2015

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Journal Editor: **Kyle Carmelo Militello**

2015 Issue

Abstraction

This paper investigates the history of colonialism within Canadian society by analyzing the relationship between the Aboriginal people of Canada and the government within a political economy framework. It will be argued that colonialism has never 'ended' in Canada; the continuing legacy of colonization is the egregious economic and political inequality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

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JACQUELINE M. LACCHIN

"[Canada] ha[s] one of the longest-standing...unbroken democratic...stabile regimes in history...without any social breakdown, political upheaval or invasion...*We also have no history of colonialism*...we have all of the things that many people admire about the great powers, but none of the things that threaten or bother them about the great powers."

– Prime Minister Stephen Harper, 2009 G20 Summit (quoted in Wherry 2009)

What is colonialism? Does Canada lack a history of colonialism? Is colonization anachronistic or is it an extant political and economic practice? In this essay I will attempt to answer these questions by situating my analysis of the colonial relationship between the Aboriginal people of Canada and the government within a political economy framework. I will be drawing upon the works of Frantz Fanon to illuminate the micro, 'pyscho-affective' experience of colonialism; to assess the macro, structural aspects of colonialism, I will assume a 'Marxist-informed dependency theory approach.' I argue that colonialism has never 'ended' in Canada; the continuing legacy of colonization is the egregious economic and political inequality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. Canada has an ongoing practice of 'internal colonialism' on the First Nations reserves, and a broader, neo-colonial relationship with all Aboriginal peoples in general (i.e., Status Indians, Non-status Indians, Inuit and Métis). This neo-colonial relationship is most evident in the failure of the federal government to uphold its 'fiduciary duty' to respect the rights and sovereignty of its 'wards' and to protect the traditional lands held in 'trust' for the Indigenous population; instead of investing Aboriginal leaders with true political and economic control over 'Indian' affairs, the federal government has kept Native communities in a state of political dependency and economic underdevelopment.

Contrary to the ignorant comments of the Prime Minister, Canada does, in fact, have a history of colonialism—it is one bloodied by cultural genocide, forced exclusion and total assimilation; likewise, the neo-colonial relationship of dependency proves that 'Canada the Good' has, *at least*, one 'thing' that is 'bothersome' about 'great' powers. This form of erasure and blatant bigotry illustrates that Canadians do not live in a 'post-racial',

multicultural world. Following the logic of Fanon, then, Aboriginal Canadians are the 'wretched of Canada.' However, I argue that this violent history was not birthed by racism, but political and economic motives; racism was an *ex post facto* rationalization to assuage the consciences of the 'moral' colonizers.

The 'Great' Exploration of the Brave 'New' World

The 'discovery' and settlement of New France by French European explorers, such as Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain, began in the 16th century. Initially, European interest in the 'New World' was "merchant capitalist in nature", meaning the accumulation of wealth was premised on small scale trade between imperial outposts and the extraction of basic commodities; the first explorers from Europe came to Canada in search of fish, not pelts (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 19). In 1670, The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) established a fur trade between the British colonists and the Indigenous population, which marked the start of the economic, political and social dependency of the Natives on the colonial powers (Frideres 2011: 9).

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 acknowledged that the Indigenous peoples had the rightful claim to, and use of, their ancestral lands, and that these lands could not be purchased or encroached without Native consent (Frideres 2011:9); this was a self-interested ploy to procure political support by granting concessions to Aboriginals that were complementary to the British merchant capitalist's aim of monopolizing the fur trade (Fleras 2012: 195). But, at the dawn of the 19th century, the Royal Proclamation became a legal obstacle to the securitization of private property for industrial capitalist development (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 21).

Once the British gained power over French settlements in Canada, the Native peoples were no longer needed to secure military alliances; moreover, with the decline of the fur trade, Native trapping labour and cultural practices no longer held value to the British explorers (Frideres 2011:21). In fact, during the economic crisis of the fur trade in the 1860s, the HBC actively encouraged Native trappers to enter land treaties with the federal government in order to shift the cost of providing burdensome Native income support to the government; in effect, annual treaty payments constituted an indirect government subsidy to

the HBC (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 27-8). Therefore, the new phase of capitalist development deemed Native political and economic power superfluous and irrelevant to the changing material conditions of Canada. As such, the Natives were defined as a 'problem' that had to be 'socially contained' via forced assimilation and displacement.

Colonial Nation-Building: Primitive Accumulation and the Rise of Canadian Capitalism

To build the Canadian nation, European colonizers needed to annex the land, resources and labour of the indigenous population in North America. Colonialism, then, is a form of "structured dispossession"; the settler-colonial dynamic is one of domination, where political and economic power has been "structured into a relatively secure...set of hierarchical social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous...lands and self-determining authority" (Coulthard 2014: 6-7).

To politically debilitate the Natives, colonial Britain included a provision in the British North America Act (1867) that declared "Indians, and Lands reserved for Indians" the responsibility of the federal government; in effect, the Natives were officially deemed 'wards' of the state, and their lands were to be held in trust by the Crown (Frideres 2011: 9). Moreover, in 1867, the passing of the Indian Act cemented the restructuring of Aboriginal communities along patriarchal lines, and also divided the Indigenous community into a 'caste' system, where Status or registered 'Indians' were afforded legal protection and received social benefits from the state, while Non-status, Inuit, and Métis did not (Frideres 2011: 9).

