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**THE EVOLUTION OF A RACISM:
FIRST PEOPLES AND THE
EUROPEAN INVASION OF CANADA**

by

DORIS RAJAN-EASTCOTT

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Social Work

School of Social Work

**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario**

June 6, 1990

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ISBN 0-315-60503-0

The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
and Research acceptance of the thesis

"THE EVOLUTION OF A RACISM:
FIRST PEOPLES AND THE EUROPEAN INVASION OF CANADA"

submitted by Doris Rajan-Eastcott, B.A.

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Social Work

Thesis Supervisor

Director, School of Social Work

Carleton University

June 6, 1990

Abstract

The indigenous peoples of Canada have been historically subjected to a profound racism. An understanding of the development of this particular experience of racism can be attained by focusing on the political economy related to the socially constructed concept of race as it has evolved historically. The European conquerors' utilization of indigenous labour in the primary production of the fur trade, led to the development of a racist theory which would serve to legitimize this exploitation. This ideology purports that based on biological determination, the white European is superior to the indigenous peoples in culture and intelligence. When the ownership of indigenous lands grew in importance over the need for indigenous labour, racism became intensified to justify this more blatant exploitation. Aboriginal policy which served to provide ideological credence to the functioning of racism, expressed the objectives of control, appeasement and assimilation. Racism against the First Nations is still a very salient feature today as evident in their poor health and economic conditions, inadequate social and education services, and the state's refusal to entrench self-government in the Canadian Constitution.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee; Peter Findlay for his ability to make me feel at ease, Kerry Abel for her keen eye for historical (and typographical) detail, Jim Albert for his relentless critical approach that surprisingly has led to a new friendship that I hope to maintain. I have learned a great deal from the teachings of Professor Frances Abele. Her keen intellect and somewhat demanding approach has forced me to develop a more astute means for conceptualizing subjects of interest. For your time, understanding, insight and sincerity, I thank you.

I know it is almost obligatory to thank your loved ones, but this note to Brian, Cara and Baby (?) comes from my heart. Thank you Brian for protecting our unborn from that electro-magnetic field! Without your word processing, this paper would "literally" not exist. You are my strongest support. Cara, mommy's finally finished her "tesis" - let's play now okay? And Baby? Sorry for the fatigue, the sore back and the constant stream of anxiety hormones that I sent down to you via the placenta, I love you already as much as I love all of you.

Finally, to the people of the First Nations - being a brown-skinned person in this society has been and continues to be very painful. Although I haven't lived your experiences, I am no stranger to racism. I've hurt for you and want us all who suffer to find the answers together. For letting me read your writings, I thank you. I am stronger because of you.

Table of Contents

	Page
Acceptance Sheet.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
 CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	 2
 CHAPTER II: THE BIOLOGICAL PREMISE OF "RACE".....	 8
1) The Origins of the Term "Race".....	9
2) The History of the Biological Study of Races.....	10
3) The Biological Factors that Result in Physical Differences Between Humans.....	14
 CHAPTER III: THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF "RACE".....	 19
1) Why the Connection was made Between the Biological and Social Concepts of Race.....	20
2) The European Doctrine of Racism.....	27
 CHAPTER IV: A HISTORY OF THE ORIGINAL PEOPLES OF CANADA - A FOCUS ON LEGISLATION.....	 36

CHAPTER V: CURRENT MANIFESTATIONS OF RACISM.....	77
1) The Justice System.....	78
2) Education.....	81
3) Child Welfare.....	83
4) Health.....	85
5) Individual Incidents of Racism.....	86
 CHAPTER VI: ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND RACISM.....	 89
1) First Nations on Self-Government.....	91
2) The Canadian State on Self-Government.....	96
3) The Conflict Between the First Nations' and the State's Definitions of Self-Government.....	101
4) Why These Conflicts Exist.....	104
 CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSIONS.....	 109
 Appendix A: Probable Position of Ice Cover and Distribution of Human Population About 10,000 Years Ago.....	 116
Appendix B: Aboriginal Cultural Regions.....	118
Bibliography.....	120

There is no question that Canada has aimed "at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of" First Nations. Every single aspect and part of our lives has been undermined and nearly destroyed by the colonialists; the destruction is continuing today and is about to be "constitutionalized". Our traditional food source is depleted, our original land bases are gone, our spiritual ways have been 'apprehended' from us by Canada's social workers.

(Eric Robinson and Henry Bird Quinney, 1985: 35)

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

After years of adaptation and change, the historical racism which initially faced the first peoples of Canada, still powerfully persists. The position the indigenous peoples of Canada occupy within the social, political, and economic strata of Canadian society is quite evidently amongst the lowest. As a collectivity they experience the poorest housing and health conditions, substandard educational services, low educational attainment, wage disparity with mainstream citizens, a pronounced dependency on welfare assistance, and an over-representation in both male and female penal institutions.

Since this paper is written by a non-aboriginal person, it is imperative that an explanation be given of why particular terms have been chosen to be used in this paper when referring to the indigenous peoples. As is the case globally, each individual nation possesses a name which has been passed down to its people from generation to generation. It follows that the indigenous peoples of Canada identify themselves by the names of their ancestors, whether they be Anishinabe, Nakota, Mohawk, Métis, Inuit or Dené. For purposes of this paper the terms First Nations, first peoples, original peoples, indigenous, and aboriginal will be used because these terms for the collectivity of indigenous people are generally most preferred by the aboriginal peoples themselves.

When the indigenous peoples of Canada are considered as one group, they generally experience the above poor conditions more so than any other group in Canada. The aboriginal peoples are distinguished as a

group on the basis of their native status and their physical appearance. Since one of this group's distinctive features is physical appearance, and since they as a collectivity experience conditions of poverty, the existence of racism can be speculated.

What is racism generally? Under what specific circumstances and why does it operate against the indigenous peoples?

This thesis is an attempt to develop one kind of answer to these questions. First I aim to develop a clear understanding of the concepts of race and racism. Secondly I will describe and analyze Canadian indigenous peoples' particular experience of racism, within the context of an analysis which focuses on the political and economic origins of the concept of race.

In response to some aboriginal writers who suggest that non-aboriginal peoples should learn about the Canadian indigenous experience by reading, listening and interpreting these experiences within a mainstream framework of understanding, I will give priority to the indigenous peoples' own descriptions of their own experiences over non-aboriginal work, for the purposes of lending empirical support to this paper's analysis.

The big problem for the concerned non-Indian is simply that he doesn't know what he is doing. He lacks any clear understanding of the Indian and because of this he can't develop any clear perspective of the issues facing our people. His efforts confuse the issues rather

than contribute to happy resolutions
(Cardinal, 1969: 90).

This paper aims to contribute to the development of that clear perspective.

The concept of race is recognized as having emerged sometime around the late eighteenth century. However for the purposes of this paper "race" will be used in the historical period before this time to simply refer to the distinctions among humankind that are based on physical appearance. Thus the term race will be used in reference to the physical distinctions made between groups of people in historical periods before it actually developed in contemporaneous usage.

Racism is defined as an ideology that purports that one group of people is superior to others, with distinctions among groups based on physical appearance. Physical appearance served initially as a symbol for an assumed aesthetic and then later, a cultural and/or intellectual inferiority of subordinated groups.

The argument in this thesis is that in the context of the indigenous Canadian experience "race" can be understood as a social construct which aided in the economic development of Canada on behalf of the intruding European powers. By labelling the subordinated aboriginal peoples as a group that were inferior to the European peoples, exploitation which ensured European profits, was legitimized and capital accumulation was thus facilitated.

Since the focus of the paper is on the Canadian indigenous peoples' experience of racism, it is then logical to include a general overview of the political economies of pre-contact European and indigenous societies. Since we are concerned with the interaction of the peoples in these two continents, it is imperative to gain a general understanding of the reasons for European expansionism in order to isolate some of its effects during the periods of contact. Equally important is a general understanding of how the indigenous societies' political, economic, and social structures have been altered over periods of contact.

The historical analysis of the periods of contact will focus on how the paper's definition of race contributed to the development of European capitalism. The objective of this section will be to understand the development of the ideology of racism and to be able to identify some concrete expressions and effects of it. This can be facilitated by examining the nature of indigenous policy as created by the European then later Canadian states. By examining some of the legislation that has been developed in relation to the indigenous peoples we will be given a point of study for analyzing 1) racist ideology (as fostered and/or expressed by policy) and 2) how racism operates (as the implementation of aboriginal policy will illustrate). Then I briefly examine some of the areas where racism against indigenous peoples is currently manifested. By this point in the paper, it is hoped that it will be evident that racism served to expropriate the political rights of the first peoples. Therefore, the paper's more extensive examination of the contemporary issue of

aboriginal self-government is viewed as topic of prime importance when discussing racism and the first peoples of Canada.

It must be stressed from the outset, that this paper is written by a non-aboriginal person, in mainstream terms, to an intended mainstream audience. In adherence to one of this paper's objectives, the story will be told as much as possible by the people who live this racism. This is a learning experience for the author and other non-aboriginal Canadians, and does not in any way attempt to inform the indigenous peoples of a reality that only they truly understand.

CHAPTER II:
THE BIOLOGICAL PREMISE OF "RACE"

If it is true that the brain of the Huron Indian contains in an undeveloped form an intellect as great as that of an Englishman or a Frenchman, why has he not in the course of the ages invented printing or steam power?

Count Gobineau 1800's (Boyd, 1950: 8)

This chapter aims to delineate firstly how the course of scientific inquiry developed in relation to the study of humankind or races, and secondly to describe the biological factors that have resulted in physical differences between humans. The objective here is to illustrate the influence of the external socio-political environment on the development of this particular science which we will understand to have been particularly influential when presented with the current biological knowledge of genetics. This chapter speaks very generally about two large and diverse groups, the First Nations and the Europeans. It is acknowledged that there would have been considerable variation within each group in terms of how a particular individual accepted or shared the views to be attributed to their collectivity.

1) THE ORIGINS OF THE TERM "RACE"

The English term "race" has European relatives in the French word *race*, the Italian word *razza* and the Spanish word *raza* (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 3). This term first appeared in the English language around the year 1500. It was used to refer to either a set of persons (such as a family, for example) or a group of plants or animals (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 3). As European explorers reached out to lands unknown to them, the term slowly began to be used in reference to the physically different populations of humans being encountered. By the mid-eighteenth century, a race referred to both the physical characteristics and cultural traits of a thus

distinguished group of humankind (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 3). In at least this sense, the development of racial doctrines was related to European imperialism. Racism is an ideology that builds on physical and cultural difference to justify exploitation and expropriation. What becomes a relevant difference in appearance is socially constructed and in that sense arbitrary.

2) THE HISTORY OF THE BIOLOGICAL STUDY OF RACES

As the term race took on new significance in the mid-eighteenth century corresponding to European capitalist expansion, an interest in the classification of humankind was beginning to arise in the natural sciences.

Prior to this, European science was in the process of developing systems of classification for animals and plants. In 1758, the Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus published Systema Naturae, a work which attempted to classify all of living nature (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 4). Each grouping of creatures was referred to as a species. This system of classification was popularly adopted by generations of scientists to follow. Linnaeus began the classification of humankind into four main races. Up to this point the term only referred to a sub-species. This classification, based on skin colour, consisted of "Europeans, Asiatics, Africans, and American Indians" (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 6). In his classification of humans, he included what he noted as behavioural characteristics

of each race to contribute to, what he believed to be a complete, thorough and scientific description of the human races of the world.

In an attempt to correct Linnaeus' subjective approach, in 1781 the German physiologist Johann Friedrich chose the seemingly more scientific criterion of skull shape (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 6). It was Friedrich who coined the terms Caucasian, for Europeans, Negro for Africans, Mongol and Malayan for various groups of Asians and American Indian for the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

With every new group of indigenous people to be encountered this frenzy for classification flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Corresponding to this new ordering of humankind was the usage of more detailed subjective criteria for categorization, such as hair type, nose shape, eye colour and even ear type. These new European scientists were referred to as physical anthropologists. Physical anthropology has been defined as "the study of the origin, development, and distribution of man's physical characteristics" (Boyd, 1950: 1). Two French scientists Paul Broca and Joseph Deniker contributed greatly to this trend of study. Deniker delineated ten races of humans in Europe alone (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 7). Thus as capitalist expansion brought the Europeans in contact with many of the world's peoples, the more rigorous classification of humankind corresponded with a need for some Europeans to attain ideological support for their ventures. Despite these unsavoury beginnings, Physical Anthropology is now recognized as a respectable science.

The science of genetics initiated by Gregor Mendel's work of 1866, revolutionized the study of humankind. Mendel's plant research introduced the laws of segregation and independent assortment of inherited traits (Loehlin, Lindzey, and Spuhler, 1975: 4). During the turn of the century the term "gene" was used to refer to the basic unit of the human makeup that produced the regularities in inheritance as discovered by Mendel (Loehlin, Lindzey, and Spuhler, 1975: 4).

Also very influential to the "scientific" classification of humankind was Francis Galton's work Hereditary Genius published in 1869. Galton's study aimed to illustrate "the biological worth of different races according to the number of their geniuses" (Loehlin, Lindzey, and Spuhler, 1975: 19). Galton's study explained that those people who have excelled in their achievements also have biological relatives who were also judged to be outstanding achievers. Based on the ranking of geniuses by racial group, Galton concluded that:

the Negro race ranked two grades below the
Anglo-Saxon, on a total scale of sixteen ranks
(Loehlin, Lindzey, and Spuhler, 1975: 19)

Thus he felt successful in his proof that superiority was inherited.

In The Origin of Species published in 1859, Darwin developed the theory of evolution and particularly his view of the importance of natural selection (Loehlin, Lindzey, and Spuhler, 1975: 3). His work was important because of its focus on the orderly development of

new features of living beings resultant from past forms of life. This concept was quickly adopted by social scientists (like Darwin's cousin Galton) with the purposes of linking behavioural traits to the evolution of humankind.

Over the next half century an interest in not only differences in intelligence between races developed, but also differences in the individual's mental abilities. This led to an increased focus on intelligence testing which gave rise to scientists who set out to illustrate that by means of intelligence tests, one race could be shown to be mentally superior to others. By Hitler's time in Germany the study of racial superiority in intelligence peaked. The important aspect of this type of study was, as William C. Boyd explains:

...all of these doctrinaires held the belief that there are inherited differences in ability or moral fiber or something of the sort between the different races. They believed that these differences are not merely cultural differences, but are based on real, fundamental and hereditary factors (Boyd, 1950: 4)

The global revulsion to the Jewish holocaust resulted in a quiet period for the scientific study of races, that lasted from the end of the Second World War until the late 1960's (Richardson and Spears, 1972: 10). With the growing racial tensions between blacks and whites in the United States, we see in the early 1970's a revitalization of the race and intelligence issue. Most memorably the works of Jenson, Eysenek, Burt and Shuey all set out to illustrate

that based on IQ tests (which they believed to be valid measurements of intelligence), blacks were innately inferior to whites in the United States.

