

A Note on Decolonization, Poststructuralism, and Method in Indigenous Critical Theory



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Abstract

The meaning of the word 'decolonization' is rapidly changing in Canada. Today, the word has re-penetrated the psychology of mainstream Canadians. And, with mainstream society now finding the term effective and useful for advertising products the synonymy of the term with 'anti-colonial' is becoming a problem. Decolonization appears to be a decolonial term, but when I carefully critique its ideological usage by settler colonials, I find it's almost guaranteed that the contemporary usage of the term will come full circle. As it enters the mainstream market economy, the term gets structured primarily by profit motives rather than community values. Very soon, popular usage of decolonization will once again refer to a matrix of settler colonial values, rather than the independent community-based processes which grassroots Indigenous and anti-colonial peoples have used. As decolonization terminology becomes popular in Canada's mainstream, it will methodologically contradict the grassroots' anti-colonial aspirations. In this paper, I've tried to understand how Indigenous people might be influenced by the structuralist patterns of thought in anti-Indigenous or modernist knowledge frameworks, I have looked at how bureaucratic institutions reinventing decolonization use the ideology of profit to assimilate Indigenous peoples using old progress ideologies that drive the historical master-narrative of settler colonial nations like Canada. The final section looks at how those ideologies produce categories of identity that promote a progress narrative that is continuing to seek the assimilation of Indigenous peoples into the settler colonial system's public market economy. Here I've advocated for a post-structuralist method for comprehending Indigenous decolonization movement.

Keywords: *Critical Theory, Decolonization, Indigenous Critical Theory, Native Criticism, Post-colonial Studies*

Main Text

I'm skeptical when an author implies that decolonization exorcizes colonization from their writing. The common meaning of decolonization is, I think, extremely suspicious in today's world.

Currently, the meaning of decolonization is evolving. It's become a household word. A titular term, ubiquitous. It's on the cover or headline of many books, journals, newspapers, and even popular magazines. Decolonization has entered the psychology of the quotidian.

And, I wonder: if decolonization is now profitable, is it still de-colonial? Isn't colonialism an ideology designed to express a system of profit-mongering? An agenda of commodification? How could an anti-colonial idea — meant to express something that seeks to be something other than the creation of profits — have been allowed to be appropriated this way?

To understand how the meaning of the word, as it evolves, got shaped into what it is now, I have looked at how it arrived at its present meaning in our Canadian context. What processes have shaped it in the past? What are these processes likely to become in the future?

Today's decolonial terminology became more common as a result of waves of Indigenous social movements — for example, Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike in 2012, and, of course, the Idle No More Movement. Media attention toward these hot topics and Indigenous issues in general has become big business in almost all of Canada's main newspapers.

Decolonization is a term Indigenous people have prescribed collectively. As Harsha Walia (2014) describes, for example, in "Decolonizing Together: Moving Beyond a Politics of Solidarity Toward a Practice of Decolonization": decolonization means a re-imagining of the relationship between Canadians and Indigenous peoples. Walia says "Decolonization is as much a process as a goal." She writes it's about "relationships with land, people and the state" that entail "re-centering on Indigenous worldviews"(2014, p. 45).

Yet, another process of reimagining is also happening, a corporate one. Decolonization seems about to go full circle—it's turning back on itself, returning to the

settler colonial ideology from whence it was liberated during Idle No More.

Part of the problem is that the general public does not really know what colonialism is; does not see it as generating profit via the exploitation of the marginalized population; and doesn't think of imperialism as inherently negative. For many, decolonization simply means *something about* Indigenous racial identity. For them, decolonization is imagined as a capitalist empowerment of an impoverished racial group, liberated by merit, gaining entry into the colonial business world. This view is advertised in a commodified fashion in Times Square, in popular magazines, etc. etc.

Having become a desirable term ostensibly depicting a desire for racial equality, the term is now nominalized by mainstream advertising, making it a tool useful for the generation of revenue. This decolonization mindset can give the business world access to what is probably the newest most lucrative domestic market in Canada (TD Bank, 2011). As a buzzword, decolonize can now be used to influence the buying habits of a large segment of the racialized domestic population.

