it sought "to develop the thesis that civilization has been dominated at different stages by various media of communication such as clay, papyrus, parchment, and paper produced first from rags and then from wood."[61] The purpose of the Stamp Lecture, according to Innis, was to "concentrate on the period in which industrialization of the means of production has become dominant through the manufacture of newsprint from wood and through the manufacture of the newspaper by the linotype and the fast press."[62] To this end, he examined how the interplay between the development of hydro-electric power and the production of newsprint had an impact on the circulation of newspapers in North America. According to Innis, this resulted in a form of journalism that was overly beholden to the "demands of advertisers," which had a deleterious impact on the "character of news."[63] In turn, "the problem of adapting news to the needs of increased circulation led to an increasing dependence on feature material" and "the decline of the editorial as an influence on public opinion" with "headlines and news [dominating] the front page."[64] Innis also stressed that "the dominance of the newspaper was accompanied by a ruthless shattering of language, the invention of new idioms and the sharpening of words."[65] Moreover, as he emphasized, this form of journalism had a profound impact on the conduct of foreign policy and on the rise of nationalism.[66] However, he did not confine himself to examining the impact of industrialized newspapers on politics and public opinion. Amplifying some of the claims he was making in the Beit lectures, he argued that "the impact of advertising through the press on the social sciences has been overwhelming."[67] Of particular concern to Innis was "the lack of interest among social scientists in other civilizations than those of the west, in the neglect of philosophical problems, and in the obsession with scholastic problems of reconciling dynamic and static theories."[68] More generally, Innis observed that "marked changes in the speed of communication have far-reaching effects on monopolies over time because of their impact on the most sensitive elements of the economic system."[69]

60 Ibid., 164–70.
61 Innis, *The Press*, 5.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., 17.
64 Ibid., 20–3
65 Ibid., 28.
66 Ibid., 29, 44.
67 Ibid., 45–6.
68 Ibid., 46.
69 Ibid., 47, 49.

The themes from the final Beit lectures were also evident in Innis's Cust lecture at Nottingham University. It is noteworthy that the original version of the lecture[70] differs fundamentally from the published version that eventually appeared.[71] Above all, the earlier iteration offered a more biting critique of American imperialism, while at the same time scorning the governments of both Canada and Britain. Reflecting his dismay with recent developments in his native land, he "[welcomed] the opportunity of discussing our problems in a country which I hope still maintains the traditions of freedom of speech."[72] He stressed that "Canada has had no alternative but to serve as an instrument of British imperialism and then of American imperialism" and that it "came under the vacillating and ill-informed policy of the United States.[73] The Cust lecture served to give focus to some of the general questions addressed by Innis in his final Beit lectures. He gave attention to relations between Canada, Britain, and the United States within the ambit of the "increasing power of American imperialism" and the "waning influence of the British empire." He underscored his contention that "American foreign policy has been a disgraceful illustration of the irresponsibility of a powerful nation which promises little for the future stability of the western world."[74] Echoing the views of "Professor Robert Peers"[75] Innis was of the view that "Canada must call in the Old World to redress the balance of the new, and hope that Great Britain will escape American imperialism as successfully as she has escaped British imperialism."[76] Innis's detailed examination of the relations between Canada, Britain, and the United States provided a nuanced elaboration of how, in his view, "survival in the West depends on their continual subordination and on a recognition of the cultural leadership and supremacy of Europe.[77]

Innis's views on the western civilization in the post-war period were also displayed in the remarks he made at a meeting of Commonwealth universities held at Oxford University in the summer of 1948 subsequent to his lectures in Oxford, Nottingham, and London. Most notably, he took part in a featured session of the meeting: "A critical review, from the points of views of an historian, a philosopher, and a sociologist, of the structural and moral changes produced in modern society by scientific and technological advance." Emphasizing that his standpoint was that of an economist rather than an historian, Innis was of the view that "the

70 Innis, "Great Britain, U.S., Canada" (1948).
71 Innis, "Great Britain, U.S., Canada" (1952).
72 Innis, "Great Britain, U.S., Canada" (1948), 2.
73 Ibid., 5.
74 Ibid.
75 Robert Peers (1888–1972), Professor of Adult Education, University College, Nottingham, 1909–70. Robert Peers, *Adult Education: A Comparative Study* (Routledge, 2013).
76 Innis, "Great Britain, U.S., Canada" (1948), 24.
77 Innis, *Empire*, 169.

agenda had been pawed over by administrators [and] that the true scholars in the Congress had also been pawed about by administrators." He believed that "there was some measure of truth in the remark of my colleague [that the] topics for the discussion of these meetings had to do with matters administrative."[78] He observed that the "principal actors in the programmes were VCs [vice-chancellors], presidents, and principals, and other administrative officers." He was hopeful, however that there would be a "full opportunity for the men who do the important work in the Universities – the teachers – to participate in the discussion and to make this meeting a success."[79] He went on to provide a more pointed critique of how Commonwealth universities had become implicated in broader monopolies of knowledge: "We are compelled to recognize the significance of mechanized knowledge as a source of power and its subjection to the demands of force through the instrument of the State. The Universities are in danger of becoming a branch of the military implications and to attack in a determined fashion the problems created by a neglect of the position of culture in Western civilization."[80]

Innis's remarks at the meeting of Commonwealth educators can be viewed as the capstone of his academic visit to the United Kingdom in the spring and summer of 1948.

Reviewing

Empire was eventually published on 19 January 1950. Shortly thereafter, Innis sent copies to his University of Chicago colleague, John U. Nef, and to his former student, Andrew Clark.[81] Given Arthur Cole's support or Innis's work in communications, it is not surprising that he planned to organize a meeting of members of the Economic History Association to discuss *Empire*.[82] In preparation for this session, Innis's former student, and junior colleague, Tom Easterbrook, planned to organize a smaller seminar to discuss the book.[83]

The response to *Empire* was largely bound up with reactions to his other communication works, as well as reflections on Innis's legacy upon his death

78 This was likely University of Toronto President, Sidney Smith, who also attended the meeting.

79 Innis, "Critical Review," 101–2.

80 Ibid., 152.

81 Nef to Innis, 21 March 1950. JUN, UCL, box 24, file 4; Andrew Clark to Innis, 9 April 1950, HAI, B72-0025, UTA, box 8 file 4. Both were eventually to write reviews of *Empire* and *Bias*.

82 As chair of the Rockefeller-sponsored Committee on Economic History, Cole had been very supportive of Innis's work in communications.

83 Tom Easterbrook to Innis, 18 February 1950, HAI, B72-0025, UTA, box 8, file 5. The others involved were Hugh Aitken and Noel George Butlin. Aitken and Easterbrook were at Harvard and planned to come to Toronto for the meeting. Noel Butlin (1921–1991), who was visiting from Toronto, later became a leading figure in the Australian social sciences.

in November 1952. The reviews written by those who admired him were generally quite positive and were perhaps not subject to the usual level of frank criticism.[84] Other reviews, while demonstrating some misgivings, did acknowledge the originality of the argument and the importance of the subject matter.[85]

Most notably, the eminent archaeologist, V. Gordon Childe, wrote a review of *Empire* that appeared in the *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*.[86] Childe, from the standpoint of archaeology, raised some questions about Innis's interpretations of media and their impact during antiquity. At the same time, he praised Innis for having opened up an important line of investigation.