Thus when we examine how the notion of biological determinism by race developed in the context of European scientific inquiry, it is quite easy to relate each wave of study with the external political environment. The racist doctrine that was developing in support of new global economic arrangements, ideologically propelled the course of some scientific study.

3) THE BIOLOGICAL FACTORS THAT RESULT IN PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HUMANS

The relationship between the science of race and the corresponding political climate weakens the credibility of an objective biological nature to the concept of race. What is the biological basis to the concept of race? More specifically, what has resulted in the physical differences that are evident between humans? This knowledge will help us separate the biological and socio-political premises of the concept of race which will then aid in the task of clarifying how the idea of biological determinism contributes to the social construction of race.

What has given rise to noticeable differences between people is based in the laws of genetics and the ability of human beings to adapt to their environment.

Genes are the basic units of heredity, located on the chromosomes in the nucleus of every cell (Richardson and Spears, 1972: 115). These particles are the basis of the diversity which exists between humans. The human being contains 25 pairs of chromosomes within each cell's nucleus. Each individual possesses a unique set of genes. This set of genes, received at conception, is referred to as a genotype (Richardson and Spears, 1972: 115). Although we can conclude from observation that a person's hair colour is brown (their phenotype) we are unsure of the number of gene pairs responsible for determining this hair colour (their genotype) (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 35). The phenotype then, is the externally observable aspect of an organism whereas the genotype is the underlying biological makeup of an organism (Loehlin, Lindzey, and Spuhler, 1975: 4). Even if a group of people possess outwardly similar hair and skin colour, they will be genetically heterogeneous. This is because individual genes are inherited not total genotypes or phenotypes (Loehlin, Lindzey, and Spuhler, 1975: 21). The fact that African people and their descendants for example, possess a black kinky hair type and brown skin, relates back to their original environmental habitat. Through the process of natural selection, environmental forces act as selective agents through the means of genetic adaptation, to bring about the differences we see between peoples (Gain, 1971: 68). Therefore;

When we view a race, long-established in a particular climatic zone, habituated to a specific foods and level of caloric intake, and subjected to local diseases, our first

inclination is to explore the immediate environment for selective factors responsible for local differentiation (Gain, 1971: 68).

For example, populations originating in tropical climates, have acquired a darker skin pigmentation due to the increase of melanin needed to protect against sunburn (Gain, 1971: 70).

The people of extremely cold environments such as the Inuit of the Arctic have developed a body type which can be described as follows:

Thick-set reduced of leg and peripheries, there is a minimum of outstanding projections. By limiting surface relative to mass, less heat is lost by radiation, conduction and convection and (probably) by insensible perspiration. By pulling in projections closer to the warm body core, differential cooling is avoided with consequent danger of freezing (Gain, 1971: 74).

Therefore populations of people share common genetic traits because they have interbred within a common geographical location. The assortment of genotypes that exist within this breeding population group, are referred to as the group's gene pool (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 34). Since human populations have been extremely mobile, the interchange of genetic material has caused gene pools to undergo continual changes. Thus:

Ultimately, the descendants scarcely resemble their ancestors, phenotypically and geno-typically as well. Though the many

racess of mankind derive from a common source, they have come to differ widely, both among themselves, and from their first sapiens progenitor (Gain, 1971: 68).

Therefore the notion that humankind can be segregated into different races or subspecies based on their affinity to their original "pure" race, is by the laws of genetic inheritance, impossible to illustrate. As Boyd explains:

The independent assortment of chromosomes in inheritance and the possibility that genes can cross over between pairs of chromosomes are alone sufficient to show the futility of trying to recognize remote ancestral types in a modern population (Boyd, 1950: 192).

A characteristic trait such as skin colour, that has been used to classify a race is determined by just a few genes of an individual. The entire make up of an individual however is determined by "the action and interaction of the whole twenty or forty thousand or more genes" which the person possesses (Boyd, 1950: 193). When we look at the genetic differences that exist between two different individuals within the same, so called race, they will differ in respect to, at the very least, a thousand or more genes (Boyd, 1950: 201). Whereas there are probably less than seven pairs of genes that differentiate the black race from the white. Thus there are vastly more genetic differences among individuals of the same race, then there are genetic differences among groups of individuals or races.

Summary

Scientists who have set out to prove the innate superiority of one race over another have no biological foundation upon which to base their claims. The term innate implies that certain races have inherited genotypes that result in superior achievements over other races. We have seen that individual genes are inherited not genotypes. Thus, based on genetic variability there is no scientific basis to classifying humans into distinct races.

The discussion of the biological premise of race clarifies that race is primarily a social concept which evolved in conjunction with European imperialism. The social concept of race seeks scientific backing that is discretionary and thus invalid:

whatever races we choose to distinguish will be almost entirely arbitrary, and their distribution will depend on the particular characteristics on which we choose to base them... The observed difference may be the chief or even the only difference (Boyd, 1950: 207).

Therefore the ideology of racial superiority based on biological determinism, racism, is a scientific falsity whose purpose is to support the socio-political intentions of its creators.

CHAPTER III:

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF "RACE"

The Mystery of the White Man:

In his social doctrines he stresses his belief in equality and elaborates on the need for and the value of diversity. But confront him with a diversity in colour of skin, confront him with some different values and see how long he stays a champion of diversity. He believes in equality, but apparently believes the white man is more equal than the Indian.

(Harold Cardinal, 1969: 75)

1) WHY THE CONNECTION WAS MADE BETWEEN THE BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL CONCEPTS OF RACE

Knowing now that there is little biological basis to the concept of race, we can inquire more specifically into how and why the social and biological concepts of race became intertwined.

The biological status now accorded to the concept of race relates back to the visibly physical differences between the Europeans and non-Europeans. Physical differences initially served to just separate Europeans from non-Europeans. Later these physical differences would increase in significance as they would relate to the European-non-European economic interaction.

During periods of initial contact between the Europeans and the First Nations, physical difference was an issue for both sides. The significance of this difference initially depended on each group's cultural framework. By cultural framework it is meant the way their group perceives the world and their position in it. One major difference between the indigenous peoples of Canada's value system and the European's, was their sense of being in concert with the balance of nature. The Europeans believed themselves to be the masters of nature. The indigenous peoples' sense of human importance was that humankind was not greater than any other of the earth's creatures. They perceived of their humanhood with, what we would now name great humbleness. Therefore when indigenous societies were exposed to peoples who were very physically different than themselves in appearance, they interpreted this

difference as signifying something greater than who they were, as opposed to something less. So in 1670 when a Jesuit priest, Father Claude Allouez, entered an Algonkin village never before visited by a white man, these Algonkin people had the following reaction:

Startled by his pale complexion and long black robe, the Indians, who took him for some sort of a divinity, invited him to the council lodge. One of the elders approached him with a double handful of tobacco. (Petrone, 1983: 15).

This aboriginal group's reaction to the white priest's arrival demonstrates the humility that they possessed in relation to the world around them.

The significance the European's attached to the indigenous peoples' physical difference in appearance, illustrates how the Europeans perceived of themselves as being above those encountered. Early Europeans on the subject of the indigenous peoples' skin colour;

widely maintained that they were born white and became sun-tanned or dyed themselves brown. Although their way of life was judged to be primitive or debased, it was hoped that they could quickly be taught to live as Christians and Europeans, and would be grateful for such instruction (Trigger, 1985: 15).

In this perception, the European's skin colour was what humankind's skin colour was meant to be like. Therefore, it is only by means of the sun that the indigenous peoples' skin could be brown. Thus, initially the Europeans saw themselves as better than the indigenous peoples based on their physical appearance. However, there was not an extremely negative association with the indigenous peoples' physical difference in skin colour, as Trigger continued:

They were often described as physically attractive and their skin colour was not perceived to be notably different from that of Whites (Trigger, 1985: 15).

Gradually we can note a change in these initial reactions to the physical differences that exist between these populations of human beings. Beginning in the nineteenth century, the Europeans began to view the indigenous peoples as "inherently savage" and "it was argued that they could no more be civilized than an animal's nature could be changed" (Trigger, 1985: 15). Thus, the indigenous peoples' differences came to be explained by assumed differences in biological composition.

During the same period we also see a new significance denoted to the Europeans' physical difference of skin colour, by some members of the First Nations:

White man, I have noticed your behaviour,
it has been correct; but
White man, your colour is deceitful
(Petrone, 1983: 27).

What caused the factor of different physical appearance to take on new meaning? We have seen that the concept of race has no true biological foundation, but rather a social origin. Social relations however are aspects of prevailing economic relations. Biological status therefore is ascribed to the notable physical differences between groups to allow for the efficient functioning of the relations of production. As Singh Bolaria and Li explain:

Skin colour, hitherto an irrational attribute, now provides the basis for assigning a group of socially defined undesirables to undesirable jobs. There is a new rationality in skin colour because a definite economic value is associated with it (Singh Bolaria and Li, 1988: 29).

The racism that has been imposed on the indigenous peoples of Canada has its origins in this logic. The First Nations were initially incorporated into the European commercial system, as the primary producers in the fur trade (Valentine, 1980: 72). A racist ideology developed which would serve to legitimize this necessary exploitation of the indigenous peoples. In addition as will be developed in Chapter IV, racism rationalized European expropriation of indigenous lands.

If we look at the impetus behind each new wave of the historical "scientific" study of races, we can relate its occurrence quite readily to a particular phase in the development of European capitalism.

Any piece of research is a product of the researcher's own perspective, which in turn is greatly conditioned by their environment. Francis Galton's writing in the second half of the nineteenth century took place during a period where British colonialism had firmly established the functioning of capitalism in the Americas. The United States was self sufficient from the motherland and a British state was being organized in Canada. The social institution of slavery was imperative to the development of the U.S. economy. Thus an ideology which would ensure the continuance of these relations of production was essential. Galton's aim to illustrate the biological worth of the human races, has its basis in such an ideology. This point is demonstrated when Galton said:

It is in the most unqualified manner that I object to pretensions of natural equality... The mistakes that the Negroes made in their own matters were so childish, stupid, and simpleton-like, as frequently to make me ashamed of my own species (quoted in Richardson and Spears, 1972: 12).

Social Darwinism, borrowing from the natural sciences, set out to explain the evolution of humankind by setting out stages in the development of the ideal advanced civilization in order to rank human populations (as delineated by race) in terms of their achievements. As Dara Culhane Speck elaborates:

People who celebrated private ownership of delineated plots of land were considered to

be thinking more abstractly, and were therefore presumed to be more intelligent, than those who supported group ownership (Culhane Speck, 1987: 74).

This Eurocentric view on what constitutes an advanced society, served to explain the inequality that existed between races as natural occurrences. Thus by providing an ideology such as Social Darwinism, exploitation is legitimized and ensured continuance. This is not to imply that physical anthropologists, psychologists or any other types of scientists that have concerned themselves with proving that humankind can be classified into races, have done so in conscious instrumental attempts to further capitalist interests. As Leon explains:

Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, indeed, but with a false consciousness. The real motives impelling him remain unknown to him, otherwise it would not be an ideological process at all. Hence he imagines false or apparent motives (Leon, 1970: 235).

Ideology is adopted by its advocates if some gain can be attained from such an adoption.

Physical differences such as skin colour were first seized upon by European "thinkers" for the purposes of segregating and defining humankind. Since economic relationships were being divided on racial grounds, so too would scientific thinking.

The effect of the new global relations did not only manifest itself in the natural sciences. The course historical study took during this same period, illustrates this point. Martin Bernal's extensive study entitled Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization, documents how the conventional view of Greek culture circa 1500 BC originating from colonization by Egyptians and Phoenicians, was replaced by a new historical theory which denied the Egyptian and Phoenician conquests (Bernal, 1987). Bernal interprets this rethinking of Europe's past to racism:

For 18th and 19th century Romantics and racists it was simply intolerable for Greece, which was seen not merely as the epitome of Europe but also as its pure childhood, to have been the result of the mixture of native Europeans and colonizing Africans and Semites. Therefore the Ancient Model had to be overthrown and replaced by something more acceptable (Bernal, 1987: 2).

Therefore in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, the assumed biological differences between races was penetrating all fields of study.

The biological concept of race contributes to the socially derived concept of race and the socio-political ideology of racism. As we have seen, the beginning roots of the ideology of racism can be traced back to the overtly different physical traits that existed between the Europeans and the indigenous peoples. These physical differences in appearance would soon take on new significance for

the European intruders, when in the interest of capitalist development, exploitation and expropriation needed to be legitimized.

Thus, we see the birth of an ideology of racism which received support from some scientific research of Europe's past. The scientific credibility accorded to the concept of race resulted in the formation of the following way of thinking:

Hence nature itself decreed that Indians must give way to a superior order of human beings. Europeans thus believed that they were biologically justified in their efforts to subjugate and replace native people (Trigger, 1985: 15).

2) THE EUROPEAN DOCTRINE OF RACISM

Having now clarified the distinctions between the biological and social concepts of race, it would be useful to delve more specifically into the factors that have led to the development of European racism. Since European capitalist expansion brought the Europeans in contact with the indigenous peoples of Canada, it will be useful to examine the impetus behind European exploration. The ideology of racism may have partially evolved out of the philosophy governing European expansionism. This is stated because racism supports capitalism and capitalism motivated European expansion. Having accomplished this we can then build on the conceptual framework introduced in the last section of this chapter, to arrive

at a more precise definition of the nature of European racism. Some analytical points in reference to the relationship between class and race will also be clarified.

Although the Vikings of Europe in the tenth century are believed to have ventured into North America, they did not establish permanent settlements. The reasons behind the contrast between these early European explorers and those of the fifteenth century, is based on the emergence of commercial capitalism. A particular set of ideas about "race" emerged with capitalism and imperialism.

In the fifteenth century mercantile interests were now being more consistently supported by European states. The results were the formations of overarching states with a high degree of concentration of command (Wolf, 1982: 109). The most powerful states in terms of initiating and realizing overseas expansion were Portugal, Castile-Aragon, the United Provinces, France and England. Their relationships have been described as highly competitive:

Each sought to oust the others from access to resources at home and abroad, and to reduce the ability of its competitors to continue in the game of expansion (Wolf, 1982: 110).

The factors which led to the expansion of England differed significantly from other European competitors. Only England used its wealth "as capital to acquire and transform means of production and set them in motion through the purchase of labour power offered for

sale by a class of labourers" (Wolf, 1982: 120). The English economy also possessed two characteristics which distinguished it from the rest of Europe and also contributed to their success at expansion. First, the English peasantry was placed in an extremely vulnerable position because of the gradual dissolution of peasant land tenure to be replaced by money rents (Wolf, 1982: 121). Secondly, the manufacturing of woolen cloth dictated the movement into rural lands, where cheap labour and resources could be exploited. The significance of this was that the expansion of the cloth manufacturing industry "intensified the use of land as a marketable commodity and as an instrument in commodity production" (Wolf, 1982: 122). The weakening of the English peasantry and the expansion of the wool industry both served to redefine land as a commodity, resulting in the maximization of profits, and thus, encouraging the quest for more land.

