THE BC LAND QUESTION, LIBERAL MULTICULTURALISM, AND THE SPECTRE OF ABORIGINAL NATIONHOOD[1]

RICHARD J.F. DAY & TONIO SADIK

INTRODUCTION

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES simultaneously embody two distinct and contradictory realities: one of overrepresentation in the mass media and official discourses, which suggests that innumerable initiatives, financial and otherwise, are in the works to "solve" the so-called "Indian problem" (Dyck 1991); and one of perpetual marginality, as Canada's most disadvantaged "citizens" (Nagey, Larcque, and McBride 1989). Thrust into this position of doubly problematic internal Otherness by centuries of colonialism, Aboriginal peoples have yet to significantly affect the construction of their own identities within mainstream Euro-Canadian contexts. They tend to appear on the political and theoretical landscape as shadows or silhouettes – as spectres, we might say.[2] And, like spectres, their features, as well as the lands they "haunt," remain indistinct yet somehow deeply troubling.

It is upon this vague pairing of figure and ground that liberal multiculturalism, as a discursive field of political theory and state policy, attempts to inscribe its own more familiar, more familial, vision of Aboriginality. This vision is undoubtedly "progressive" in that it acknowledges that the Euro-colonial model of undifferentiated citizenship cannot accommodate the aspirations of all who find themselves within the purview of the settler states. Instead, it holds

[2] This is an allusion to the concept of the spectral developed in Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (1994). Just as the spectres of communism haunt globalizing capital and those who would oppose it, so the spectres of Aboriginal self-determination haunt Canadian multiculturalism.

that "[a] new concept of citizenship must ... be defined that can embrace indigenous peoples' aspirations for self-determination in terms of the new politics of cultural recognition" (Havemann 1999, 469). That is, liberal multiculturalism offers itself as a postcolonial "solution" to the colonial "problem" of Canadian/Aboriginal relations. While this inclusionary politics is a clear improvement over past tactics of exclusion, genocide, and assimilation, its rise to prominence has been accompanied by both continued Aboriginal activism and an emerging academic literature that explicitly rejects many of its fundamental assumptions and arguments. Although Canadian liberal multiculturalism is supposed to be based on "dialogue" and "recognition," many of its proponents have unfortunately tended to ignore, downplay, or reconfigure these dissenting voices. It would seem that while some modes of Aboriginal self-determination are not only permitted but celebrated, certain others are so threatening to the "new" concept of citizenship that they cannot even be acknowledged as possibilities.

In this article we examine liberal multiculturalist political theory and the BC treaty process as linked sites of interaction between the Euro-Canadian nation-state and Aboriginal communities.[3] We argue that the treaty process shares with liberal multiculturalist theory certain "regularities in dispersion" (Foucault 1972) that tend to perpetuate rather than to dissipate hierarchical relations of power between the participating identities. On this basis, we claim that liberal multiculturalism still depends to a significant extent upon the deep structures of colonial discourse and, therefore, tends to exacerbate the very problem it attempts to solve. In order to support this thesis, we appeal to the emerging body of work on "traditional Aboriginal nationhood," where certain liberal assumptions – for example, re-garding the centrality of individual rights, the bureaucratic nation-state, and free-market capitalism – are clearly problematized and contested. Of particular concern here is the apparent incommensurability of two competing views on the possibilities for Aboriginal "self-determination" as "nations within" or "nations alongside" the Canadian state. In an attempt to explain this clash of discourses, we offer up

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[3] This approach has the unfortunate side effect of conflating all immigrants who arrived after the French and the British with the French/British (i.e., Canadian) nations-state. Due to space limitations, the many and complex relations of power that exist between the Canadian nations-state and non-Aboriginal "minorities" cannot be discussed here. Let it be said, however, that much of the critique of liberal multiculturalism that we want to develop could apply to these situations as well.

the thesis that Canadian multiculturalism – despite its professed commitment to "accommodating diversity" – has yet to traverse the fantasy of "reconciliation" within the liberal-capitalist nation-state. Until it does so it will continue to find itself in the self-contradictory situation of having to ignore or actively discourage dissenting voices that emanate from some of its partners in dialogue.

CANADIAN LIBERAL MULTICULTURALISM

Before beginning the discussion that is our prime concern here, it is helpful to delineate the object of analysis. As Pierre Bourdieu (1992, 228) has pointed out, the term "field" does not imply the "objective" existence of some hard-core referent but, rather, is a name for a *mode of constructing* analytic objects. Thus, not only are the terms, rules, and limits of a field of discourse always subject to contestation but the field itself only emerges out of an agonistic play of meaning. We attempt to show – although due to limitations of space cannot hope to prove conclusively – that there are indeed sufficient regularities across what we call "Canadian liberal multiculturalist theory and practice" to merit considering this discourse as a single analytic object.[4] Within this discourse, which attempts to regulate all "Canadian," "ethnic," and "racial" subject positions, we are particularly interested in relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal identities. Of course, Canadian issues and events condition, and are conditioned by, ongoing negotiations at the supranational level (e.g., via the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples). While the global context is surely relevant, in this article we are not able to adequately explore its effects.[5] Also, it should be noted that Canada has much in common with other "White settler" countries, such as Australia and New Zealand, in both the historical development and the current state of its multiculturalism policy. These relationships, while important and interesting, will not be addressed here.[6]

Within the field of Canadian liberal multiculturalist theory and practice as so delimited, we wish to discuss two linked but relatively

[4] For an extended discussion of this issue, see Chapter 2 of *Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity* (Day 2000).

[5] Without a detailed discussion, which space does not permit, we can only assert (rather than argue) that, to the extent that the UN discourse on indigenous rights is relevant to Canadian liberal multiculturalism, it displays similar regularities and, thus, would be susceptible to our critique. For an optimistic, yet telling, discussion of Canada's record on the international scene, see Venne 1999b.

[6] See Havemann 1999 for an interesting collection of essays on this topic.

autonomous subfields. One of these subfields is characterized by a defense of what Daniel O'Neill has called a "strong multiculturalism," and can be observed in theoretical debates over individual versus collective rights. These hybrid liberal/communitarian theorists "make allowances for minority cultural rights, while remaining simultaneously committed to a core set of individual rights incapable of being trumped in the name of culture" (O'Neill 1999, 223). Our analysis focuses upon two of the writers whom O'Neill includes in this group, Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor, but also refers to other participants in the debates.