Editing

The bulk of the reviews appeared in the immediate aftermath of *Empire*'s publication in 1950 (namely, 1950–2). Given that Innis had written numerous glosses in the margins of a copy of the text – likely with the view of producing a revised version of the book – this meant that he was able to take the reviews into account when writing his marginalia.[87] The notes were written willy-nilly in the spaces available on many of the pages of *Empire*. The longer addenda were written in the margins at the top and bottom of the pages. He also wrote passages between lines within the body of the text. Innis used the right margins to write brief notes accompanied by an indication of what they referred to in

84 G.V. Ferguson, review of Harold A. Innis, *Empire and Communications; The Press, a Neglected Factor in the Economic History of the Twentieth Century, International Journal* 6, no. 1 (1950): 55–6; Andrew H. Clark, review of Harold A. Innis, *Empire and Communications; The Bias of Communication*, *Geographical Review* 43, no. 1 (1953): 140–2.

85 Henry L. Roberts, "Recent Books on International Relations," *Foreign Affairs* 29, no 1 (1950): 143–64; Franklin Fearing, "Books," *The Quarterly of Film Radio and Television* 7, no. 1 (1952): 87–96; D.C. Somervell, review of *Empire and Communications*, by H.A. Innis, *International Affairs* 26, no. 3 (1950): 452–3.

86 V. Gordon Childe, "Review: *Empire and Communications* by H.A. Innis." *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science / Revue Canadienned'Economique et de Science Politique,* 17, no. 1 (February 1951): 98–100. Innis had met him at the 220th anniversary celebration of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, which had taken place in Moscow and Leningrad from June 15 to June 28 in1945. Harold Adams Innis and William Christian, *Innis on Russia: The Russian Diary and Other Writings* (Toronto: Harold Innis Foundation, Innis College, University of Toronto, 1981). He made a number of references to him in Harold A. Innis and William Christian, *The Idea File of Harold Adams Innis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

87 That Innis made a practice of presenting revised versions of his positions in light of reviews and new findings is evident in a series of articles he wrote on Peter Pond and the early fur trade subsequent to the publication of his Pond biography. William J. Buxton, ed. *Harold Innis on Peter Pond: Biography, Cultural Memory and the Continental Fur Trade* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019).

the text.[88] Shorter items could also be found there (often without specification of what they referenced in the text). They included single words, names, places, dates, and brief queries. In some instances, Innis used a free-floating note to provide an explanation of a statement he had made in the text.[89]

Innis's glosses, as it turned out, were not written in vain. They were incorporated into the new version of the text, edited and revised by Mary Quayle Innis, that was published in 1972.[90] As with the *Fur Trade in Canada* and *The Cod Fisheries*, Quayle Innis incorporated Innis's marginalia into the revised versions.[91] All three revised versions were produced under the auspices of the Harold Innis Memorial Committee, which had been established to oversee the republication of some of Innis's writings, as well as a number of his previously unpublished works.[92]

Mary Quayle Innis explained that the additional material consisted of "new ideas, suggestions, quotations, references – many to newly published books – which might be incorporated in the footnotes of a second edition." She emphasized that these references "were nearly always incomplete" and were "the raw material for new documentation, not new footnotes in themselves." Accordingly, it was decided "to publish the new material very much as it stood." She did, however, locate the sources used by Innis, making use of the most recent editions of these works whenever possible.[93]

Given the unconventional nature of Innis's additions, it was necessary to put them in a somewhat unconventional footnote form. The material[94] was broken down into discrete footnotes, indicated with lower-case letters. and placed

88 Innis's annotated copy of *Empire* is located in the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library of the University of Toronto Library. Watson has reproduced page 93 of the volume (*Marginal Man*, 240). This material is mostly covered on page 76 of the 1972 version of *Empire*.

89 For instance, Innis added to his statement that for various political forms of political organization, writing was "the work of highly centralized political and social organization – royal and priestly classes" (Innis, *Empire*, 10). He cited Arthur Evans and Joan Evans, *The Palace of Minos: A Comparative Account of the Successive Stages of the Early Cretan Civilization as Illustrated by the Discoveries at Knossos* (London: Macmillan, 1902).

90 Innis, *Empire*.

91 The first version of *Fur Trade* was published in 1930. The revised version appeared in 1964. Harold A Innis and Oliver Baty Cunningham Memorial Publication Fund, *The Fur Trade in Canada* (New Haven: Yale University Press; London: H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1930); Harold A. Innis, *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy* (New Haven: Yale University Press; Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1940). Revised versions of the latter appeared in 1954, 1978, 1979, 2011, and 2018.

92 Other works in this initiative included Harold Adams Innis, *Essays in Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956).

93 Mary Quayle Innis, Editor's Note, in *Empire and Communications*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

94 Ninety-one items were added; most of them were new.

directly under Innis's original numbered footnotes. When the letters of the alphabet were exhausted, they were doubled up (e.g., aa). The items that Innis had inserted into the text were placed in the appropriate locations. The remaining longer additions written into the top and bottom margins were placed at the bottom of the pages under the newly added lettered notes. These appear to have retained their original order and were organized into un-indented paragraphs that often spilled over several pages. Overall, the additions were of greater length and detail then Innis's original rather terse footnotes. And while the references in the 1950 version overlapped considerably with those found in his "History of Communications" manuscript, those in the 1972 version appeared to be mostly from works that had not been cited in either of the earlier texts.[95] In the 1972 version, the original index was retained with a few new additions from the material that had been added. Quayle Innis also revealed that Innis had "indicated a few changes in the body of the text," and that these were made "without comment."[96]

The items appearing at the bottom of the pages appeared to be a combination of detailed reading notes accompanied by "ideas" and questions that were likely to guide future revisions.[97] While Quayle Innis made a valiant effort to incorporate the new material, the content and purpose of the material belied its new form.

The glosses (converted to notes by Quayle Innis) did not conform to the model for footnotes as it had emerged in the twentieth century. As described in the *Manual of Style* published by the University of Chicago in 1906, their role is one of "aiding readers [to] search out and read an author's source material" and "indicating a pattern of debt and/or a direct pattern of influence and connection."[98] This was in line with the tradition of footnotes as discussed by Anthony Grafton. He noted that "historical footnotes … seek to show that the work they support claims authority from the historical conditions of its creation [and] that its author excavated its foundations and discovered its components in the right places."[99] Innis appeared to have added his marginalia in an

95 Most notably, Harold Peake and H.J. Fleure, *Merchant Ventures in Bronze* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931); *The Horse and the Sword* (Oxford: Clarendon; London: Humphrey Milford, 1933).

96 Mary Quayle Innis, "Editor's Note," in Innis, *Empire*.

97 They could be seen as a variant of Innis's *Idea File*. Indeed some of the entries from this work found their way into Innis's marginalia (e.g., the metal theory of history as advanced by Childe), *Idea File,*102 11/14 in *Empire*, 29.

98 *Manual of Style: Being a Compilation of the Typographical Rules in Force at the University of Chicago Press*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906. https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/dam/jcr:bba47b07-61ba-41c3-8c79-33c005c1f56d/CMSfacsimile_all.pdf. Accessed 4 August 2021. Cited in Andrew Chrystall, "A Second Way to Read McLuhan's Footnotes to Innis," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 45, no. 2 (2020): 328.

99 Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), 32.

effort to fight the fixity of the text, thereby serving the purpose of completion and elaboration. For the later chapters, as noted, the issues addressed appear to have been taken up in other publications, based on the presentations that he had given in Britain during the spring and summer of 1948. This certainly reflects Innis's "bias with the oral," expressed at the Congress of British Commonwealth Universities in 1948.[100]

The glosses were aspirational, providing a template or blueprint for revision; they pointed to an integrated text with notes blended in, rather than located in margins to buttress or elaborate the argument. They not only provided guidelines for revision but corrected dates and clarified periodization. In some cases a name was simply listed with no explanation given as to why it had been included. Most notably, a gloss often consisted of a question. These were likely not intended for the reader but for Innis himself, indicating lines of research that could profitably be pursued. This suggests that the text should be read as an "unfinished and incomplete" work in progress much like his "History of Communications" manuscript.[101] Very possibly, Innis also wished to elaborate on the sections of the main text that gestured to key issues and sources rather than exploring them in detail.