The relationship between racism and European expansion after the 15th century, relates to the ideology that governed imperialism. The new capitalist civilization that arose in Europe developed a method of operating that would be very different from the organization of imperial Rome. Thus many institutions developed in order to conduct the political, social and economic actions of society, as opposed to leaving this solely in the hands of one ruling imperial power. For the new order to function, an ideology developed congruent with the operation of the economy. This ideology was generated from the leaders and the church. For example, to enlist the cooperation of the peasantry, Christianity professed that "manual labour was an

integral part of the spiritual life...'to work is to pray' - laborare est orare" (Stavrianos, 1981: 47).

In addition, sentiments of national pride flourished due to the establishment of a more open, extended and competitive European market. With the illusion that "gains for your country meant gains for yourself", explorers took great pride in their country and their rulers. At the time the Europeans invaded the Americas, the English particularly had reason to feel successful. As Wolf explains England's success was a new phenomenon:

England began as a marginal and colonial country, lying off a continent populated by more powerful neighbours, wealthier and equipped with more elaborate institutions than its own (Wolf, 1982: 123).

Yet because of its unified administration, weakened peasantry, the success of the cloth trade and its inexpensive mode of governance, England quickly became the wealthiest capitalist society in Europe (Wolf, 1982: 123).

From the content of this chapter so far we will now be able to isolate the main features of European racism. We have seen how the physical differences that existed between the Europeans and the indigenous peoples were from first contact assigned some social significance. The degree and nature of social significance accorded to, for example skin colour, relates to the expected merits such an

ascription would render. Since skin colour is such a noticeable difference, it is readily seized and used as a distinguishing label between groups of people. In the European's case, the labelling of humankind grew in importance (as illustrated by the increase of research conducted on the topic of racial differences during the mid-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) when a need arose to justify the social relations defined by the mode of production they imposed.

Since the European explorers came from a class based society they were socialized with the notion of inequality. This inequality was legitimized by the prevailing ideologies of the preordained fate of the peasants. Thus, some people were seen as "naturally" inferior to others. Therefore, the first characteristic of European racism was the biological supremacy of the white race.

This biological superiority manifested itself in the supremacy of their civilization. This meant that they saw their political organization, their mode of production, their culture and their religious practices were all far superior to others. European religious beliefs take us to the second feature of this particular racism. The adaption of Christianity to capitalism resulted in a paternalistic quality to their racism. As Bruce Trigger explains, at early contact the Europeans did not as of yet regard the indigenous people with great distaste. However, their way of living was deemed inferior and could benefit greatly from Christian teachings.

Thus the nature of early European racism can be defined as; a theory which contends that the white race is biologically superior to all non-white races. In addition because of the European's "higher" morality (which is a result of their Christian ethics) non-white societies could benefit from these greater civilizations.

In the process of examining how this racism operates, it will be imperative that racism is not seen as originating solely as a result of legitimizing class divisions. That is, a class based on race is not a perfect analytical substitute for the white proletariat. Although an understanding of race in terms of its relationship to the contradiction between capital and labour is important, we must note that this relationship possesses different dynamics than that of the white working class. As Paul Gilroy elaborates:

Class analysis must be opened up so that it can be supplemented by additional categories which reflect different histories of subordination as well as the "historical and moral" elements Marx identified as determining different values for different types of labour power (Gilroy, 1987: 19)

With the indigenous peoples, the system of capitalism did enhance and develop the racism which was directed against them. European capitalist development however resulted in not only the exploitation of indigenous labour but also the expropriation of indigenous lands. In addition, the conditions under which capitalism aimed to take root in Canada were exceedingly different from that of Europe. Initially this land would be profitable for France and England

because of its production of the raw material fur. The process to collect fur demanded the mastering of a vast wilderness under climatic conditions unfamiliar to the Europeans. Learning the techniques for trapping and being able to sustain entry into these lands, meant having to enlist the cooperation and participation of the First Nations who inhabited these areas. Thus the accumulation of capital could only be accomplished by the Europeans through the attainment of cultural, spiritual and coercive control over the indigenous peoples. Yet it must also be recognized that the European players were not instrumentalist puppets who consciously carried out their devious ploys. Conflict occurs because each side believes in its motives and behaviour. As Jennings explains, in light of potential material gains with grave moral contradictions;

Persons and groups reaching for illicit power customarily assume attitudes of great moral rectitude to divert attention from the abandonment of their own moral standards of behaviour. Deception of the multitude becomes necessary to sustain power, and deception of others rapidly progresses to deception of self (Jennings, 1975: ix).

The indigenous peoples also had to contend with their experiences of exploitation in cultural terms which were different than their own.

Therefore, race and class are not different, unrelated categories nor exact substitutes for one another. Race can be viewed as "the modality in which class is lived, the medium in which it is appropriated and fought through" (Gilroy, 1987: 30). Since class is an

economic phenomenon, perhaps it can be suggested that certain objective conditions initiate class formation. However, class formation needs to be viewed as a process led by the on-going social conflicts and struggles which result from the exploitation of one group by another. In the European-First Nations' case, because of the dynamics of race and indigenous status, class formation develops in a unique and dramatically different way than white class formation in Europe did.

In the historical analysis of race and racism, it is important that we recognize that we are examining the subjective interaction of peoples. This can be accomplished most accurately by examining both groups' intentions and effects. The intent of the historical description and analysis to follow, is that we recognize the role of race in class formation. The merit of this focus is that we begin to recognize the importance of the racial dynamic in the formation of Canadian history. Abele and Stasiulis argue that:

...race and ethnicity along with gender, are constituent features of class formation and potential resistance and ... these axes of oppression provide the modalities, conflicts, and contradictions through which class is lived in Canada (Abele and Stasiulis, 1989: 268).

Therefore, although racism as an ideology is fundamentally the belief of one's own group's superiority over others, the nature of each experience of racism depends on the particular conditions and circumstances that have resulted in its creation:

Rather than talking about racism in the singular, analysis should therefore be talking about racisms in the plural. These are not just different over time, but may vary within the same social formation or historical conjuncture (Gilroy, 1987: 38).

In the case of the indigenous peoples of Canada, the ideology of racism developed to legitimize the exploitation of indigenous labour and the expropriation of indigenous lands. Having acquired this framework for conceptualizing the relationship between race and class, let us now enter into a journey of this particular racism's development.

CHAPTER IV:
A HISTORY OF THE ORIGINAL PEOPLES OF CANADA:
A FOCUS ON LEGISLATION

Father

Our ancestors one day on looking towards the rising sun, saw people of a different colour to themselves and not long after they stretched out their hands to us. We were delighted at the appearance of these strangers... they told us we should never be in want or miserable with them...

Father

My heart now fails me. I can hardly speak - we are now slaves and treated worse than dogs - those bad spirits take possession of our lands without consulting us. They even tie us up and torture us almost to death.

Ocaita, an Odawa Chief, July 7th, 1818
(Petrone, 1983: 43,45).

This chapter begins by generally describing pre-contact indigenous societies so that we can later discuss how racism affected their social, political and economic systems during periods of contact. An initial discussion of the origins of First Nations in what is now Canada, will be offered to help us acquire a sense of their longevity in this land. The section of this chapter which examines the periods of contact aims to analyze the development of the ideology of racism by identifying some concrete experiences and effects of it. The main argument of this chapter is that the indigenous peoples pre-contact societies were greatly altered with the incorporation of their labour in the capitalist production of furs and later with European Crowns' quest to attain their lands. A theory of racism developed to justify and legitimize this exploitation.

The history of the indigenous peoples of Canada did not begin with Columbus' so commonly termed "discovery of the Americas". What Columbus did discover was a land full of many nations who already had long established histories.

There are two versions on the origins of indigenous societies. The first is the Bering Strait hypothesis initiated by some European scientists, and the second is the belief of indigenous peoples that they have been in the region of Canada for time unknown.

The Bering Strait theory contends that the first peoples to inhabit North America came originally from Asia some 35-27,000 years ago (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 19). The basis for determining these dates

rests largely in archeological evidence such as artifacts, hunting camps, occupation sites, and hearths (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 65). Some skeletal remains have also been recovered to help date humans presence in the Americas. The oldest remains to be discovered date back 100,000 years (Hughes and Kallen, 1974: 65).

The Bering Strait theory suggests that a narrow stretch of land connected the easternmost section of Siberia and the western tip of Alaska and the Klondike valley. It was over this neck of land that "primitive Stone Age hunting peoples" entered this continent pursuing reindeer, bison, mammoth and mastodon (Ryerson, 1972: 10) (see Appendix A for a diagrammatic illustration of this theory).

Inuit are believed to have entered Canada later than the ancestors of other First Nations. They are said to have crossed over the Bering Strait when the arctic coasts became free of ice some 4,000 years ago (Crowe, 1974: 3). These people are believed to have been descendants of the ancient Bering Sea people, the "hunters of sea-mammals" (Ryerson, 1974: 21).

Many indigenous peoples dispute the Bering Strait hypothesis by asserting that their ancestors have their own means for recounting their own histories through oral tradition. Archaeology can never disprove the First Nations' versions of their origins in Canada because their speculations on the dates of the first peoples' arrivals are solely based on the evidence they can recover. This is not

definitive proof, since it is always possible that older artifacts will be discovered.

One factor which may lead one to discount the Bering Strait hypothesis is that of the dissimilarities of languages between the Asians and First Nations:

...there has been found so far no convincing trace of kinship between any Asian tongue and the hundred and twenty or so languages of the native peoples of the Americas (Ryerson, 1972: 11-12).

When one examines the creation myths of many First Nations, it is clear by their references to certain animals and geographic locations that they believed themselves to have originated in this country. The Chippewa nation recounted their legend of the creator Nanabozho to European travelers as early as 1721. Nanabozho was said to have been born at the outlet of Lake Superior. He created the first Chippewas and did many things for the people he created.

Nanabozho changed the appearance of the Chippewa country. By damming up the rivers in order to catch beaver, he formed Lake Superior (Clark, 1983: 5).

Similar legends passed on through generations by indigenous elders are present in many First Nations' histories.

By examining tools and fossil remains, some European scientists have speculated on the climatic conditions, game that was present, and the techniques used for hunting in early pre-European Canada. Pre-contact indigenous histories have been divided by these scientists into four different time phases based only on the archaeological finds that have been recovered. A collection of First Nations' oral histories have not as of yet been comprehensively collected in the way which we now seek to gain an overview sense of each indigenous society by approximate time period. The following section will firstly examine the phases of indigenous history that have been delineated and then will examine pre-contact indigenous societies in a coast to coast overview. Thus European derived classifications will be used for purposes of their focus on political economy, yet will recognize that this will be by no means complete, comprehensive, or precise. It also should be noted that a chronological approach is not intended but rather descriptions of various scholars' accounts of First Nations' histories.

The phases of ancient aboriginal history have been divided into 1) the Paleo-Indian phase, 2) the Archaic or the Laurentian phase, 3) the Woodland period, and 4) the ancient Iroquoian (Ryerson, 1972: 13-15). It should be noted that these categories apply only to the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence lowland region.

The "Paleo-Indian" phase, believed to have existed about 10,000 years ago, proposes that the early peoples were hunters who used weapons and tools of stone and bone (Ryerson, 1972: 13). The

Archaic period a proposed 5,000 to 6,000 years ago introduced double-edged knives and spear heads of ground slate for hunting (Ryerson, 1972: 13). Fishing, the use of nuts and other vegetables, served as a supplement to big game (Trigger, 1985: 76). During this period, human made copper products left evidence of mining. Trade was also evident because these copper products have been found to be widely distributed.

During this period the cultivation of corn was apparent in Ontario. The increased use of pottery and cooking pots may suggest a less nomadic lifestyle (Trigger, 1985: 77). During the summer months large bands joined together at fishing camps for burial rituals, the exchange of goods and the arrangement of marriages (Trigger, 1985: 77). Chiefs, hereditary positions of authority, appeared to have acted as conflict managers to ensure that bands of great numbers could remain together from spring to autumn (Cleland, 1982: 775). Women were believed to have moved from their band to live with others, as opposed to an earlier belief that these peoples practised matrilineal residence patterns (Trigger, 1985: 78).

During the Iroquoian phase sometime after AD 500, the hunter-gatherer economy was replaced by a horticultural society (Trigger, 1985: 83). This culture appears to have originated in southwestern Ontario. The Iroquoians grew corn and fished during the spring to autumn season and retreated into the interior of southwestern Ontario to hunt during the winter (Trigger, 1985: 85). The surplus of corn resulted in the storage of food for the winter. Due to the fact

that women were remaining in main villages to attend the crops while men conducted the hunting and fishing, matrilineal residence now became a more feasible arrangement (Trigger, 1985: 89). As the Iroquoian period progressed horticulture began to provide most of the food for villages although hunting and fishing continued (Trigger, 1985: 92). During the fourteenth and fifteenth century the Iroquoian period witnessed the movement and realignment of populations which resulted in the spreading of new innovations (Trigger, 1985: 94-95). An increase in warfare resulted from greater dependency on horticulture which led to "increased competition over strategic, localized resources" (Warrick, 1984: 65-66). Another reason for increased warfare may relate to the growing importance of women to Iroquoian society. This importance is explained by the anthropologist Diamond Jenness:

The important place that agriculture held in their economic life, and the distribution of labor....leaving the entire cultivation of the fields and the acquisition of the greater part of the food supply to the women (Ryerson, 1972: 15).

It has been suggested by Bruce Trigger that the men, feeling threatened by this new female status, may have turned to warfare to recover lost prestige. This prestige would be obtained by sacrificing prisoners, a practise which was believed to encourage the growing of crops (Trigger, 1985: 99).

In the late Iroquoian period, the indigenous peoples' culture that is known, appears to have become more socially complex. As a result of joining tribes, communities became larger and village planning became more elaborate (Warrick, 1984: 67-68). Tribal councils were being formed to manage the emergence of new tribes (Trigger, 1985: 102). Warfare appears to have resulted in the amalgamation of tribes, for the purpose of gaining political alliances. Trade between tribes was not a common practise (Trigger, 1985: 104). The exchange of goods was seen as an expression of goodwill as opposed to trade for economic benefit.

Much of the earliest evidence gathered on pre-contact Canada relates to the Iroquoian group. Nearer to the point of contact aboriginal First Nations have been categorized by six cultural regions relating to specific geographic areas. These six regions are; 1) The Eastern Woodlands, 2) The Plains, 3) The Pacific Coast, 4) The Cordillera, 5) The Mackenzie and Yukon river basins, and 6) The Arctic barren grounds (Valentine, 1980: 56-64) (see Appendix B). The peoples of the Eastern Woodlands were the Algonkian speaking migratory hunter-gatherers and as already described, the lowland Iroquoian agriculturalists. The division of labour for the Algonkian was on the basis of sex and age (Valentine, 1980: 59). For these peoples no formal political power was accorded a particular class or individual. The accumulation of goods was not feasible in a migratory lifestyle, therefore egalitarian values were predominant (Valentine, 1980: 59).

The indigenous peoples of the Plains spoke dialects of Algonkian or Siouan. They too were migratory peoples who joined together during the spring and summer months for communal buffalo hunts (Valentine, 1980: 60). Buffalo herds provided food, hides for clothing and shelter. Like the Algonkians of the Woodlands they possessed no formal political organization which stressed leadership and their division of labour was also based on sex and age (Valentine, 1980: 60-61).