Between 1850 and 1923, the Canadian government established a grand scheme of fraudulent misrepresentation and theft to acquire the vast majority of the land that demarcates Canada today (Frideres 2011: 11). Natives were coerced into signing treaties they did not understand and/or were manipulated by the government into surrendering land vis-à-vis oral promises (Frideres 2011: 12-3). With the wholesale dispossession of the Native population from their land came the establishment of the reserve system, or the 'internal colonies' of Canada.

According to the internal colonial model, the invasion of a colonizing group into Native territories strains traditional and cultural forms of sustenance and 'ways of life', creating a situation of external political control by, and economic dependence on, the colonial

settlers; moreover, the colonizers provide the reliant, indigenous population with a substandard quality of social services— keeping them physically, intellectually, socially, politically and economically underdeveloped—and justifies this 'inhuman' treatment by invoking an ideology of racism (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 6-8). For example, it has been argued that the First Nations reserves are "internal colonies" that serve as a "hinterland" for white exploitation, since they are rich with coveted natural resources (Frideres 2011: 172). European colonizers extract non-renewable resources from 'Indian' lands and exploit the labour power of the Native population by recruiting them into unskilled, seasonal employment opportunities owned and managed by the colonists; moreover, economic dependence is furthered via repressive legislation, such as the Indian Act and the Income Tax Act, which effectively limit Native access to credit by prohibiting reserve property from serving as collateral for loans, thereby deterring development (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 8).

However, while the internal colonial approach does have some merit, the colonial interest in civilizing 'Indians' into the 'Christian European way', as well as the exploitation of the lands, did not occur upon first contact; it was not until the decline of the fur trade by the end of the 19th century, and the rise of the industrial mode of production, that the 'Indian' became a 'problem' to the nation-building of Canada (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 9). In fact, the lifestyles of Aboriginals were essential to the economic growth of the early fur trade, as well as to the survival and acclimatization of Europeans to the harsh North American winters in the 16th and 17th centuries (Frideres 2011: 8).

Likewise, the internal colonial model, as a derivative of dependency theory, fails to grasp the nuanced social hierarchies *within* colonized populations. In other words, internal colonial theorists, like dependency theorists, homogenize both colonial and colonized groups and nations, thereby falsely assuming that *all* colonizers and colonized share identical class interests. To the contrary, there are capitalists in the peripheral colonies and non-capitalists in the metropolitan core (Allahar 2005: 2); a "Marxist-informed dependency approach" emphasizes that underdeveloped regions, too, have a capitalist economic structure (Allahar 1995: 115). Thus, a neo-Marxist theoretical lens provides a more comprehensive approach to

analyzing the development of the unequal relation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sectors of Canadian society.

A political economy approach is rooted in the Marxist tradition of historical materialism, which posits that changing social and material circumstances, such as the economic mode of production, shape, and are shaped by, the social relationships and experiences of the human actors in a given society (Allahar 1995: 50). In other words, the core of the political economy approach is how people "socially produce and reproduce the conditions for their existence" as "interacting social subjects" (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 13). In an unequal, capitalist society, such as Canada, the social conditions one experiences is determined by the amount of access one has to the political and economic sources of power—such as the amount of wealth one owns or the political clout one has. However, access to power is not evenly distributed across the population. Thus, people are situated along a socio-economic hierarchy based on their distinct social characteristics—such as class, race, gender, et cetera—which can either impede or expedite access to power. Thus, as Wotherspoon and Satzewich note, "the history of Indian [sic] administration is tied to the development of a capitalist mode of production characterized by race, class and gender relations" (1993: 17).

Capitalism, put simply, is a system of economic production that is premised on inequality, for only a relatively small group of people own the means of production (i.e., land, technology, commodities, etc.), while the rest of the population must sell their labour power to the owners of production to earn a living. But capitalism "was not part of the original baggage" European explorers brought to the 'New World' (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 18). For Marx, the transition from a feudalist to a capitalist society occurred via "primitive accumulation"—where the privatization of real property (i.e., the separation of peasants from communally shared land, and the transformation of those lands into commercial lots) led to the "proletarianization" of the masses—the conversion of the peasantry into wage workers who must 'prostitute' their labour to bourgeois commercial landowners (Allahar 1995: 50). In the context of colonial Canada, then, the treaty-making process was crucial to the primitive accumulation of capital (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 18), since it violently ripped indigenous peoples from the source of their livelihood—

the land (Coulthard 2014: 7-10).

Physical Social Control: Reserves of Land, Labour and People

The main thrust of government actions throughout history had the objective of politically and economically managing the Aboriginal population within the "framework of national and capitalist development"; through various policies and programs, the state sought to produce a particular kind of citizen and labourer—one that could be easily exploited to serve the broader purpose of building the Canadian state (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 110). According to Fanon, the colonial world is a "compartmentalized", "Manichean" world—"a world divided in two" and "inhabited by different species"; the "native sector" is squalid and derelict, while the "colonial sector" is extravagant and pristine (2004: 2-5). The colonial government of Canada instituted a prophylactic system of segregation to house the Native 'vagrants;' the Native population was physically contained in remote, isolated enclaves on discarded lands (Frideres 201: 14). During the early 20th century, the reserves operated on a "pass system", which prohibited 'Indians' from leaving their 'shanty quarters' and venturing into the 'civilized world' without the sanction of the Indian agent; this racist system later served as the inspiration for apartheid South Africa (Frideres 2011: 14).