It was evident that Innis had planned to beef up the earlier part of the text that dealt with the alphabet and orality. To this end, he referred to a number of publications that had appeared after 1948; hence they had not been available to Innis when he prepared his Beit lectures.[102] A number of them were from articles that had appeared in journals during 1951 and 1952. Strikingly, Innis added material from the *English Historical Review*, *Journal for the History of Ideas*, and the newly established *Past and Present*.[103]

Reflecting his plans for revising the text, *Idea File* contained a flurry of entries dated around 1950.[104] It is not clear whether he had read the works he cited cover to cover. He made no effort to either describe or interpret standpoints of the texts in question or their overarching lines of argument;[105] he seems to have selectively chosen statements consonant with his own emergent perspective, even if they were not necessarily representative of the entire texts.[106]

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100 Innis, "A Critical Review."

101 Buxton et al., *Innis's History of Communications.*

102 The explosion of works published after 1948 was related to the lifting of wartime restrictions, and the return of academics to scholarship.

103 This may have been because V. Gordon Childe was a founding member of the journal, serving on its editorial board.

104 Innis and Christian, *The Idea File of Harold Adams Innis.*

105 For instance, he did not distinguish between scholars who viewed the Bible as historically accurate and those who used archaeology as a point of departure.

106 For example, Abel Hendy Jones Greenidge and Marcus Tullius Cicero, *The Legal Procedure of Cicero's Time* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901); Frederic G. Kenyon, *The Bible and Archaeology* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940).

Meaning was created through the assemblage of statements taken from different sources.[107]

Perhaps because they were so unwieldy in form, the glosses have largely been ignored. However, the added notes are not really intelligible without imagining how they would have been incorporated into a revised text. This would have involved some departures from the first edition of *Empire*. As noted, the original text was roughly chronological and was organized in three clusters.[108] The anticipated revision emphasized not only diachronic transitions (within and between these clusters), but also synchronic comparisons of the movements and developments that Innis had surveyed within each cluster. The glosses were often linked to the main text on the same page – sometimes specifically with letters (likely added by Quayle Innis). However, in many instances they simply represented an idea having some putative reference to the material Innis had discussed on the page or to a group of items that Innis had added.

Understanding the Glosses

The additional glosses seem to have been added to provide more texture to Innis's discussion of the factors underlying changes (in relation to time and space) with a view to strengthening the linkages between the clusters of material he examined. Since the glosses ought to be treated as an integral part of the text (rather than additions extraneous to it), one is obliged to imagine the form *Empire* would have taken, had Innis been able to revise it along the lines that he was suggesting. Accordingly, what follows is a reconstruction of *Empire* as viewed through the lenses of the marginalia, gesturing to the original text wherever appropriate.

The glosses in the book's introduction gave little indication that Innis had plans to revise it extensively. He quoted from Wyndham Lewis in an apparent effort to compare the British and French Empires[109] and noted that early writing was produced by "a highly centralized political and social organization," namely "royal and priestly classes."[110]

Innis, however, added numerous glosses to the chapters on Egypt and Babylonia, signalling that he intended to substantially revise them. To this end, he engaged with major works that he had originally ignored such as those

107 For example, William Keith Chambers Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion: A Study of the Orphic Movement* (London: Methuen, 1935); Arthur Lane, *Greek Pottery* (London: Faber, 1947).

108 See p. xvi above.

109 Wyndham Lewis, *The Art of Being Ruled* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1926); Innis, *Empire*, 4.

110 Evans and Evans, *The Palace of Minos*; Innis, *Empire*, 10.

by Henri Frankfort[111] James Henry Breasted,[112] David Diringer,[113] as well as two texts by William Foxwell Albright.[114] Drawing on Frankfort (1897–1954), Innis was able to provide greater precision about how Egyptians periodized their own development and kept track of time. Frankfort also made specific reference to the importance of writing, metal tools, and monumental art for Egyptian civilization.[115] In addition to using Breasted (1865–1935) for shedding light on the conflict between oral and written traditions in Egypt, Innis also drew on his work to add detail to his examination of how papyrus and clay were deployed in Syria and Egypt, respectively.[116] Innis made numerous references to a pioneering work by Diringer (1900–1975) to give more nuance and detail to his discussion of how the alphabet emerged and developed in the near East, particularly in relation to Aramaic script.[117] Innis owed a particular debt to Albright (1891–1971) in fleshing out a narrative of Egypt's developmental trajectory, particularly as it pertained to the "Mosaic" tradition.[118]

Innis's marginalia in the initial cluster appeared to have been particularly affected by his engagement with the work of V. Gordon Childe. Most notably, he wrote a response to Childe's review of *Empire*.[119] While Innis acknowledged that his claims were open to criticism, he also used the article as a way of reinforcing his claims about the difficulty of understanding the past through the lenses of the present and how archaeology was biased because of its fixation on material remnants of past cultures.[120]

Other ideas of Childe were prominently featured in the new footnotes that had been included in the 1972 edition of *Empire*.[121] Innis cited Childe's recently

111 Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

112 James Henry Breasted, *A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times of the Persian Conquest* (London: Holder and Stoughton, 1919).

113 David Diringer, *The Alphabet: A Key to the History of Mankind* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948).

114 William Foxwell Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940); *The Vocalisation of the Egyptian Syllabic Orthography* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1934).

115 Innis, *Empire,* 14.

116 Ibid., 16, 42.

117 Ibid., 41, 43, 48, 52.

118 Ibid., 19, 30, 34, 44, 45, 47, 64.

119 Harold Innis, "Communications and Archaeology," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science / Revue Canadienne d'Economique et de Science Politique,* 17, no. 2 (May 1951): 237–40. See also p. xxi and note 87 above.

120 Ibid.

121 They can be found, *inter alia,* in *Empire*, pp. 16, 19, 29, 30, 35–6. Within the text, he had cited a quote from Childe's classic *Man Makes Himself* to support his contention that scribes in Egypt had become "a restricted class" and that writing was a "privileged position."

published *Social Evolution*[122] and made frequent reference to his *What Happened in History*.[123] Innis also cited material from the journal *Past and Present,* which had begun publication in 1952 with Childe on its editorial board.[124] (Childe had founded an earlier journal, upon which *Past and Present* was based. He also wrote an article on civilization for the second issue,[125] citing a recent book by Frankfort.[126]) By virtue of a frame of reference that encompassed ancient Sumer and Egypt – as well as related movements such as the Hittites, Akkadians, and Hyksos – Childe's account overlapped considerably with the material covered by Innis. Moreover, Childe's commentary dovetailed with that of Albright, Breasted, Diringer, and Frankfort. He emphasized the development of writing with particular reference to hieroglyphics and cursive signs.