The aboriginal peoples of the Pacific Coast developed an "elaborate system of social stratification" based on hereditary ranks (Valentine, 1980: 61). These peoples lived off the abundant supplies of the sea. They lived more stationary as a result of their rich food supply. The many nations who comprise this grouping, all shared the following features of their societies; a social structure which distinguished between aristocracy, commoners and slaves and hereditary ownership rights to resource territories (Valentine, 1980: 61-62).

The peoples of the Cordillera region lived off of salmon, elk, bear, and beaver. The Kootenay People of this region were very similar to the Plains peoples. The Athapaskan speaking nations engaged in trade with the coastal peoples and have thus adapted their systems of social stratification and slavery (Valentine, 1980: 62).

The indigenous peoples of the Mackenzie and Yukon river basin, were migratory hunter-gatherers. Thus their social and political

structures were similar to the peoples of the Eastern Woodlands and the Plains.

The last group, the Inuit of the Arctic barren grounds are those peoples who inhabited the area from Alaska to Labrador and some of the Arctic islands (Valentine, 1980: 63-64). These people hunted sea mammals and caribou for food, clothing, fuel and shelter (Valentine, 1980: 63). The Inuit have developed technology based on bone, stone, driftwood and animal hides to combat and adapt to the harsh arctic climate (Valentine, 1980: 63). Their social structures were also similar to the other semi-nomadic hunting-gathering indigenous societies.

The majority of these societies were based on a hunting and gathering economy. They lacked formalized political organization, lived migratory lifestyles, and possessed egalitarian values between families. The division of labour was based on sex and age. The Iroquois and the Pacific Coast peoples appear to have developed civilizations which contrast greatly to other indigenous societies. The Iroquois' horticultural based society led to the development of a highly structured state society which incorporated "five widely dispersed nations of thousands of agricultural villages" (Ortiz, 1984: 2). The Pacific Coast and the Athapaskan peoples of the Cordillera region lived more stationary lives in regions rich in resources. Their social organization was a highly stratified social system with clearly recognizable authoritarian political leaders.

Pre-contact Canada appears to have contained many separate nations with considerable diversity amongst them. The geographical region whose borders are now defined as comprising Canada, would not have warranted study as a unified location if not for European intervention.

Pre-contact indigenous societies have been, it is believed misleadingly, analyzed within the context of the Marxian concept of "Primitive Communism" (Bourgeault, 1983: 49-50). Marx uses the concept to refer to an early societal stage in the development of European capitalism. To classify pre-contact indigenous societies into this category will ignore many of their unique characteristics and will serve to focus on a specific few. The following discussion will illustrate this point.

Marx states that in a primitive communist society the basic mode of production is based on the common ownership of the means of production (Bourgeault, 1983: 49). In this analysis the struggle for subsistence engages a person's time and energies for basic survival. Thus group cooperation and aid is a necessity which has the result of creating egalitarian relationships. In this society there is no place for a "leisure class living off the surplus produce of others" (Ryerson, 1972: 16). With different environmental conditions, these "primitive communal" societies possess different means of survival, however, their subsistence economy results in similar socio-political structures.

One problem with this means for conceptualizing the indigenous societies is that this concept is in itself, Eurocentric. It defines the criteria by which societies are to categorize themselves in terms that relate directly to the evolution of European societies. It assumes a progression of civilization which ultimately arrives at the accomplishments of European civilizations. It can be seen, in effect, as an unconstructive means of analysis because as;

Claude Meillassoux has rightly argued that to characterize such populations by an absence of features calling them "classless", "acephalous", or "stateless" tells us nothing about what they are (Wolf, 1982: 88-89).

Therefore terminology developed to describe and analyze European societies is applied to these dramatically different societies having the effect of focusing on particular characteristics at the cost of disregarding others. For example, it is agreed that land within the "primitive communist" societies of northern aboriginal peoples, was viewed as existing for all and as producing what was to be used by all (Bourgeault, 1983: 49). Also agreed is that between such collectivities, social relations would be largely egalitarian. However, to state that within a primitive communist society social relations were equal, ignores the division of labour by sex. European influenced socialists in an attempt to idealize societies before the intrusion of capitalism, create dichotomous circumstances to later emphasize the negative effects of capitalism. This is done

sometimes at the expense of race and as in this case, gender. In speaking of pre-contact indigenous societies, Bourgeault states:

Inasmuch as women did particular kinds of work, the work they did and the overall relations between the sexes were based upon the reciprocal and mutual exchange of goods and services (Bourgeault, 1983: 50).

It is difficult to speculate whether or not different tasks took on different societal values. During the description of the Iroquoian period of pre-contact, Trigger suggested that warfare may have been a result of men trying to recover status. This appears to suggest that firstly men were of higher status in society and that secondly they had the power to reclaim prestige that may have been reassigned.

With the highly stratified societies of the west coast, it is additionally difficult to place pre-contact indigenous societies neatly into the primitive communist category.

Thus the concept of primitive communism will equip us with a means of conceptualizing the conditions of pre-contact indigenous societies in biased political and economic terms. It is probably still useful and less precarious to use the Marxian concept of mode of production to help explain the emergence of certain social relations. Mode of production can be simply defined as the ways in which human beings organize social labour to effect a necessary

transformation of nature (Wolf, 1982: 73-100). In this sense kinship can be seen as a mode of production;

Kinship can then be understood as a way of committing social labour to the transformation of nature through appeals to filiation and marriage, and to consanguinity and affinity (Wolf, 1982: 91).

Kinship can refer to close familial hereditary relationships as well as more distant relations. With the exception of perhaps the Iroquois societies, most indigenous societies organized around the basic nuclear family, from which kinship ties extended. Thus the importance of kinship ties to the organization of aboriginal societies appears to be a more central characteristic of these pre-contact societies, than their common ownership of the means of production.

Thus the nature of pre-contact indigenous society can be cautiously generalized as possessing the following characteristics:

- egalitarian relations between collectivities or tribes
- division of labour on the basis of sex and age
- the majority had no rigidly defined political structure

- most societies did not have highly structured political organizations with the exceptions of the Iroquois and the peoples of the Pacific Coast
- Kinship had practical and ideological significance
- there was no concept of land ownership for the majority of

nations, except the peoples of the Pacific Coast region

- competition and thus warfare increased for the Iroquois when an increased reliance on horticulture replaced hunting and fishing as a means for subsistence

The Europeans coming to the land of the First Nations shared more of a common socio-political character than the many diverse indigenous societies of pre-contact Canada did. This contributed to the complexity of reactions the First Nations had to the infusion of European capitalism into their economies.

Having now acquired a sense of the socio-political circumstances of pre-contact Europeans and First Nations, we are now better equipped to understand the processes involved in the interactions of the two groups. Since an attempt to present a comprehensive history of indigenous-European relations in Canada, would be beyond the scope and objectives of this paper; a very specific focus on the history of legislation as it developed in relation to First Nations will be offered. By specific it is meant that only the legislation which illustrates racist ideology as fostered and expressed by policy and which also demonstrates how racism operates as its implementation reveals, will be examined. Legislation will thus aid in the realization of the objective of this section which is to analyze the development of the ideology of racism and to identify some concrete expressions and effects of it. In addition, the importance of understanding the development of aboriginal policy will contribute to our later quest to examine current manifestations of racism, particularly in relation to the issue of aboriginal self-government.

This is because legislation and policy are concrete expressions of government intent. The political apparatus is designed to create a support framework which serves to perpetuate, safeguard, contribute to and maintain the economic arrangements on behalf of those who initiated and will eventually benefit from these arrangements. Upon the realization that current policy is a product of its predecessors, we recognize that legislative changes occur in accordance to set state boundaries. The boundaries were developed with practical purposes, but as economies change these too slowly and dialectically adapt. Becoming sensitized to the historical essence of aboriginal policy allows us to identify past legislative objectives in their revised form. In an attempt to gain a holistic picture of how legislation developed in relation to First Nations, a chronological context is imperative. This will allow us to go through steps in the growth of aboriginal policy, thus enabling us to comprehend the ideology behind major course changes. Background information which relates to the development of policy will also be offered to contribute to the attainment of a general sense of the periods of contact.

Initially the Europeans' use of aboriginal land required no official laws, however, traces of informal policy towards the indigenous peoples can be seen as early as 1665 in New France. Under the direction of King Louis XIV of France, colonizers were instructed to; treat the "Indians" with kindness, respect their land rights, convert them to Catholicism and, of the prime importance to France, work

towards the increase of trade (Cumming and Mickenberg, 1972: 78-79).

In the area then known as Rupert's Land, the establishment of Britains Hudson's Bay Company was formalized. In 1670, the Royal Charter of Rupert's Land from Charles II of England granted a trade monopoly to the Company relevant to the Hudson's Bay region (Cumming and Mickenberg, 1972: 139). The Hudson's Bay Company was "given" rights to "sole trade and commerce" in the regions of Ontario and Quebec north of the Laurentian Hills and west of the Labrador boundary, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the southern half of Alberta and the south eastern corner of the Northwest Territories (Hudson's Bay Company, 1938: 7-8). Although some treaties between the Company and the First Nations of Rupert's Land were signed between 1668-1692, only one involved the actual cession of land.

The informal policy on "treatment of the Indians" sent by King Louis XIV of France illustrates that right from contact the indigenous peoples were regarded as a separate race from that of the Europeans. The first colonizers of Canada were being formally asked to gain the essential participation of the indigenous peoples into the French fur trade. This was to be accomplished by gaining their trust through kindness, and respecting their land, and indoctrinating them with a religious ideology which would serve to motivate and control their behaviour.

The Royal Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company granted the English exclusive trade rights to the regions of Rupert's Land. These rights were meant to be exercised over the other European traders, particularly the French who also claimed rights in this region (Ryerson, 1972: 138). The indigenous peoples were not perceived as nations who had rights to the lands they occupied.

The English's only criteria to gain trade rights to this land was to attain the King's formal consent. This charter, by not addressing the First Nations' rights to their territories, illustrates that the indigenous peoples were below the European definition of what constitutes a nation and therefore did not have to be accorded the same respect. The British crown clearly placed its pursuits above the indigenous peoples and in fact possessed very little recognition that the First Nations had pursuits relevant to their own societies. The Europeans that were in the indigenous peoples' land, however, quickly became aware of the limitations of crown granted rights to land. That is, the pragmatic considerations involved in actually gaining political control over indigenous lands was more complicated than simply transferring aboriginal title and jurisdiction to European Crowns (Berkhofer, 1978: 126).

During this early period of contact the land of Canada proved profitable to these European countries because of the supply of the raw material fur which was being produced for manufacturing in the mother countries. The economic relationship between the colony and the European homeland can be described as one where the raw

material not only stimulated the manufacturing of the product but also the manufacturing of other products needed in the colony (Innis, 1970: 385).

The European presence in what is now Canada was based on the extension of mercantile capitalism to this non-European area. The wealth that could be attained from the exchange of commodities would address a demand in the European market (Bourgeault, 1983: 41). The priority was not to settle and develop a self-sufficient producer-consumer infrastructure and society, but to increase, sustain, and stimulate staple production on behalf of the motherland. In addition a colony engaged in staple production was unable to develop internal industries which could compete with the manufacturers of their mother country (Innis, 1973: 391). Thus land ownership at this point was not an important priority, as these early policies have illustrated.

For the French, settlement meant having to live more closely with the indigenous peoples. This may have contributed to the French's perception that the differences that existed between themselves and the indigenous peoples could be changed. Thus race to these early French men was not something impermeable and rigid. This letter by an early French settler in 1666 illustrates this point:

In order to strengthen the colony in the manner you propose, by bringing the isolated settlements into parishes, it appears to me without waiting to depend on the new colonists who may be sent from France,

nothing would contribute more to it than to endeavor to civilize the Algonquins, the Hurons, and other Indians who have embraced Christianity, and to induce them to come and settle in common with the French, to live with them and raise their children according to our manners and customs (Frideres, 1974: 6).

The English as traders and perhaps due to a greater sense of superiority resulting from their European success, only exercised enough "kindness" needed to elicit the First Nations' participation in their accumulation of furs. The English need which arose later for settlement and population growth, would choose not to use the indigenous peoples as "settlers" or "family members" to as great an extent as did the French, a choice grounded in the English's more pronounced belief in the superiority of their people over even other whites, but most dramatically over other racial groups.

Conflict between French and British traders began to erupt when indigenous peoples who once brought their furs east to New France, were carrying them north to Britain's Rupert's Land (Ryerson, 1972: 139). The rising strength of England, "based on capitalist manufacture, compelled a re-division of bases and colonial possessions" (Ryerson, 1972: 146). Thus the English in Canada aimed to assert their dominance by pushing the French out of resource rich and established trading regions. The English and the French both attempted to gain the military alliance of the powerful First Nations. Indigenous nations either sided with one of the European countries' efforts at expansion and conquest or as the Iroquois Five

Nations did, realized that their support to any of these foreign powers would not benefit them. As one chief expressed this:

The English and the French, without any right, have usurped the grounds they now are possessed of: and of which they have dislodged several Nations, in order to make way for their building of Cities, Villages and Forts (Ryerson, 1972: 142-143).

The next significant policy to effect the indigenous peoples was the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713, where French Acadia came under British rule. This occurrence prompted some Maritime First Nations who held loyalty to the French, to behave in "hostile" and "disruptive" ways towards British settlers (Cumming and Mickenberg, 1972: 95-96). This disharmony led to The Submission and Agreement of the Delegates of the Eastern Indians, a legislative agreement that pressed these Maritime First Nations; 1) acknowledge British jurisdiction in this region, 2) agree to settle disputes in Crown courts, and 3) realize they had continued fishing, hunting and fowling privileges. Later in 1752, another treaty of "Peace and Friendship" was signed between the Mic Mac nation and the Governor of Nova Scotia to demonstrate to these indigenous people that the British government was concerned about their welfare. During this time period many treaties of this nature were signed between the British and the Mic Mac nation.

In 1755, the British government appointed two officials to specifically manage "Indian affairs" in the land now known as North

America. Their mandate was to ensure that trade in relation to the indigenous peoples was regulated and that treaties of alliances were secured with First Nations (Patterson, 1987:182).

It is evident that as the British stated their dominance in this area there arose a greater need to exercise more control over the indigenous people's life. Trade and military support were the two greatest priorities during this period.

To contribute to the understanding of how policy developed during this trade and military period, it may be useful to discuss and analyze some other expressions of racism external to the law, that may have influenced legislative development. When writing about the above period, many historians contend that the first peoples' lifestyles, practises and cultures were not yet seriously disrupted. Their argument envisions the early era of the fur trade as one where the indigenous peoples and the Europeans were "Partners in Trade" (Morantz, 1983). In the seventeenth century, the trade resulted in mutual benefits for both the Europeans and the indigenous peoples, possibly due to the facts that the aboriginal peoples were more numerous, familiar with the environment and "capable of repelling" the few thousands of French who first came to these shores (Miller, 1989: 40). This resulted in more power for the First Nations which caused them to resist altering their own practises to accommodate the European's desires.

