Aboriginal Labour in the North-West

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ABSTRACT. This article provides an historical overview of Aboriginal labour as a background to Saskatchewan forming as a province in 1905. It documents why and how Indians and Métis were formed as a labour force in the mercantile capitalist fur trade, beginning in the late 17th and continuing through to the 19th centuries. It argues that northern Indians were incorporated into early capitalism and exploited as a labour force in the commodity production of fur directed at the accumulation of wealth (capital) in Britain. In the late 18th century capitalist relations of exploitation were combined with intermarriage between European men (British and French) and Indian women as policy, resulting in the Métis as a source of cheaper wage labour internal to the fur trade than imported wage labour from Britain. In the 19th century a mostly Métis labour force and commercial middle class, centred in the Red River colony, rose in opposition to the political and economic colonialism imposed by British mercantile capitalism. This insurgency, beginning in the 1840s and continuing through 1869–70 with the confederation of Canada to 1885 at Batoche, made repeated demands for responsible government and access to land.

SOMMAIRE. Ce chapitre présente un exposé historique de la main-d'oeuvre autochtone à l'arrière-plan de la formation de la Saskatchewan en 1905. Il décrit pourquoi et comment les Indiens et les Métis furent utilisés comme main-d'oeuvre dans le commerce des fourrures mercantile et capitaliste, à partir de la fin du 17ième siècle et jusqu'au 19ième siècle. On y soutient que les Indiens du nord furent incorporés dans le capitalisme naissant et exploités comme main-d'oeuvre dans la production de fourrures visant à l'accumulation de capital en Grande-Bretagne. A la fin du 18ième siècle, les relations capitalistes d'exploitation se trouvèrent combinées avec la politique de mariage entre Européens (britanniques et français) et Indiennes—ce qui produisit les Métis comme source de main-d'oeuvre salariée interne à meilleur marché que celle importée de la Grande-Bretagne. Au 19ième siècle, une main-d'oeuvre et une bourgeoisie commerciale principalement métisses, concentrées dans la colonie de la Rivière Rouge, se dressa contre le colonialisme économique et politique imposé par le capitalisme mercantile britannique. Cette insurrection, échelonnée depuis les années 1840 jusqu'à Batoche en 1885, en passant par 1869–70 après la Confédération, renouvela le demandes pour un gouvernement responsable et un accès aux droits territoriaux.

Introduction

Aboriginal peoples[1] have a long history of participation in the labour force and political struggles in Western Canada that precedes the formation of Saskatchewan as a province in 1905. With the exception of Rolf Knight's *Indians at Work*, it is not inappropriate to say that few inquiries have been made specifically into the labour history of Indians and Métis as working people.[2] Knight reveals how and why Indians entered the resource industries' wage labour in British Columbia between 1858 and 1930, as loggers, longshoremen, teamsters, miners, fishers and cannery workers to name a few. They made these jobs an important part of their lives; Knight argues that there was nothing inherent in the cultures and ethnicities of Indians which prevented them from taking and remaining active in wage work. At the same time, he acknowledges that the Canadian state imposed the Indian Act and the reservation system for the express purpose of breaking down the traditional organization of labour, but, unlike the application of these policies on the prairies, in British Columbia, their purpose was to deliver Indian labour to the resource industries.

The historical circumstances of Indian and Métis labour in Saskatchewan are markedly different from British Columbia. This chapter is a general overview of Indian and Métis labour before the formation of Saskatchewan as a province. It has two main areas of focus. First, it documents why and how Indians and Métis rose as a labour force in the mercantile capitalist fur trade of the British Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) over the 18th and 19th centuries. Contrary to popular understandings of the fur trade, the relationship developed between the various Indian peoples of the North and the HBC was not one based on mutually beneficial relations. Instead, I maintain that the northern Indian peoples were incorporated into early capitalism and exploited as a labour force in the production of fur as a commodity. On the plains the relationship between mercantile capitalism and the Indian societies was entirely different. For reasons having to do with the incapability of the HBC to dominate these societies and the lesser quality of plains compared to northern fur, the Plains Indian peoples remained relatively independent. The confrontation of the Plains Indian societies with capitalism would not occur until the 1870s with the settlement of Western Canada.

Second, the chapter investigates the political struggles of the Métis in the 19th century. The fur trade under the British HBC was as much a colonial enterprise as those undertaken by other European powers (Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and French) over the 16th to 19th centuries throughout the Americas. Centred in the Red River colony, Métis commercial and working classes emerged in the 1820s in opposition to the political and economic colonialism imposed by the HBC. Repeated demands for responsible government were made over the 1840s and 1850s, which were suppressed by British troops, only to emerge again in 1869-70 with the annexation of Rupert's Land to Canada. Although principally led by a Métis commercial class, these political struggles were supported by the Métis and Indian labour force who saw these demands in their own interests. In 1885 an insurrection took place at Batoche against the policies of the Canadian government, which were marginalizing the Indian and Métis peoples.

Capitalism and Colonialism

The modern history of the world dates back to the rise of capitalism in the feudal societies of sixteenth century Western Europe. In Europe, mercantile capitalism (1500–1800) as a system was the transitional period from feudalism to the full emergence of capitalism with the industrial revolution (1800–1880s). It had as its main characteristics the initial accumulation of capital (wealth) and the production and circulation of commodities for the market place. In order for capitalism to develop, it was necessary for the merchant classes to expand their enterprises beyond Europe and for the production and circulation of commodities to take place on a world scale. The accumulation of wealth, beginning with mercantile capitalism, thus occurred on a world level, but in a world that was divided into many diverse cultural, economic and social systems. From this time onward capitalism has been imperialistic, and a world system, with colonialism and racism being fundamental to its expansion onto the world.[3]

Imperialism is the expansion of capitalist systems into foreign territories and taking of lands, resources, and labour for exploitation. Beginning with mercantilism, the expansion of capitalism ultimately drew into its orbit many non-capitalist societies at various levels of development, ranging from communal to class and state based civilizations. Basically, colonialism involved imposing capitalism on non-capitalist societies, resulting in the transformation or complete destruction of the existing economy and social organization governing access to resources and uses of labour. The main purpose of colonies was to contribute to the economies and wealth of their colonial rulers. Towards this end the European powers imposed colonial policies which were directed at creating their self-sufficient empires, the colonies producing raw resources and food products for the home country and providing markets for its manufactures.