With regard to the second subfield, that of state policy, Kymlicka (1995, 127) has argued that "the idea that group-differentiated rights for national and ethnic groups can and should be accepted by liberals is hardly a radical suggestion. In fact, many multination liberal democracies already accept such an obligation." Canada is one of the multination liberal democracies to which Kymlicka most often refers, and he has recently written a book in which he argues that Canada's policy of multiculturalism "provides an important model of how a pluralistic community can live ... in peace, civility, and justice" (1998, 5). Charles Taylor has also focused on the Canadian case and has made similar arguments regarding the value of multiculturalist theory to Canadian state practice.[7] When we use the term "Canadian liberal multiculturalist theory and practice," then, we are referring to these ongoing debates over the meaning and application of liberal multiculturalist theory to Canadian state policy, legislation, and constitutional negotiation, particularly as they apply to treaty and land claim negotiations with Aboriginal communities.

While there is far from complete agreement among those advocates of liberal multiculturalism who address relations between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state, several key themes tend to structure the discourse. First and foremost among these has been the profession of a desire to overcome colonial relations of power between "English Canada" and the many peoples it has attempted to eliminate, assimilate, or integrate over the past 500 years. Charles Taylor has been a leading figure in advancing an argument that emphasizes the importance of "recognizing" subaltern groups within the system of

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[7] For example, in "Shared and Divergent Values," Taylor (1993, 181) notes that "accommodating difference is what Canada is all about." It should be noted that he is critical of the "depth" of the diversity that Canadian multiculturalism as state policy is able to tolerate. But, we show later in this article, Taylor's own position leans heavily towards the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Canadian liberal-capitalist nation-state.

nation-states. For Taylor (1991, 45-6), in modern societies "our identities are formed in dialogue with others, in agreement or struggle with their recognition of us." He argues that the achievement of identity through recognition is closely related to "developing [an] ideal of authenticity" (46); that is, in order to acquire an identity, we must be recognized for "what defines us as human agents," as "who we are." "The recognition I am talking about," writes Taylor (1993, 190), "is the acceptance of ourselves by others in our identity."

Taylor's theory of recognition is driven by his desire to advance the cause of "Canadian unity." As a solution to the problem of frag-mented identities within the Canadian state, he advocates harmon-ization on two levels: (1) between the individual and his or her nation, and (2) between a multiplicity of nations and their state. On the individual level, in *Hegel* Taylor (1975, 460) argues that "the problem of ... recovering a set of institutions and practices with which men [sic] can identify, is with us in an acute way in the apathy and alien-ation of modern society." At the group level he has suggested, for example, that "we" (i.e., English Canadians as a conquering people) should recognize "them" (i.e., French Canadians as a conquered people) as a means of "reconciling the solitudes" in which Canada's two dominant ethnocultural identities exist.

This argument can of course be generalized to cover an ever-expanding network of antagonistic identities, so that when Taylor allows himself to "dream in colours" for a few paragraphs at the end of *Reconciling the Solitudes* (1993), he imagines the following scenario for a Canada that has "survived the crisis" of its problematic diversity:

> It [Canada] would unquestionably be dual in one important respect.
> There would be two major societies, each defined by its own
> dominant language. But each of these societies within itself would
> be more and more diverse. First, each would be more and more
> ethnically varied and, in different ways, multicultural; second, each
> would have significant minorities of the other official language;
> third, each would contain aboriginal communities with substantial
> but varying degrees of self-government. (200)

While we will have more to say about Taylor's position later, for the moment it will suffice to note that he clearly wishes to move away from the singular conception of the nation-state that is typical of the colonial/assimilationist mentality and that he hopes, in this way, to increase the survival chances of a *nations*-state composed of a

multiplicity of articulations between "Canadian" identity poles and bureaucratic apparatuses.

Will Kymlicka has also been a tireless advocate of Canadian multi-culturalism both at home and abroad. In his most recent book, *Finding Our Way* (1998), his stated goal is to provide his readers with a "reality check" (5) by reminding them of the core values of sober pragmatism that are inherent within the Canadian way of nation building. In particular, he hopes to "sell" multiculturalism as multinational feder-alism to an increasingly reactionary English Canada by representing the claims of First Nations, Québécois, and later immigrants as relatively unthreatening and easy to accommodate. Meeting Taylor on the common ground between liberalism and communitarianism, Kymlicka argues that the claims of these groups can be satisfied by granting collective rights through a system of "differentiated citizenship." In his scheme, the population is divided into three categories: national minorities, colonizing forces, and immigrants. National minorities, such as First Nations, are those who have had their societies violently displaced by colonizing forces. The French in Canada, while they have colonized Aboriginal peoples, also count as a national minority since they were later conquered by the English. Both national minorities and colonizers are differentiated from immigrants, who, unlike the English and French, are supposed to have arrived with the intention of joining rather than destroying existing modes of social organization.[8]

Within this system, each category is assigned different modes of self-determination according to the validity of its claim to possess what Kymlicka refers to as a "societal culture": a set of institutions, based on a shared language, that "provides access to meaningful ways of life across the full rage of human activities – social, educational, religious, recreational, economic – encompassing both public and private spheres" (27). As the most successful colonizers, English Canadians have developed a societal culture that dominates the country through a well established articulation with the federal state and all but one of the provincial governments. Kymlicka suggests

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[8] While these distinctions are undoubtedly historically accurate and honest, some liberals might balk at what appears to be a theoretical justification for, and a validation of, violent conquest. Certainly, Kymlicka's formula raises the question of whether an invading force could provide itself with a liberal justification for exterminating an existing societal culture – say that of English Canada – by claiming that it "expected" to reproduce its own. This possibility becomes particularly intriguing if one begins to think about a liberal acceptance of violent internal *decolonization* by national minorities expecting to reassert the hegemony of their societal cultures.

that "most English-speaking Canadians" are therefore in no need of "special" rights and are "in favour of retaining a strong central government" (140). The French societal culture has an unclear and much embattled relationship with the federal apparatus and most of the provinces, but it possesses an exclusive articulation with the Quebec state. This degree of autonomy is an appropriate form of self-government for the Québécois, suggests Kymlicka, because it recognizes their status as a national minority (30-1). On this argument, Aboriginal peoples, especially where they are concentrated within a particular territory, would have similar rights. Non-English or French immigrants, however, would not be able to claim support for maintaining their own societal culture, this right being "neither desirable nor feasible for them" (35); rather, they are expected to integrate with either the Anglophone or the Francophone societal cultures.