In addition to reserving remote and unwanted lands for Native confinement, the reserve system also acted as a system to house a cheap, dispensable 'reserve army of labour' (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 29). Despite the existence of class hierarchies within Aboriginal communities, most Natives who are active participants in the work force are precariously employed part-time in menial, low-wage work that requires little in the way of education (Frideres 2011: 175). A "bush economy" (i.e., hunting, fishing, trapping, etc.) on the reserves developed alongside the capitalist "cash economy"' of Canada; small-scale agricultural farming provided the famished Native sector with a source of sustenance, supplementing the low wages earned off and on the reserves (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 46). However, subsequent revisions to Indian Act made it illegal for Aboriginals to sell their products in the mainstream Canadian market; local white farmers lobbied the government to impede Aboriginal competitiveness—they contended that treaty subsidies yielded an unfair advantage, and thus, restricted trade (Frideres 2011: 14).

The criminal justice system also serves as a 'reserve' or 'holding pen' for the 'Indian' population. The incarceration rate of Natives is grossly disproportionate to the percentage of Aboriginal peoples residing in Canada (Fleras 2012: 179). Systemic racial profiling leaves the Native population more vulnerable to arrest and police surveillance (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 201), reiterating Fanon's claim that "the colonized subject is always presumed guilty" (2004: 16). Yet legal control of Natives is not solely criminal in nature. Historically, colonial laws deemed Natives 'infantile wards' of the state, and thus, they were deprived of civic and democratic rights (Frideres 2011: 4). Even when Aboriginals were enfranchised and afforded other civil rights, such as the right to legal counsel, the federal government has continued to use the law as a neo-colonial mechanism of Aboriginal extirpation; the government is notorious for badgering Natives into lengthy and costly litigation processes to settle land claims with the aim of prematurely exhausting their opponent's financial resources and bullying them into accepting meager settlements (Frideres 2011: 17). For example, it took nearly 30 years for the Musquem Band of Vancouver to receive a binding decision from the Supreme Court of Canada in 1984 (Frideres 2011: 16).

On a more callous level, the Indigenous peoples of Canada have been socially tyrannized vis-à- vis violence and extermination—by both intentional and negligent conduct. In The Pas, Manitoba, a racist-informed practice called "cruising" is customary; young white males habitually 'cruise' around town at night searching for Aboriginal females to lure into their vehicles with the promise of free alcohol, thereby 'softening them up' for rape (O'Connor and O'Neal 2010: 7-9). Similarly, the Saskatoon police force has ritualized the tradition of giving young Aboriginal men "starlight tours", where they detain intoxicated Aboriginal males in the dead of winter, courier them out to 'drop-off zones' in desolate areas on the outskirts of town, and leave them to the artic elements; more often than not, unsuspecting pedestrians happen upon their thawed, lifeless bodies on warmer days (O'Connor and O'Neal 2010: 105).

Likewise, infecting and decimating Native populations with disease is not an anachronistic colonial practice; although colonists no longer distribute small-pox infected blankets among Natives to "extirpate the execrable race" (Short and Huseman 2012: 227) or expose "healthy children to those with tuberculosis" in the residential schools (O'Connor and

O'Neal 2010: 22), the health and well-being of Aboriginals is far below that of non-Aboriginal Canadians (Frideres 2011: 71). For example, the environmentally unsound manufacturing of synthetic oil from bitumen in Northern Alberta, known as the 'tar sands', adversely affects the sustenance and health of the local Aboriginal communities. In the downstream Mikisew Cree First Nation community of Fort Chipewyan, the small population suffers with a "disturbingly disproportionate level of deadly diseases" (e.g., leukemia, lymphoma, lupus, etc.) and "severe deformities" (Short and Huseman 2012: 224-5).

Therefore, colonialism is a fascist, violent system of rule and domination by a foreign, invading power that subordinates and terrorizes an indigenous population with the eye to establishing foreign settlements on the newly acquired land à la theft. However, colonialism involves "not only...objective historical conditions but also human attitudes to these conditions" (Fanon 1967: 84); in other words, colonial domination includes both a physical and ideological form of social control.

Myth, Ideology and 'Race'

Ideologies are systems of beliefs that are widely held by a population; they serve to inform and organize social behaviour around shared symbolic meanings (Allahar 1995: 22). Ideologies, therefore, seek to make sense of the world by defining reality and making claims to truth. However, ideologies need not be based on empirical fact; to be sure, many ideologies, such as religion, are based on blind faith and absolute conviction (Allahar 1995: 21). Thus, as a matter of belief, and not grounded in empiricism, some ideologies involve myth and the make believe. Myths are widely shared and believed tales that "dramatize, exaggerate and reinterpret facts" to aid calculated social ends (Smith 1988: 2). Regardless of whether a given definition represents the naked truth or is sprinkled with embellishment, definitions of truth and reality are "real in their consequences"; therefore, what is believed to be true is acted upon as if it does, in fact, represent the cold, hard truth (Allahar 2011: 244).

Colour, as in the shade of one's complexion, is innately meaningless (Shils 1968:1); it is the mind that transforms a neutral concept into one that evokes a sentimental response (Bastide 1968: 34). Racism, then, is an ideology that affixes negative meanings to distinct groups of people that share similar phenotypical traits (skin colour, hair texture, bone structure, etc.) (Allahar 1993: 67). Racist ideologies, like all ideologies, are historically

situated; they are socially constructed to explain social phenomena. Colour symbolism is deeply embedded in Christian thought; as "bearers of a message", "white is used to express the pure, while black expresses the diabolical" (Bastide 1968:34-6). For Christians, sin, defined as a 'stain' or 'pollution', became associated with darker-skinned peoples through biblical tales of 'sinners' who were 'blackened' or 'cursed' by God; thus, over time, those with dark skin were conflated with sin and the devil (Allahar 1993: 43-7).