When the European fur-trading companies arrived in the region, the people did not become trappers in the sense that acquiring pelts for trade superseded hunting for food (Morantz, 1983: 7).

There is some validity to this perception, however, even the European's initial dependence on the indigenous peoples for survival resulted in an unequal relationship rather than a partnership. For example, as Sylvia Van Kirk explains in her study of women in a fur trading society in western Canada, inter-racial marriages enabled European traders to gain the necessary allowances needed with a group of indigenous peoples, to enhance their prospects and operations of the trade (Van Kirk, 1980). Indigenous women therefore were exploited by the European traders because they were perceived as being "an important commodity in themselves in order to gain access to the particular societies" (Bourgeault, 1983: 55). This does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the social relations between indigenous men and women were transformed from being reciprocal and/or egalitarian to "subjugation of Indian women" (Bourgeault, 1983: 55). Was the indigenous women's role in society altered drastically or did her oppressor simply change colour? This early description by a Chipewyan man of the "beauty of a woman" would appear to suggest one sex benefiting over the other's labour in pre-contact indigenous society:

Those beauties are greatly heightened, or at least rendered more valuable, when the possessor is capable of dressing all kinds of skins, converting them into the different

parts of their clothing, and able to carry eight or ten stones in summer, or haul a much greater weight in winter (Van Kirk, 1980: 118-19).

In any case the Europeans were dependent on indigenous women to aid in their activities of trade with indigenous men. This relationship whether transformed from past gender relations or not, was exploitative rather than an equal exchange.

The Europeans also depended on the First Nations for; the essential tools for trapping, the canoe for hunting, carrying and following trap lines, the snowshoes, moccasins, and their labour power (Morton, 1967: 10-11). Thus of the utmost importance to the Europeans was the First Nations' knowledge of geography and the technology of survival.

It must be remembered that this was an interactional process. The more independence the indigenous peoples initially experienced would gradually alter. Interaction between two greatly different societies will not usually result in equal effects or gains. The European peoples came to this country with particular goals governed by an ideology which stressed accumulation as opposed to subsistence. To enact their plans, Europeans imposed the exchange of commodities for economic gain. The indigenous peoples' placed a different incentive on the exchange of goods:

The subordination of the exchange of goods to non-economic purposes in Indian society is

demonstrated by the enormous significance of gifts. The bestowing of presents was used, for example, to establish rank and prestige, as well as to mark important occasions in the life of an individual (Washburn, 1967: 50).

The indigenous preference for European implements and cloth created a dependency upon the European market economy (Jennings, 1975: 39). After prolonged contact, the symbolic meaning of goods exchange took on a material nature, because as Jennings explains, the indigenous peoples were being fenced into the European system:

In the trade that thus came to dominate their economy, the Indians had no choice but to supply the commodities demanded by the Europeans (Jennings, 1975: 41).

In an attempt to gain an understanding of the real interactional processes that occurred up to this period of the fur trade, it is important not to perceive of the indigenous peoples as either heroes defending their lives and cultures or as victims of unrelenting European oppression (Trigger, 1985: 297). In addition all First Nations were not similarly affected. The following factors all affected the extent to which their cultures were altered; 1) the extent of contact, 2) the nature of their pre-contact activities and 3) the particular aspect of the European trade that they were being enlisted to participate in. This of course does not deny or make little of, the extent of destruction the Europeans imposed on the far less aggressive peoples. The Europeans were the invaders equipped with a powerfully dangerous pre-contact ideology, technology,

economic pursuits, religious doctrines, and most deadly, fatal epidemics. During the three centuries of European presence in Canada, tens of thousands of indigenous peoples died from imported diseases (Crowe, 1974: 127). Thus although the indigenous peoples can not be viewed as one dimensional victims, they certainly were forced to deal with endless sufferings. Aboriginal policy simply enshrined European dominance over First Nations.

The next transition in policy was characterized by the English's new desire for land ownership. With the success of English conquests over the French, the British aimed to expand and fully exploit their new domain. Britain was particularly asserting its dominance nearing the turn of the 18th century. In the Royal Proclamation of 1763 we can note the first real reference to the securing of land. The Proclamation attempted to clarify British governmental control over First Nations' land. The terms of this legislation delineated: 1) the creation of a large reservation of land for hunting, 2) a method for obtaining Indian land for settlers, 3) that land owned by Indians was only to be sold to the Crown, and 4) it mapped out the eastern boundaries of what was to be recognized as "Indian Country" (Cumming and Mickenberg, 1972: 23-38).

We can also note that a series of land surrenders were formally signed during 1812, most notably the Grand River Tracts of 1798 in Southern Ontario. After the war of 1812, the great influx of settlers, the dependency of indigenous peoples' on the European market and the end of the need for military alliances, were all

factors that caused the course of aboriginal policy to change (DIAND, 1975). More specifically, since British dominance over other European powers was secured at this point, and the indigenous peoples were immersed in the new economy, there became less of a need to gain indigenous military support and to elicit, in order to maintain, their participation in the fur trade. The need for more land for European immigrants prompted the necessary legislative actions of more treaties being signed.

Immigration policy also was related to the indigenous peoples. During the period of Confederation to 1885, the Canadian Pacific Railway was constructed in order to "open" the west to immigrants. The government of Canada offered "free land" to central European immigrants as incentives to come populate and cultivate this part of Canada. This land however would not be "opened" until the aboriginal peoples who occupied it were cleared from it (Elliott, 1983: 289). The recognition of the vast untapped resources of this extensive area prompted the government to seek, through immigration, potential labourers to produce goods for domestic use, commerce, and for trade purposes. In addition, these proposed racially desirable immigrants were to become citizens of Canada.

At this point in the Euro-Indigenous relationship, the indigenous peoples were either to be colonized, segregated or killed. The notion of them becoming a part of this new establishment of a European society was not an option. This can be seen as relating partially to the theory of racism which was in formation after the onset of

contact. In this sense, race was a means for creating the division of labour needed in the fur trade and racism justified the exploitation apparent within this division of labour (Bourgeault, 1988: 49). We also understand that to the Europeans the indigenous peoples' cultures and physical differences did not interact to constitute a credible civilization and/or humanhood. Thus the First Nations were the first people not to meet the "eligibility criterion" of racial suitability, which was (and still is) a predominant component of immigration policies.

The decline in the fur trade after 1821 initiated an increasing dependency on other staple exports (Innis, 1973: 393). The rise of the lumber trade was accompanied by the need for European labourers to conduct the operation of this new trade. By 1851 the population of Canada was large enough to be able to "produce and maintain its own institutional structure" (Frideres, 1988: 84). In addition, an agrarian sector developed which aimed to expand its holdings to keep up with the opening of new markets for the agricultural surplus (Frideres, 1988: 85). Thus, access to indigenous land became more important than access to indigenous labour (Abele and Stasiulis, 1989: 253).

When owning the First Nations' land was not as necessary as the sustainment of them as the primary producers in the fur trade was, the British (and French) Crowns set out legislation which, with the aim of appeasement, supposedly protected their land rights. Now there was no longer a need to be kind or respectful to the First

Nations' culture, economies or land rights. The treaty process itself was based on deception. The indigenous peoples believed themselves to be in possession of the lands ceded to them by a treaty, when in actuality that which was ceded was still by law "vested in the Crown" (Ryerson, 1972: 239).

How could such blatant exploitation be justified in the face of the contradiction with Christian ethics? The answer would be to intensify the ideology of racism and to adapt it to Christian morality. Since the indigenous peoples were perceived as nothing more than a nuisance to the functioning of Canadian capitalism they would have to be either diligently controlled to allow for the extinguishment of their land title, or segregated from the new society, or done away with altogether. The following statement was typical of charters in this period:

to collect traps and wage wars on the "barbarians" and to pursue them even beyond the limits of their province and if God shall grant it, to vanquish and captivate them; and the captive put to death (Frideres, 1974: 8).

The indigenous peoples became, in some Europeans' perceptions, more distinct and separate from that of themselves. Perhaps unconsciously this had the effect of magnifying positive self-created images of the European, which in addition legitimized their poor treatment of these peoples. Christianity would be adopted as a suitable frame upon which this theory would dialectically develop,

because it seemed to preserve past morality while in actuality it allowed past ethics to be contradicted. The concept of savage therefore;

made it possible for Europe to bypass the complexity and integrity of New World societies, it also greatly enhanced the task of bringing about the acceptance and assimilation of new facts that did not accord with cherished beliefs (Dickason, 1984: 59).

Christian and heathen translates easily to whites and non-whites (Jennings, 1975: 6). Polar extreme images help to separate, contain, and simplify the complexities which exist between groups of peoples. Since the most feasible identifiable differences between the two groups were physical attributes, these would serve to be the labels which would in turn be accorded absolute qualities.

In it the Christian caucasians of Europe are not only holy and white but also civilized, while the pigmented heathens of distant lands are not only idolations and dark, but savage (Jennings, 1975: 6).

These reciprocal images serve the purposes of the white man who now may appear morally right and justified in imposing his controls on the indigenous peoples. Civilization has indeed, as Jennings expressed, "created a savage so as to kill him" (Jennings, 1975: 10). The rationale behind this explanation of the construction of the

"savage" was that the Europeans perceived of the indigenous peoples as being;

bound inextricably in a primitive past, a primitive society and a primitive environment to be destroyed by God, Nature, and Progress to make way for Civilized Man (Pearce, 1965: 4)

Thus savagism existed only as it related to the civilization which by nature it would have to be destroyed by (Pearce, 1965: 104).

Christianity would be a means to gain ideological control over the indigenous peoples and would also serve the purpose of destroying their past ways of living which were now incongruent to capitalist interests. By adapting Christianity to racist theory, the racial divisions were strengthened and thus exploitation was exonerated.

The racial inequality that was apparent in social relations was based on the relative power exercised by the Europeans. The following letter written by Shinguaconse, an indigenous man in 1849, clearly summarizes, reveals and describes the nature, development and effects of the early European racism that was imposed on the First Nations:

When your white children first came into this country, they did not come shouting the war cry and seeking to wrest this land from us. They told us they came as friends to smoke the pipe of peace; they sought our friendship, we became brothers. Their enemies were

ours, at the time we were strong and powerful, while they were few and weak. But did we oppress them or wrong them? No! And they did not attempt to do what is now done, nor did they tell us that at some future day you would (Petrone, 1983: 59).

In 1876, the federal legislation entitled the Indian Act was passed. This Act was a consolidation of existing aboriginal legislation. The entitlement to certain services under the act is based on a principle of patrilineal descent. Status "Indians" (those who have been registered with the government) have the rights of 1) access to land in the form of reservations, depending on the treaty signed, and 2) educational, health and welfare needs provided for by the federal government (Cummings and Mickenberg, 1972). Indigenous peoples who have undergone enfranchisement right up until 1960, lost their "Indian" status (Frideres, 1988: 11). That is, up to the year 1960, any status "Indian" who has chosen to vote in a federal election gave up their legal status and thus rights entitled to them under the provisions of the Indian Act (Frideres, 1988: 11). In addition, up until 1985, any legal "Indian" woman who married a "non-Indian" male lost their status for herself and her children (Frideres, 1988: 11). This rule however did not apply when genders were reversed. The Indian Acts in 1884 and 1895 contained dictates within them that aimed to destroy certain cultural practises and thus facilitate assimilation. The 1884 act made celebrating a traditional indigenous gift giving occasion, the potlatch, illegal and the 1895 act prohibited the practice of certain aspects of the Sun Dance.

The Indian Act was the most formalized attempt by the Canadian state to gain control of every facet of aboriginal life. It is largely an appeasement package aimed at gaining cultural control by means of assimilation. By appeasement it is meant that the Indian Act aimed to pacify or conciliate the indigenous peoples' resistance to their expropriation by offering concessions. It has served to segregate and define for the indigenous peoples who is and is not considered to be an "Indian". This has resulted in divisions among the First Nations themselves that has in a sense "structured inequality, poverty and under-achievement among Natives" (Frideres, 1988: 37). The Indian Act has also been a mechanism for isolating the indigenous peoples from mainstream Canadian life. Those First Nations who are recognized under the Act are caught in a double bind. On the one hand they are only too aware of the racially discriminatory history and nature of this act, yet on the other it is an important vehicle for asserting their land claims and other rights that may have been accorded to them through the negotiations of their ancestors and the British, now Canadian state. As this quote by Kermot A. Moore illustrates, the racism that is fostered by the Indian Act is all too apparent to those who are victims of it.

The racist bill called the Indian Act has wreaked assimilation and genocidal havoc; has divided families and communities and set one against another; has degraded and maligned our image in an effort to wipe out the record of our existence and heritage; has taken our land by force, subterfuge and/or trickery in order to exploit and control its resources (Moore, 1984: 88).

The ideology that purports that the Europeans are superior to the indigenous peoples has resulted in attempts (e.g. the threat of disenfranchisement to gain the right to vote) to make the First Nations similar (assimilate) to the Europeans for purposes of absolving past responsibilities by denying the importance of non-European cultures. Thus when the term assimilate is used it refers to the dominant power's efforts to assimilate the First Peoples into a political-economic situation not to treat them or their cultures as equal to the Europeans. Racism therefore has justified the cultural destruction (cultural genocide) of the first peoples' societies. Thus assimilation and cultural genocide along with degradation and discrimination are all different yet related to racism.

Another policy of assimilation is represented by The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, better known as the "White Paper" which was released in 1969. The "ideological advertising" for this policy was based on the ideal that "no Canadian should be excluded from full participation in society" (Canada, 1969). This paper proposed to repeal the Indian Act and dismantle the Department of Indian Affairs. The massive and forceful opposition by aboriginal organizations against this policy resulted in its retraction in 1971. The paper was criticized for its assumption that within Canada there is equal opportunity and access to the rewards that the market system generates. The focus of this policy shifted off any effects the Indian Act may have had at addressing the socio-political and economic structural inequities experienced historically by First Nations, and onto the strengths of individual

attributes and achievements. The policy's ideology envisions the indigenous peoples as supposedly equal competitors in Canadian society, even in the context of their historical oppression that now would only be intensified with the extinguishment of their legal and legislative protection and support. Once again assimilation of the indigenous peoples became a primary policy objective. In this instance, assimilation meant the relinquishing of federal responsibilities and obligations for the First Nations, and the denial of the history, culture and spirituality of the indigenous peoples.

The Department of Indian Affairs introduced a new legal system which contained objectives congruent to the Indian Act's goals. In 1973, the Supreme Court's hearing of the Nishga land claim gave aboriginal land claims a platform of legitimacy. In 1974, the Indian Claims commission within the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) was developed as a formalized process to deal with aboriginal land claims (Patterson, 1987: 191). The progressive nature of this governmental development was highly questioned. It may have given more state control to a process that resulted in bureaucratic delays and inaction. It also could have given more legitimacy to land claims with the objective of co-opting threatening oppositional forces. In both cases the claims commission in DIAND would have been following in the footsteps of its predecessors by adhering to the mandates of control and appeasement.