Through its allocation of self-government rights to national minorities, Kymlicka's system, like Taylor's, appears to meet Aboriginal peoples' demands for recognition as distinct societies capable of self-determination. The Canadian state has kept pace with these theoretical developments through a series of legislative acts and royal commissions that have adopted many of the central terms and concepts of liberal multiculturalism. The Multiculturalism Act, 1988, for example, sets out the government's commitment to "recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society" and that "multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of Canadian heritage and identity" (Canada 1988). During the 1990s the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples exhaustively analyzed and critiqued the Canadian state's historical failures, after which the federal government expressed its intention to "set a new course in its policies for Aboriginal people" (DIAND 1997b, 2). This course, like liberal multicuturalist theory, is to be based on principles of "mutual respect, mutual recognition, mutual responsibility, and sharing" (2). Thus, in both theory and state policy, liberal multiculturalism presents itself as a long-awaited solution to the recurring problem of Canadian diversity.

RECOGNITION AND
SELF-DETERMINATION
IN THE BC TREATY PROCESS

In order to assess this apparent sea change in liberal multiculturalist
theory and practice during the 1990s, we now examine the British
Columbia Treaty Commission process (hereafter the treaty process)
as one instance of "dialogue" between the Canadian state and
Aboriginal peoples. As is well known, very few treaties have been
negotiated between Aboriginal nations and the BC government. The
colonial policy of denying Aboriginal rights allowed the province to
"buy time" to establish itself, but it also ensured that the spectre of
Aboriginal self-determination would continue to threaten the state's
authority to regulate (and profit from) capitalist exploitation of "its"
lands and resources (Venne 1999a). According to the BC Claims Task
Force, the establishment of a treaty process was supposed to help
reconcile the conflicting interests of First Nations and the "many
others who have acquired a variety of interests from the Crown" (1991,
16). Significantly, the means by which the Crown might have acquired
these interests in the first place is not being addressed. Yet, in what
was hailed as the dawning of a new era in Aboriginal/government
relations, in 1993 the BC government finally came to the table to
negotiate modern-day treaty settlements with British Columbia's
First Nations. In this section we examine whether the treaty process
in fact represents a "break with history" by analyzing how it has dealt
with two key issues: history and extinguishment. These issues, in
turn, relate to the possibilities of Aboriginal self-determination within
a liberal multiculturalist framework.

Culhane (1998) has described how, throughout history (up to and
including today), the fiction of *terra nullius* – vacant land uninhabited
by "civilized" societies – informed the settlement of British Columbia.
In keeping with this ancient European notion, the BC government
has been unilaterally conveying title to Aboriginal lands to White
settlers since before 1871. The Nisga'a were perhaps the most vigorous
in challenging this practice, leading the federal government to finally
begin negotiations with them in 1976. However, because of the
widespread power of the *terra nullius* narrative, initially Aboriginal
groups desiring self-representation were less concerned with defining
a particular vision of themselves in the eyes of governments than
with being seen in the first place (i.e., being recognized as peoples

with rights). As this goal was achieved, however, the Canadian state, in an attempt to regulate the meaning of the conflict over "who owns the land?" (Asch and Zlotkin 1997), shifted its strategy from denial to effacement and re-inscription.

In 1984 a pivotal legal challenge emerged whereby the Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en sought a declaration from the courts that would acknowledge, among other things, that they were "entitled to govern the[ir] territory by Aboriginal laws which are paramount to the laws of British Columbia" (*Delgamuukw* 1991, vii). While the decision handed down by the Supreme Court of British Columbia in *Delgamuukw* is now well known, Satsan (Herb George), a key figure in this case and BC regional vice-chief of the Assembly of First Nations, reflects on its final appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada and its effect on treaty negotiations:

> There's no pressure on government for them to change their mandate or their way of dealing with us ... They say to us "we've got the best thing for you [the treaty process] and you should just come, this is the best place for you, this is the best thing going." And they say, "if you want to consider litigation, you'd better consider these other things: number one, litigation takes a long time and you've got to be committed to it and we don't think you want to do that, we don't really believe that you can; number two, it's going to cost money and we know you don't have it; number three, the burden of proof is on you and the evidence that is going to be required to satisfy the test is beyond you, and we know that because we've taken your history away from you." They come right out and say that to us. (Interview with authors, 22 April 1999)

While the Supreme Court's decision in *Delgamuukw* has been celebrated as a victory, it has not significantly altered the Canadian state's position on Aboriginal self-determination and, indeed, has led the state to attempt to seduce Aboriginal nations into choosing the safer, more domestic, treaty option (Borrows 1999; Schulte-Tenckhoff 1998). Policy statements from the federal government are clear on this point: self-government will be exercised *within* the existing Canadian Constitution. What Canada recognizes as a right to self-government is not a recognition of Aboriginal sovereignty in the international sense; rather, Aboriginal peoples will continue to be citizens of Canada and the province or territory within which they live, but they may exercise varying degrees of jurisdiction and/

or authority in particular areas of governance (DIAND 1997a). Thus the court system, while it has sometimes "ruled against" the Canadian state, has by no means presented a threat to its sovereignty (Rotman 1997). As Dara Culhane (1998, 367) has pointed out, "the Aboriginal title codified by the Supreme Court's ruling [in *Delgamuukw*] remains a subordinate one that constitutes a burden on the Crown's underlying, radical title. The hovering sovereign's hegemony remains paramount."

The BC treaty process was cast as a political rather than as a legal response to the land question (BC Claims Task Force 1991). Like its federal predecessor, it was supposed to mark a "fundamental change in how the federal government will work together with Aboriginal peoples" (DIAND 1995). However, characterizing this process as something new – as a radical break from the past – obscures the struggles and experiences that brought Aboriginal peoples to the table in the first place and limits the possible outcome of any negotiations that might take place. These limits can be seen in two key phenomena that have come to shape participation in the process: (1) the unwillingness to deal with "history" (which results in obscuring the historical relations of power between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state as well as the concomitant obligation to deal with the illegal expropriation of lands and resources) and (2) the tacit insistence upon the "extinguishment" of Aboriginal title (which results in severely limiting the scope of Aboriginal claims to sovereignty and nationhood).

From the point of view of the Canadian state, "the Province's resources are not usefully spent in a lengthy exploration of historical and archaeological evidence ... The Province is not interested in recreating the past" (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs 1995). Rather, treaty negotiations are seen as "a means for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to come to a shared understanding of how we are going to live together. Treaties are key vehicles for establishing a *forward-looking relationship*" (*Treaty News*, 10 March 1998, emphasis added). The effect of this characterization is to block certain roads to self-determination and to reinforce a colonial relationship (Legaré 1995). Narratives about the future and about what is new tend to efface the history of ill-treatment that Aboriginal peoples have endured at the hands of the Canadian state. Although references to the historical treatment of Aboriginal peoples are no longer uncommon in government documents, they continue to be couched

in a rhetoric of absolution that makes them quite unbearable to the informed reader.