Many institutional sources do understand the term as meaning anti-colonialism, but their definition of colonialism tends to refer to 'the past.' Their progress-ideology is an embodiment of entrenched colonial beliefs in institutional architecture.

These views circulate daily in the media— CBC News, the Globe and Mail, Vice News, even music, arts, culture and entertainment sources like Exclaim!*@# or Vogue— makes inquiry into the direction the term is going very important.

It is time to think about how going forward imperial bureaucracies will attempt to

financially appropriate grassroots' messages for purposes of cultural reclamation.

In the future, it's likely that the process known as decolonization will probably go back to its root in a colonial concept that exploits a marginalized labor group for profit rather than remain an undoing of what the grassroots have deemed the colonial past. The emphasis here will be on profit in the future, the undoing of the past, the growth of a new economy. This liquidation of the past is not inherently anti-colonial, quite the opposite, it's likely as old as colonialism itself.

Decolonization's roots in colonialism are observed by Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007), in "On the Coloniality of Being," where-in, they note that this term has always had a political tendency towards colonial affirmation. Decolonization is a term that settler colonial peoples have used when building new empires, empires that get built by wresting power away from unprofitable ideas imagined old and useless. For Maldonado-Torres, decolonization isn't defined by etymology alone, it's also a system of reinvention, an image of a brand-new thing; the newness of it is important to its comprehension. For example, Wolfgang Hegel in the Enlightenment Age (the 1700s) already thought this was an old imperial idea, even if it's an idea that "only becomes a project in the twentieth century" (2007, p. 261).

Having now reached maturity as a political program, it's very important to look critically at what's happening in the mainstream's psychology, as we adopt the term and familiarize ourselves with its newest modalities. Roberto Esposito (2015) points out, when speaking of democracy, that it's highly unlikely that any of the most common political forms known to our current system are going to change as a result of exposure to new terms, like decolonization. This is

because "no real change in our current political forms is imaginable without an equally profound alteration of our interpretive notions" (2015, p. 15). Like Esposito, I don't think that new terminologies or new languages can fundamentally change the colonial system— only new interpretative strategies have potential for changing how we cope with our political system.

In the present day, I've seen the word 'decolonization' being used by contemporary journalists in a manner that my work opposes. Current usages seem to fundamentally misunderstand the invisible value systems embedded in settler colonial ideology. Unlike the appropriation of terminology in grassroots Indigenous movements, it's unlikely that the new dialogue will effectively address how settler colonial ideology is designed to influence the interpretive machinery hidden in current political ideology— an ideology seated in the structural values of a capitalist nation-state.

Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) sees 'decolonization' tending to promote settler colonial ideals using a decolonization ideology "that is probably as old as colonization itself" (p. 23). Decolonization is not really an anti-colonization strategy, but a way of creating new modalities of colonization.

Alongside Maldonado-Torres, I am not skeptical of the Indigenous movement's idea of decolonization as anti-imperialism. But unlike Maldonado-Torres, I do tend to be skeptical of the idea that today's Indigenous movements will be able to retain control over what decolonization means. The reason for this will be discussed here— in reference to the machinery of the state— and how it's been designed to coerce and otherwise modify grassroots politics to make them conform with mainstream ideology.

It seems clear the colonial structure of capitalism will ensure buzzwords like this one will be manipulated by the interests of large corporations, newspapers, and governments in order to financially access a lucrative Indigenous domestic market.

In Frantz Fanon's (1963) *The Wretched of the Earth*, he observes some of these dynamics, which situate decolonization *inside* a colonial ideology, even as it seeks to fight against those colonial processes. Fanon observes that decolonization can be seen or discussed as a continuation of the system of exploitation and oppression of the disempowered or marginalized members of society if the structure of our western socio-economic system itself cannot be changed to fully reflect the disempowered group's interests. This happens even if representatives of the system of imperialism promise differently. He writes:

At whatever level we study it... decolonization is quite simply the replacing of a certain 'species' of men by another 'species' of men. Its usual importance is that it constitutes, from the very first day, the minimum demands of the colonized. To tell the truth, the proof of success lies in the whole social structure being changed from the bottom up (1963, p. 35).