Yet, secularization did not uproot all institutionalized Christian values, myths and ideologies; fragments of Christianity, such as colour symbolism, were left embedded in the collective unconscious of modern society, ready to be revived at any fleeting moment (Bastide 1968: 45). Therefore, sedimented into secular ideology, colour serves as a means to distinguish between those from the core and those from the periphery of society (Shils 1968: 1-2); it is a "badge of master and subject, of the enslaved and the free, the dominators and dominated" (Isaacs 1969: 75). With regards to the mythical belief of biological 'race', then, racial ideologies serve to justify discriminatory practices that inhibit or permit full participation in political and economic institutions, and relegate people to certain social positions according to their 'race' (Allahar 1993: 67-8).

Erasure is an ideologically racist practice where the "forgetting of history" is "deliberately engineered" by elites, effectively "silencing" contrarian and subjugated voices, creating "partial truths" that augment elite interests; this is important, for those with the "power to construct the past ha[ve] the power to order the present and future" (Allahar 2011: 246-8). Canadian historians have summarily 'documented' that Aboriginals, as 'primitive', 'uncivilized' beings, contributed little, if anything, to the development of Canada; they were a 'race' destined for extinction because they lacked the capacity to 'govern' themselves in accordance with modern standards (Frideres 2011: 3). This 'concealment' serves to erase from the record the barbaric violence done to Native peoples by the 'civilized' settler Europeans, leaving a 'sanitized', 'revisionist' form of 'history' that casts the European 'race' as inherently 'superior' beings who 'discovered' a 'New World' (Frideres 2011: 3). For example, in initial contact, the indigenous population was decimated with both the deliberate and unintentional spread of smallpox; in some instances, entire nations were extinguished, such as the Beothuk in Newfoundland, who became an 'extinct species' by 1829 (Frideres

2011: 11).

The colonists legitimized their violence with the racist doctrine of 'manifest destiny'—the maxim that the colonizer was 'ordained by God' to embark on a 'frontier mission', expanding westward, to cultivate the 'barren' lands, and civilize the 'backward' peoples, of North America. This 'westward expansion' was based on the belief that the 'New World' was *terra nullius* (Latin for 'nobody's land')— that the indigenous inhabitants of North America lacked political sovereignty over the land (Coulthard 2014: 175). In other words, *terra nullius* was the "myth of the empty land which allowed space for the erasure of Aboriginal histories and for the crimes of colonization" (McKenzie 2007: 135). Thus, in Eurocentric thought, the history of the 'New World' began with Columbus' explorations in the 15th century; anything prior to European encounters was not noteworthy (Davidson 1992: 23-4).

Today, biological racial mythologies are no longer 'scientifically' supported; instead, racist ideologies have been socially constructed to fit the changing circumstances of a society that is premised on knowledge and technological progress. The object of racism, then, has shifted from genetically identifiable characteristics to traditional "ways of life" that mark certain groups as culturally "inferior" (Coulthard 2014: 146). Some scholars, such as Lawrence Harrison, believe that "values, beliefs and attitudes are a key component of development", and thus, culture has the power to "thwart or facilitate progress"; in other words, 'underdevelopment is a state of mind' (Harrison and Kagan 2006: xi-xv). Thus, those who lack 'progress prone' cultural attributes—achievement orientation and entrepreneurship, competition and individualism, the value of private property and time, etc. (Harrison and Kagan 2006: 358)—are inherently "culturally deficient" and must be "saved" from their 'backwardness and folly' (Frideres 2011: 171). Unmitigated assimilation of Natives to Canadian culture is arguably an 'orthodox' position in government, especially by the right-of-center. For example, Tom Flanagan, a former campaign manager for PM Stephen Harper, adamantly professes that 'aboriginality' is mere fiction; in other words, he attests that Aboriginals do not have inherent rights to self-government and sovereignty, and that European colonization was "inevitable" and "justifiable", since "European civilization was

several thousand years more advanced than Aboriginal cultures" (2008: 6-7).

These covert racists overlook a crucial aspect of historical materialism: that 'ways of life' are defined and shaped by social, political and economic circumstances; in other words, culture and the economy exist in a symbiotic relationship. Moreover, as discussed below, the 'state of mind' of the underdeveloped has been spawned by economic, political and cultural imperialism. Thus, nations are not 'underdeveloped' because of their culture; nations are underdeveloped because they are kept in a state of economic, political and social dependency by imperial capitalism and neo-colonialism. As Sartre argues, the colonial system, by nature, "effortlessly destroys all attempts at development" (2001: 42).

Ideological Social Control: The Epidermalization of Inferiority and The Residential School

Historically, the indigenous population was ideologically controlled by forced assimilation and indoctrination; it is through socializing institutions, such as education, where the Natives learned to accept the dominant Canadian culture's definitions of truth and reality as the 'normal', 'natural' and the 'right' way of knowing and being. As Fanon states, the colonial government utilizes "a language of pure violence"—with the "clear conscience of the law enforcer", the government agent "brings violence into the homes and minds of the colonized subject" (2004: 4). In other words, to sustain long-term supremacy, a more insidious, 'psycho-affective', form of social control must be implanted and cultivated within the native to "transform the colonized population into *subjects* of imperial rule" (Coulthard 2014: 31).