The making of colonial economies around the production of agricultural products and raw resources required the creation of a plentiful and continuous supply of cheap labour subjected to various means of coercion and exploitation. Depending upon the form of labour needed most of it came from existing indigenous sources, but also from the forced migration of people from the home countries or other parts of the colonial world. In many cases labour forms were created where before they did not exist. This can be seen, for example, with the creation of African slaves as forced labour in the Caribbean and Latin American plantation systems, and Scot and French migrant indentured wage labour, and Indian trappers as coerced indigenous labour, in the North American fur trade. At the heart of the mercantile expansion were the slave trade and the plantation system in the Americas to which the Atlantic trade and other mercantile enterprises interconnected.[4]

The capitalist exploitation of labour is traceable to the mid-17th century with the rise of capitalist manufacturing and the law of value. Following the law of value, the capitalist production of commodities requires that they possess value that has to be greater than the cost of their production, which includes payment to labour, in order to assure a profit from their sale in the market place. Thus, labour in the production of commodities produces value greater than the value of its payment, or the price

of labour, which is realized as surplus value. From this time onward capitalism follows only one "law" which is that labour, whether in the home countries or in the colonies, must be exploited in the maximum production of surplus value.[5]

It was during the mercantilist period that the structures of unequal exploitation of labour and trade were initially created between the colonizing countries and their colonies. Following the law of value, the price of labour (for example, the maintenance of African slaves, and trade goods for Indian trappers) in the colonies was kept lower than the price of labour (wages) in the home countries. Unequal exploitation occurred; the surplus value in the resources produced by cheaper colonial labour was greater than the surplus value in the manufactured goods produced by higher priced European labour. From this time onward trade between the colonies in the form of cheaply produced resources, and home countries in the form of manufactured resource products, constituted the unequal exchange of surplus value based upon unequal payment to labour.[6]

It was also during the mercantilist period that the unequal development of capitalism between the colonial and home countries was first established. While mercantilism broke down or destroyed the existing organization of labour and economy in the colonial areas, at the same time it reproduced them in a distorted form. The structure of specialized production of resources and unequal exchange directed at the accumulation of wealth and manufacturing in the home country was aggravated by the industrial revolution. The continued economic aggression and political domination by the home countries resulted in the creation of a deformed, dependent form of capitalism in which backward forms of labour were reinforced and perpetuated in the colonies. Any attempt at independent capitalist development in the colonial areas—including class struggle—was blocked. The result was the underdevelopment of capitalism and classes in the colonial economies.[7]

Mercantile Capitalism and Economic Conquest: The 17th and 18th Centuries

The Indian societies of the sub-arctic previous to the mercantile capitalist fur trade were autonomous hunting-gathering societies. As such they were part of the broad family of communal formations. However, in comparison to other more advanced horticultural communal formations, such as the Iroquois, these societies of hunter-gatherers were not capable of producing great amounts of economic-surplus. Socially, these societies consisted of small gatherings of families grouped together in bands, which were also the basic unit of production.

As hunter-gatherers these societies were egalitarian in the sense that they were organized around kinship as an ideological and social system of co-operation. What the people produced and how it was distributed, exchanged and consumed by harvesting from the natural world was undertaken and directed at the survival of the collective whole. In these societies kinship defined the access to resources and tools of work, and the collective mobilization of labour in the production and distribution of products for their use-value. As such, there was not specialized production and exchange of fur or any other natural products as commodities on the basis of

exchange-value. The only division of labour was by sex and age. Within the sexual division of labour the relationship of women and men was mutual and reciprocal in the sense that each sex and each individual was autonomous to the extent that they had control over the conditions of their own work and the distribution of what they produced, which was equally valuable to the collective whole. While individual leadership existed and exercised power over others, it was attributed to personal capabilities, like a leading hunter, and ended when the tasks were completed. Consequently, in these societies there was no permanently existing social group of individuals as a class that dominated the population through the use of a state for the purpose of extracting economic surplus for themselves.[8]

When the HBC formally positioned itself on the west coast of Hudson's Bay and the southern portion of James Bay in the 1670s, two incompatible economic, and social systems were brought into contact with each other: the British mercantile capitalist system and Indian cooperative communalism. If the systematic production of fur was to occur, then the HBC had to gain access to, and exert control over, the Indians as the only available source of skilled labour for that purpose. The northern Cree, Ojibway and Chipewyan-Dene in the Hudson's Bay basin, however, were not prepared to become party to the production process. As cooperatively organized peoples their ideological and social organization of labour resisted any form of commodity production and exploitation.

For fur production to be successful, it was necessary that the labour of Indians be diverted from the production and consumption of goods for their own use to the specialized production of fur as a commodity for sale. Trade by itself was insufficient to bring about the required transformation. The communal societies would continue to trade sporadically for manufactures as a complement to their natural subsistence economies. Since kinship as an ideological and social system of cooperation was dominant in the organization of labour and the distribution of the economic surplus, the merchant capitalists, acting through their resident officer traders, were required to use the kinship system, including existing authority figures both women and men, and to impose economic and non-economic forms of coercion. The coercion took the form of introducing new tools of work with European trade goods and alcohol to develop initial trade relations.[9]

The following account of the Dene-Chipewyans northwest of York Factory is the clearest expression of the intention of the British, in the early 1700s, to incorporate Indians by the use of economic coercion into mercantile capitalism:

> [T]here is abundance of Indians in those parts as never has traded either trade or commerce with any people… [B]ut these poor people have none but are forced to live by their bows and arrows and they cannot live a great many together, because they have nothing to subsist on but what they hunt… But if please God when I have settled a trade amongst them and can bring what I am working upon to pass I will stop the trade with those Indians for a year or two … and drive the Dogg's to the Devill.[10]

In essence the HBC was initiating its strategy of economic conquest. In this case the

trade was developed initially through the use of a woman. Because of her political influence she was able to recruit selected followers to come to York Factory to be collectively trained in the use of the rifle and to learn which furs were valuable, the desired quality, and the time of year they were to be trapped:

> [S]he has told all her country men what ever traded for and directed them how to stretch and clean all there skins and furs, etc. The time of year to kill them in telling them to kill no summer skins but Moose skins ... she kept all the Indians in awe ... she scolded at some and pushing of others that all stood in fear and forced them to y'r peace ... now whe is here she doth awe her country men they dare hardly speak to her.[11]

As revealed above, initial trade contacts were made by the resident officer traders on a collective basis using the Indians' traditional trade practices and authority over trade. New manufactured tools of work, such as the gun, steel trap, knife and axe, together with food, clothing and alcohol were introduced with the intent of creating a want for these goods based upon their usefulness and displacing their equivalent domestic production.[12] In the case of alcohol it was introduced as a form of psychological coercion.