In the chapters on Egypt and Babylonia, Innis identified the processes involved in producing the phenomena that he discussed in the text. This involved tracing how early writing was produced within centralized organizations,[127] a theme that was examined by drawing at length on Childe,[128] Breasted,[129] Erman,[130] and Diringer.[131] Examining the spoken word in relation to religion and magical power[132] he stressed how liturgies and prayer gain "potency from solemn utterance of true divine name."[133]

The emergent administrative state apparatus, as grounded in written texts using various material media, was Innis's point of reference for tracing a range of practices, particularly in relation to military interventions. While war and the military figured prominently in Innis's original analysis, he had downplayed

122 V. Gordon Childe, *Social Evolution* (London: Collins, 1951). *Empire*, 60.

123 V. Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History* (London, Penguin, 1964). Consistent with her approach to revising the text, Quayle Innis referred to the new 1964 Penguin edition, rather than Penguin's original 1914 edition. That Harold Innis saw Childe as having biases similar to his own is evident in a statement he made about this volume in the opening paragraph of his reply to Childe's review.

124 Christopher Hill, R.H. Hilton, and E.J. Hobsbawm, "Past and Present: Origins and Early Years," *Past and Present*, 100 (1983): 3–14; A.H.M. Jones, "The Economic Basis of the Athenian Democracy," *Past and Present*, 1 (1952): 13–31.

125 V. Gordon Childe, "The Birth of Civilisation," *Past and Present* 2 (1952): 1–10.

126 Henri Frankfort, *The Birth of Civilization in the Near East* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1950).

127 Innis, *Empire*, 16–17, 20, 22, 36, 42–3, 48.

128 Childe, *What Happened in History?*; Innis, *Empire,* 15–16.

129 Breasted, *History of Egypt.*

130 Adolf Erman and Helen Mary Beloe Tirard, *Life in Ancient Egypt* (London: Macmillan, 1894).

131 Diringer, *The Alphabet*.

132 Robert Briffault, *The Mothers: A Study of the Origins of Sentiments and Institutions*, vol. 1 (London: George Allen and Unwin: New York: Macmillan, 1927); Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*; Innis, *Empire*, 24–5.

133 Innis, *Empire*, 21, 184–8.

both, which were not even listed in the index. To be sure, Innis provided a sketch of the rise and fall of various city-states and empires but had little to say about the war and violence that made this possible.[134] Innis did not confine himself to descriptions of the war-making capacities of early administrative states; he examined the processes through which war-making apparatuses were assembled and then put into action. This involved discussing the administrative organization in terms of its constituent features including metallurgy,[135] horses,[136] and weaponry,[137] building and deploying modes of transportation, such as canals.[138] and the development of new technologies such as the light, horse-drawn chariot.[139] The latter, according to Childe, allowed Ahmose (the founder of the New Kingdom) to form a centralized military monarchy."[140]

War, moreover, was closely bound up with religion and familial relations. Expanding on his notion that worship provided "a religious basis for development of imperial development"[141] he added in a gloss (quoting Breasted) that "monotheism was imperialism in religion"[142] and noted the "importance of belief in immortality to military power."[143] Indeed, marriage alliances served to cement control, through unions such as that of Thutmose IV and the King of the Mitanni's daughter.[144]

Innis also gave attention to a range of other practices that he believed contributed to the consolidation of administrative states. These included the methods deployed such as stone-cutting and the use of plaster,[145] the creation of a

134 For instance, while Innis drew on Burn for his discussion of Alexander the Great, he was more interested in the descriptions of war-making capacity (Ibid., 33–5) rather than the actual fighting, as Burn so graphically describes: … "two great masses of cavalry met head on [engaged in] the 'fiercest cavalry fighting of the whole action ... each man trying to hack his way through straight before him …" A.R Burn, *Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Empire* (London, 1947), 118. This may have been an artefact of the trauma he suffered in the trenches of the First World War. When he did recount his experience of the war, he dwelt on issues related to strategy and logistics, with particular reference to his involvement with the preparations for the assault on Vimy Ridge. Harold Innis, (William J. Buxton, Michael R. Cheney, Paul Heyer, eds.) *Harold Innis Reflects: Memoir and WWI Writings/Correspondence*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016, 56–75, 186–91.

135 Peake and Fleure, *Merchant Ventures in Bronze*.

136 Peake and Fleure, *The Horse and the Sword.*

137 Ibid.

138 George A Barton, *The Origin and Development of Babylonian Writing*, vol. 1 (London: Hinrichs, 1913).

139 Childe, *What Happened in History?*; Innis, *Empire*, 15–17, 19–20, 29, 33, 35–6

140 Childe, *What Happened in History?*, 162.

141 Innis, *Empire,* 21.

142 Ibid.

143 Ibid., 20.

144 Ibid., 20.

145 W.M. Flinders Petrie, "On the Mechanical Methods of the Ancient Egyptians," *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 13 (1884): 88–109.

solar calendar,[146] the growth of science,[147] the freeing of law from religion,[148] and the development of diplomacy.[149]

In the initial Egypt and Babylon chapters, Innis also set the stage for his subsequent discussion of Greece/Rome. This involved tracing the trajectory of the alphabet – as linked to the oral tradition – from the near East to Europe.[150] Within the glosses, Innis continued to make reference to the emergent scribal culture[151] emphasizing the development of the alphabet from its near-East origins,[152] through Crete[153] to ancient Greece, and then to Rome.[154] He gave particular attention to how the spoken word was "universally invested with magical power" in the "primitive world,"[155] writing styles in relation to script[156] as well as to biblical studies.[157] Especially interesting to Innis was the material nature of what was written upon, particularly clay, stone, papyrus, parchment, and paper.[158] He sought to understand how the materiality of a particular medium affected the practice of writing.

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146 Alan H. Gardiner, *The Egyptian Origin of the Semitic Alphabet* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1916).

147 Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*.

148 Lewis Richard Farnell, *Greece and Babylon* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1911).

149 Cumberland Clark, *The Art of Early Writing: With Special Reference to the Cuneiform System* (London: Mitre Press, 1938).

150 Solomon Gandz, "Oral Tradition in the Bible," in *Jewish Studies in Memory of George A. Kohut, 1874–1933,* ed. Salo W. Baron and Alexander Marx, with a section in Hebrew, a Portrait, and a Bibliography compiled by E.D. Coleman (New York: Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1935), 248–69.

151 Albright, *Egyptian Syllabic Orthography*.

152 Albright, *Stone Age to Christianity*; A. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948); John Strong Newberry, "The Prehistory of the Alphabet," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 45 (1934): 105–56.

153 Evans and Evans, *Palace of Minos*

154 Jesse Benedict Carter, *The Reorganization of the Roman Priesthoods at the Beginning of the Republic* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1917).

155 Briffault, *The Mothers*, referenced in the unnumbered addition on page 13 in Innis, *Empire*; Farnell, *Evolution of Religion.*

156 William Bell Dinsmoor, *The Architecture of Ancient Greece: An Account of Its Historic Development* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1950); Diringer, *The Alphabet*; Albright, *Vocalization of the Egyptian Syllabic Orthography*; Carter, *The Reorganization of the Roman Priesthoods at the Beginning of the Republic*; Austin Lane Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta, 1087–1216* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); James Westfall Thompson, *The Medieval Library*, 1923; F. Thureau-Dangin, *Recherches sur l'origine de l'ecriture Cuneiforme*, vol. 1., 1898; Frederic G. Kenyon and A.W. Adams, *The Text of the Greek Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1949).

157 Frederick Victor Winnett, *The Mosaic Tradition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949).

158 William Henry Paine Hatch, *The Principal Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939); Frederic G. Kenyon, *Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932).