> Sadly, our history with respect to the treatment of Aboriginal people is not something in which we can take pride. Attitudes of racial and cultural superiority led to a suppression of Aboriginal culture and values. As a country, we are burdened by past actions that resulted in weakening the identity of Aboriginal peoples, suppressing their languages and cultures, and outlawing spiritual practices. We must recognize the impact of these actions on the once self-sustaining nations that were disaggregated, disrupted, limited or even destroyed by the dispossession of traditional territory, by the relocation of Aboriginal people, and by certain provisions of the Indian Act. We must acknowledge that the result of these actions was the erosion of the political, economic and social systems of Aboriginal people and nations. (DIAND 1997b, 4)

These broad statements about history – even when claiming to be about reconciliation – allow governments to shape the meaning of the histories that continue to affect the lives of Aboriginal peoples while simultaneously creating the appearance that historical matters have been addressed (Fortune 1993). Ironically, it is precisely where the past must be addressed – at the treaty table – that it is defined as a barrier to meaningful negotiations.

At the same time, the characterization of the treaty process as forward-looking allows the Canadian state to pat itself on the back for having entered into negotiations in the first place. This is an ancillary aspect of the overarching reinscription process to which Aboriginal groups are being subjected across a range of contexts (Venne 1999a) – a process that constructs the government's willingness to negotiate as an act of "benevolence," although the alternative to negotiations is nothing at all (Clark 1990). Politicians and bureaucrats utter the words "forward-looking" as though their meaning is universal and self-evident. However, this high-sounding phrase can be seen as an attempt to legitimate negotiations that tend to be conducted without reference to crucial historical considerations. This approach perpetuates the well established colonial practice of freezing Aboriginal peoples in time. "Contact" marks the point at which Aboriginal history both begins and ends: what Aboriginal peoples did before contact is irrelevant, and what they have done since is illegitimate or "inauthentic" (Malkki 1997). Moreover, the

sharp distinctions between the past and the future (between pre-contact and post-contact) imputes a cosmology that may or may not have meaning from an Aboriginal perspective. Nevertheless, these notions have become an unquestioned and unquestionable part of the master narratives that inform our understanding of Aboriginality vis-à-vis the land question in British Columbia (Furniss 1997/98).

The second phenomenon that shapes participation in the treaty process is the insistence upon the extinguishment of Aboriginal rights. Here extinguishment refers to substituting Aboriginal rights – as recognized and protected by the Constitution – with treaty rights. Historically, many treaties in Canada have included a provision requiring Aboriginal peoples to "cede, release and surrender" their rights as indigenous peoples in exchange for a treaty (Asch and Zlotkin 1997). While the meaning of this provision has been in dispute, most Aboriginal groups in British Columbia reject the principle of extinguishment as a precondition for negotiations. Nevertheless, under the guise of "certainty" extinguishment continues to be a feature of the treaty process. For example, Robin Dodson, a federal chief negotiator, speaking within a context not particularly sympathetic to First Nations concerns, is able to assure listeners that "governments are at the [negotiation] table for a reason. We want something. We require certainty: a predictable understanding of who has the right to do what."[9]

Whatever the relationship between extinguishment and certainty, it is perhaps more important to focus upon how extinguishment, as a precondition, figures into the treaty process. Ed John, in his former role as a task group member of the First Nations Summit, complains that Canadian governments insist on bringing their sovereignty into negotiations while simultaneously denying the sovereignty of First Nations:

> They say, these are conditions which we will not compromise, they tell us to leave our Aboriginal rights at the door when we come to the negotiating table, but they insist on asserting their Crown sovereignty when they're sitting at the table.[10]

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[9] Robin Dodson, speaking to representatives of the Fraser Valley Regional Advisory Committee (FVRAC) in Chilliwack, 8 November 1999.

[10] Ed John, speaking at the UBC Political Science Students' Association conference entitled "The Aboriginal Land Question: Building New Partnerships through Modern-day Treaty Negotiations," 4 March 2000.

In practical terms, this translates into the legitimation of Crown rights at the expense of Aboriginal rights and significantly weakens the position of First Nations. The requirement for extinguishment reinforces a colonial, and therefore domestic, conceptualization of treaties, thereby perpetuating the tendency to elide or elude the possibility that Aboriginal nationhood could be achieved alongside, rather than inside, the Canadian nation-state (Borrows 1999). As Culhane (1998, 347) observes, it is "at precisely the same moment that the Crown recognizes title [that] Aboriginal peoples must surrender it."

To return to the question that animates this section: does the treaty process mark a radical break from the past? The answer, unfortunately, is no. To date, at least seven settlement offers have been made under the treaty process, all of which have been rejected by the First Nation concerned. While the recommendations of the BC Claims Task Force (1991) may have appeared to herald a new era in which Aboriginal groups would be "allowed" to define themselves within the context of negotiations and beyond, their expressions and claims have instead been effaced and reinscribed so as to render a meaningful resolution of the issues unlikely. Despite its potential, the BC treaty process situates Aboriginal peoples in a position very similar to the one from which they are struggling to emerge, obscuring their history, limiting their rights, and denying them a complete set of options for self-determination within or apart from the Canadian state apparatus. Considered as part of the "dialogue" leading to "mutual recognition," which is supposed to be taking place between Aboriginal peoples and Euro-Canadians, the BC treaty process is seriously deficient. While some progress has perhaps been made, relations between these two identities are still based on colonial structures of domination: Aboriginal peoples must present their claims in Canadian courts, while the converse would be considered an absurdity; Canadian sovereignty is taken for granted and seen as unproblematic, while Aboriginal sovereignty is ruled out a priori; Aboriginal claims to recognition are not heard in the spirit of "acceptance of ourselves by others in our identity" (Taylor 1993, 190) but, rather, are skillfully transformed so as to rob them of their problematic particularity; and, finally, the demand for extinguishment, without a complementary extinguishment of Canadian rights, renders ridiculous any claim to equality and mutual recognition, and leaves little hope that the "new" BC treaty process will break the colonial impasse.

IS LIBERAL MULTICULTURALIST
THEORY (POST)COLONIAL?