Relationships between British men, particularly the resident officer traders, and Indian women were strategic to developing and consolidating the mercantile fur trade, as well as gaining access to the kinship system. In the words of one officer of the HBC in the early 1700s Indian women were "a great help in engaging them [Indians] to trade," these alliances with Indian women resulted in "a firm friendship."[13] During this early period the exchange of men and young boys along with women took place as symbols of peace and friendship. Most important, however, were relationships between the officers of the HBC and Indian women who were influential either in their own right or perhaps as relatives of leading hunters, and also if the relationship led to the begetting of children. The following illustrates this point, particularly the importance of intermarriage:

> Ausiskashagan came in here hawling his sick wife on a Sledge, relieved then with provisions ... she having been brought up at Albany and used to these comforts, as being of ye blood Royal and has a child by Mr. Adams, is very industrious in catching Martins, I having had above two hundred from her husband already and must use them with tenderness on acc't of ye comp'ys interest.[14]

Once the resident officer traders determined that their trade relations with the Indians were solidified and there was a continuous want for the manufactured goods, they undertook two strategic actions. First, price as a measure of value exchange was imposed on all formal exchanges. Second, collective trade was terminated and individual trade imposed in its place. The purpose of individual trade and price was to break down the ideology of collectivism and production for the common good and create in its place the acceptance that fur and manufactured goods were commodities and individual private property. In order to reinforce the acceptance of private property and also encourage individual merit, high fur production was rewarded with

free gifts of manufactured goods and alcohol. Once Indians accepted price and engaged in the specialized production of fur, then Indian labour came under the domination of capital. Gradually, the Indians' need for European goods was created. No longer was Indian labour directed toward their collective societies, but instead it was directed toward capital accumulation by merchant capitalists.[15]

The initiation of individual trade with rewards was intentionally conducted with Indian men, thus establishing men, and not women, as the dominant source of labour in the production of commodities for exchange. Moreover, the introduction of new tools of work, such as hunting and domestic tools, through men, displacing the old, was strategically undertaken by the resident officer traders to fracture the reciprocal relationship between Indian women and men in the sexual division of labour, and at the same time break the dependency of individual family units on their communal societies. Indian women's role in the communal societies and in the families was ultimately transformed. They were no longer responsible for producing these tools as had been traditionally the case, and at the same time, they increasingly directed their labour toward the required preparation of fur. In this process Indian men gradually came to interfere with and then dominate the labour process of women in the commodity production of fur.[16]

In order to further fracture the collective societies, bands of individual families were assigned to particular fur-trading posts constituting the home guard Indians. As Indian men engaged directly in hunting and trapping, the fur-trading posts assumed the responsibility, through credit, for attending to Indian women and children. Indian women, in turn, were cajoled to contribute their labour to the upkeep of the post by producing natural produce provisions and clothing, in the process further weakening their contribution to the collective Indian society. Whereas previously women's labour was directed towards the collective society, it was now redirected towards the upkeep of the fur-trading posts.[17]

In the fur trade of mercantile capitalism the HBC was not interested in completely destroying the Indian communal societies, only in transforming them and ending the predominance of the kinship system and the cooperative organization of labour. In fact, merchant capital intentionally reproduced the basics of Indian relations of production in a distorted and ruptured form. On the surface it appeared as though the societies still continued in their independent historic form. Continued subsistence from the land meant that the mercantile company was not totally responsible for the upkeep of Indian labour, as it was for its wage labour force. The continuation of their "traditional economies" also meant that the value of Indian labour could be kept at its lowest common denominator. The result was a high degree of exploitation and high rate of profit.[18]

The imposition of new relations of exploitation and the transformation of Indian societies with the fur trade, together with the importation of British wage labour and officer traders, created a colonial economy and society in which there was a fundamental division of labour between the Indians as primary producers of wealth and the British as wage labourers. This division was based primarily on the law of value and the price of labour reinforced by political coercion from the

merchant capitalists in London through their resident officer traders. Indians came under the Indian tariff, or the rate at which they were paid for their furs, which was a rate of exploitation greater than that of British workers. Any change in production relations, such as allowing Indians access to wage-labour jobs around the posts, was forbidden, since such change would contribute to the breakdown of the division of labour and remove Indians from the primary production of fur.[19]

The economic basis of the division of labour between Indian and British labour was reinforced on the ideological level through the political use of Christianity. The early racism and nationalism expressed in terms of Christianity was instilled in the British labour force around the fur trade posts as the difference between the superior civilized British Christian and the inferior uncivilized heathen Indian. The intent was to bind the British labourers in loyalty to the HBC and so create an intermediate buffer between the merchant class in Great Britain and what would otherwise be a mass of British and Indian labouring people. In effect, racism served the purpose of preventing British labourers from joining with the Indians as mutually exploited labour in possible opposition, or outright revolt. We see this with the daily reading of the scriptures by the resident commanding officers:

> Wee do strictly enjoyn you to have publick prayers and readings of the Scriptures...that wee who profess to be Christians may not appear more barbarous than the poor Heathens themselves who have not been instructed in the knowledge of the true God.[20]

The fundamental division of labour between Indians and British labourers was thus socialized around the ideology of race (racism) as a means of reinforcing this separation. Any fraternization between British labourers and Indians was considered a detriment to the trade and outside the "Lawes of God or man."[21] Segregation was reinforced through various disciplinary actions by the officer in charge at the fur trade post. British workers were not allowed to fraternize, especially at time of trade, and Indians were not allowed into the trading posts, or taught to read, since it was feared they would come to understand the economics behind the relationship of exploitation. There were, nonetheless, numerous instances where British workers ran away to live with the Indians. From that time on they were considered to have degenerated into uncivilization and dealt with as an Indian under the Indian tariff.

The HBC as a mercantile company reflected and practiced still lingering feudal labour relations in Great Britain. All skilled and unskilled labour was recruited individually, legally bound to the HBC by contract as indentured (bonded) labour usually for three to five years, and economically dependent upon the particular post to which it was sent. They were carpenters, tailors, coopers, fishermen, boat and canoe builders, sawyers, blacksmiths, boatmen and labourers to name a few. The relations between the mostly Scot workers, called servants, and officers of the post were paternalistic following the feudal master-servant relationship. In return for the loyalty and performance of the workers, the HBC assumed most of their overhead expenses such as food, clothing and housing.[22]

The unskilled labourers did the heaviest of work that the senior officer class

would not, and tradesmen were not expected, to do and they were expected to do it without question. The work was demanding and in many cases cruel, requiring young, fit "lads." They performed a multitude of tasks around the posts ranging from some hunting, fishing and gardening, as the posts tried to be self-sufficient, through to general upkeep, assisting the tradesmen and doing seasonal land and water transportation between posts. From the beginning the tradesmen, in addition to their other duties, were used to manufacture trade goods at the larger posts where the HBC found it cheaper to produce than purchase them in Britain. These included commodities such as clothing, ice chisels, and awls to name a few. In addition to manufacturing tools of work for the Indians' use, the blacksmiths often doubled as armourers adapting and repairing Indian rifles to the climatic conditions. Although hired as bonded labour and dependent on the fur trade post, class conflicts were not all that uncommon between the servants and the Company's officers. Usually these were expressed on an individual basis and occurred in relation to wages, treatment, and working conditions. If the conflict was severe enough, the individual workers responsible would be fined, physically beaten, jailed, and/or sent back to Britain and possibly blacklisted.[23]