This reality does not necessarily inherently devalue what's been achieved by those who have risen up. Fanon's book about the Algerian revolution, *A Dying Colonialism* (1965) makes the point clear in its conclusion: decolonization (as a form of anti-colonialism) may happen in many ways, but ultimately, in order for it to work, it must express the independence of the group that's risen up to reject their oppressor (1965, p. 179). In Canada, as decolonization enters the market economy, that independence is being lost.

Today, it's the independence of the Indigenous grassroots that's being threatened in Canada.

Right now, the term 'decolonization' has the potential to become an instrument that continues to acculturate land-based Indigenous peoples by undermining their achievements as a grassroots movement. Fanon argues that decolonization can be re-aligned with "a historical process" that can only be understood as an "exact measure" of a movement's rejection of a "historical form" of "colonization" (Fanon, 1963, p. 35). Doing this does not mean rejection of history itself, but a rejection of the form of history which oppresses them.

This process of decolonization can lead to the creation of what Fanon calls the 'new men', men who then become a new economic subspecies: a species that can, in some cases, be as imperialistic as the colonizer and in some cases, just as willing to exploit land-based culture as the colonizers.

The new men may rape and pillage land-and-land-based culture in the newest possible ways; and, rather than doing this from a remote place (like when one culture colonizes a different culture), the new settler colonizes in the most immediate fashion possible (like a brother who exploits brother).

In alignment, I reject the 'de-colonial' claim that's been made by the more liberal scholars of decoloniality in Native frameworks— and I'd like to do this most especially when they describe the 'penetration' of liberal ideals as something good. Scholars like Paulette Regan seem to want to see colonialism as a thing that's fundamentally distinct from liberalism, and, doing this, they neglect any mention of neoliberalism, which is the source of the most pernicious colonial and settler colonial methods and processes that are

threatening the Indigenous people's movements today.

Today, the word liberal is imagined meaning 'tolerant.' In fact, the term liberalism is what describes British colonialism and imperialism throughout the latter half of the Enlightenment era, and most of the Victorian era, when Canada was being subjugated by the commonwealth. It often seems that liberal scholars—like those who have worked in management roles within the Truth and Reconciliation Center—seem to feel that the new modalities of assimilation ought to be hidden, ignored, or optimistically renamed processes of 'representation' and 'integration;' as if the new penetrative aspects of liberal integration policies are somehow inherently good, anti-colonial, or somehow beyond the history of colonialism itself.

These scholars seem to believe that by penetrating Indigenous society with market-values, the growth of settler colonialism is somehow reformed to constitute a more morally just process representative of their Indigenous decolonizing aspirations.¹

¹ "... to insist, as Krupat and others do, on a 'genuinely heterodox national canon' inclusive of American Indian literature (orature or otherwise) has equally undesirable implications. It becomes equally an instrument of control as Eurocentric standards of judgment are employed to claim into the national canon only those works of which the métropole approves, those which best legitimate the existing social order. "Indigenous writing has suffered many of the general historical problems of post-colonial writing, [including] being incorporated into the national literatures of the settler colonies as an 'extension' rather than as a separate discourse.' Such incorporation denies Native literatures of its distinct existence, specific differences, and independent status of literary production and, as Owens contends, retards consideration of Native works in their own cultural contexts'. A quest for Indigeneity has been part of settler literature and national literature since the conception of American national culture— but that

However, decolonization's anti-racist framework remains with much in common with the program that is put forward by Britain after WWII; this is a framework that is highly compatible with both liberalism and settler colonialism.(see footnote 3).

The idea that penetration constitutes decolonization only masks the longstanding and ongoing tradition of settler colonialism, it masks the etymological and historical root of settler colonialism; and doing this, it only furthers the long-and-deep process of injuring and attempting to destroy Indigenous culture's relationships to land and land-based-knowledge or spirituality.²

In my work, I don't want to mask or nominalize how ecologically-oriented Indigenous cultures are coercively assimilated into the dominant social order's economic alterity to land-based or ecological ways of life. For example, in my forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation, *Settler Colonialism at Portage and Main: Past and Present*, for example, I have avidly avoided using the term decolonization at all throughout the text, as I see it as an intensely problematic term.

long-term presence does not make Indigenous complicit with it at a grassroots level with settler colonial processes of assimilation venerable or worth masking" (Womack, 2008, p. 86- here Womack is quoting Cook-Lynn).