His initial glosses in the chapter on Greek civilization traced the link between Babylonia, Egypt, and Greece via "Knossos-Cretan-civilization."[159] He examined how the alphabet that had developed in Phoenicia and Cyprus was adapted to the "rich oral tradition" in Greece.[160] His glosses largely address issues related to poetry's conquest by prose.[161] Innis was of the view, however, that the reforms of Solon – reflected in his fame for having instituted popular government in Europe – ushered in a new phase of development in Greece.[162] The glosses added at this point gave texture to this claim, with their examination of changes in aesthetics and artistic expression. These included poetry,[163] painting,[164] ceramics, literature,[165] sculpture,[166] drama,[167] religious rites,[168] music,[169] and architecture.[170] He noted, however, that the reformed order was not without its challenges. His glosses provided detail about "individualistic religions" such as Orphism and Pythagoreanism.[171] Departing from a reluctance to examine aesthetic or artistic developments in any detail – or to pass judgment on them – Innis provided a great deal of nuance and detail to what he obviously believed to be something of a cultural effervescence in classical Greek civilization, quoting figures of the day such as Hesiod[172] and

159 Innis, *Empire,* 53–4.

160 Ibid., 58.

161 Ibid., 57–65; Harold Cherniss, "The Characteristics and Effects of Presocratic Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 3 (1951): 319–45; Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion.*

162 Francis Macdonald Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (London: E. Arnold, 1907); Innis, *Empire,* 69.

163 Parry, Homeric language; Innis, *Empire,* 68.

164 Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947); Innis, *Empire,* 69.

165 James Henry Oliver, *The Athenian Expounders of the Sacred and Ancestral Law* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1950); Innis, *Empire,* 71.

166 Stanley Casson, *The Technique of Early Greek Sculpture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).

167 Thomas W. Allen, *Homer: The Origins and the Transmission* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970); Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908); Innis, *Empire*, 71; Parry, "Homeric Language," 78; Rhys Carpenter, *Folk Tale, Fiction and Saga in the Homeric Epics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1946).

168 Elisabeth S. Holderman, "A Study of the Greek Priestess" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1913); Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*; A.W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens* (London: Oxford University Press, 1946).

169 Schlesinger, *The Greek Aulos*.

170 Dinsmoor, *The Architecture of Ancient Greece*.

171 Ibid., 73; Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*; Francis Macdonald Cornford, "Invention of Space," in Murray, Gilbert et al., eds., *Essays in Honour of Gilbert Murray*, 215–35 (London: Allen and Unwin, 1936); Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*.

172 Hesiod and T.A. Sinclair, *Hesiod: Works and Days* (London: Macmillan, 1932).

Herodotus[173] to support his claims. Central to discussions of ancient Greece in both the original text of *Empire* along with the additional glosses was the work of Werner Wilhelm Jaeger (1881–1961). In the 1950 edition of *Empire*, Innis made frequent reference to Jaeger's classical text, *Paideia*, underpinned by his conviction that Jaeger's conception of education was key to understanding Greek civilization.[174] In the glosses Innis added to the chapter, he used an earlier volume written by Jaeger to support his claim that humanism in ancient Greece had "subordinated technical efficiency to culture."[175] This reflected his interest in tracing the decline of orality in Greece attendant upon the spread of writing.

Innis began his chapter on Rome by emphasizing the extent to which Western culture owed a debt to the "rich oral tradition of Greek civilization."[176] His early glosses in the chapter examined this heritage in relation to the early days of Rome, with particular reference to the use of papyrus,[177] the adaptation of Greek cults, the invocation of Greek political ideas,[178] the introduction of Greek script,[179] and the establishment of currency.[180] He also called attention to the influence of Etruscans,[181] the rise of plebeians,[182] and the reorganization of the priesthood.[183]

Innis then used his glosses to elaborate his discussion of the eastern outposts of the Roman Empire. In line with his earlier discussion of religion in the near East, he examined Judaism in relation to holy literature,[184] the calendar,[185] Platonic thought,[186]

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173 Herodotus et al., *The History of Herodotus,* Trans. George Rawlinson (London: J.M. Dent; New York: E.P. Dutton, 1910).

174 Werner Wilhelm Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945). Innis had already drawn on this volume in his first major text on communication. Harold A. Innis, *Political Economy in the Modern State.*

175 Innis, *Empire,* 83.

176 Ibid., 85; Greenidge and Cicero, *The Legal Procedure of Cicero's Time*.

177 Hatch, *The Principal Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament*.

178 John Linton Myres, *The Political Ideas of the Greeks* (New York: Abingdon, 1927).

179 Kenyon and Adams, *The Text of the Greek Bible*.

180 C.H.V. Sutherland, *Coinage in Roman Imperial Policy, 31 BC–AD 68* (London: Methuen, 1951).

181 Inez Scott Ryberg and American Academy in Rome, *Early Roman Traditions in the Light of Archaeology* (Bergamo: American Academy in Rome, 1929).

182 J.L. Strachan-Davidson, "The Growth of Plebeian Privilege at Rome," *The English Historical Review* 1, no. 2 (1886): 209–17.

183 Carter, *The Reorganization of the Roman Priesthoods at the Beginning of the Republic.*

184 Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough, *By Light, Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism* (London: H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1935).

185 James George Frazer et al., *The Golden Bough: A Study of Magic and Religion*, part 4 (London: Macmillan, 1907).

186 Julien Benda and Richard Aldington, *The Great Betrayal (La Trahison des Clercs)* (London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1928).

geometry,[187] the use of parchment,[188] and theatre.[189] Following this lengthy discussion of Hellenism within the Roman Empire, Innis addressed its influence on Rome.[190] He noted the introduction of drama,[191] how stichometry was affected by reading aloud,[192] how orality and literacy intersected among the Druids[193], and the further adoption of Greek deities.[194]

Innis's glosses in his chapter on Rome also serve to elaborate his views on governance, particularly in the early Roman Empire. To this end he addressed issues such as taxation,[195] public service,[196] record-keeping,[197] currency,[198] succession,[199] architecture and the built environment,[200] as well as the reliance on libraries and texts,[201] Recognizing the centrality of writing for the Roman Empire, Innis used his glosses to elaborate on the material aspects of written material, examining the use of parchment and papyrus[202] and the extent to which

187 William Ridgeway, *The Origin of Metallic Currency and Weight Standards* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1892).

188 Hatch, *The Principal Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament*.

189 Pickard-Cambridge, *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens*.

190 Innis, *Empire,* 96.

191 E. Norman Gardiner, *Athletics of the Ancient World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930).

192 J. Rendel Harris and A. Augustus Hobson, *Stichometry*; Farnell, *The Evolution of Religion*.

193 Nora K. Chadwick, *The Druids* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1966).

194 Arthur Darby Nock, "Σύνναος Θεός Symnaos God," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 41 (1930): 1–62; William Scott Ferguson, "Legalized Absolutism En Route from Greece to Rome," *The American Historical Review* 18, no. 1 (1912): 29–47.; George Willis Botsford, *The Roman Assemblies from Their Origin to the End of the Republic* (New York: Macmillan, 1909); Hendrik Wagenvoort and Herbert Jennings Rose, *Roman Dynamism: Studies in Ancient Roman Thought, Language and Custom* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1947).

195 C.H.V. Sutherland, "Aerarium and Fiscus during the Early Empire," *The American Journal of Philology* 66, no. 2 (1945): 151–70.

196 Mason Hammond, *The Augustan Principate in Theory and Practice during the Julio-Claudian Period* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933); Raymond Henry Lacey, *The Equestrian Officials of Trajan and Hadrian: Their Careers, with Some Notes on Hadrian's Reforms. A PhD Dissertation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1917).

197 Donald Struan Robertson, *A Handbook of Greek & Roman Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943).

198 Victor Ehrenberg, *Aspects of the Ancient World* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1946); Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex*.