The residential school system, implemented in 1879, was expunged from the Indian Act in 2010, although the last school officially closed in 1996. The conditions of the schools were horrid; modeled after U.S. army re-education schools for prisoners of war, they bore more of a resemblance to concentration camps than they did to institutions of enlightenment, especially if one took into account the systemic physical and sexual abuse practiced by the 'teachers' (O'Connor and O'Neal 2010: 16-22). The cardinal purpose of the school was to "erase the native identity"—or "kill the Indian in the child"— by "grinding" into the Native's mind that the "normal state" of the 'Indian' was "uncivilized, dirty and would not be tolerated by white society" (O'Connor and O'Neal 2010: 16-21). Yet, in practice, (re)- education was

not the first priority of the school; children were conscripted into domestic and agricultural slave labour for half of the day, which efficiently economized grounds-keeping expenses (Schissel and Wotherspoon 2003: 43). More importantly, the "half-day system" socially engineered Natives into 'plebeian' economic roles, thereby harvesting a cheap source of labour for farms, industries and households (Schissel and Wotherspoon 2003: 31). In fact, under the "guise of work experience", an "apprenticeship" system, which outsourced free child labour to surrounding white communities, proved to be so economically viable that communities frequently lobbied the state to have residential schools established in their jurisdictions (Schissel and Wotherspoon 2003: 45).

The Native child was socialized in Eurocentric thought by learning to speak the language of the colonist, for as Fanon says: "to speak a language is to appropriate its world and culture" (1967: 21). In other words, language is the vehicle by which culture and meaning are transmitted and internalized in the psyche of the speaker. The 'civilizing mission'—or 'the white man's burden'—reorganized the social and cultural way of life for the Aboriginal peoples; the matriarchal familial structure and egalitarian social organization of Native clans was deemed 'primitive' and 'backwards' (Frideres 2011:6-7). If they were to 'progress', then the first peoples of Canada needed to align their form of social organization with the European tradition of patriarchy, individualism and capitalism; in other words, they had to assimilate.

Today, assimilation is more indirect and covert, than manifest and blatant. For example, state funding of Friendship Centers on reserves in the late 20th century was a latent attempt by the state to facilitate the urbanization and assimilation of 'Indians' to neo-liberal Canadian society, which would effectively reduce the government's cost of maintaining Status 'Indians' (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 242). Similarly, as Coulthard notes, with the influx of Natives to the metropolitan core, and the begrudging gaze of the resource exploitation industry on the precious commodities located on Aboriginal terrain, "disciplining indigenous life to the cold rationality of market principles" will likely remain a top priority of the state in the coming future (2014: 13).

Irrespective of the assimilationist tactic commissioned, as the indigenous population

internalizes Eurocentric teachings, they adopt a 'white narcissistic' worldview based on the 'myth of white supremacy' (Bastide 1968: 46-7); put differently, as the 'white gaze' of the colonizer is assumed, the Native comes to define him/herself as the governing, white culture does (Fanon 1967: 90). This yields an inferiority complex in the Native; he or she denigrates him/herself and his/her 'kind' as inherently devoid of morality, worth, dignity, et cetera. Fanon named this complex the 'epidermalization of inferiority' (1967: xv)—the source of the inferiority is materialized in the Native's skin colour, which is darker than the 'pure', white flesh of the colonizer; it is a "bodily curse" that is "over determined from the outside", making one a "slave not to the idea others [hold], but to [one's] appearance" (Fanon 1967: 90-4).

In a 'white supremacist' society, then, a "Manichean" dualism structures and organizes the social hierarchy—polarizing sectors into light/dark, superior/inferior, civilized/barbaric, moral/immoral, et cetera; this Manichean worldview is deeply entrenched in the socio-economic structure of society and in the collective unconscious of the people (Sartre 2001: xii). In Marxist terminology, both the superstructure (i.e., ideologies, laws, norms, etc.) and the substructure (i.e., the economic mode of production) simultaneously discriminate against the 'other' who is not European and white (Allahar 1995: 19). Therefore, the colonized subject cannot be truly equal to the white colonizer in a racially structured world, despite the existence of constitutionally enshrined human rights; and, as Sartre argues, "demanding yet denying the human condition makes for an explosive contradiction" (2004: liv).

The Colonized and Rage: Internal and External Violence

According to Fanon, "the colonist keeps the colonized in a state of rage, which he prevents from boiling over"; nonetheless, this rage "periodically erupts into bloody fighting" amongst the subjugated (2004: 16). This violent rage is spontaneous; it is neither controlled nor directed—it is not focused on the roots of one's oppression, but instead at whatever is within one's immediate vicinity. This is evident in the case of Aboriginal Canadians, for they are more likely to be both the perpetrators and victims of violent crime (Frideres 2011: 86). For example, domestic and sexual abuse—both spousal and child—is endemic within

Aboriginal communities, as is homicide (Fleras 2012: 181).

The 'erupted rage' is guided inwards as well; the epidermalization of inferiority engenders an identity crisis within the Native's psyche, birthing a plethora of psychosocial problems: psychopathology and mental illness, addictions and substance abuse, self-mutilation and suicide (Fanon 2004). Aboriginals have one of the highest, if not the highest, rates of mental illness, suicide and substance abuse in Canada (Frideres 2011: 86). On some reserves mass suicide attempts by Aboriginal children à la gasoline sniffing are routine (Schissel and Satzewich 2003: 41); Pikangikum, a small reserve located northeast of Winnipeg, is "crowned as Canada's (or even the world's) suicide capital" due to its exorbitant suicide rate (Fleras 2012: 181). Likewise, many residential school survivors suffer from a variant of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder—the Residential School Syndrome—which has not only nurtured dependence on, and abuse of, drugs and alcohol, but has also precipitated the occurrence of frequent, violent outbursts (O'Connor and O'Neal 2010: 33-5). Fanon argued that "at the...moment when [the natives] discover their humanity, they begin to sharpen their weapons to secure its victory" (2004: 7); in other words, violence—whether material or symbolic—is necessary for decolonization to take effect, since colonization is devoid of reason and rationality. Violence is a catharsis, a 'cleansing force' (Fanon 2004: 51)—it kills 'two birds with one stone'—both the oppressor and the oppressed (Sartre 2004: xivi). In other words, violence frees the colonizer from both physical and mental slavery; no longer will a Manichean relation of inferiority/superiority exist, for without a superior one cannot be inferior, vice versa.