² A penetration argument is made by Paulette Regan (2011). She demonstrates why she feels this would be just throughout her book, *Unsettling the Settler Within*. There are many other authors who have also made that argument, and not all of them come at it from the same political point of view as Regan. Regan appears to me to be implicitly in favour of liberalism in her approach, albeit a radical form of liberalism. However, there are also Liberal-Conservative arguments that you might consider for understanding Indigenous arguments for assimilative penetration— or even outright integrationism. To understand the penetrative argument of more conservative Indigenous people, you might read, for example, lawyer William Wuttunee's (1971) *Ruffled Feathers*.

In my dissertation, I only like to employ the term when speaking in a critical context, like in this article. I do this because I tend to believe that decolonization—especially when deployed by non-Indigenous peoples—actually tends to *serve* the colonial economic processes that are destroying land-based relationships. Decolonization is a term that is instrumental to the assimilation of Indigenous peoples into Canada's mainstream socio-economic framework.

In addition to this, it's also become very clear to me that Indigenous peoples' movements shouldn't be seen as inherently autonomous or independent of settler colonial interests, unless they can show that they are not being politically or economically coerced by government or corporate officers (as a Treaty Commissioner, or other members of the Crown). It's highly unlikely that this avoidance of coercion would be possible in a contemporary commonwealth—as, scholars of Commonwealth Studies (Jürgen Habermas, or Max Horkheimer for instance) have shown that British commonwealths have been fundamentally coercing their grassroots movements since the invention of the Gutenberg Press (in the 15th century).

During the 2021 Every Child Matters protests it became very clear to me that the government's commissions, commissioners, and general policy frameworks—like those of the TRC and the Treaty Relations Commission in Manitoba—had taken it upon themselves to design the grassroots mass-movement's goals while working in tandem with liberal reform media newspapers to broadcast a set of socially-engineered goals to the nation, as if those goals represent the grassroots. In effect, the grassroots' points of view are being reverse engineered by the media and government in ways comparable to how grassroots mass-movements have had their messages coerced or manipulated in the past.

It's important to note that the educational policies and curriculum of Every Child Matters got designed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, between 2019-2020 (see TRC, 2019- *Every Child Matters*), and had had most of its goals printed by 2020. Although the commission is hiring Indigenous peoples to do this, and features grassroots testimony to support its claims, the curriculum did get issued more than a year before the emergence of the latest Indigenous mass-movement that rose up to express its dissenting views. More and more, the initially autonomous Indigenous mass-movements have begun to look more-and-more homogeneously akin to those political mantras that are being handed down by the political bureaucrats and journalists who have printed the achievements of the movement in newspapers devoted to liberal reform ideologies.

These administrators are people for whom the "engineering of consent" is "the central task" to be performed within the "staged 'public opinion'" exhibited at the political protests of a nation (Habermas, 1968, p. 194). This task is a long-standing tradition within British Protestant Liberal society—and can be traced back to the anti-Indigenous frameworks of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century.

The incipient technocratic tendency of the commonwealth framework is well known among the philosophical critics of the Anglo-Saxon histories alluded to above. The administration of society by newspapers and government, using free market liberalism, has been documented at length by Frankfurt school scholars, as well as the radical Surrealists and Situationists in the early twentieth century. Indigenous grassroots movements are far from having their radical movement immune to these politically appropriative methodologies (Horkheimer,

1947; The Situationist International, 1967; Habermas, 1968).

To promote resistance to the colonial processes of assimilating and integrating Indigenous peoples into colonial systems of thinking, I now want to promote taking a deep look at the structural form of the historical code, and its systemic profit-based way of organizing the world, including the effects it's had on the settler colonial Canadian mindset.

My aim, when doing this, is to try and understand how the modern era is being programmed by historical and contemporary patterns of thought; codes which are determined by an administered society—codes which are handed down to grassroots movements, in order to control how they express their 'radical' ideologies. These hand-me-down mantras tend to be progress-ideologies that reflect the historical-yet-anti-historical master-narrative; it is a paradoxical historical narrative which promotes a progress-narrative that's profitably supportive of settler colonial government and corporate profit-motives by any means necessary (Horkheimer, 1947).