Mercantile Capitalism and Internal Sources of Wage Labour, 1760s–1821

As the first half of the 18th century was characterized by mercantile capitalism establishing itself around Hudson's Bay, so the latter part of that century and first part of the 19th century came to be characterized by the deepening of commodity production with a corresponding increase of British colonialism and imperialism. This included the rapid inland penetration of the HBC and North West Company (NWC), the continued process of economic conquest, and the increased exploitation of Indian labour as a result of monopoly competition between the two fur trade companies and increased demand in the European market. It was also during this period that the foundations of what was to become an underdeveloped colonial economy and society in the 19th century were laid. The continued specialized production of fur for export contributed, along with other colonial resources from elsewhere in the British colonial empire, to the accumulation of capital and industrial development with manufacturing in Great Britain and backwardness of the HBC fur trade society and economy.

The competition and inland penetration by both mercantile companies created an increased need for more permanent labour and officers to work and manage the expanding post and transportation system. However, the cost of maintaining the expanded system and increased importation of labour became astronomical. From 1774 to 1821 the HBC post system increased from 7 to 242, and its labour force expanded from fewer than 200 to just over 900 men. In addition, the resident labour force was aware that the HBC needed more labour and so began demanding increased wages. Strikes and mutinies became common and precipitated the question of wage labour and its costs. Together with labour shortages in Europe, due to wars, and increases in the price of labour, due to industrialization, there emerged the need for formal wage labour in the country that would be cheaper and at a price lower

than that imported from Britain, but would be available without having to draw upon the Indian population.[24]

The last twenty years of the 18th century was rent with strikes and mutinies during the summer season amongst the inland boat brigades manned mostly by Orcadians. The boatmen, in navigating the inland rivers and transporting goods in and furs out, had become the backbone of the inland penetration. Because of the danger involved in navigating the river systems the labour process in the boats was highly specialized and skilled. The most skilled were the steersman, then the bowsman, followed by the middlemen with each position paid according to its skill. In any trip death or injury was not that uncommon. During the 1790s numerous strikes broke out at Cumberland House, in what is now northern Saskatchewan, amongst the boatmen running boats from York Factory to Cumberland House, over wages, working conditions and terms of their contracts. These boatmen had been in the service of the HBC for a good many years and had come to know the value of their work.

These strikes were significant because they represented, in addition to raising their wages, an attempt by the boatmen to organize collectively and break the absolute power the HBC held over bonded labour. In a sense it might be considered as an initial attempt by labour to create a "free" labour force by trying to organize in the fur trade territory—which they could not do in Britain—the collective negotiation of their contracts on their terms. Take the following report on the strikes to the London board of directors:

> [C]alled a council and acquainted Men ... out of thirty Men whose times expire this year only three entered into contract... Seven others promise to give their answer tomorrow. They appear this year to make a higher demand for wages than any preceding one, and it is evident a combination is entered into among the whole. But what is still more extraordinary most of them are inclinable to return for two years only, that all their times might expire at once; and as the chief part are Steersmen, they suppose their leaving the Service all at once it will greatly distress the Inland Trade; if not totally stop it.[25]

The response of the London directors was to direct their resident officers to reward the loyal, ship home the disloyal and begin to look for an alternate source of labour that could be trusted.[26]

The most available potential source of cheaper labour was the Indians around Hudson's Bay and outlying area. By the late 1700s, the Indians in this area had been subordinated to capital for close to one hundred years and in the process had become an indentured labour force with debt, working the land as trappers producing fur and other natural products. During the summer season they were employed by the HBC in the same capacity as British labour in transportation, but paid at a different rate under the Indian tariff, usually working off their winter debts as if they had produced an equivalent amount of fur. Take, for example the following situation: "Poor indeed are the prospects of trade at the Factory, great part of the home guard debts remain for them to work out by Inland journeys."[27] For reasons having

to do with the law of value and, in particular, maintaining the fundamental division of unequally priced labour between Indians as the primary producers of wealth under the Indian tariff and British wage labour under the Servants tariff, the HBC could not turn to the Indians and formally incorporate them into wage labour. If the production of fur was to continue, then Indian labour had to be preserved as primary commodity production labour supported by natural subsistence no matter how impoverished they became.

The long-standing policy of the HBC for most of the 1700s was to disallow family formations between British men and Indian women from taking place. Such unions along with offspring and their upkeep were considered as an increased overhead expense and hence a drain on profits. In the past any children born of informal relations between the servants and officers and Indian women were required to be raised in the Indian societies as Indians. The HBC reversed its policy and now encouraged family formations to take place with the view that such unions would keep the servants in the country longer, and at the same time the offspring, when matured, could be used as a cheap source of wage labour. The rudiments of education and Christianity were thus imparted to the children with the intent of socially moulding them separate from the surrounding Indian population so they would become "a colony of very useful Hands."[28] In the last quarter of the 18th century the first generation of Métis were recruited to form the beginnings of an indigenous wage labour working class. Take as an example the case of Thomas and John Richards in the 1780s:

> We are sorry to acquaint you we are five men short of our intended compliment being only 59 Men, but there is two young lads by name Thomas & John Richards (sons of Mr. Richards late Master at Henley) who have made repeated application to your chief and officers to be retained in your Honors service as Englishmen, the former has frequently been employed in case of necessity.[29]

Although the two brothers were hired as bonded wage labour and as "Englishmen" under the Servants tariff, it was at half the wages for almost twice the period of time and, as well, they were not allowed to immigrate to Britain. At the time the going rate for British labour was £10 to £20 per annum for two to three years. Thus, the terms of their employment made them a captive, cheaper, wage labour force with the price of their labour below that of imported workers. Furthermore, wage labour Métis—especially those with Indian families—were socially segregated from permanent access to the outpost British community. Any Métis who were not drawn actively into wage labour had no other choice but to return to Indian society (Cree, Chipewyan, Ojibway etc.) as Indians-Métis and engage in the primary production of fur as a livelihood, serving also as a lower priced reserve army of labour seasonally employed as Indians under the Indian tariff.[30]

With inland penetration in the late 1700s the HBC was also in need of inexpensive labour to fill the positions of clerks, accountants and junior traders. The Métis sons along with some daughters of the officer class, after receiving basic education

at the larger posts around Hudson's Bay, were sent to Britain for a colonial education. On their return they came to occupy junior administrative positions under the British officer class. The Métis in these positions eventually came to comprise a national elite, or petty class that operated in alliance with the merchant capitalists in Britain and under their influence. Métis women were groomed to be partners of British officers and workers, who were no longer finding Indian women to be suitable country wives.[31]

As a matter of policy the fundamental economic division created earlier between Indians and British Europeans was expanded to include the first generation of Métis. While Métis were anglicized and Christianized, and allowed access to "English" positions as labourers and petty elites, they were, like colonial "half-breeds," not allowed to be British Europeans. The emergence of the Métis in the late 18th century had less to do with intermarriage, in a biological sense, than it did with an intentional, systematic policy of metissage creating intermediate classes between the English merchant class and the Indians.