It will come as no surprise to many readers that the Canadian state, via the government of the province of British Columbia, is trying to retain its historical advantage over Aboriginal peoples. Yet, given the voluminous production of the latest royal commission, and Canada's high moral tone on the international stage, one might well ask why the "new era" of mutual recognition has so quickly failed to live up to expectations. Is the BC treaty process an unfortunate and isolated aberration within an otherwise postcolonial relationship? Or are its failures somehow inherent within the larger discourse on Canadian liberal multiculturalism? We have referred above to the clear advances that have been made in this field. We now want to show that it also displays certain recidivisms, which helps to explain its most recent failure to make a break with the past. Once these colonial holdovers have been identified, it will become apparent that the BC treaty process stands as an *example of*, rather than as an *exception to*, the possibilities of dialogue and recognition within Canadian liberal multiculturalism.

Before proceeding, it will be helpful to give some indication of how a discursive field might be characterized as (post)colonial. A recent paper by Ian Angus is of use here in that it sets out precise criteria that are of direct relevance to our subject matter. Angus (2000) begins by defining a "multicultural speech act" as an utterance that occurs within a "multicultural context" (i.e., a context within which there is a "plurality of traditions of legitimation" [1]). Such a context has clearly existed since long before 1971, when it was officially named as such, but it has been obscured by the hegemony of a colonial discourse within which the Western tradition has monopolized the legitimation function. We can say, then, that "Canada" has always been multicultural in the sense that it has always contained a plurality of traditions. However, due to the refusal to acknowledge this pluralism (along with efforts to eliminate it), Canada has, simultaneously, been colonial.

What does it mean to overcome colonialism? The first step would be to recognize that a plurality of traditions actually exists. Through the court cases and acts of legislation cited above English Canada has taken this first step, at least in a legalistic sense. However, according to Angus, the postcoloniality of a speech act also requires the recognition that "the plurality of traditions is legitimate" (1). If

we remember Weber's definition of the state (as an entity that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory) then we would expect this overcoming to present much greater difficulties. In other words, the originality and particularity of a postcolonial utterance lies not only in its "acceptance" of the multicultural context but also in its acceptance of the *consequences* of this context in terms of shifting relations of power. For a colonizing identity, these shifts can only mean a decrease in its ability to dominate and exploit others, which will tend to appear as an undesirable outcome. Thus a colonizing state may continue to *act as though* it possesses a monopoly on legitimation, while simultaneously claiming that it now "recognizes" and "respects" other traditions. This mode of speech might be termed "pseudo-postcolonial" in that it *simultaneously recognizes and attempts to thwart* the radical possibilities of the multicultural context. In what follows we argue that such a pseudo-postcolonial position is characteristic of the discourse on Canadian liberal multiculturalism.

The fundamental flaw in liberal multiculturalist discourse becomes apparent when Taylor's theory of recognition is placed within its proper philosophical context (i.e., as a component of Hegel's discussion of the master-slave dialectic). As outlined above, Taylor hopes that newly evolving modes of recognition will allow a "post-industrial Sittlichkeit" to be fashioned out of the sharp fragments of Canadian colonialism. This is a laudable goal and one that, with certain reservations and qualifications, we share. There are serious difficulties, however, in Taylor's handling of the Hegelian narrative. This is because the recognition of which Taylor speaks is not equal, reciprocal, and freely given but a partial and grudgingly bestowed *gift* from an identity that sees itself as intrinsically valuable to a series of others whose right to existence is questionable. This can be seen in his ambivalent stance regarding recognition of the *value* of the other versus recognition of the *difference* of the other – what in Hegel would be recognition (*Anerkennen*) versus mere cognition (*Erkennen*). As members of groups within a multicultural context, cognition of difference is always already with us. By itself it allows us only to know the other as other; that is, as an entity to be assimilated, exterminated, tolerated, managed, and so on.

Recognition is something quite different. It is a certain sort of *response* to cognition of the other – a response that takes us into (or diverts us from) the realm of the postcolonial speech act. As Taylor

(1991b, 51) notes, "truly recognizing difference" involves "recognizing the *equal value* of different ways of being" (emphasis in original). But Taylor finds it difficult to move from the position of mere cognition. It bothers him that those advocating a "politics of recognition" demand that "we all *recognize* the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their *worth*" (1992, 64, emphasis in original). This difficulty is based on two points that Taylor is unwilling to grant. First, while he emphasizes the positive contribution that recognition makes to identity formation, he is less willing to acknowledge the damage that can be caused by its absence. Indeed, when he comes to speak about how the process of recognition can *fail*, he is always careful to put the claims in the mouths of others. This is apparent when he writes about the concept of "misrecognition" as it is used in identity politics. "The demand for recognition in these ... cases [minority groups, feminism, multiculturalism] is given urgency by the *supposed* links between recognition and identity" (1992, 25, emphasis added). In *The Malaise of Modernity*, Taylor writes that "equal recognition is not just the appropriate mode for a healthy democratic society. Its refusal can inflict damage on those who are denied it, *according to widespread modern view*" (1991, 49, emphasis added). Taylor goes on to acknowledge that "refusal" of recognition, or "non-recognition," can be a "form of repression"; but again he hedges by suggesting that the importance of this refusal may be "exaggerated" (50). Taylor himself is one of those who believes very strongly in the "links between recognition and identity." So why does he degrade this link to the status of a "widely held supposition" and "exaggeration"? It seems that he wants to play a dual game: when considering how the process of recognition can *succeed* in producing a unified identity, he wants to give it all the force he can. However, he does not approve of those who make use of actual historical failures of recognition to support a politics of difference that might be threatening to a precious, but fragile, Canadian unity.

Because of this reluctance to recognize those aspects of the other that conflict with the desire for a "united Canada," Taylor's model of "deep diversity" (cited above) is in fact rather shallow. In this vision, "diversity" is acknowledged through the transformation of the single category of "the people" (characteristic of the modern nation-state) to a multiplicity of categories of "citizen" (characteristic of the postmodern nations-state).[11] While there is indeed pluralism at this

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[11] See the argument presented in Day 2000, chaps. 8 and 9.

level, each of the *categories* is assumed to be monolithic in the sense that it occupies a characteristic position within the game of recognition. The English society asks for recognition from no one but is willing to *grant* it to others, thus taking the place of power as the giver of gifts. The Québécois, "ethnic" minorities, and Aboriginal peoples are given the position of those seeking the gift of recognition, each in its own characteristic mode. This is surely an advance over the model of the "tight, uniform, nineteenth century nation" that Taylor (1993, 199) is attempting to overcome. But, especially with regard to Aboriginal communities, the model must be extended to admit of diversity within these categories themselves. Again, a careful and generous reading of Taylor's text shows that he is to some degree aware of this need in that he envisions "varying" degrees of self-government being granted to Aboriginal communities. However, it must be noted that he does not in any way acknowledge the existence of Aboriginal claims to sovereignty or traditional nationhood, thus waking himself up at precisely the point where his dream threatens to turn into a nightmare for English and French identities.