Following the repatriation of the Constitution in 1982, which, under section 35(1), "recognized and affirmed" the existing rights of Canada's first peoples, Native impatience with colonial Canada reached a tipping point; egregious refusal to uphold these entrenched rights energized the militancy of various First Nations communities across Canada. For example, the Innu of Goose Bay, Labrador set up a blockade at the Canadian Air Force/NATO base to protest the encroachment of their lands by the military-industrial complex; in Alberta, the Lubicon Cree protested the oil and gas development in their region; various First Nations in British Columbia set up blockades in response to the provincial governments ardent refusal to acknowledge any Aboriginal claim to land title in the province;

in Québec, the Algonquin of Barriere Lake impeded clear-cut logging that affected their lands vis-à-vis blockades; and the Temagami First Nation of Ontario set up blockades to halt the non-Native development of their lands (Coulthard 2014: 116-7). This decade of more peaceful protest culminated in the violent uprising and seventy-eight day standoff in Québec during the summer of 1990—colloquially known as the 'Oka Crisis.'

During the colonization of New France, the colonial government appointed the Catholic Church as trustee to the Mohawk Nation of the Kanehsatake reserve; however, despite having the legal obligation to hold the traditional lands in trust for the Mohawks, the Church subsequently sold the land to the municipality of Oka (Corrigall-Brown and Wilkes 2012: 228). In March 1990, the city of Oka proposed to expand a private golf course by an additional 9 holes, and erect luxury condominiums bordering the course's fairways, which would trespass on the sacred, traditional burial grounds of the Mohawks (Winegard 2008: iii). After unsatisfactory conferences with local government officials, and unsuccessful attempts to get a court-ordered injunction to halt the development, the Mohawks erected a barricade on the road leading to their traditional land (Dhamoon and Abu-Laban 2009: 175). On July 11, approximately 100 officers of the provincial police force—the Sû reté du Québec (SQ)—engaged in a "paramilitary-style assault" on the people of Kanehsatake, which resulted in the death of Corporal Lemay (Dhamoon and Abu-Laban 2009: 175). The raid ignited pockets of resistance by Indigenous peoples across Canada; from Montréal to as far as Vancouver, blockades, vandalism, marches, protests (both violent and non-violent) and hunger strikes emerged (Winegard 2008: 149-50).

The show of 'pan-Indian' solidarity after the guerilla-style attack by the SQ in Oka grabbed the attention of the federal government, who, albeit reluctantly, began negotiations with the Mohawk 'terrorists'; however, on August 14, Prime Minister Mulroney deployed over 2500 Canadian soldiers to four locations near the Mohawk barricades, who, under federal directives, conducted regular military raids until the Mohawk Warriors surrendered on September 26 (Dhamoon and Abu-Laban 2009: 175). The excessive use of force and violence against the Mohawks by the Canadian government was vindicated under the guise of 'national security', for the media represented the Mohawk Warriors as "terrorists" and "savage extremists who were beyond the rule of law" (Dhamoon and Abu-Laban 2009: 176).

Nationalism and Decolonization: Red Power Activism

When the colonized discover that "the skin of a colonist is not worth more than the natives" (Fanon 2004:10), the colonized is purged of the epidermalization of inferiority—he or she is no longer ensnared and enslaved to his or her appearance. Yet this ideological emancipation is only half the battle for deliverance; the collective conscience of the oppressed must be cultured via a national sentiment—a primordial, ancestral linkage that stimulates a sense of dignity, confidence, rootedness and unification among the oppressed Natives (Smith 1988: 2). As education and organization among the oppressed proliferates, the subjugated grow cognizant of the roots of their exploitation. However, Fanon is obdurate in his view of nationalism—it is only to be an interim measure in the transitory phase of the liberation struggle; if primordial kinship becomes chronic, it, *ipso facto*, obstructs any chance for international liberty, and it itself becomes a source of tyranny over alien 'others' (1967:112).

The 1969 'White Paper' drafted by the federal government advocated for the "blanket assimilation" of the Status 'Indians;' the policy unilaterally proposed to expunge the "enshrined aspects of legal and political differentiation" that distinguished Status 'Indians' from other Native Canadians under the Indian act (Coulthard 2014: 4). Thus, the White Paper was essentially an instrument of "cultural genocide", and an expedient attempt by the government to offload federal costs onto Aboriginal communities (Fleras 2012: 198). However, the White Paper unintentionally provided all 'classes' of Natives with a sense of solidarity, inaugurating "an unprecedented degree of pan-Indian- ness" that quashed the colonial policy (Coulthard 2014: 4). Fashioned after the Black Panthers in America, an indigenous anti-colonial nationalism emerged, dubbed "Red Power activism", which created a "resurgence of native consciousness" and an "explosion of Native writing" during the 1960s and 1970s (Mackenzie 2007: 6-7). Thus, the traumatic, shared history of all Natives—the forcible removal from ancestral lands and the destruction of traditional cultures—provoked a "spiritual yearning for rootedness", and served to inspire collective political action (Allahar 2011: 255-60). For example, in 1961, a 'pan-Indian' political organization—the National Indian Council (NIC)—was formed, representing Métis, Status and Non-status

'Indians' alike (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 231).