The economic transformation of northern Indian societies took place from the late 17th to well into the 19th centuries as the mercantile fur trade moved inland from the Hudson's Bay coast through to the McKenzie River valley. By employing the same strategy of intermarriage and controlling the tools of work developed earlier around the coast, the resident traders were able to bring about the subordination of inland Indian labour to capital. Once accomplished, the division between non-wage and wage labour was created around the various inland posts, reinforced economically by the Indian and Servants tariffs and ideologically by race categorization as policy. Although the communal societies disintegrated economically, mercantile capitalism intentionally perpetuated the fundamentals of their organization of labour, including subsistence from the land and ethnic group organization, in a distorted and ruptured form.

The Red River Colony and the Internal Labour Market

From 1821, when the NWC merged with the HBC, until 1870, when Rupert's Land was annexed to Canada, an era of formal British colonialism existed. During this period the HBC no longer exercised political power solely as an independent mercantile concern, but came more closely under the control of the British Parliament and Colonial Office. A political and state governing organization was established in the Red River colony under the administration of the HBC to deal with the developing internal class formations and divisions of labour, guarantee the continued accumulation of capital from the fur trade by the merchant capitalist class in Britain, and maintain British imperial interests and political sovereignty over Rupert's Land.[32]

After the merger of the NWC into the HBC in 1821 the HBC retrenched its operations to the Red River colony. The intention was to create an agricultural settlement and labour market. All surplus labour, including British and British-Métis labourers under the HBC and French and French-Métis labourers and buffalo hunters under the NWC, together with retired British officer traders from both companies were settled at Red River where they, along with the Selkirk settlers

(crofters) from the Highland clearances in Scotland, received land allotments forming the nucleus of a colony. In the colony the settled labourers constituted a labour pool and market to be drawn upon seasonally when needed and discharged during slack periods, or hired annually cheaper than either those from Britain or Quebec. It was the responsibility of the Christian churches to socialize the population and mould the labour force into the required disciplined form needed by the HBC.[33]

As an agent of British colonial policy the HBC directors in London stipulated that the settlement be organized first and foremost around a "respectable white population" as an outpost of British civilization. Following this directive, representation on the colonial state system (Council of Assiniboia) was drawn from those European classes loyal to British and HBC mercantile interests—the resident and retired officers of the HBC, Selkirk settlers and Protestant and Roman Catholic clerics—who were appointed by the Governor of Rupert's Land. Clearly, this body was not representative, nor was it responsible. The Red River colony was not established as a free colony in the sense that land was available for freehold title. Rather, land tenure remained with the HBC in semi-feudal fashion. Land allotments were distributed by the Governor with the largest going to the loyal European classes who would constitute the agricultural producing settlers, and the smallest to the labour force, some of whom were allowed to be squatters, for subsistence production supporting their paid incomes.[34]

The policy of metissage developed by the HBC in the late 1700s was continued in the Red River colony. In order to guarantee the propagation of a wage labour force (Métis), as well as a middle class, guidelines were put forward to curtail intermarriage with Indians and restrict it to Europeans (British and French) and Métis and then again among the Métis.[35] Racial distinctions were made between Indian, Métis and European, and then again between British-Métis and French-Métis. The British-Métis were considered superior to the French-Métis in that they were the offspring of the dominant, superior racial nation. The French, on the other hand, were a subject, lesser European people; and since they, mostly labourers, were seen by the British as "little removed from savages," the French-Métis were characterized as the product of two inferior races.[36] The following is an accurate reflection of the racial categorization of the Métis, which took place under British colonial rule:

> [T]he French Métis are a very different race... [A]lmost all the national characteristics of the Scotch are reproduced in almost their native strength in their half-breed children... [W]hen a Scotch voyageur took to himself a wife from the Indian tribes he let it be distinctly understood that he considered himself superior to his escort, who carried out his wishes to the letter... The children were brought up in the way he thought best. The French coureur de bois always regarded his Indian spouse as his equal and let her have her own way in the bringing up of children and consequently, the Indian characteristics came to the front. In this way, there was formed a race, hospitable, careless, generous, having many of the noble qualities of the Indian and the French. But totally without ballast, fickle in their dispositions and easily influenced either in the right or wrong direction.[37]

In the course of creating a labour market and classes the policy of metissage,

rationalized in terms of biologically determined races and characteristics, led to the creation of a hierarchal racial caste system, which was in turn formalized within the class structure. In the context of this colonial economy and marginal development of classes, which was similar to other colonial areas particularly Latin America, the Métis as mixed-bloods ranged from Indian-Métis to European-Métis.

In the fur trade, "White race" was introduced reflecting British colonial policy of the 19th century as a political expression of the imagined racial superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans. In the Red River colony the conditions of the Indian, Métis and European as labourers and bondservants were very similar. With the policy of metissage directed first and foremost at creating and reproducing a labour supply, the French and British labourers through intermarriage were assimilating into a greater homogenizing Native population. By defining the Red River settlement, and by extension the rest of Rupert's Land, to be a "white" colony with political power vested in the local European (British and French) classes loyal to the HBC, the merchant capitalist class in London created a buffer between themselves and the greater Native population. The "White race" was intentionally invented by the ruling class as a social control formation in response to the threat of labour disloyalty. The invention of the "White race" thus served as the principal historic guarantor of ruling class domination of European and non-European labour dividing one from the other.[38]

From the labour force in the Red River colony came the buffalo hunters, agricultural labourers for the large landowners, and workers in river and land cartage who were recruited on a seasonal basis. It also provided labour to be hired annually complementing continuing labour supplies from Scotland and Quebec.