Similar deficiencies can be discerned in Kymlicka's discussion of the allocation of rights and responsibilities to various citizenship/ethnocultural categories. While this process of allocation is certainly superior to classical racialist methods of allocating (or denying) citizenship rights, it also takes the form of the gift and relies upon an unsupported assumption that each category carries with it a particular "point of view." At times Kymlicka (1995, 145) is sensitive to this problem, as in the section on Aboriginal self-government where he notes that "Indian bands differ enormously in the sorts of powers they desire." He shows a similar awareness of the complexities of the politics of identity among Canadian Francophones living both within and outside of Quebec. But in a section entitled "Two Models of Federalism" he paves over this uneven ground with the claim that "the Quebecois and Aboriginal peoples insist that Canada must be seen as a multination federation" (146). In other words, "they," as homogeneous groups – in fact as *one* homogenous group (the national minorities) – now suddenly appear to take up the position he is advocating.

The need for this manoeuvre is clear: despite almost thirty years of official multiculturalism, the results have been at best mixed. Kymlicka tries to explain this lack of success by suggesting that Canadians are "clinging stubbornly to a model of federalism that has

demonstrably failed, not only in Canada, but in other Western multination states as well" (182). As an alternative, his model would involve a greater devolution of power to the Québécois and First Nations peoples. We would claim, however, that this devolution does not go far enough. Although it presents itself as the realization of a differentiated ideal of equality, Canadian multiculturalism – as both state policy and liberal theory – in fact involves a state-sponsored *redistribution of traditional inequalities* within the established categories of colonizer, colonized, and immigrant. There is no sustained critique, or even analysis, of the ways in which liberal-democratic capitalism and the state – regardless of their "ethnic identity" – have helped to construct and maintain Canadian colonialism. This kind of "postcolonial" thought seems to involve little more than the articulation of an adequately functioning political economy to an ever-expanding network of identities that are supposed to be "neutral" with regard to the most pressing problems facing *all* human beings today.

This problem has been noted by James Tully, who, in the mid-1990s, developed a critique of the theory and practice of "recognition," which is fundamental to the positions advanced by Kymlicka and Taylor. "The language employed in assessing claims to recognition," Tully (1995, 35) argued, "continues to stifle cultural differences and impose a dominant culture, while masquerading as culturally neutral, comprehensive, or unavoidably ethnocentric." As an alternative, Tully has suggested that modern European constitutionalism should be "amended and reconceived" so as to "guide intercultural negotiations on just forms of constitutional association" (31). Interpreted in the most radical way, this could be taken as a willingness to engage in discussions that challenge the full gamut of colonial structures. However, it should be noted that Tully speaks primarily about legal and cultural institutions; he does not present an integrated critique of capitalism, the state form, or the domination of nature. Rather, he expresses his hope that Aboriginal communities can achieve self-determination without "capsizing" the Canadian "ship of state" (28). As Bhikhu Parekh (2000, 351, n. 7) has recently pointed out, while Tully suggests that new forms of constitutionalism should be explored, he "more or less takes the modern state for granted" and thereby fails to "recognize" the specificity and value of other modes of social organization.[12]

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[12] Alan Cairns's (2000, 9) recent attempt to resurrect the "citizen's plus" mode of articulating Canadian and Aboriginal identities suffers from this same deficiency in that it assumes

In sum, we would say that Taylor's recognition theoretic is flawed by its reliance upon the notion of a gift from a superior to an inferior identity; this flaw is implemented in Kymlicka's theory of group differentiated citizenship rights; and it is insufficiently challenged in Tully's vision of postcolonial forms of constitutionalism. As we have tried to show, liberal multiculturalist discourse is founded upon a simultaneous affirmation and denial of the multiplicity of positions within Aboriginal communities. When combined with an unqualified dismissal of options on the sovereignty-nationhood end of the spectrum as "unrealistic," "dangerous," or "anachronistic," this strategic ambiguity enables the construction of a monolithic "Aboriginal point of view" in which the gift of limited forms of self-government within the Canadian state appears as the only viable option. While it may be progressive in some ways, this argument effaces the processes that continue to marginalize Aboriginal peoples and, thereby, helps to naturalize colonialism – as the racist and sexist pursuit of capitalist exploitation supported by state domination – as an inevitable and, indeed, bilateral outcome.

Perhaps more important, liberal multiculturalism also helps to justify past and present attempts by the Canadian state to exorcise precisely those spectres of Aboriginal self-determination that might offer the only chance of breaking away from the colonial legacy. As Parekh (2000, 112) points out: "To call contemporary western society liberal is not only to homogenize and oversimplify it but also to give liberals a moral and cultural monopoly of it and treat the rest as illegitimate and troublesome intruders." Only if "the rest" are not treated as illegitimate interlocutors, only if *all* aspects of *all* of the traditions that comprise the multicultural context of the territories claimed by the Canadian nation-state are considered as legitimate, can there be any hope of further advances towards postcolonial modes of interaction. It is in the name of a more open dialogue that we present, in the following section, a discussion of certain radical critiques of Canada's multicultural context that not only engage cultural issues but that also problematize patriarchy, state domination, and capitalist exploitation.

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that the only way in which "interconnectedness" can be achieved is via the institutions associated with the liberal-capitalist nation-state.

LIBERAL MULTICULTURALISM
AND TRADITIONAL
ABORIGINAL NATIONHOOD

As we have seen, the battle over the meaning and implementation of self-government is an important site of conflict between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state. In this section, we look at why this conflict has been so intense and why it has resisted the best efforts of liberal-capitalist theory to "multiculturalize" itself. Within European political theory, self-government is a mode of self-determination, which refers to the right of a people to determine its own destiny independent of external interference. In the heady days of European nationalism it was assumed that any people worthy of the name would fight for an exclusive articulation with a sovereign state and that if they won they would thereby prove their entitlement (Hobsbawm 1990, 102). In the 1960s the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights affirmed that "all peoples have the right of self-determination"; that is, they have the right to "freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development" (cited in Macklem 1995, 23-4). Recently, however, colonized groups who have claimed this right have been seen by liberal political commentators as pursuing a regressive form of ethno-nationalism. The way to the future, according to these "progressive" thinkers, will involve forms of civic or multicultural identification, in which no people will claim an exclusive articulation with a territorial state (Habermas 1992; Ignatieff 1993). This new common wisdom is also reflected in international law, which does not recognize the right of minorities to secede from *already existing* states (Macklem 1995, 25).