Philosophically speaking, I personally appreciate how anthropologist Johannes Fabian (1983) describes how our modern situation came to be. Fabian describes how western society has moved away from venerations of history, and how our historical-yet-anti-historical processes have become venerations of a "rejection of historical code" which is not an "actual departure from it" (1983, p. 21). This rejection without departing amounts to an assumption of guilt for the sins of history, but an acceptance of the underlying ideology expressed by that historical code.

When rejecting our history, we assert a wholehearted belief in the ideology of the present. This belief is non-critical. Our eyes focus on hope in the future, rather than seeking

to understand how our actions have been shaped by past ideologies. We continue to promulgate those which we do not know exist in the present through an uncritical belief in a modernist ideology.

This idea has been supported by Indigenous Critical Theorists. For example, Craig Womack's (2008) "A Single Decade: Book-Length Native Literary Criticism" describes how a queer Creek-Cherokee scholar critiques modernist ideology. Womack notes the intersections between forward-looking ideology and the rejection of history.

Womack articulates alternatives to the problems associated with trying to reject a historical code without having first sought to understand the mindset that has accompanied that code's history. Womack says it's very difficult to reject a historical code that you don't understand. In order to reject historical processes, one ought to study it, and try to remember the processes that constituted it.

Womack (2008) argues that simplistic and reductionistic forms of analysis—like those seen in many books about native symbolism—have promoted an ahistorical and sometimes clichéd or decontextualized relationship to Indigenous culture.

Stuart Hall (1977) also describes the scene in similar ways. For example, Hall points out that the reductionist approach to understanding native or racialized cultures in Britain can often reflect a colonial tendency that regards artifacts and texts as mere 'archives' of an existing (capital C) form of culture. This form of culture gets imagined being somehow *beyond* the archives of history, this *beyond* is a result of the reification

of objects into commodities (1977, p. 27 & 19).³

Comparably, Craig Womack also writes against this tendency towards going beyond history into a reified state, where archives are considered a realm distinct from our current reality. Writing:

We are trying to avoid the kind of literary work that has been so very popular in our field in which people avoid historical research and base their criticism exclusively on tropes and symbols. We want to show some kind of commitment to archival sources and other kinds of knowledge rather than atemporal, non-historical, clichéd analyses such as, "Well... I think the frybread probably symbolizes"... (Womack, 2008, p. 7).

Like Womack, my work also concerns itself with questions tied to investigations of base-materialism or materialism itself. (see footnote 5).

Like Womack, I don't propose studying ahistorical tropes and symbols in the historically disconnected manner so popular among the majority of contemporary researchers. I would prefer to recognize that the process of reification often seeks to be mimetic to the ahistorical process of commodification, and that an understanding of how to avoid that tendency to reify things into symbols and commodities; doing this means having a serious engagement with the progress-narrative that dominates our commonwealth's historical narrative, both past and present.

³ Hall (1977) explains that this way of examining culture takes for granted a number of etymological and historical contexts; for example, this approach to culture facilitates misguided ideas about the artefacts and texts, as it often tends to assign civilizational merit. It is a method that can inherently express "a fixed set of standards nominated as Culture with a capital 'C'"(p. 19).

He capitalizes the 'C' here to indicate that this noun is being commodified, or treated like an object,

Other critical theory examples of this exist, like those of the Native Critics Collective (2008), who also proposes another way of overcoming the problem of commodification, a problem where symbols become disconnected from their history and get reified into commodities. The Native Critics Collective does this through proposing a historically aware knowledge-based analysis of literary and cultural matters, using critical theory methods and frameworks, that are not unlike what Stuart Hall (1980) describes when he established the theoretical and methodical basis of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham using a critical theory basis.

To ensure a good fit when intermeshing these interdisciplinary fields of Native Studies, critical theory, and Cultural Studies, I like how Womack's (2008) study proposes altering the non-native methods and instruments (what he dubs Indigenous critical theory) in order to make them reflect a new historically aware "materialism with a twist" (2008, p. 7).