Every new law related to the indigenous peoples in the recent past, was developed in response to the current socio-political circumstances while at the same time keeping within the long established format in which aboriginal policy has evolved. The Constitution of 1982 reference to aboriginal peoples was no exception to this rule. The Constitution's recognition of aboriginal and treaty rights was heralded by the government and some indigenous leaders as a significant legislative and legal progression. This position was based on the primacy of the Constitution of Canada as the supreme governing law (Department of Justice, 1983: 74). Other aboriginal organizations are hesitant to over-emphasize the significance of the entrenchment of aboriginal rights, therefore they approached this occurrence more cautiously.

Section 25 of the act states that aboriginal rights and freedoms are not affected by the Charter. Any rights and freedoms recognized in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and in any land claim settlements are specifically delineated as unaffected by the act.

Section 35(1) recognizes and affirms existing aboriginal treaty rights. Section 35(2) defines aboriginal peoples of Canada as Indian, Inuit and the Métis.

Section 37(2) of the act set a precedent for a series of First Ministers' Conferences that would include the participation of First Nations in the discussion of constitutional matters which directly

affect them. The territorial governments attended on invitation and not by right as did the provincial governments.

The stated purpose of these conferences was to provide a forum whereby aboriginal peoples could discuss constitutional amendments which would be reflective of their rights and needs. Most aboriginal organizations presented arguments requesting the entrenchment of the right for self-government in the Constitution. When this process was tested repeatedly, the real nature of aboriginal constitutional power became sadly evident. Governmental assets were 1) the provinces' role in the negotiations, 2) the territories not recognized as legitimate contributors, 3) the First Nations' as invitees of the other governments (Schwartz, 1985: 10-11), and 4) their commitment of not saying no to, but stressing clarification of aboriginal demands, thus weakening aboriginal bargaining power and at the same time appearing to be in constructive negotiations. First Nations' assets were 1) that the right to self-government is an inherent and already existing right, "flowing from their original occupation of the land" and thus the constitution already recognizes it, 2) the FMC could be seen as a process to "define methods for the fuller exercise" of aboriginal rights (Hawkes and Peters, 1987: 29). Thus section 37 could be viewed as a "legal loophole" for self-government (Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1988: 15), and 3) bringing aboriginal rights into the Constitution opened up to the First Nations, the most powerful arena to continue the fight for what is rightly theirs.

Summary

The history of the indigenous peoples in what is now Canada, is a very ancient one. Some have claimed that the first peoples of this area were immigrants of Asia arriving on the North American continent some 100,000 years ago. The indigenous peoples however maintain through their histories passed down for centuries, that they have been here for time immemorial. Most pre-contact indigenous societies were based on semi-nomadic hunting and gathering economies. Exceptions to this generalizations were the Pacific Coast peoples and Iroquois nations. The Pacific Coast society was more stationary with a highly stratified socio-political organization. The Iroquoian society was based on horticulture which gave rise to their highly structured state society. The pre-contact societies could be generalized as possessing the characteristics of egalitarian relations within tribes but not necessarily between sexes, no rigidly defined political structures, the importance of kinship to the organization of their society and no real concept of land ownership.

The European invaders with their beliefs of the superiority of their own culture, set out to expand their countries' profits on route to the Americas. The interaction between these diverse peoples would result in drastic changes for the First Nations. The production of the raw material fur to be sent to the markets of the mother countries demanded the skill and participation of the indigenous peoples as primary producers. Differences in technological progress resulting

from differences in the groups' modes of production left the indigenous peoples vulnerable to European entrance. In addition this technological difference isolated human communities leaving them "without immunity against the diseases of outside peoples" (Stavrianos, 1981: 59). Thus the mostly classless societies of the First Nations were forced into the newly forming class stratified society of the Europeans, through the economic trappings of capitalism. The Europeans' class division neatly translated to the racial division of labour that developed. The exploitation of the first peoples' lands and labour would be justified on the grounds of their innate inferiority and "primitive" civilization. A theory of racism found its beginnings at initial contact but became more intensified when exploitation became more profound. Britain's quest for land ownership intensified the racism that was apparent in its early stages during the use of indigenous labour. The ideologies of Christianity and state legislation supported capitalist interests and thus strengthened racial divisions and the theory of racism.

The history of the legislation relating to the indigenous peoples, supported relative stages of European racism in conjunction with British capitalist expansionism. It did this by either ensuring that the indigenous peoples would contribute when needed or that they could be controlled when not needed. These historical legislative intentions resulted in profound contradictions. On the one hand, to ensure the First Nations' compliance and cooperation in the process of their own exploitation, the British (then later the Canadian) state offered symbolic concessions. The Royal Proclamation, the BNA Act

and the Indian Act are all representative of the historical legislative obligation that the government had, and still has, in relations to the first peoples. This "special" recognition strived to keep them set apart from mainstream Canadian life by taking away past means of survival and replacing them with a system of unilineal dependency. Thus racial divisions are kept intact. Yet on the other hand, because of the need to relieve state spending and do away with past obligations, aboriginal policy which served to segregate also sought to assimilate. As Dr. Walter Currie, a Potawatomi Ojibwa most clearly summarized it:

The policy of the ruling powers has been "use and then discard the native: banish him onto a reserve and he will disappear". Unfortunately he has not disappeared but is growing in numbers; so a new policy, one of assimilation and integration, makes him into a brown-skinned white man (Petrone, 1983: 172).

The restrictions on celebrating indigenous cultural ceremonies that were evident in the Indian Act and more recently the White Paper of 1969, are both concrete examples of the persistence of the government's policy of assimilation or legislative racism.

Continuing in the appeasement and deception tradition of their ancestors, the Canadian State of 1982 entrenched existing aboriginal rights in the Constitution. Entrenching and protecting rights that the First Nations already had legislatively affirmed, and providing an unequal constitutional amending process, may have

seemed to be in the state's best interest. By not recognizing the First Peoples' inherent legal and political rights, the Canadian state continues to exercise the historical racism of their predecessors. However, we are yet to see whether the Canadian government will hang itself with the Section 37 loophole which could witness the recognition of the right to aboriginal self-government.

CHAPTER V:
CURRENT MANIFESTATIONS OF RACISM

Almost every sister I have talked to has told me they were raised in foster homes, sent to juvenile detention centres, were victims of sexual abuse, were victims of rape. And finally entering Prison For Women, we have become victims of bureaucracy because we do not have the right colour of skin, the right kind of education, the right kind of social skills and the right kind of principles to get out of here...

Fran Sugar, 1989

The historical racism that has directed the course of the indigenous-Euro-Canadian relationship has woven itself into the very structure and fabric of Canadian society. After analyzing the origins and development of this racism, it will become quite easy to attribute the following aboriginal experiences of racism to the institutionalization of racism in government policies of assimilation, paternalism and the historical confiscation of indigenous lands, resources, labours and lives (LaRocque, 1989). For generations this racism has changed its form and expression. Today we can discover its presence intertwined within all avenues of the indigenous peoples' lives. The objective of this chapter is to outline briefly some current manifestations of racism and its effects.

1) THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Recently there has been an increased focus by the media on the issue of aboriginal peoples and the Canadian justice system, even though racism in the administration of justice in regards to the indigenous peoples has probably been expressed from the beginning of the European presence here. The new attention given this issue partially relates to the fact that the large voting visible minority populations concentrated in the larger urban centres have been experiencing racially motivated conflicts with the law. This has resulted in more attention being directed towards the issue of racial minorities and the law.

The over-representation of aboriginal peoples in both male and female penal institutions is something we have all heard again and again. For example, the Prairie Justice Research Centre reports that approximately 65 per cent of the Saskatchewan jail population is aboriginal and the percentage is predicted to grow to 80 or 90 in the next decade(Cox, 1989). Similar figures are available nationally from the 1986 Census. In the past this may have been attributed to poverty, boredom, prejudice, the lack of moral commitment to the oppressor's rules and/or the negative effects of social welfare dependency (Nager, 1975: 65). Recently however, an explanation for such an over-representation has been related to the inequities which pervade the justice process.

The following examples of "injustice in the justice system" have recently achieved public attention:

- A 40 year old Cree woman, Minnie Sutherland, was hit by a car in the Ottawa-Hull area, on January 1, 1989. She was taken off the road by the police who, believing her to be drunk, left her there to die without calling for an ambulance.
- The 1971 brutal rape and murder of 17 year old Betty Osburne in The Pas, Manitoba by four white teenage boys was brought to trial more than a decade later.
- Several unexplained deaths have been occurring on the Blood Indian reserve southwest of Lethbridge, Alberta, for over the past five years. The Blood people "accused the police of racism and of providing them with substandard policing because they are "Indians" (World Report, 1988).

- In the mostly white community of Lynn Lake Manitoba, an isolated northern town, 22 aboriginal people have died under mysterious circumstances since 1972. None of these murders have been properly investigated by the RCMP (LaSalle, 1989).
- A Micmac man in Nova Scotia, Donald Marshall served 11 years in jail for a murder he did not commit. Racist remarks were even made against Marshall by two judges involved in his new trial.

These few horrific accounts which transcend regional boundaries, graphically illustrate the extent of the injustices suffered by the people of the First Nations in their dealings with the Canadian justice system. These racially motivated abuses are so extreme and profound, yet they are also commonplace. It is only with contact of external forces that the contradiction in the judicial system is given a medium for expression. Many in mainstream Canada are shocked by this contradiction, as this quote from Police Chief James Harding of the Ontario Task Force hearings on Race Relations and Policing revealed after hearing testimony from aboriginal peoples in Thunder Bay:

My understanding of the breadth and depth of concern was not sufficient. People are hurting more than I thought they were (Appleby, 1989: A1).

Indigenous people fully understand the racist nature of the contradiction that is present in the judicial system because they have suffered from it. As Marlene Pierre, a leading indigenous spokesperson told the Ontario provincial task force into police racism;

Two kinds of justice exist for native Indians in Canada -- one for the white man and one for us (Hoffman, 1989).

The early relationship between the first peoples and the European newcomers has changed over the centuries, initially directly related to the social relations defined by the fur trade. Later this relationship was related to the increased need of European crowns to gain title to aboriginal lands. Racism was instrumental in providing an ideology which would justify any moral contradictions that inevitably surfaced. The fact that such a profound contradiction in judicial ethics currently exists illustrates that the historical racism within the colonial Canadian state is still quite prevalent today.

2) EDUCATION

The federal government's 1989 proposal to put a cap on the funding for the Post-Secondary Student Assistance Program, occurred at a time when there were more aboriginal peoples attending post-secondary institutions than ever before. The government insists that this cut in funding is fair in the context of funding that is available for the rest of the population of Canada (Assembly of First Nations, 1989: 5). The Assembly of First Nations assert that

First Nations education is a fiduciary responsibility of the federal government. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 and other agreements are binding and remain in force.

Education of native people is a right, as identified in various treaties (AFN, April 1989).

With only 20% of indigenous peoples completing high school compared to 75% of other Canadians and 70% of the aboriginal population having less than a high school education compared to 45% in mainstream Canada, how can the indigenous population be measured in the same terms as other Canadians? (Assembly of First Nations, 1989: 5) In addition, the right to the provision of education for the original peoples is something that is legislatively addressed in treaties and federal and provincial education documents and is thus affirmed in the Constitution. In 1973 DIAND accepted in principle, the Assembly of First Nations' paper entitled "Indian Control of Indian Education". This paper delineated the "jurisdictional and parental responsibilities over education by First Nations" (AFN, April 1989). In 1989 DIAND's attempt to implement policy changes without First Nations' consultation, illustrated their lack of commitment to AFN's policy paper.

Since access to post-secondary education will equip new indigenous leaders with the necessary qualifications and skills that will contribute to the achievement of self-government (Assembly of First Nations, April 1989), the ideology behind the Canadian state's policy is to lessen the political competency of the future indigenous threats to the status quo.

Aboriginal policy once again supports a specific stage of Euro-Canadian racism in its relationship with Canadian capitalist expansion. Absolving past obligations has the effect of encouraging assimilation which in turn releases financial commitments. The agreements made between the British crown then later the Canadian state and the First Nations, are in this instance not being recognized as legitimate, even when these agreements have been developed in accordance to British law. Racism as exhibited by the powerful racial group operates here because there is an attempt to bypass First Nations' legal rights.

3) CHILD WELFARE

Once again there is a contradiction in the administration and jurisdiction of aboriginal policy. The provincial government has the jurisdiction to enact child welfare laws (Wuerscher, 1979: 2). The federal government however, has the exclusive authority to "enact legislation in respect to the Indian population regarding Indians and lands reserved for Indians (Wuerscher, 1979: 2). The Indian Act mandated to fulfill this policy, does not make special provisions for the delivery of child welfare services. The result is that the aboriginal peoples are subjected to the same provincial laws in regards to child welfare as all other Canadians with no recognition of their different cultures and historical racial oppression that have resulted in their different needs. This insufficiency has produced devastating results.

For decades, the Children's Aid Societies across Canada have systematically apprehended aboriginal children with the supposed intention of protecting them from hardships and lack of care that their aboriginal families have allegedly provided. Many children have been juggled from one white foster home to another. There are many documented cases of acute physical and sexual abuse and many cases of punishments for not abandoning their "Indianess".

The operation of the child welfare process is usually conducted by non-aboriginal social workers, who are not sensitized to the historical circumstances and current conditions of the indigenous peoples. As an aboriginal social worker explains..."the fate of the woman's children, as in so many cases, was decided by a non-native worker who hadn't even met the mother" (MacLennan, 1988).

Mass apprehension occurred because of the white power structure's imposition of their values and codes of behaviour on the indigenous people's homelife. The racism evident in the larger societal context will directly translate into the child welfare institution. The mainly white middle-class social workers, educated within Euro-Canadian developed social work programs, are not adequately equipped with a historical background and the culturally sensitive intervention skills that are necessary when working with aboriginal peoples. Since racism is a powerful feature of Canadian society it will inevitably be influential in social workers' dealings with indigenous peoples. To the First Nations, the racism manifested in child welfare policy and practises have represented the most devastatingly painful

examples of the dominant power's attempts at assimilation, cultural genocide, or as some contend, just plain genocide.

4) HEALTH

The health conditions of the indigenous peoples have always been well below that of the mainstream Canadian population. In March 1988, the Assembly of First Nations published an updated report on the current health conditions of registered "Indians". The findings are tragic as these highlights reveal:

- During 1980-85, the death rate among First Nations remained higher than that of the Canadian population at an estimated 4 times the Canadian average (AFN, March 1988: 8,12).
- Infant mortality is two to three times higher than that of other Canadians (Canadian Press, October 5, 1988).
- The death rate due to respiratory diseases was twice that of the Canadian rate, in 1980-85 (AFN, March 1988: 15).
- The death rate due to diseases of the digestive system between 1980-82 and 1983-85, was twice the Canadian figure (First Nations - 59.2 deaths per 100,000; Canadian - 27.8 deaths per 100,000).
- The suicide rate was three times the Canadian average between 1980-85 (AFN, March 1988: 20).

The higher First Nations' death rate has been attributed to poor housing conditions, inadequate water supply, poor sewage systems,

poor quality health care, and poor access to these medical services (AFN, March 1988: 8).