Aboriginal communities occupying territories claimed by the Canadian state have been put in a precarious position by this about-face. Having managed to escape destruction and incorporation under the old, exclusive regime, they now find themselves facing the same threats under the new, inclusive forms of nationalism. The pivotal moment came in 1969 with the infamous White Paper, which sought to dismantle the Indian Act bureaucracy and to transform "Indians" into "citizens" like all the rest. As is well known, this move was vigorously opposed by a majority of Aboriginal communities and was soon abandoned as an explicit policy.[13] But many have argued that the policy of official multiculturalism, which was adopted soon

[13] For an extended discussion of the extent to which the White Paper remains as an unofficial guide to state policy, see Weaver 1981.

after the White Paper was scrapped, contains the same flaws. Aboriginal people have been reluctant to be "incorporated into the country's multicultural fabric and ideology," argue Marianne Boelscher-Ignace and Ron Ignace (1998, 134), because it "homogenizes us into a 'native slot' on the ethnic landscape ... rather than acknowledging Aboriginal nations' specificity and rights to express this specificity on our own terms" (150). Within the context of the debate over the meaning of self-determination, the problem here is that the "equal citizen" of multicultural nationalism occupies a position of near-maximal inclusion within the structures of the colonizing state. Such citizens can indeed express themselves as a distinct people through the preservation of limited forms of cultural display, but they are required to assimilate/integrate in all matters of society, polity, and economy.

Refusing to heed the call of equal citizenship, during the 1970s and 1980s many Aboriginal leaders spoke instead of the "inherent sovereignty" of their communities and of the need for a "nation-to-nation" relationship. The Canadian state responded by beginning to consider various plans for Aboriginal self-government. Unlike the previous attempt to dismantle the federal system of tutelage, and the subsequent shift to a multicultural regime in which Aboriginal peoples counted as one ethnicity among many, self-government is supposed to accommodate rather than to eradicate the distinct qualities of Aboriginal communities. While the precise nature of the arrangement is to be negotiated with each group, the Canadian state imagines that these discussions will address "self-government aspirations at the territorial, regional, and community levels" (DIAND 1997b, 14). However, as mentioned in the section on the BC treaty process, the purpose of this kind of self-government is "to *delegate* parliamentary authority ... not to *substitute* Indian authority for parliamentary authority" (Long, Little Bear, and Boldt 1984, 73, emphasis in original).[14] On this model, self-governing communities would have some say in matters of society, economy, polity, and

[14] The most celebrated example of self-government achieved in recent Canadian history is the creation of the territory of Nunavut, in which the legislature enjoys a wide range of powers, including "the administration of justice" (Nunavut Act , 40-41-42 Elizabeth II c. 23.1e), taxation (j), some aspects of land use and sale (i, r, s), education (m), and cultural and linguistic affairs (m, n). But the territory also has a "Commissioner" appointed by the governor in council, who takes instructions from Ottawa (6.2) and sits in the legislative assembly, though s/he is not an elected representative. The Canadian state has also reserved the right to "disallow any law made by the Legislature or any provision of any such law at any time within one year after its enactment" (28.2). Whatever powers the people and legislature of Nunavut have been granted, their use will be closely scrutinized and, if necessary, overruled by a colonial administration centred in Ottawa.

culture, but they would remain under the ultimate control of the Canadian state.

While some Aboriginal communities and organizations have endorsed the concept of "autonomy and self-determination within Canada" (Boldt and Long 1988, 51), others have attempted to keep alive the quest for self-determination on their own terms. According to Taiaiake Alfred (1999, 59), "sovereignty is an exclusionary concept rooted in an adversarial and coercive Western notion of power" and is thus inappropriate for the sort of "traditional indigenous nationhood" that he advocates (56). Patricia Monture-Angus (1999, 35) takes a similar line, suggesting that sovereignty has "disparate meanings" in Canadian and Aboriginal discourses. For Canadians, sovereignty is about rights and control of territory, while for Monture-Angus it is about responsibility and relationship *with* territory (35-6). The incommensurabilities between these two conceptions of self-determination are multiple, deep, and interconnected; and they are unlikely to disappear if they are ignored or relegated to a position of marginality by liberal theory and practice.

As part of their revaluation of the theory and practice of self-determination, some advocates of traditional nationhood seek to heal the colonial-capitalist divisions of their societies into separate administrative spheres of politics, economics, and culture. The tendency to perpetuate existing structures of domination under the new name of "Indian self-government" is of particular concern here (Boldt 1993, 142). Marie Smallface Marule (1984, 40) notes that "there is a belief among some of our Indian people that by replacing the white bureaucrats ... with brown people, we will remedy all that is wrong with our situation." On a similar line, Lee Maracle (1996, 38) has suggested that "certain of the [Aboriginal] elite stood on our heads to climb out of the mine shaft" and that "liberation means ... they become our bosses." Taking up a line of thought that is consonant with the Weberian critique of rationalization, Marule and Maracle argue that, as such, the structures and processes of bureaucracy are oppressive and inefficient, regardless of whether they are imposed from outside or chosen from inside a community. These writers alert us to the fact that a community that adopts Western modes of social and political organization receives both the benefits *and* the banes of these structures. Taken to its limit, this critique challenges the legitimacy of the liberal state, as such, in positing – and positively valuing – a mode of social organization in which there is "no absolute

authority, no coercive enforcement of decisions, no hierarchy, and no separate ruling entity" (Alfred 1999, 56).[15] While not everyone will be willing to go to this limit, it is clear that the theorists of traditional Aboriginal nationhood are developing an immanent critique of the state form as a structure of colonial domination – a critique that, once again, can be ignored by liberal multiculturalism only at the peril of decreasing its own legitimacy.

The discourse on traditional Aboriginal modes of self-determination also contains a radical critique of capitalist social relations. Maracle (1996, 41) speaks of her foremothers as people who believed it was "criminal to use another to enrich oneself; by this, I understand that exploitation of the land or people, in the interest of profit, was prohibited." For Marule (1994, 39), capitalist individualism and materialism appear as aspects of a "non-Indian economic system" that threatens to further the assimilation and extermination of Aboriginal communities and individuals. In countering this tendency, traditional nationhood offers a set of values that "challenge the destructive and homogenizing force of Western liberalism and free-market capitalism" (Alfred 1999, 60). These values are based on an entirely different – and perhaps incommensurable – notion of the relationships that prevail among human beings and between human beings and the natural world. This critique should be of particular interest to theorists of liberal multiculturalism in that it treats capitalism as an aspect or moment of Western culture – as such, it would not occupy a position outside of cultural debates but, rather, would be open to critique in a deepened postcolonial dialogue.