Doing this, Womack stipulates that using Cultural Studies frameworks in a Native Studies context means taking religious and cosmological matters into account. In this framework, the spiritual shadow of an object should never get divorced from the process of studying that thing when doing research. He promotes this type of idea saying that the cosmological base, which is really the

rather than like a somewhat intangible process. As an ahistorical mindset, studies of 'Culture' are usually seated in a set of presumptions such as economic determinism and can default to the dominant and taken-for-granted world view of the logocentric agro-industrial society. This emphasis on culture also tends to assume that liberal Protestant Anglo-Saxon societies are the gold standard against which other societies need comparison.

foundation upon which a society is built; the spiritual foundation—a shadow which is historically ubiquitous—should never be forgotten by materialist studies of such forms of cultural bases, structures, superstructures, etc. (2008, p. 7).⁴

In my work, I've applied critical theory and cultural studies methods, and have considered the foundational, structural, and ideological nature of Winnipeg's Central Economic District at a banking corner called Portage and Main. This study has also been loosely constituted in reference to a sort of metaphorical "base/superstructure," which I have seen as cosmologically or metaphysically present at that site in a non-deterministic fashion seated in the contemporary scholarship of Indigenous theorists and writers, as well as Frankfurt school critical theory (Hall, 1980, p. 27). My usage of terms like 'base/superstructure' (etc.) is not narrowly New Marxist and Althusserian, it can instead be a blend of modern theory and base-materialism.

In my studies of Portage and Main, I've sought to undermine the determinist and functionalist- structuralist codes that have created the site and most of its literature. Like other critical theorists, I perceive these "structuralisms" having reimagined the reality of the site as a reflection of how these sorts of "abstractions of texts" have taken for granted the social practices which produced them as well as the institutional sites that they claim to factually represent (Hall, 1980, p. 27). Structuralism of that kind blindly reproduces the categorical systems of thinking these systems fetishize and commodify as the 'real' principles of order which structuralists claim get expressed at sites like Portage and Main,

but also, by identities belonging to marginalized peoples.

This work has a post-structuralist agenda behind it. And, like other critical theorists who work with Indigenous scholars, I've seen structuralism having a tendency to render fundamental values and principles invisible. I propose undermining that structuralist ideology, which I've observed being scientifically romanticized. The need to be criticized, like how for instance, Stuart Hall does it, when describing how ideological constructions of "a social totality" are never simple or ahistorical, they are necessarily always a "complex structure" (Hall, 1977, p. 27).

The romantic-yet-scientific ideologies of value that I am describing systematically produce false feelings of universality and unity which are, actually disjointed. They're situated within a severely disjointed or chaotic social reality which tells people that they ought to feel whole in a world social structure that's fundamentally fragmented.

Throughout history, a variety of different structuralisms have asserted and reasserted the unity of their particular fragments of codified knowledge or value systems which the dominant cultural order is taught to prefer, or, to have a taste for (a preference for) (Bourdieu, 1969, pp. 283–295). Those structurally constructed states-of-subjectivity are fundamentally made-up of preferences for particular tastes or preferences and tend to be accompanied with a seemingly scientific aesthetic of analysis. This is because people desire romantically scientific and neutral-seeming ideology which they use to create self-replicating value systems.

⁴ The term materialism in this work refers to what the Frankfurt School means by the term 'base materialism'. Base-materialism is different than what

Marx means by materialism, in *Grundrisse* Notebook VII (1958) for example, Marx uses materialism to denote 'use value' in production capital. Base materialism refers to everyday use (1958, p. 707).

These systems are never actual pure-forms, or universal truths like what they claim to represent in themselves. These systems (which claim to be universal) cannot actually achieve unity or purity because human culture is not definable in the same manner that an object is categorizable. The categories that describe human knowledge and value-systems are always going to be shifting-yet-firm complexes; the science behind our taste for a particular structure aren't provable the same way that a taxonomic science will seek to present them (Bourdieu, 1969).

The ideology of taste and preference tends to be seated phenomenologically in a consciousness which is class-based, because it's a consciousness that prefers categories of knowledge (classes of knowledge) over knowledge itself. Knowledge seated in taste or preference is never neutral, and should not pretend to be neutral, even when presented as a system of categories— and yet most taxonomic systems (like those which dominate Modernist cultures) tend to ignore the non-neutral structure of the typologies of knowledge its produced by means of its structuralist categorical method.