199 Ehrenberg, *Aspects of the Ancient World.*

200 Botsford, *The Roman Assemblies from Their Origin to the End of the Republic*; Dinsmoor; *The Architecture of Ancient Greece*.

201 René Cagnat, "Les bibliothèques municipales dans l'Empire romain," *Mémoires de l'Institut de France. Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 1909; M.P. Charlesworth, *The Roman Empire* (London: Cumberlege, 1951); Gaston Boissier, *Cicero and His Friends: A Study of Roman Society in the Time of Caesar* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925). Chadwick, *The Druids*.

202 Hatch, *The Principal Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament*; Reginald Lane Poole, *Lectures on the History of the Papal Chancery down to the Time of Innocent III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915); Kenyon and Adams, *The Text of the Greek Bible*.

both the oral and written tradition related to the development of law.[203] Overall, he was of the view that Rome "unlike Greece" had an "emphasis on space" and was influenced by the "linear and narrative" as evident in the Roman army's "limited interest in time."[204] In contrast to the Byzantine empire, which took the form of an "ecclesiastical hierarchy" grounded in parchment and biased towards time, the Roman empire, which extended over a vast area, took the form of an imperial bureaucracy largely deploying papyrus.[205]

In the chapter, "Parchment and Paper," the early glosses were appropriately framed by this subject matter. Innis appeared to use the advent of papyrus as a way of periodizing the material covered, noting that parchment superseded papyrus under Benedict VIII (1020–2). It noted, however, that papyrus was able to persist until 1050 under Gregory IX and Victor II.[206] In the glosses, he elaborated on his claim in the text that a monopoly of knowledge grounded in parchment had important implications for Western civilization, a monopoly that broke down with the introduction of paper.[207] He gave considerable attention to illuminating the nature of that civilization, with particular reference to the relation between Rome and the early church in Scotland and Ireland,[208] how "13th century great papal formula books," reflected the "enormous administrative and legal centralized bureaucracy at Avignon,"[209] and how the Domesday book and the Magna Carta could be seen as "landmarks in transition from oral society to written society."[210]

Power struggles in the church ensued, bound up with centralization, prose, and papal formula books.[211] The shift in power, he suggested, was related to the replacement of the uncial style of script by the less cumbersome miniscule.[212] In tracing the coming of paper to Europe, Innis provided a brief overview of its migration from ancient India and China via Persia and the

203 Greenidge and Cicero, *The Legal Procedure of Cicero's Time*; Strachan-Davidson, "The Growth of Plebeian Privilege at Rome."

204 Ehrenberg, *Aspects of the Ancient World*; Innis and Innis, *Empire,* 108

205 Poole, *Lectures*; Innis, *Empire*, 115.

206 Poole, *Lectures*; Innis, *Empire*, 116.

207 Innis, *Empire*, 117.

208 Ibid., 119.

209 Innis, *Empire*, 133; Geoffrey Barraclough, Curia Romana Catholic Church, and British School at Rome, *Public Notaries and the Papal Curia: A Calendar and a Study of a Formularium Notariorum Curie from the Early Years of the Fourteenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1934).

210 Innis, *Empire*, 134; V.H. Galbraith, *The Literacy of the Medieval English Kings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936).

211 Francis Wormald, *The Survival of Anglo-Saxon Illumination after the Norman Conquest* (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1946).

212 Innis, *Empire*, 121; Kenyon and Adams, *The Text of the Greek Bible*; Frederic G. Kenyon et al., *Ancient Books and Modern Discoveries* (Chicago: Caxton Club, 1927).

"Mohammedans."[213] He sought to bolster his claims that the advent of paper undermined the monopoly of knowledge rooted in parchment as embodied in "ecclesiastical control."[214]

Innis's glosses tailed off in the final chapter on paper and the printing press. It may have been because he had already added a good number of unattributed notes in the text; this indicated he had already included material that he wanted to follow up on. It also could have been that Innis added little in the chapter because of time constraints or because he had already covered these issues in his other talks in Britain in 1948.[215] Moreover, some of the material in glosses had also been covered in some of his writings of 1949–52.[216] His gloss on the first page of the chapter suggests that he wished to frame a revision in terms of what happened after the fall of Constantinople in 1453.[217] Above all, he noted this meant that Western Christendom was in a "stronger position," leading to the "revolt of Protestantism"[218] and the notion of "papal infallibility."[219] Some of the early glosses in this chapter examined the extent to which religious texts were central to the transformation.[220] Building on his introductory comments he conjectured on whether the fall of Constantinople led to England's renaissance and the reformation.[221] The remaining scattered glosses largely served to buttress Innis's claims about the increasing presence of monopoly[222] as well as mechanized communication.[223]

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213 Innis, *Empire*, 124–31; Hatch, *Principal Uncial Manuscripts*; Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*; Solomon Gandz, "The Dawn of Literature: Prolegomena to a History of Unwritten Literature," *Osiris* 7 (1939): 261–522; Photius and John Henry Freese, *The Library of Photius* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; New York: Macmillan, 1920).

214 Innis, *Empire*, 136–40. Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta, 1087–1216*; Étienne Gilson and Henriette Hertz Trust, "Saint Thomas Aquinas," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 21 (1935).

215 See pp. xvii–xx above.

216 Harold A. Innis, *Roman Law and the British Empire; One of a Series of Lectures Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the University, Delivered at the University of New Brunswick, March 30, 1950* (Fredericton: University of New Brunswick, 1950).

217 Innis, *Empire*, 141.

218 Ibid.

219 Ibid., 166.

220 Brooks Adams, *The Emancipation of Massachusetts* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919); John William Adamson, *The Extent of Literacy in England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1929).

221 Innis, *Empire*, 147.

222 Ezra Pound and D.D. Paige, *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907–1941* (New York: New Directions, 1950); Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce: A Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923); Legouis and Cazamian, *History of English Literature*; Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: Crooke, 1651).

223 Ibid., 169; E.M. Winslow, *The Pattern of Imperialism: A Study in the Theories of Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948); George, *Caliban*.

Mary Quayle Innis and *Empire*

The fact that the original text had been revised in this way has significant implications for how it should be understood. Above all, Mary Quayle Innis should be given more credit for the edition that was published in 1972. By virtue of her careful work in adding the new material and clarifying the sources, her role certainly exceeded that of editor. The volume that resulted from her handiwork can best be seen as the culmination of a complex process of consolidation and retrieval of Innis's writings following his death in November, 1952. She took a leading role not only in producing revised versions of Innis's writings[224] but also by helping build his legacy in other ways. The year before he died she "typed [the] index to [Innis's] … *The Bias of Communication*."[225] She prepared the index to his posthumously published *Strategy of Culture*[226] (delivering the manuscript to the University of Toronto Press),[227] worked on his books, papers, and pamphlets,[228] typed the "Ideas" manuscript,[229] as well as his autobiography,[230] and sorted out "The Russian Diary."[231] Along with all of these she was also involved with the newly formed Harold Innis Foundation[232] and Innis College.[233]

For whatever reason, producing a new version of *Empire and Communications* was not among those initiatives that she initially undertook. This changed in 1970 when she began revising *Empire* in tandem with a venture organized under the auspices of the CRTC[234] to publish a version of Innis's "History of Communications" manuscript. Possibly due to conflicting visions about the form to be taken by the volume, a final version of it never materialized.[235] By contrast, Quayle Innis's project of editing a new version of *Empire and Communications* proved to be a very successful one. She already had established an excellent working relationship with the University of Toronto Press by virtue of

224 Harold Adams Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956); Innis, *The Cod Fisheries.*

225 Innis, *Bias*.

226 Harold Adams Innis, *The Strategy of Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952).

227 Mary Quayle Innis Personal Diary entries for 23 September, 14 October 1952, Innis Family Fonds, Mary Quayle Innis Sous-Fonds, UTA 1412, UTA.