Even if some Aboriginal communities manage to avoid the worst effects of rational-bureaucratic domination and capitalist exploitation in their quest for self-government, there remains a third "gift" of Western liberalism that many are reluctant to accept: patriarchy. "The denial of Native womanhood is the reduction of the whole people to a sub-human level," writes Lee Maracle (1996, 17). "The dictates of patriarchy demand that beneath the Native male comes the Native female." On this point, at least, liberal multiculturalism *has* had something to say: gender oppression is sometimes considered as an example of a "failure of recognition." Yet, just as often, gender issues

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[15] While these are clearly not mainstream European ideas, there are most certainly social and political theories and practices within the Western tradition that would have strong affinities with traditional Aboriginal nationhood. Certain forms of collectivist anarchism, especially the "social ecology" of Murray Bookchin, come to mind. But this is not an issue that can be developed here.

are excluded from discussions of multiculturalism on the grounds that cultural, racial, and ethnic issues must be treated in their specificity.[16] Finally, when gender *is* considered, the simple fact that liberal multiculturalism is a *liberal* discourse militates against the appearance of loaded concepts like patriarchy and oppression. A nod to an equality-based, or perhaps a "differential equality-based," form of liberal feminism is the most one can expect. Given the complex problems facing Aboriginal women within Canada, or within self-governing Aboriginal communities, it would seem that a much more radical stance is necessary – starting, perhaps, with the recognition that patriarchy exists and that racism, sexism, and capitalism form a linked system of domination and exploitation.

There are of course many questions to be raised regarding the theorization and implementation of the various models of traditional Aboriginal nationhood and their possible abuses. Some of these – the importation of Western structures of patriarchy, bureaucratic domination, and capitalist exploitation – have been discussed above. It should also be noted that the definition of "traditional" is itself a hotly contested issue within Aboriginal communities. For some, it is traditional to advocate "the internal apprehension of our children" by band bureaucracies (Maracle 1996, 38). For others, this is in direct contradiction to Aboriginal laws and values. Similar examples and arguments could be presented for each of the ways in which the traditional discourse discussed here tries to differentiate itself from liberal-democratic capitalism. One might also question the extent to which the elements of a coherent Aboriginal tradition even exist and, if they do, how they are to be recovered within the current context.

Perhaps these questions and concerns mean that the attempt to formulate a traditional Aboriginal mode of self-determination will exhaust itself in the mire of (post)colonial relations of power. But we do not believe this to be the case; rather, these debates are themselves evidence of the ongoing rewriting of Aboriginal traditions and experiences within the current context of simultaneous colonization and decolonization, the neoliberal attack on the welfare state, and capitalist globalization. As an attempt to further a holistic revaluation of Aboriginal social, cultural, and political forms, traditional nationhood represents a distinct and relevant option to both self-

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[16] Multiculturalism in Canada tends to be limited in this way, while in the United States the discourse is broader and tends to encompass, for example, issues of deaf, gay, and lesbian rights.

government and sovereignty on the European model, and the writers who advance this position are therefore deserving of much more attention than they have so far received from mainstream liberal multiculturalist theory.

CONCLUSION

Although necessarily limited in its scope, our examination of the BC treaty process and liberal multiculturalist theory has tried to show how these two fields share certain regularities that suggest their mutual complicity in ensuring that the table of legal-political dialogue remains tilted against the more radical aspirations of Aboriginal peoples. To the extent that they present claims of sovereignty and traditional nationhood, Aboriginal communities draw attention to the unpleasant fact that Canada, as the lost object of the multi-culturalist fantasy, *does not exist*. Canadian multiculturalism, as a liberal theory and practice, is thus haunted by both the past and the future of Aboriginal-Canadian relations. On the one hand, it must attempt to exorcise the spectres of those who have been badly treated from a history with which "we" are now less than comfortable. On the other hand, it must attempt to ward off the spectres of a future that is even more frightening, a future in which the self-determination of Aboriginal peoples takes forms that question the legitimacy of the liberal-democratic-capitalist nation-state itself. Preserving a culture within a multinational federation is one thing; offering up competing models for the articulation of peoples with polities and economies is quite another. Perhaps the greatest threat posed by the theorists of traditional Aboriginal nationhood is that they are developing an immanent critique of Canadian society that is applicable not only to Aboriginal people living on reserves but also to mainstream citizens who are already fully integrated into the structures of liberal-democratic capitalism.

   As noted above, Will Kymlicka (1995, 127) has stressed that the goal of his theory of multicultural citizenship is merely to "ratify and explain" state policy, not to bring about any great conceptual innovations. This tendency has been noticed by Ian Angus (1997, 137), who has suggested that "the practice of multiculturalism in English Canada has proceeded further in its everyday, institutional, and policy contexts than it has a social and political philosophy." Indeed, it is likely that some of the most interesting possibilities of

multiculturalism have been obscured or left unexplored precisely because contemporary theory has been following the lead of the state policy discourse. Another source of conservatism can be found in an orientation to limits that are apparently placed upon multicultural discourse by regressive trends in public opinion; that is, in the tendency of the public spheres hegemonized by the "two founding races" to react against the overturning of their colonial privileges. If it wishes to prove its progressive credentials, then liberal multiculturalist theory will have to move beyond these limits and begin to chart new territory. One important step in this direction would be to more fully acknowledge the "diversity within diversity" that characterizes not only Aboriginal nations but *all* human communities and, in so doing, to avoid the fallacious construction of a single Aboriginal point of view, from which limited forms of self-government appear as the only viable option for self-determination.

But this is only one aspect of a larger and much more difficult task: that of taking up a position that proceeds from mere recognition of the difference of the Other to acknowledgment of the value of the Other *as such*. From such a position, Canadian multiculturalism could allow itself to undergo creative encounters with traditional Aboriginal discourses, which have been widely acknowledged to possess unique and valuable insights into peaceful coexistence among human groups as well as between human groups and the lands they inhabit. If the past 500 years have taught us anything, it is that the spectres of Aboriginal sovereignty will never be exorcised by any amount or type of rational-legal containment: this only leads to their proliferation. If we are to make further breaks with our shared history of domination and exploitation, then these spectres must be *exercised*, allowed to take on embodied forms that, once removed from the realm of the undead, might not prove to be so frightening after all. This would be a crucial function of a radical multiculturalist theory/practice that would take upon itself the task of criticizing and transforming state policy and public opinion rather than using the reticence of policy makers and mainstream Canadians to justify its own failure to sufficiently move beyond colonial relations of power.

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