As Stuart Hall (1977) writes:

... the process of ordering (arrangement, regulation) is always the result of concrete sets of practices and relations. In constituting a particular cultural order as 'dominant', it implied (though this was rarely examined) the active subordination of alternatives— their marginalization and incorporation into a dominant structure: hence, also, the resistances, antagonisms and struggles which result from regulation (1977, p. 27).

By choosing a set of dominant categories, a system of order must subordinate alternative knowledge categories. Doing this,

the dominant cultural order reorganizes the subordinate culture, and seeks to regulate the tensions and resistances that exist within or between groupings by subordinating them. It does this by creating a 'concrete' or 'practical' system of order which tends to be mimetic to the aesthetics of a romantic-yet-scientific structure of knowledge. It is in that context that the contemporary interpretations of culture become an imperial shorthand for "the economic, political, and ideological instances" that modern structuralists deem the 'determinations' (of what's been described above) in a supposedly self-apparent or universal system of domination which becomes concrete in methodology (pp. 28).

Structurally, these hyper-determined objects are not unlike what Hall has described. The metaphors of one culture gets transformed into a system of reified symbols deemed a reality of a different order; wherein the things associated with a subordinate culture get symbolically reimagined as an abstract categorical object subordinated to the structuralist mindset of the dominant order. In the process, the reified object comes to exist as a mirror image of the structuralist mindset; and metaphorical correspondences to commodified objects of reality become so exact, even the fate of the thing gets imagined like a concrete reified commodity existing outside a historical or cultural code-of-knowledge.⁵

The resulting hyper-determined structuralist world becomes like how Roberto Esposito's (2016) book *Persons and Things* describes them, as "A thing which has lost his shadow..."(2016, p. 92). For us to hyper-define objects of culture using the structuralist method, we turn decolonial Indigenous relationships to the land into personified

⁵ You might take a look at Susan Buck-Morss' (1977) work for more about the tautological notion of a thing-

as-a-mirror-of-commodity-value, and, at what Frankfurt School theorists call exchange-value (in Buck-Morss she is referring to Theodore Adorno).

shadowless objects. Objects that can only survive the settler colonial process of reification if they "either fall under the sway of [this] madness or perish" in an "integral reality" with an absolute coincidence between the virtual, the truth, and the appearance of the thing (Esposito, 2016, pp. 92-93; parenthesis added for clarity).

The structuralist method takes over the meaning of the subject-matter and subordinates it; as, all aspects of the dominated culture will then need to be a historically clarified in order to be believed to be in perfect correspondence to their newly commoditized self. (for more information about this, see Theodore Adorno's *oeuvre*— it contains in depth analyses of why identity politics are synonymous with processes of assimilating (or, "exchanging") identities to render them compatible with the liberal market-economy).

In conclusion: throughout this essay I've used a post-structuralist style to critically examine structuralist knowledge frameworks that tend to encourage an economy-of-knowledge that's instrumental to the assimilation of subjugated groups into a settler colonial knowledge-framework. The focus here has been upon assimilation into the market and some of the ways in which the modernist framework commodifies Indigenous people's culture.

In this article I've argued that settler colonial knowledge frameworks tend to become anti-historical, pro-development, and

pro-capitalist in their ideological structure. The sorts of ideologies I speak of here are operative in context of a critique of the decolonized framework, and, are what I think promulgates the current movement's new structurally defined government and corporate frameworks.

I have found these frameworks reflective of, for example, modernist and structuralist trends towards new anti-historical master-narratives. Narratives which I find seated in settler colonial orientations, which I believe have more in common with racist master-narratives than with land-based Indigenous values themselves.

In this essay I've expressed how Indigenous people might be influenced by the structuralist patterns of thought to reflect anti-Indigenous or modernist knowledge-frameworks. I've critiqued how bureaucratic institutions generate the ideology of these historical master-narratives and considered how those ideologies have promoted a progress-narrative that continues to assimilate land-based Indigenous peoples and will ultimately assimilate them into the settler colonial system's mainstream labor force and market-economy.

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