The fact that the health conditions experienced by the people of the First Nations, are sharply contrasted with that of mainstream Canadians, illustrates the racial nature of this issue. All the factors that have been attributed to have caused the grim health status of the First Nations are related to the overall poor living conditions experienced by indigenous peoples as a whole. In turn, indigenous poverty is a result of the dependency on the state, which provides a marginal existence in a system that is not only foreign but one in which they possess little power. Once again, when the issue is power, and this power is divided on racial grounds, the issue is clearly racism.

5) INDIVIDUAL INCIDENTS OF RACISM

The manifestations of racism that have been revealed through an examination of issues such as the justice system, education, aboriginal women's issues, child welfare, and health have focused on racism on a macro level. When an ideology such as racism is unconsciously used as a tool in the colonization process, it develops as a response to certain objective criteria which the system of capitalism creates. This becomes reinforced with policy, which in turn mandates institutions. For institutional racism to function, a strong belief in the ideology must be

obtained on the individual level. The following recent incidents attest that this has indeed occurred:

- A Quebec MP, Steve Michelin stated in a Montreal newspaper that "all Indians should be sent to Labrador, to all go live together and have peace and leave us in peace" (Payne, 1988).
- A school board in Winnipeg welcomed the United Church to use an old school for an aboriginal training seminar. The people of Woodhaven however, circulated a petition to keep them out of their neighbourhood (World at Six, 1988).
- In New Brunswick a Micmac man filed a complaint against a Bank of Nova Scotia, where he was turned down for a loan because he lived on a reserve. The loan officer stated that he would be too much of a credit risk and that it was the bank's policy not to lend aboriginal peoples from the Restigouche reserve any more money (World Report, January 26, 1989).

The stories of racism in the course of everyday life, are endless for the aboriginal peoples. It is evident that the colonial racism that was experienced by the first peoples may have changed its avenues of expression in adaptation to the changes in society, however, it still relentlessly persists.

The belief that the Euro-Canadians are superior to the indigenous peoples established itself in the initial social relations of the capitalist production of the raw material fur and intensified with the desire to attain aboriginal lands. The ideology of racism had the effect of justifying and legitimizing exploitation which was necessary to ensure capitalist expansion. Legislative objectives of appeasement, assimilation, and control all supported this same goal.

A brief examination of education policies for example as they relate to status aboriginal peoples illustrated that past obligations which have been affirmed in Canadian laws are not being respected. In the past, concessions were given in order to secure capital acquisitions. To the Euro-Canadian state this meant that a true commitment to their own legal system was not mandatory in dealings with the indigenous peoples. The current incidents that were described relating to the administration of justice in relation to the First Nations, are living testimonies to this point.

Dependancy on the government, a result of the state's attempt to harness more control over the First Nations, has created conditions of abject poverty. This is partially due to the fact that state welfare provisions are once again inadequate. Racism on the institutional and individual level have resulted in serious conflicts for the first peoples as was noted in the operation of child welfare services and in day to day individual incidents. Thus the racism that has been woven into the institutions and policies of Canadian society has adverse effects for the First Nations in virtually every avenue of their lives.

CHAPTER VI:
ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND RACISM

A Declaration of the First Nations

We the original people of this land know the Creator put us here.

The Creator gave us laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature and mankind.

The laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities.

We have maintained our freedom, our languages, and our traditions from time immemorial.

The Creator has given us the right to govern ourselves and the right to self-determination. The rights and responsibilities given to us by the Creator cannot be altered or taken away by any other Nation.

Eric Robinson and Henry Bird Quinney, 1985

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

The notion that an indigenous people would have to demand from the newcomers in their land, that their right to govern themselves be acknowledged as a right, seems anomalous. However, given the knowledge of how the Europeans gradually dissolved indigenous social, political, and economic systems, the First Nations' subordination to the Canadian state is quite understandable. Also understandable is the indigenous peoples' desire to reclaim this lost power and control over their own lives. The indigenous peoples have learned through their own losses, the importance of the Europeans' laws and statutes. This is why some First Nations seek first and foremost to gain back political power by ratifying it within these laws. State and Euro-Canadian intervention which has proved to be so destructive to the first peoples, will be arrested and replaced with indigenous concerns, approaches and solutions. Thus constitutional entrenchment of self-government would ensure that indigenous needs and rights would no longer be held hostage to that of the foreigners'.

This is the ideal, however, when one group holds power over another, they are rarely happy to relinquish it. Since in this situation we are referring to two groups that are divided on racial grounds, we are once again witnessing the transactions of racism. Regardless of party or government in office during the post-constitutional period, the Canadian state would appear to be sincerely interested in the notion of aboriginal self-government. The First Ministers' Conferences were designed to convey this sentiment. The Canadian state however continues to refuse constitutional entrenchment. This

state inaction suggests the prospective losses such a move might result in for them.

In an attempt to gain a competent understanding of this particular manifestation of racism, it will be initially helpful to explore the various stakeholders' perspectives on this issue. By doing so we will then be able to comprehend the nature of the conflict and ultimately move on to explain why this conflict exists within the context of the structural analysis of racism which has been employed.

1) FIRST NATIONS ON SELF-GOVERNMENT

The First Nations of Canada have now asserted that they are composed of distinct societies who all share a common colonized oppressive relationship with the dominant people's government. Given the poor track record of the colonizer's state, First Nations are now saying its time to gain back the control to govern themselves over the matters that directly affect them. The following section relays what some aboriginal peoples believe as constituting self-government. Examples have been chosen from the major aboriginal groupings of Inuit, status and non-status. The Assembly of First Nations is a national political lobbying organization which represents the concerns of status aboriginal peoples with the exception of Inuit. The Métis National Council is a similar organization which addresses the issues of non-status Métis peoples. For an example of an Inuit definition of self-government,

the Inuvialuit peoples of the Western Arctic's perspective will be presented.

During the First Ministers' Conferences on Aboriginal Rights, various national aboriginal political organizations were called upon to define self-government as they perceive the term to mean. Most First Nations' organizations began on the premise that:

Canada's aboriginal peoples were self-governing prior to European settlement, and that this indigenous right has never been extinguished either by conquest or consent (Hawkes and Peters, 1987: 27).

In addition they believed that Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 which affirms "existing aboriginal and treaty rights" includes the right to self-government (Department of Justice, 1983). Their purpose of attendance then was to request an amendment to Section 35(1) which would clearly delineate the recognition of their right to self-government (Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1988: 56-57). The constitutional protection of this right would prevent "any piece of legislation, any law of general application" from amending this agreement (Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1988: 127).

The Assembly of First Nations delineated nine necessary governmental powers that would constitute effective self-government:

1) Executive and Legislative Powers

- 2) The Power to Administer Justice and Enforce laws
- 3) The Powers of Taxation
- 4) The Power to Regulate Domestic Relations
- 5) The Power to Regulate Property Use
- 6) The Power Relating to Social Programs
- 7) The Power to Determine the Official Language
- 8) The Power to Delegate
- 9) The Power to Define Indian Status and Membership

(Conference on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, 1983)

The Métis National Council asserted at the First Ministers' Conference of 1983 that "the Constitution of Canada must confirm the right of the Métis to establish our own forms of self-government" (Conference on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, 1983). Métis self-government is described by the MNC as possessing the following principles:

- 1) Political autonomy and guaranteed participation in the larger political system
- 2) Since the Métis cannot obtain political autonomy through provincial powers, they need their own self-government structures
- 3) Guaranteed representation in Parliament
- 4) Self-government rights would apply both on and off the Métis land base
- 5) Métis self-government to be guaranteed as a right, must be provided for in the Constitution
- 6) Métis government will be a representative democratically elected government

(Conference on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, 1983)

In addition, the MNC declared that they need more local Métis people to be involved in community decisions; "not outsiders deciding what is right for the Métis" (Conference on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights,

1983). They want control over childcare, the school system, the police, health, housing, hunting and fishing and recreation (Conference on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, March 1988).

Since the 1970's, Inuvialuit of the Delta-Beaufort Region of the Western Arctic, have documented their concerns about the lack of control over the delivery of government services for them. The Kativik Regional Government, resulting from the James Bay Agreement, set the precedent for giving indigenous peoples "political control over a law-making form of regional government" (Goose, 1983). The Inuvialuit people's organization for a Western Arctic Regional Municipality (W.A.R.M.) aspired for this governmental control because they believed that:

A Western Arctic Regional Government, with law-making authority, will return a level of control to the Inuvialuit majority over the institutions and the programs that are critical for our survival in the changing Beaufort Sea Community. This control will allow us to preserve the strength of our culture and to enjoy the benefits and opportunities of partnership in the Canadian establishment (Goose, 1983: 1).

There exist some legislatively enshrined examples of self-government-like arrangements such as the Sechelt Indian Band Self-Government Act, the Cree/Naskapi (of Quebec) Act, and the Act Concerning Northern Villages and the Kativik Regional Government. Amongst indigenous leadership there is a debate on what

specifically constitutes self-government. Some argue that no existing self-government arrangement truly exists yet in Canada. The present examples of aboriginal control over lands and resources, they continue, are better termed self-management or similar to municipal governmental arrangements (Hawkes and Peters, 1986: 25). Others contend that the essence of the term rests in "whether or not an agreement allowed the Aboriginal Peoples to engage in the economy of their choice (traditional vs. wage)" (Hawkes, 1986: 25).

Even though all three of the indigenous groups have had varying historical relationships with the European and now Canadian states, there are some basic elements of oppression that they all share that has led to commonalities in the definition of self-government. These can be listed as follows:

- 1) Section 35 of the Constitution Act, by affirming existing aboriginal rights, also includes the right to self-government
- 2) An amendment to Section 35 entrenching the right to self-government would clarify, assure and protect this right
- 3) First Nations' governments "will be shaped by the distinct cultural values and traditions of native peoples" (Lyon, 1984)
- 4) For self-government to succeed, a land base must be accorded (Lyon, 1984)
- 5) Without relinquishing historical entitlements, they wish to gain some extent of governing control over their own social and economic lives

Self-government quite simply appears to mean to the many groups of indigenous peoples that they reject being controlled by the dominant

Euro-Canadian state because this control is related to the historic racial inequality that has only resulted in detrimental outcomes for First Nations.

2) THE CANADIAN STATE ON SELF-GOVERNMENT

The federal government began to take the issue of aboriginal self-government more seriously after the 1985 Supreme Court ruling in the *Musqueim Case* (Frideres, 1988: 343). The final ruling recognized that indigenous sovereignty and rights are "independent and apart from the Crown" and that these rights originate from First Nations' title and occupation (Cardinal, 1986). This in essence, recognizes the indigenous peoples' right to self-government as beyond the realms of the Constitution. The government however, in a refusal to fully appreciate the enormous significance of this ruling, initiates their response to the demands of aboriginal self-government within the state boundaries of the Indian Affairs department.

The historical objectives of DIAND was to gain control and dominance over the First Nations to ensure continuous economic expansion. This control was facilitated by the offering of legislative and material concessions. The Department of Indian Affairs has been historically aligned with any other state bureaucracy that happened to manage an area which the indigenous peoples may have held some power in. For example, in 1936 Indian Affairs fell under the jurisdiction of the Department of Mines and Resources, in 1950 it was shifted to Citizenship and Immigration, and since 1953, it has

been under the mandate of Northern Affairs and National Resources (now titled Northern Affairs) (Frideres, 1988: 22). The department had a difficult mandate to operationalize. On the one hand aiming to gain control in order to exploit, while at the same time, appearing to be solely concerned with the welfare of the indigenous peoples. As the operators of the Indian Act and aboriginal treaties, the department's aim of providing "compensation" to indigenous peoples in the form of services became the prime ideological basis to its functioning. With increased specialization and bureaucratic growth, the department developed its own internal dynamics and personal objectives. It must then protect and maintain its own existence while at the same time act on behalf of the government's overall interests.

What is the government's stake in indigenous issues? Decades after having accomplished virtual complete ownership of land and resources in Canada, aboriginal peoples have become less significant to the government. In addition, since indigenous people constitute a very small proportion of the Canadian electorate, and there is no need to utilize their labour, they have become even less important to the operation of advanced capitalism in Canada. Yet the state is bound by its own historical legislative obligations and rules.

The current Conservative government has demonstrated its strong commitment to strengthening the interests of the business class (through, for example, increased privatization, and the unequal tax burden carried by low and middle income Canadians etc.). Therefore,

the issues affecting the First Nations rarely go beyond the minimal symbolic recognition by the Department of Indian Affairs, unless they may have threatening economic consequences for northern development. In addition, a southern provincial or federal agency, far removed from northern issues, may be responsible for developing specific northern projects (Abele and Graham, 198: 122). The extent to which southern policy is driven to meet northern needs depends on the capacity of the federal government to persuade the provinces to change their procedures (Abele and Graham, 198: 115).

It appears most constructive to understand the government's perspective on self-government within the context of these boundaries. The government's unwillingness to entrench the right to aboriginal self-government in the Constitution illustrates the extent of the state's lack of commitment to the indigenous-defined principles of self-government.

In April of 1986, DIAND issued a policy statement which delineated several non-constitutionally entrenched "initiatives to increase self-reliance and self-sufficiency in Indian communities" (DIAND, 1987). The federal government states that it is "committed to the objective of self-government for aboriginal people" (DIAND, 1987). They continue to state that self-government as a high federal priority, is reflected in the reorganization and current emphasis on self-government in the department. The policy initiative termed Community-Based Self-Government Negotiations proposes to develop self-government arrangements within the existing constitutional

framework (DIAND, 1987). In these community-based negotiations the government describes its role as follows:

- departmental officials coordinate in partnership with the community, the involvement of other federal departments
- has the lead role in developing policy for community-based self-government initiatives
- negotiates arrangements that provide for a greater degree of autonomy for Indian communities to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves working with moneys currently budgeted for the department (DIAND, 1987)

The parameters of the government's definition of self government are outlined as follows:

- 1) The process is not intended to define, redefine or renegotiate aboriginal or treaty rights
- 2) The special relationship between "Indian" people and the federal government will continue
- 3) The Indian Act will continue to apply for the purposes of determining which members of the community are "Indians"
- 4) The powers between the federal and provincial governments will not be altered
- 5) Self-government arrangements must be compatible with the established principles, jurisdictions and institutions of government in Canada
- 6) Agreements-in-principle must be ratified by the community membership and the federal cabinet

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- 7) Federal and provincial laws will continue to apply under new self-government arrangements

Information from **Indian Self-Government Community Negotiations - Guidelines** (DIAND, 1987)

If a First Nation community wishes to launch into "partnership" with the federal government for a community self-government, they are asked to comply with a pre-designed negotiation procedure. They are asked to define 1) how they propose to become a legal entity, 2) what the structure and procedures of their government will include, 3) how membership may be confirmed or relinquished, 4) appropriate administrative mechanisms as well as rules and procedures for land management, 5) how their financial powers will be arranged, and 6) they must develop an implementation plan (DIAND, 1987).

In addition, self-government negotiations with the Métis People and with non-status "Indians" rests within the provinces (DIAND, 1987).