228 Ibid., 16 April, 19 August 1953.

229 Ibid., 19 May, 12 June, 26 September 1953.

230 Ibid., 2, 13, 15 October 1970.

231 Ibid., 19 March 1956

232 Ibid., 12 December, 27 February 1969; 2 June 1969, 3 December 1971.

233 Ibid., 5 November 1969.

234 Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

235 William J. Buxton, "The Bias against Communication: On the Neglect and Non-Publication of the 'Incomplete and Unrevised Manuscript' of Harold Adams Innis," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 26, no. 2 (2001): 211–29.

editing a book of hers that it published[236] along with another to which she had made a major contribution.[237] She had come to know some of the staff at the Press including Marsh Jeanneret, Eleanor Harman, R.I.K. Davidson and Francess Halpenny. She was well versed in material that was pertinent to *Empire*. Her *Economic History of Canada*, the second edition of which had just been published, addressed issues related to media and communications.[238] She had already been reading a number of works that Innis had cited in the volume as well as texts by a number of authors that he had referenced.[239] In addition to having read works that had relevance to the text she had also been taking Greek lessons.[240]

Early in 1970 she met with Davidson who told her she should transcribe all of the notes that Innis had written in the margins of the text.[241] This proved to be her primary task in editing the book over the next year and a half. Her work required more than just the capacity to decipher her late husband's illegible script. Doing this effectively required a great deal of familiarity with the material in question,[242] going well beyond checking the references used by Innis. She not only used the most recent editions of the works he had cited, but also added a work by Havelock, which she had read (and obviously thought was

236 Mary Quayle Innis, ed., *Nursing Education in a Changing Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971); Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools of Ontario and John Keiller Mackay, *Religious Information and Moral Development: The Report of the Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools of the Province of Ontario, 1969* (Toronto: Ontario Department of Education, 1969).

237 Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools of Ontario and Mackay, *Religious Information and Moral Development*.

238 Mary Quayle Innis, *An Economic History of Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954).

239 These included: James Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire* (London: Macmillan, 1919); Jacob Burckhardt and S.G.C. Middlemore, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1898); Jaeger, *Paideia;* Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*; E.T. Owen, *The Story of the Iliad, as Told in the Iliad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

240 Elizabeth Bowen, *A Time in Rome* (London: Longmans, 1960); Henri Pirenne and Frank D. Halsey, *Medieval Cities* (New York: Doubleday, 1925); Arthur Darby Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933); Mary Quayle Innis Personal Diary, 27 December 1969.

241 He had earlier suggested that she read *Empire* (which she did).

242 Delisle and Mitchell have decisively demonstrated Mary Quayle Innis's role in supporting his career. And Black has underscored her importance as a writer and scholar. However, neither article has provided a full account of the extent to which she was a formidable media scholar in her own right. She also was an enthusiastic consumer of material in a range of media, including, radio, TV and film as well as a radio commentator for arts and politics for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Donica Belisle and Kiera Mitchell, "Mary Quayle Innis: Faculty Wives' Contributions and the Making of Academic Celebrity." *Canadian Historical Review* 99, no. 3: 456–86; J. David Black, "'Both of Us Can Move Mountains': Mary Quayle Innis and Her Relationship to Harold Innis' Legacy," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 28, no. 4 (2003): 433–47.

pertinent).[243] Her daughter Mary, her brother Donald, and Davidson also contributed. Much of this work was taken up with working over "E. and C cards"[244] and doing research at a number of venues including the main University of Toronto Library, The Toronto Reference (Central) Library, Trinity College Library, Victoria College Library, Locke Library,[245] "Church Library," Saint Clements Library,[246] and the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies Library.[247] She also worked at libraries in Vancouver, when visiting her daughter Mary and in Waterloo when visiting her daughter Anne. She uncharacteristically complained of being "very tired"[248] and struggling in the stacks at the University Library. Preparing the index and checking the proofs proved to be particularly time-consuming, requiring nineteen days[249] and thirty-six days respectively.[250] On 4 October 1971, she sent the revised version along with a new index to the University of Toronto Press. The book appeared on 9 January 1972, the day before she passed away.[251]

Constructing the Innisian Oeuvres: The Place of *Empire*

The full meaning and significance of *Empire* have not been adequately addressed; its relationship to Innis's broader *oeuvres* largely remains unexplored. Innis himself bears some of the responsibility for this state of affairs. A number of his early statements about the origins of his major communications works were not only misleading but suggested a periodization of his writings that is at odds with their actual order. He noted that the revised versions of papers that were included in *Bias of Communication*[252] were "brought together for purposes of accessibility and to support in more detailed fashion the thesis developed in *Empire and Communications*."[253] Yet two of the chapters included in

243 Eric A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963).

244 Mary Quayle Innis Personal Diary, 23 March 1970.

245 Now the Locke Branch of the Toronto Public Library.

246 Now the Saint Clements Branch of the Toronto Public Library

247 On one occasion she noted with evident enthusiasm that she had managed to track down "Poole" at the Pontifical library. Mary Quayle Innis Personal Diary 14 April 1970. This was perhaps Reginald Lane Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Medieval Thought and Learning* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; New York: Macmillan, 1920).

248 Mary Quayle Innis Personal Diary, 6 April, 1970.

249 She and her daughter Mary prepared the index from 10 to 29 September 1971, Mary Quayle Innis Personal Diary. This work was evidently onerous; she remarked that she and her daughter were "both sick," that the index was "hard," and that her eyes were "tired." Mary Quayle Innis Personal Diary, 11–13 September 1971.

250 She received the proofs on 30 August 1971 and worked on them until 4 October 1971.

251 Black, "'Both of Us Can Move Mountains.'"

252 Innis, *Bias*.

253 Ibid., xvii.

Bias[254] had appeared *prior* to the publication of *Empire*.[255] This suggests that the thesis Innis attributed to *Empire* had actually been foreshadowed by at least two of his earlier writings.

A similar elision can be found in the preface Innis wrote to *Changing Concepts of Time*.[256] In this case he claimed that in the volume he sought "to elaborate the thesis developed in *The Bias of Communication* and *Empire and Communications*.[257] However, two of the volume's chapters[258] had previously appeared.[259] Hence, Innis's claim that the purpose of the volume was to relate this thesis to "immediate problems" can be called into question. Indeed, given that both chapters originated in lectures delivered in the same year (1948) as those upon which *Empire* was based, then arguably they reflected "more sharply the temper" of the early cold-war period than that of a later chapter characterized more by firmer American cultural hegemony.

Innis's perspective on Canada's international position had evolved over time. In the 1920's he stressed the extent to which Canadian development had been shaped by its status as a hinterland producing staple products for metropolitan countries, particularly France and Britain.[260] By contrast, in the 1930's, following Canada's attainment of autonomy within the British empire, he adopted a more continentalist perspective, viewing his native country as primarily a nation-state within North America.[261] However, according to his friend – and University of Toronto colleague – Donald Creighton, with the "huge expansion of American imperial interests" attendant on the Second World War, the threat of the United States began to be borne upon him." At the same time, the "evident decline" of Britain was "brought home to him when he went [there] in 1948." By the time the war had ended, according to Creighton, Innis had become fully aware of "our gradual subordination in a continental empire which was dominated by the United States."[262] Innis's rage remained simmering in the final chapters of *Empire* and in his three papers delivered in Britain in 1948. But by the early 1950's his anger had reached a full boil, largely because of his disgust

254 "Minerva's Owl" and "The English Publication Trade in the Eighteenth Century"

255 Harold Adams Innis, *Minerva's Owl* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948); "The English Publishing Trade in the Eighteenth Century," *Manitoba Arts Review* 4 (1945): 14–24.