However, the 'pan-Indian' consciousness waned in the fight for political and economic sovereignty; as a result, 'petty tribal' politics and factionalism materialized—Natives challenged other Natives in the political arena in lieu of joining together to assault their common oppressor. As the government came under increasing fiscal restraint, the Aboriginal community reverted to segregation along legal demarcated lines once again in an attempt to secure power for their own 'kind'. For example, the pan-Indian NIC bifurcated in 1968; the relatively 'privileged' Status 'Indians' formed their own political organization, the National Indian Brotherhood (The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) today), while those neglected 'Indians' lacking legal recognition—Non-status 'Indians' and Métis — formed the Native Council of Canada (Ramos 2006: 126). In 1983, the Native Council of Canada disintegrated as well, with the Métis forming their own organization—the Métis National Council; furthermore, since the 1990s, within the Status 'Indian' 'caste', the AFN has come under fire from the Native Women's Association of Canada for neglecting the concerns of Native women and supporting the sexist and patriarchal provisions of the Indian Act (Ramos 2006: 227). Likewise, student groups and grassroots organizations frequently criticize the bureaucratic political organizations for ignoring the poorest sectors within Aboriginal societies, thereby acting as a 'client group' and appendage of the colonial state (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 239).

Nevertheless, a recent omnibus budget bill (Bill C45)—or the "latest installment of...colonial dispossession"—has sparked another pan-Aboriginal movement that rivals the White Paper-inspired Red Activism of the 1960s; though starting off as a grassroots struggle by Native women against patriarchy in 2012, the 'Idle No More' movement is now joined by the international community in a mê lée against the neo-colonial relationship of capitalist imperialism itself (Coulthard 2014: 161-2). Reminiscent of Fanon (2004), the Idle No More movement purposely lacks, and eschews, leadership; in fact, the activists are deeply skeptical of official Indigenous political organizations—such as the AFN— for they tend to coopt "transformative potential" vis-à-vis negotiation and reformism (Coulthard 2014: 162).

Red Capitalism and The Red Skin, White Mask Comprador Class

While in an "embryonic stage", the Aboriginal bourgeoisie or the "red capitalists"

control small, regional enterprises on the reserves that provide services to Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) in industries such as aviation, snowmobile manufacturing, resource extraction and real estate (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 65). Thus, the Native bourgeois class is more akin to a petit- bourgeoisie, and operates as a "junior partner" of the imperialist bourgeoisie (Allahar 2005: 16). In fact, the colonial government promoted and sponsored leading families on the reserves who were exceptionally "cooperative" with Indian agents; in other words, the state culled a "comprador class" to act as "agents of social control" and "drive a wedge in Indian [sic] communities" (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 69). More so, the recruitment of the 'best and brightest' into state leadership positions, in an attempt to 'buy off' Aboriginals who posed a potential threat to the socio-economic order, has fashioned a group of people who are branded as "red apples" by the broader Native community— having "sold out to white society", they are "red on the outside" but "white on the inside" (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 71). This, too, is analogous to the writings of Frantz Fanon: the 'native intelligentsia', or the comprador class, that Fanon spoke of were suffering from an 'alienation of the self'—they had 'black skin', but they wore a 'white mask'; in effect, they mentally enslaved themselves after having been physically enslaved, and freed, by the white man (Fanon 1967: 168).

Relatedly, although the Indian Act allowed for the creation of band councils to 'govern' the Native communities, this 'power' was largely symbolic, since *de facto* and *de jure* power resided with the Minister of Indian Affairs, who had, and still has, the capacity to veto band decisions (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 34). Thus, since the Native elite's power is limited by the Canadian state, the Native elite is "little more than [a] federal proxy" (Fleras 2012: 197). For example, the state insists that any institutionalized accommodation of Indigenous cultural differences emanating from land claim settlements be reconcilable with colonial sovereignty and capitalism (Coulthard 2014: 66). Aboriginal self-government negotiated "under the auspices of corporate dominance", then, characterizes neocolonialism, not decolonization; devolution is a policy that compliments the "neoliberal agenda" of promoting "fiscal restraint" by attacking the welfare state via reducing federal responsibility to provide costly services, paid out of tax dollars, to registered 'Indians' (Slowey 2001: 265-8). And since Aboriginal communities lack the financial resources to supplant the subsidies,

the state, and the Native elite, enthusiastically promotes polices and programs that establish partnerships with MNCs (Slowey 2001: 269).

Swift settlement of outstanding land claims in undeveloped, resource rich areas—such as Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories—are politically motivated ruses to ensure a stable local government, and thus, attractive environment for national and international investment; as a result, the dependence on the federal government has shifted to a dependence on MNC imperialism (Slowey 2001: 270-2). And since the quality of life and development index of Aboriginals parallels that of Mexico and Thailand (Fleras 2012: 180), the "red capitalism" on reserves acts much like the free trade zones in the 'Third World,' where the cost of production is lessened due to virtually non-existent tax rates and an impoverished labour force, compelled by the 'whip of hunger', to work for minimal pay in substandard conditions (Wotherspoon and Satzewich 1993: 71).