The state's definition of self-government applies exclusively to status aboriginal peoples and is mandated through the Department of Indian Affairs. It therefore does not address the concerns of the many aboriginal organizations who wish to see their right to self-government affirmed in the Constitution Act. The next section will enter into a more specific analysis of why these conflicts exist and how they relate to the overall issue of racism.

3) CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FIRST NATIONS' AND THE STATE'S DEFINITIONS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

The state's and the First Nations' general definitions of self-government are fundamentally incongruent. The government states that it recognizes that the governance of indigenous communities should be in the hands of the aboriginal peoples directly involved. This statement by Bill McKnight, a former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, illustrates this profession:

Community self-government...seeks, within the Canadian constitutional framework to place decision-making and political, economic and cultural leadership in the communities where they belong (DIAND, 1987).

Yet the steps initiated by the government in relation to the negotiation of self-government do not demonstrate this level of commitment. During the First Ministers' Conference on Aboriginal constitutional matters, the federal government was unable to attain a consensus among the provincial First Ministers which would have allowed for the entrenchment in the constitution of the right to aboriginal self-government. This "inability" to reach an agreement may have served as a political strategy employed to avoid the constitutional entrenchment of self-government. In blatant hypocrisy, Indian Affairs continues to express its desire to see the inclusion of this right. They are quick to add that this would be something in the future, therefore in the meantime, they encourage the acceptance of their community based "self-government" plan.

The indigenous organizations which have defined their particular meaning of self-government stress the desire to have eminent governing authority. The government on the other hand seems willing to grant less authority to the aboriginal communities than they themselves seek to attain. For example, the federal government's statement that they have "the lead role in developing policy for community-based self-government" directly contradicts the purpose and intention of aboriginally defined self-government. In addition, DIAND's "self-government" demands that prospective indigenous communities conform to set procedures and guidelines. Just the very existence of these guidelines plus their specific terms, illustrate at the very least initially, that the government intends to be intrinsically involved in every aspect of this supposedly autonomous aboriginal government. When set guidelines are developed and imposed, the indigenous communities are immediately forced to define themselves in mainstream terms. Aboriginal leaders have repeatedly stressed that self-government will allow them to define their own needs and to develop strategies to address these needs.

Another problem which arises when an attempt is made to match the First Nations' definition of self-government with that of the state's, is the government's affirmation that the federal and provincial laws will continue to apply.

We can reason that the declaration that federal and provincial laws still apply must have been included for a purpose. It logically follows that any legislation related to self-government

arrangements would not contain conditions which would be inconsistent to federal and provincial laws. Thus aboriginal self-government is further confined and disempowered.

Another problem occurs when the government states that they will continue to define who is an "Indian" in a proposed self-government community. The Assembly of First Nations expressed that in their conception of an ideal self-government community, the aboriginal government would define "Indian" status and membership. The government will allow the community to define its own membership on the condition that written rules and procedures, describing how membership may be confirmed or relinquished, are prepared. Once again, the aboriginal peoples are being told how to run their government. In addition, a possible consequence of following this command, could be the defining of less membership than previously would have been defined, if the indigenous community was not subjected to this rule.

The last major conflict with the government's definition of aboriginal self-government and the First Nations' is the fact that their plans only apply to status "Indians" and Inuit. The Métis and non-status indigenous communities who wish to establish self-government arrangements must do so in conjunction with their provincial government. This ignores the rights of "non-legislatively" defined aboriginal peoples and it specifically ignores these groups' desire to attain self-government. This policy also illustrates how the Constitution's definition of an aboriginal person as Indian, Inuit

and Métis has no real significance in relation to the issue of self-government. This is why the Métis National Council very strongly asserts that "Métis self-government to be guaranteed a right, must be provided for in the Constitution" (Conference on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, 1983). That is, the phrase Métis self-government must be clearly delineated to ensure that they are not excluded from self-government constitutional recognition.

4) WHY THESE CONFLICTS EXIST

The state's apparatus designed to deal with "Indian affairs" has as its main rationale for existence, the need to control and appease the indigenous peoples. The state, bound by British (now Canadian) property laws, and the threat of never signed treaties currently intensifies its desire to appease in order to maintain control. This appears to be the central impetus behind the government's self-government initiatives. Public pressure for the realization of aboriginal rights is not sufficient to affect government behaviour on this issue. A study conducted by Decima Research concluded after researching public opinion on aboriginal rights that the issue of aboriginal rights is a small priority to the majority of mainstream Canadians, thus sufficient public pressure can not be expected (Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1988: 41).

Thus, motivated by the fear of unsigned treaties, historical obligation and the perpetuation of their own existence, the Indian

Affairs department uses the aboriginal peoples' terminology, self-government, to illustrate that they are striving towards idealizing the same objective as the indigenous peoples themselves are. Therefore, to gain the aboriginal peoples' compliance, the government stresses their "commitment to the objective of self-government" (DIAND, 1987). However, as illustrated earlier, there are profound incongruencies between the First Nations' and the state's definition of self-government. The state envisions self-government as concerning administrative matters "within the jurisdiction of senior government levels" (Asch, 1984: 71). Hence, their community-based self-government effort which does offer, on a piecemeal basis, an option for more aboriginal control over their own communities but does so with many restrictive government controls intact. In addition, the government will not take steps to constitutionally entrench the right to self-government for the aboriginal peoples.

Since the government has continually reinforced three main policy objectives throughout its aboriginal policy history, these being 1) appeasement, 2) exerting the necessary control over First Nations to ensure profit, and 3) assimilation, we should search for all three of these areas when analyzing the state's current initiatives in the area of self-government. Having identified appeasement and control, the quest now is to locate assimilation. Another main reason why the state has adopted the notion of self-government is that their version of "self-government" can provide a method by which funding cut-backs can not only be instrumented but also legitimized. In the

state's dealings with First Nations, we witness a movement in virtually all program areas, of an attempt to reduce funding in complete denial of historic obligations and responsibilities. Two current examples are cut-backs in post-secondary aboriginal education, and housing policy (which imposes private ownership in mainly non-market socio-economic environments). Provisions delineated in the Indian Act and treaties were offered to ensure that the state would acquire indigenous lands. Upon the acquisition of these lands the commitment to the terms of these agreements have not been respected. This relates to the functioning of racism because the dominant power does not feel enough obligation to the oppressed group to adhere to their past commitments. Power here is divided in racial groupings. Less respect is being accorded to the indigenous peoples and this is justified through racist conditioned responses when dealing with aboriginal issues and concerns. The government's policy on self-government would logically follow in this same format. Since support to capitalist expansion has been the historical objective of policies toward aboriginal peoples, the current self-government policy will be no exception. The entrenchment of aboriginal self-government in the constitution could result in some serious capital losses. For example this action could result in the indigenous peoples gaining back some resource control and blocking some northern development plans. It also could mean that defense initiatives in the north could suffer. The state's aboriginal self-government does not allow capitalist interests to be threatened and at the same time could actually be used to justify less financial support.

Initially, First Nations are trying to attain self-determination or more control and input in the areas of policy development, implementation, and operation. Realistically, they want the continuance and increase of government funding to help gain, as the Penner Report stated to be essential to eventual self-government, a "sound economic foundation" (Rawson, 1988). Relinquishing policy development, program operation, and administrative controls is not synonymous with abandoning financial responsibilities. The state, however, appears to contend that it is because right at the time that they are advocating their self-government and encouraging more aboriginal involvement, they are simultaneously reducing their funding in virtually all areas of indigenous support. Thus it is rational to predict that the state's self-government will be used to justify the absolution of funding provisions.

From past experiences, the aboriginal peoples are by now well aware of state intentions. To the indigenous peoples, the state's self-government can be viewed as a modern day treaty filled with compensational gifts, but whose main objective is to maintain the historical control that it has always had, to ensure that their interests are advanced at the expense of the indigenous peoples. Aboriginal self-government entrenched in the constitution means an end to the racism that is ratified in Canadian law, as Harold Cardinal explains:

If that constitutional power is shifted from the federal government to Indian First Nation governments, the Indian First Nation

governments of this country will have the right to pass any and all legislation necessary for their continued existence. Parliament will no longer have the jurisdiction or the right to pass any laws for Indian people (Cardinal, 1988).

The state expresses a commitment to the principle of self-government only as they themselves define it. They object to the indigenous peoples' definition of self-government on the basis that sovereign aboriginal political rights violate fundamental values of liberal-democracy (Asch, 1984: 87). What we know is that these "fundamental values of liberal-democracy" create the myth of individuality as the strength to achievement, and by doing so deflects the attention from the reality that one group profits over another. In this case, the formation of these groups was based on a racial principle, and they continue to be separated on racial lines. Thus liberalism aligns itself with racism, so together they can support the goals of capitalism. The state denies the First Nations their political will because to not do so would result in much capital loss. Thus in keeping with the pattern of the Euro-Indigenous historic relationship, racism justifies the exploitation needed to advance or protect capital interests.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSIONS

Racism is an ideology which maintains that one group of people is superior to another, based on a belief of biological determination. Each example of racism differs depending on the specific historical circumstances which an affected group experiences. The objective of this paper was to develop a means for conceptualizing the particular type of racism which the indigenous peoples of Canada experience. Initially it was important to clarify what is actually meant by the concepts of race and racism. In the analysis of the biological premise to race it was found that based on the laws of genetics, there is no scientific basis to classifying the human species into specific races. The concept of race therefore was constructed to define social relations. A hypothesis was offered which purported that in the case of the indigenous peoples, social relations were divided on racial lines to correspond to the relations of production imported and imposed by the European invaders. This led us into an examination of pre-contact European ideology. It was found that the ideology governing European capitalist expansionism was related to the ideology of racism. The necessity of class divisions to the functioning of capitalism translated efficiently to class divisions based on racial differences. Thus the European doctrine of racism professed the biological superiority of their "race" and civilization to justify the exploitation of the world's indigenous peoples. Race exploitation because of physical, cultural and environmental differences associated with the concept can not be a perfect substitute for class. Thus a historical analysis of racism must recognize the circumstances, the process and effects of the interaction of the particular players being examined.

Pre-contact indigenous societies generally were based on hunting and gatherer economies. This led to semi-nomadic lifestyles which encourage egalitarian relations. In addition, with the exception of the Iroquois nations and the Pacific Coast nations, most societies had no rigidly defined political structures. Pre-contact Europeans with their strong desires for resource rich lands were soon to meet peoples who possessed very different values in regards to land and land ownership.

The European need of the indigenous peoples' labour in the primary production of fur, led to the development of an ideology of racism to legitimate the necessary exploitation which would ensure the continuance of this economic relationship. Eventually, the First Nations became dependent on the commodities being exchanged to them, leading to the destruction of their past ways of functioning. The theory of racism employed against the indigenous peoples intensified with increasing British dominance in Canada and the resultant quest for land ownership. The indigenous peoples' labour became less important than the need to acquire their lands. To the Europeans, the First Nations became an obstacle to expansion rather than essential participants. Thus to be rid of this obstacle, the indigenous peoples were to be either controlled or killed. Such blatant mistreatment of one group had to be legitimized because of its material importance. Christianity then later liberalism would be adapted to the theories of racism to strengthen the ideological foundation to exploitation.

An examination of the history of legislation as it developed in relation to the First Nations illustrates another medium which fostered racism. The British then later the Canadian state enacted policies which served to guide the indigenous peoples' lives in directions which would ensure that state and capitalist interests were advanced. The most important function of the legislation was that it was to maintain control over the First Nations. This control was executed indirectly by offering concessions to appease or compensate the indigenous peoples, or it imposed changes to aboriginal lifestyle and culture with the goal of assimilation to absolve past obligations.

The Constitution Act of 1982 followed in the appeasement tradition. By affirming rights which the First Nations already possessed through treaties, the Indian Act and the BNA Act, this inclusion would appear to have more symbolic importance than practical progressive implications. The refusal of the state to entrench the right to aboriginal self-government in the constitution gives more credence to this observation. Although the government professes its commitment to the realization of self-government, an examination of their definition of the term reveals that the ultimate control in negotiating a self-governmental arrangement will still remain with the state. The government uses the notion of self-government to legitimize the absolution of financial responsibilities, and to appear that they endeavour on behalf of the aboriginal peoples. Yet, the Department of Indian Affairs which is responsible for the state's

"self-government", constrained by its historical origins and mandate, is contradictory to the real welfare of First Nations.

The history of the Euro-First Nations' relationship develops into the late twentieth century. The power secured by the British conquerors is still one whereby the dominant group rules over the group they have subordinated. Since these groups are still divided on racial terms, racism is very evident in the arrangement of power which surfaces when efforts to attain the right to self-government take place.

Racism could be isolated as an inherent feature in all the areas of conflicts that the aboriginal peoples are presently afflicted by. The aboriginal peoples are subjected to racism in the operation of justice, the poorest health and housing conditions, inadequate social and educational services, and to abject poverty.

Since all these inequities are experienced by the aboriginal peoples as one "group", then we conclude that the division is based on a racial premise. This knowledge, aids in the recognition that the initial "relations of production" that began in the seventeenth century, are still socially and politically intact. As Harold Adams, a Métis scholar construes:

White supremacy which had been propagated since the beginning of European imperialism became woven into Canadian institutions such as the church, the schools and the courts and

it has remained the working ideology of these institutions (Adams, 1975: 8).

We as a society, must accept that racism against the aboriginal peoples, is a salient feature of Canada. We also can attribute the indigenous peoples' racist experiences to the institutionalization of racism in government policies of assimilation, paternalism and appeasement. We can not explain this racism by attributing it to their race's individual values or codes of behaviour. That is, the origin of this racism is not based on cultural differences that exist between the indigenous peoples and mainstream Canada.

The aboriginal peoples are demanding the right to exercise their political will because it is the only way they will be able to escape the institutional structure that imprisons them. A recognition of this fact is the first step we can take to assist the aboriginal peoples in their fight to eliminate racism. The government players and all other of us concerned must recognize that they are distinct nations, who were given special rights to compensate for the taking of their land. We must recognize that they have legitimate rights to claim lands that have never been ceded by their ancestors. We must accept, respect and support their eventual goal of total self-determination in all facets of their lives.

They themselves will tell us what we can do for them, because they have the answers to their own problems. We, in mainstream Canada, must learn to listen:

If white society will accept a role that permits Indians to determine their own solutions for the future, if the whites will work among themselves to broaden their knowledge of the non-Indian society, such interested white people can and will play a crucial role in assuring racial stability in Canada. If non-Indians generally continue to remain ignorant of the situation facing native Canadians, then Indians will continue in futile struggle against a government which has a history of betrayal and monumental bad faith (Cardinal, 1969:95)

APPENDIX A

**Appendix A: Probable Position of Ice Cover and Distribution
of Human Population about 10,000 years ago**

Source: Crowe, 1974: 2

APPENDIX B

Appendix B: Aboriginal Cultural Regions

- 1) The Eastern Woodlands
- 2) The Plains
- 3) The Pacific Coast
- 4) The Cordillera
- 5) The Mackenzie and Yukon river basins
- 6) The Arctic barren grounds

Source: Jenness, 1963.

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