256 Originally published in 1952. Harold Adams Innis, *Changing Concepts of Time* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004).

257 Ibid., xxv.

258 Innis, "The Press" and "Great Britain, the United States, and Canada."

259 Innis, Great Britain, the United States and Canada. 1948).; Innis, The Press

260 Innis, *Empire*, 6.

261 Buxton, *Harold Innis on Peter Pond*.

262 Elspeth Chisholm, interview with Donald Creighton, 21 November 1972. Interviews conducted of various individuals for the CBC programme "Innis of Canada: A Study of a Scholar." UTA, Elspeth Chisholm Fonds, B1974-0001/004.

with the Korean War and the role that Canada was playing in it.[263] Echoing the views of his colleague and collaborator, Arthur Lower, Innis now believed that Canada had come full circle, moving from colony to nation and then back to colony.[264] To be sure, Canada received only scant mention in *Empire*. But he did acknowledge in the first few pages of the volume that in attacking a new set of problems and issues he relied on tools that had been forged in the "interpretation of the economic history of Canada and the British Empire."[265]

Because of Mary Quayle Innis's revisions, the 1972 version of *Empire* differed dramatically from the text of 1950, as it contained works that were circulating in the period up to the early 1970s.[266] Given that he added material up until at least February 1952, this means that *Empire* was contemporaneous with his final published works.[267] The volume should not be understood as Innis's initial monograph on communications – *Political Economy* (published in 1946) has that distinction – it should be viewed as the centrepiece of works on communications and culture that appeared in the period after the Second World War.[268]

By virtue of how it made sense of myriad aspects of different social formations, the 1972 version of *Empire* was continuous with the approach he had developed in his early work, most notably in his two volumes of "Select Documents."[269] Drawing on the French possibilist tradition of cultural geography,[270]

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263 Ibid. See also Donald A. Wright, *Donald Creighton: A Life in History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 188, 227. This vituperative view of American cultural imperialism is evident in his pamphlet "Strategy of Culture." Harold A. Innis, "The Strategy of Culture: With Special Reference to the Canadian Literature – A Footnote to the Massey Report.," in *Changing Concepts of Time* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press., 1952), 1–19. His son Donald provides further evidence of his father's disenchantment with the United States in his account of their discussions during the summer of 1952 when Innis was preparing his American Economics Association presidential address. Donald Innis, "Comment, Harold Adams Innis (1894–1952)." *American Economic Review* 43, no. 1 (1953): 22–5.

264 A.R.M. Lower, *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1946).

265 Innis, *Empire*, 6.

266 For instance, Childe's *What Happened in History* had been republished in a number of editions by Penguin in 1964 and had enjoyed a wide circulation.

267 These include not only *Bias*, *Changing Concepts of Time*, and *Strategy of Culture,* but also "Monopoly and Civilization," "Roman Law and the British Empire," as well as "Industrialism and Cultural Values."

268 It overlapped with the never-completed "History of Communications" manuscript, which covered much of the same material in more detail.

269 Harold A. Innis (ed.), *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, 1497–1783* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 1929); Harold A. Innis and A.R.M. Lower, eds., *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History 1783–1885* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1933).

270 Vincent Berdoulay and R. Louis Chapman, "Le Possibilisme de Harold Innis," *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe Canadien* 31, no. 1 (March 1987): 2–11.

Innis examined the interplay between geography, technology, and various aspects of human endeavour. He was particularly interested in understanding the processes through which time and space were reconfigured. In his earlier writings on Canadian economic history and political economy, his analyses were primarily framed by geographical and climatic factors.[271] However, in *Empire*, Innis placed the mode of communication front and centre in his discussions, with particular attention given to not only its materiality, but also to its practices.

Innis provided a clear sense of what he had in mind during the period when *Empire* was about to go to press. In the spring of 1941, the editor of Clarendon Press, D.M. Davin, informed him that a description of *Empire* would appear in its list of books for autumn and winter (1949–50), and requested that Innis provide him with "its contents, purpose, etc."[272] Innis complied with the request, providing a statement that gives some insight into the finished manuscript that had emerged from the Beit lectures. He emphasizes that while the volume examined "large-scale territorial organizations such as empires," its focus was actually "the *conditions* which favour [their] emergence" and "which are important in determining their *continuity* [emphases mine]." To this end, Innis gave particular attention to the "administration of these organizations" with particular reference to the "important place" played by communications in their operations; he sought to examine how communications were able to mobilize "administrative talent." He emphasized that he sought to describe "various systems of communications" and to analyse "their possibilities and limitations … in relation to political organizations. dominated by them." This required an examination of the extent to which these limitations became "evident in the decline of these organizations," which involved "replacements by a new medium." Finally, Innis suggested that "a medium adapted to the administration of vast areas has limitations in meeting problems of continuity." This implies "a medium suited to political organizations tends to be followed by a medium suited to organizations concerned with time and essentially ecclesiastical." Subsequently this process is reversed, with time-based ecclesiastical organizations being succeeded by space-oriented political organizations. Finally, he gives "special consideration … to stone, clay, papyrus, parchment, and paper and the radio [as] media."[273]

This statement concisely captures his overall line of argument in the volume, giving particular attention to its broader scope and dynamics. He emphasizes

271 For instance, in his study of the Canadian Pacific Railway, he examined the interplay between drainage basins, staples, technology, settlement, politics, and the economy. Harold A. Innis, *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (London: P.S. King; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1923).

272 Davin to Innis, 11 May 1949, DPE, A76-0025, UTA, box 6 file 8.

273 Ibid.

that it focuses on the administrative structures of large-scale organization and how they emerge, develop, and decline over time. These patterns of change were said to be rooted in systems of communication, which were both enabling and constraining. While he provides some sense of what these communication forms consist of (i.e., stone, clay, papyrus, parchment, and paper and radio), he gives little indication of what he means by the *conditions* making for the emergence and continuity of these large-scale organizations. The array of conditions considered by Innis was by no means constant or consistent throughout the volume (as enhanced by the later marginalia). Innis was at pains to demonstrate that each of the succeeding clusters he examined had its own character and dynamic, depending on the interplay between systems of communication and other conditions.

As a philosopher of history, however, Innis's contributions went well beyond speculation about the meaning and purpose of the historical process. To be sure, *Empire* represents an ambitious effort to chart the rise and fall of civilizations over a number of millennia. But he did not undertake this task for its own sake. In the words of his friend and colleague, J.B. Brebner, Innis's historical scholarship was fuelled by the concern to help correct the "cult of the present as inherent in the economics and politics of modern communications monopolies" that he felt "was robbing [human beings] of [their] roots in experience and thereby of [their] good sense.[274]

Innis's reading of the then current state of western civilization was in line with his analyses of earlier empires. As he emphasized, imbalances between time- and space-based tendencies led to instability and ultimately decline. In the post-Second-World-War era, according to Innis, a decided bias towards space had taken hold as manifest in rampant mechanization. By virtue of its detailed and nuanced examination of the power dynamics of "large-scale territorial organizations such as empires," *Empire* offered some insights into how "the bias of communication" in the Western world could be checked, and the enduring "problem of empire" confronted.[275]

274 Quoted in Havelock, "Harold Innis: The Philosophical Historian," 255.
275 Innis, *Empire*, 170.