Towards a Socialist, Post-Colonial Future

Despite the similar experience of colonial domination, both historically and presently, between the Aboriginal peoples of Canada and the inhabitants of ex-colonies in the 'Third World', a fundamental aspect differentiates the experiences of the two situations: the Aboriginal population constitutes approximately 3% of the Canadian population, whereas the colonized population in the former colonies, such as Algeria, constituted the numerical majority (Cairns 2000: 26). This relative 'weakness in numbers' poses dire consequences for the Indigenous decolonization movement in Canada; the Canadian majority is not homogenous, as Canada is a 'country of immigrants', and thus, the non- Aboriginal population cannot be pushed out by force, and return 'home,' like the decolonization of Algeria that Fanon (2004) described. In other words, for the (neo)colonial 'masters', Canada is 'home'. This is, unfortunately, where Fanon's analysis in *The Wretched of the Earth* (2004) proves unsuitable to the Canadian context; it would be ludicrous, and irresponsible, to advocate for the violent uprising of only 3% of the population against the remaining 97%. Moreover, not only does the 'colonized' 3% of Canada lack the 'power in numbers', but they also lack the military clout; and since, as Mao Tse-tung notably said, 'power comes from the barrel of the gun', and 'those with the biggest guns have the most power', a violent uprising by the Aboriginal population of Canada would essentially be a suicide mission that would not

profoundly alter the lived reality of their 'kind'— that is, assuming there are survivors of their 'kind' to profit from the spoils of violence.

So, then, if violence is not the answer for the 'wretched of Canada', what is? Cairns, in his book *Citizens Plus*, gets at the crux of the matter by advocating for a "viable constitutional vision" which emphasizes that, while the Aboriginal population differs from the non-Aboriginal population in many aspects, the "difference[s] are not total [and]...there is much overlap—[most importantly] we share a common space" (2000: 5). Focusing on the commonalities, rather than the differences, allows people from disparate 'kinds' to transcend their primordial attachments; by growing cognizant of the shared situations of exploitation, those who were previously 'falsely conscious'—and believed the myths peddled by those in power that different 'kinds' (i.e., racial, ethnic, gender groups) automatically have divergent interests—can merge to form a 'class-in-itself': that is, they become the majority of peoples who are subjugated by the socio-economic order (Allahar 2005: 6). This defeats the first barrier aforementioned to the Aboriginal revolutionary struggle. Constituting the numerical majority, then, education and organization can facilitate the awareness that, together, the oppressed majority can alter their social situation, and create a more just society; put differently, the revolutionary class transitions from a 'mere statistical aggregate' to a 'class-for-itself' (Allahar 2005: 6).

In the words of Fanon: "all forms of exploitation are identical, since they apply to the same object: the [hu]man", and deny one's right to be treated as a human (1967: 68). The point is that the group does not need to be homogenous in regards to their identity; no two people, irrespective of sharing the same gender, socio-economic class, 'race', et cetera, are identical or undifferentiated—but that does not preclude them from realizing that they are still humans and deserve dignity and respect from the 'other'. As Fanon said: "the white symbolizes capital as the negro labour...among the black race, it is the struggle of the world proletariat which he sings" (1967: 111). A common goal—universal socialism—can unite those who previously felt they had nothing in common for the very reason that all who are exploited, dehumanized and alienated by capitalism stand to benefit socially, economically, politically and psychologically from a more just and equal world.

Thus, in this new socialism, all unique differences need not be obliterated; in fact, true

social democracy requires heterogeneous opinions, for the fundamental cornerstone of social democracy is an informed citizenry capable of participating in debate. And since, by definition, a debate requires, at minimum, two viewpoints—an opponent and proponent on a given issue—censorship and 'groupthink' (homogeneity of thought) actually impedes, rather than cultivates, social democracy. The important point, however, is that these differing viewpoints have equal opportunity to speak and be heard in the public 'market place of ideas', and be considered and judged by the merits of the argument and quality of the evidence put forth, not by the appearance of the speaker.

My point, then, is that the 'Indian Problem' is not just an 'Indian' problem—despite the fact that Aboriginals are not treated as equals, for the majority are relegated to the margins of society and deemed 'the wretched of Canada'—their plight serves as an illustrative, and hopefully motivating, case of the exploitative powers emanating from capitalism. Put differently, the 'Indian Problem' is a 'Capitalist Problem', and thus, is not solely relevant to those with Indigenous ancestral lineages. As Sartre said in his preface to *The Wretched of the Earth*, it is not just the Algerians being decolonized, but the French as well: "the colonist inside every one of us is surgically extracted in a bloody operation" (2004: lvii). Though it would be naï ve to call for a *tabula rasa* (i.e., blank slate), historical injustices and grudges must be transcended if Canada, and humanity, is to move toward a socialist reality; both the minds of the colonized *and* the colonizer must be 'decolonized' (Isaacs 1968: 78), for the "black man [is a] slave to his inferiority, and the white man [is a] slave to his superiority" (Fanon 1967:40-1).

Thus, Canada should heed Fanon's advice: to restructure the 'racist structure' and demythologize the 'racist myths' floating in the 'collective unconscious' (1967: 62-71). This, obviously, will not occur over night; but it most certainly cannot happen unilaterally. Hence, all victims of capitalism, regardless of sex, 'race', religion, et cetera, must forge the new Canada in *praxis;* by collectively working towards a superordinate end, we can build a society that is inclusive and respecting of differences, yet simultaneously unified by a "single political community" (Cairns 2000: 80).

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