Although the colony was established as a capitalist labour market, labour was not entirely free. With the exception of the buffalo hunters and agricultural labour in the colony who were independent, all seasonally and annually employed labour, whether from the colony or Scotland and Quebec, continued to be employed by the HBC as bonded labour and subjected to the feudalistic master-servant relationship until 1870. By the 1830s, 20% of the contracted annually employed workers were Métis. Their numbers increased to approximately 50% by the 1850s. These numbers do not include the seasonally employed labour in the colony, such as with Red River carts or boats, and interior at the many posts.[39]

With numerous posts spread throughout the interior the HBC was in need of a source of provisioning in addition to what could be produced in the Red River colony. Since the plains Indians were still independent and had not been brought under the complete influence of the HBC and transformed into commodity producers for exchange, the labour necessary for the surplus production of protein food in the form of pemmican and hides for eastern industry came from the plains buffalo hunters in the Red River colony. From the Red River came the seasonal labour as boatmen (voyageurs) for the boat brigades moving manufactured goods in and furs and hides out between the northern inland posts and York Factory via the Red River colony. Boatmen from the Red River would also work for the Métis commercial transporters between the Red River and York Factory. Also, out of the Red River came labour

which would work the land cartage system of Red River carts for the HBC and Métis owners, transporting manufactured goods inland and hides out from the posts along the southern plains to the Red River colony where they would be reloaded on the boat brigades bound for York Factory. The following is an account of the seasonal labour force in the Red River colony:

> [M]any follow these callings from necessity more than choice: these being the only lawful means within their reach to obtain clothing for themselves and families. By making a voyage to York a man will earn £6 or £7 sterling ... the same defence may be made for many who leave their homes, their children and churches to go to hunt on the plains, Pemican, Dried meat and fat, which they sell to raise money to purchase the European articles wanted for their individual or family use.[40]

The fur trade in what is now Saskatchewan goes back to the 1770s with posts at Isle à la Crosse and Cumberland House. At Cumberland House, for example, over the late 18th to early 19th centuries the post labour was mostly Orcadian recruited from the Orkney Islands for general post work, but at the same time skilled in water transportation. Some tradesmen were recruited mainly as carpenters for boat and canoe building. As with the opening of all new posts, intermarriage with the local Indian people was a strategic undertaking in the development of the trade. For most of this early period the Orcadian labourers assigned to develop the trade assimilated with intermarriage into the local Indian people, and like elsewhere the mixed-blood children were designated to be trade leaders.

In the 19th century as the post infrastructure expanded in northern and southern Saskatchewan more labour was recruited, especially British and French Métis from the Red River colony, to fill the need for general labour and tradesmen. With continued intermarriage directed at metissage a local Métis labour force developed around the various posts as buffalo hunters on the plains, general labourers, and short distance transportation workers. At these inland posts the Métis were Indian-Métis as they were linguistically and ethnically more closely akin to the regional Indian peoples than their European heritage. What demarcated Indian-Métis from Indians, including mixed-blood Indians, was based mostly on their identification and employment in wage labour positions under the Servants tariff by the resident HBC trader. What took place earlier in the late 1700s around the Hudson's Bay was reproduced in northern Saskatchewan; the division of labour and differential exploitation between primary production and wage labour was reinforced by the Indian and Servants tariffs.[41]

Colonial Capitalism and the Struggle for Responsible Government, 1820s to 1860s

In the 1820s an underdeveloped colonial form of capitalism took root in Rupert's Land and the Red River colony characterized by a marginally developed labour force and limited accumulation of capital by an indigenous commercial class. An indigenous commercial class composed mostly of Métis but also British emerged in the colony as a result, in part, of the HBC contracting out certain enterprises, such as

transportation, fur and buffalo hide trading, and retail merchandising, which it no longer wished to solely operate. Centred in the colony the HBC exercised complete monopoly control over the economy and political processes. There was no internal or external market for any commodity goods namely fur and agricultural products other than that provided by the HBC and then at controlled prices. In addition, tariffs were applied to all the settlers' imported goods. These economic restrictions, together with a semi-feudal land tenure system under the control of the company, meant there was no expanded reproduction of the economy so capital accumulation by the landed and commercial classes was restricted. Furthermore, the commercial class was denied representation on the local governing body.[42]

From the 1830s onward, the Métis commercial and working classes along with intellectuals came into conflict with the economic and political colonialism imposed by the HBC merchant class in Britain. In the colony it became apparent that the fur trade economy, forms of labour and overall population in Rupert's Land was backward under a decadent and outdated mercantilism. The initial strategy by the commercial class was to break the monopoly of the HBC and to freely sell their furs in the external market place. In a petition to the British Parliament in 1846, the leading Métis merchants in the colony identified the root cause of their underdevelopment as the exploitation of the population and the transference of wealth from the country to the HBC merchant class in Britain:

> [T]he appalling condition of the native population ... are ascribable to the present system of misgovernment ... [T]he spirit and tendencies of the Hudson's Bay Company ... to draw the greatest possible revenue from the country ... without direct and positive accountability to the Legislature of this country ... while ... the lives of the unoffending native race ... are deprived of their inheritance and their natural rights and ... are being virtually sacrificed year by year to the same selfish and inequitous object.43

The response of the British parliament was to reject the request of the petition. In Britain, the HBC and its monopoly was still seen as an important agent of British colonial interests in British North America.

Over the course of the 1840s, radical liberal ideology and nationalism emerged from elements of the commercial class and intellectuals, which gave leadership to the struggle. Influenced by rising liberal democracy with the industrial and working classes in Britain and the 1840s revolutions in Europe, namely France, demanding greater representative and responsible government against the oligarchy of the mercantile and landed aristocratic classes, the Métis commercial class and intellectuals in the Red River acquired the political ideas of European liberalism which they set about applying to their own circumstances. After the rejection of the petition to the British parliament the strategy to break the monopoly of the HBC was extended to include demands for representative and responsible government. Mobilization of the local Indian and Métis labouring classes was undertaken with the intent of creating a united front. It was reported by the colonial governor that the radicals were "endeavouring to persuade the ignorant Indian and HalfCaste population, that they were an injured and oppressed people."[44]

During the 1840s the class interests of the Red River boatmen were also taking form around wages and working conditions. One important issue amongst the tripmen was to have a day of rest on Sunday—referred to as anti-Sunday travelling. Many a strike and mutiny occurred over these issues, which became a major struggle with the HBC over the rights of workers. As with the Orcadian tripmen of the 1790s, the HBC saw the strikes as a threat to its control (feudalistic master-servant relations) over bonded labour. As a matter of necessity the HBC did concede on these issues. During the democracy struggles of the 1840s, the boatmen of the Red River brigades aligned themselves politically with the Métis commercial class in the colony. In the summer of 1846, James Sandison, a British-Métis leader in the anti-Sunday travelling campaign, organized a strike at Portage La Loche (now northern Saskatchewan) with the rallying statement:

> My Brothers! It is the Half Breeds that make the laws at Red River for themselves and for the Canadians and Scotch people, and if we do not do it here it is our own fault. We have the same power here that they have there.[45]

What is significant about this strike and the overall struggle for democratic representative and responsible government was that they were attempts to break the economic and political colonial structure of British mercantilism and to redefine the international division of labour (unequal development) imposed on Rupert's Land and the Red River colony. What was taking place centred in the colony was an anti-colonial struggle. The emerging nationalism, though originating within the Métis, extended beyond themselves to include Indians and "Canadians and Scotch" people through recognition of common territorial roots, and the adverse effects of colonial capitalism. It was a recognition of nationhood which cut across the various class formations and countered the racial and ethnic/religious division imposed and perpetuated by British colonial power.

The repeated demands for representative and responsible government together with the constant illicit trade into the United States by the commercial class was met with political and economic reprisals by the British government and the HBC in the form of increased tariff rates on imported goods and legal suppression. The intensity of the struggles in the 1840s reached such a point that one observer noted:

> Politics are running very high in the settlement ... to petition the Queen for Freedom of trade, a Governor independent of the Hudson's Bay Company and an elective legislature and if these are not granted ... I am certain it will end in a revolution.[46]

In response to the reprisals the insurgent classes militarily confronted the HBC to deny responsible government and free trade. In retaliation the British Colonial Office and HBC dispatched British troops to suppress both the rebellion and free trade. In the colony, martial law was declared with the commander of the troops being made military governor. In order to co-opt the struggle the HBC made the concession of representative, but not responsible government. Moderate representatives of the British and French-Métis commercial class were appointed to the local government

with support from the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. As well, the HBC allowed a modest degree of liberalized trade into the U.S., thereby isolating the radical elements and restoring divisions between British and French-Métis. The Métis boatmen and buffalo hunters opposed the granting of greater representation only to the moderates, to the exclusion of responsible government and the radicals. So great was their opposition that the resident HBC officials were fearful of an alliance forming between the Métis and Indians throughout the interior and a possible uprising.[47]

Absolute power to legislate over the Red River colony and, by extension, the whole of Rupert's Land with responsible government, was opposed by the British colonial authorities. Such power would lead to unrestricted access to markets, shipping, and control over tariff rates. It could lead, also, to further confrontation over the accumulation of capital, and the possible political and economic separation of the colony, especially if political power were to become consolidated within the radical members of the insurgent classes. What the British government and HBC officials feared the most was an alliance bound in nationalism between the radical leaders and the broad labouring class.[48] While the HBC was able to impose its authority over the population of the Red River colony, at the same time the resident authorities knew their days were numbered. The intensity of the struggles of the 1840s prompted one resident HBC official to state to the colonial governor:

> We can no longer hide from ourselves the fact ... that the day is certainly not far distant, when ours, the last important British monopoly, will necessarily be swept away like all others. By the force of public opinion, or by the still more undesirable but inevitable course of violence...within the country itself. It would therefore in my humble belief be far better to make a merit of necessity than to await the coming storm, for it will come.[49]

The Red River Colony and Canada, 1869–70

In the Red River colony it was known as early as 1858 that the British had political plans of incorporating all of Rupert's Land and its agricultural lands into a confederated British North America. From this point on British imperial financial interests, in conjunction with their British Canadian counterparts, began planning the union of all the British colonies into one nation-state. Their intention was to open the plains area of the West to European settlement and capitalist agricultural production for the industrial East and world market. In 1863, the old HBC mercantile class was bought out by the International Financial Society (a conglomerate of European banking capital) and the company reorganized around banking capital in preparation for agricultural settlement. In the 1860s, British Canadian merchants and settlers moved into the colony and surrounding region claiming lands in advance of the annexation of Rupert's Land to Canada. What was not known in the Red River colony was when the transfer would occur and what would be the new political and economic arrangement.[50]

After the reorganization of the HBC in 1863, the internal politics and economic structures of the Red River began to crumble. The HBC selectively introduced new technology with river steamboats, which could haul larger loads to replace the boat

brigades, and land cartage system, creating unemployment and forcing reduced wages and over-work. Thus, strikes were more numerous among the boatmen: the Red River to Portage La Loche boat brigades engaged in work shut downs every summer throughout the 1860s including during the summer of 1869. In the Red River colony the HBC and governing authority, which was supported by the conservative representatives of the commercial class, churches and Selkirk settlers, enjoyed no support from the boatmen, buffalo hunters and small cartage operators.[51]

The issues and events surrounding the formation of the provisional government in the Red River colony, conventions struck up to form the terms and conditions for negotiating entry into Canada, sending of Canadian troops by Ottawa to seize the territory and disband the provisional government, negotiation of the Manitoba Act creating and incorporating Manitoba as a province into Canada and distribution of the 1,400,000 acres of Métis lands under the Manitoba Act are well documented in Canadian historical accounts.[52] What transpired over 1869–70 was a national-democratic struggle against colonialism that had been ongoing since the 1840s. The underlying issues, as they were during the free trade struggles of the 1840s, were the accumulation of capital, where it was to be directed, and responsible government. Because classes in the colony became politically divided on these issues, the "rebellion" was as much an internal civil war as it was an external, anti-colonial conflict.

In the Red River there were two fundamental political ideas and class blocs competing with each other, principally fought out between Louis Riel and James Ross over the annexation of Rupert's Land to Canada: the doctrine of equality within a democratic society and the doctrine of freedom of commerce. Behind Ross were the medium and large landholders comprising Selkirk settlers, retired HBC officers, British Métis, recently arrived British Canadian merchants and settlers, and the Protestant church. Ross supported Ottawa's intention of annexing Rupert's Land and the Red River colony with territorial status with a limited form of representative institutions based upon private property ownership. What Ross and his supporters wanted was a guarantee by Ottawa that the registered lands of the medium and large settlers under the HBC would become freehold title.[53]

With the return of Riel from Quebec, in 1868, a radical liberal democratic bloc emerged and formed around the poorer classes of French and British-Métis and Indian boatmen, plains hunters, cartage operators who were mostly squatters and poorer elements of the registered landed commercial class. With the demise of the mercantile fur trade and opening of the prairies to capitalist agriculture, members of the labour force foresaw their potential marginalization and that, as an alternative, they had to have guaranteed access to land as a means of production. Drawing upon the tradition of radical liberalism in the colony, Riel and his supporters set about developing a political programme to deal with the annexation of Rupert's Land to Canada.[54]

The transfer of Rupert's Land (NWT), on December 1, 1869, from British mercantile ownership to a confederated Canada made for a weak political link in British North America and offered an opportunity to the poorer Métis classes to make a decisive break in their own interests. It was the view of the Métis under

Riel's leadership that the whole previous history of British colonialism would be allowed to continue in a confederated Canada if there were not a fundamental change in the political and economic system. That fundamental change could only come about with the establishment of responsible democracy and the creation of a state and territory over which they held power. This time the strategy was not to confront governing power, as in the 1840s, but to replace it. On 8 December 1869 Riel and his supporters overthrew the governing authority of the HBC, and in its place established a provisional government. In the Red River colony the HBC authorities had been anticipating such a political act:

> I regret to say that there is at present considerable excitement in the Settlement apparently caused by the proposed arrangement for the transfer of the country to Canada. Several individuals have taken claims on the Reserve in the immediate neighbourhood of this Establishment in the expectation that their right to the land will be acknowledged... It is also said that the party among the half-breeds mean formally to claim the amount (300,000 pounds) from the Canadian government which it was proposed should bè paid to the Company for the cession of the Company's rights, in addition to this they are to seize the Government of the Country.[55]

Riel and the provisional government foresaw that the wealth derived from the exploitation of lands in the West would be directed primarily toward banking and railroad interests in Canada, with little or no benefits to the poorer Indian and Métis classes. The strategy was to establish an "interim of colonial independence," nationalize the NWT under the political control of the provisional government and then negotiate the terms and conditions for the entry of the colony and NWT into Canada. Some of the more important demands were freehold land tenure, popular responsible government, provincial status for the whole of the NWT equal to all other provinces with control over land and resources under the provincial government, and to have Ottawa negotiate with the Indian peoples the terms and conditions of their entry into Canada.[56]

The response by Ottawa was to send Donald A. Smith from the HBC in Labrador and later of CPR fame as an agent to work behind the scenes with Ross to consolidate an opposition and undermine the provisional government. During the conventions of January 1870 to form the terms of agreement for negotiation with Ottawa opposition was voiced, including from the moderate French Métis, against a provincial state with responsible government and the nationalization of NWT, as it was seen that such demands would work against their interests in relationship with Canada. Despite internal political opposition Riel was still able to keep the different political factions aligned with his programme and at the same time maintain a political front to deal with the external politics of Ottawa. When the delegates chosen from the conventions went to Ottawa to negotiate the entry of the NWT and Red River colony into Canada it was with the programme of the provisional government.[57]

In the negotiations with Ottawa the demands for provincial status over the whole of the NWT and control over lands and resources with popular responsible

government were rejected. As the negotiations were taking place Ottawa sent troops to the Red River to seize the territory and disband the provisional government. Like the HBC and Britain during the free trade struggles of the 1840s, Ottawa was fearful of a provincial state under the control of radical reform liberals in alliance with the broad labouring class. The idea of control over a state for the purpose of preventing the speculation in lands by financial capital was a threat to capital and to the formation of Canada as a nation-state. The compromise agreement was provincial status for Manitoba with responsible, not popular responsible, government based upon private property ownership and 1,400,000 acres of land to Métis male heads of households. In the negotiations it was agreed that the Métis lands would be distributed by direct allotment under the provincial legislature. The agreement was formalized in the Manitoba Act, 1870, which was, in turn, imbedded in the constitution of Canada.[58]

Once Riel was driven into exile and politically neutralized Ottawa set about gaining control over Manitoba as a province. The moderate British and French Métis and the other settler and commercial classes were rewarded with freehold land title to their lands under the HBC and participation in the electoral political process. The responsibility for the distribution of Métis lands was then taken from the Manitoba legislature and placed under the Dominion Lands Act of 1872 administered by Ottawa. The intent was to open the vast Métis lands to speculation by financial interests from Ontario. Gradually, land scrip was introduced to help facilitate this process. The ultimate outcome was the radicals and poorer Métis labouring class became the ultimate victims of land speculation.[59]

The Insurrection of 1885

Throughout the 1870s and early 1880s with the influx of settlers and land speculation the exodus of landless Métis boatmen, buffalo hunters, land cartage labourers and poorer commercial class operators from Manitoba into the NWT took place. In the NWT they combined with the plains Métis and settled as squatters around such communities as St. Laurent/Batoche, the Qu'Appelle valley and Battleford amongst others in what is now Saskatchewan. As a prelude to settlement in the NWT Ottawa imposed treaties, the Indian Act in 1876, and the reservation system to pacify the plains Indians against the taking of their lands in the interests of industrial and financial capital. The reservation system, which is traceable to British colonial policy in Ireland and the US in the 16th and 17th centuries, was created in the form of concentration camps designed to destroy the Indian communal societies and incorporate them into capitalism. A high-ranking government official declared very clearly the intent of Ottawa:

> The policy of destroying the tribal or communist system is assailed in every possible way and every effort made to implant a spirit of individual responsibility instead.[60]

Arguably, the marginalization of Indians and Métis that Riel foresaw fifteen years earlier in Manitoba had unfolded in the NWT. Issues of access to freehold land as a means of production against corporate interests and speculation by the HBC, CPR

and private land companies, responsible government, policies toward the Indian peoples to whom the Indian-Métis in particular were intimately related, together with the impact of the great depression of 1876–96 in the western world, all combined to create an insurrection against the policies of the federal government. In the aftermath of the 1885 insurrection land scrips were issued to the Métis as a continuation of the process begun in Manitoba. The purpose was to pacify the Métis, but also to allow the speculation and black marketing in homestead lands by chartered banks, private financial houses and land companies that were otherwise prevented by the Dominion Lands Act.[61]

It is unfortunate but not surprising that Riel has been so maligned as a religious mystic and political fanatic. Riel was first and foremost a 19th century radical liberal-democrat and a modernist in the tradition of 19th century liberalism. In his later years while living in exile it appears he was also influenced by Marxism. As a modernist he understood the inevitability of the encroaching economic system and tried to incorporate Indians and Métis interests into it for their betterment. Without delving into his views and differences with Roman Catholicism, his internal conflicts were mostly about coming to terms with the agenda of advanced capitalism in Western Canada toward marginalized peoples, and at the same time reconciling outdated, semi-feudal religious dogma with current liberal-democratic, and apparently Marxist, ideals. His demand for equitable inclusion into capitalism and liberal democracy together with his religious beliefs made him an early liberation theologist. For his beliefs and actions he was killed on November 16, 1885.[62]

The 1885 insurrection was destabilizing enough to prod the Canadian government to respond in an authoritarian manner directed at the segregation of the Métis and Indian population from European settlement. Essentially, the application and enforcement of the Indian Act imposed on Indian peoples, and defacto on the Métis, a racial-legal definition of what were otherwise differences in social and economic development between themselves and European peoples. Some Indian-Métis living the Indian lifestyle, such as buffalo hunters, had no other choice than to become treaty-status Indians. Still others including Indians, depending on their livelihood and whether they applied for Métis scrip, remained outside the Indian Act and reservation system. The following is a general retrospective account of that policy in the late 19th century:

> On entering into treaty in the Western provinces, those who followed the Indian mode of life on reserve and received annuities and certain other treaty benefits were known as "Indians" whether they were of pure Indian blood or mixed. Those who elected to take scrip in lieu of treaty benefits and to live off the reserves were known as "Half-breeds," although they may have been of pure Indian blood.[63]

In what is now southern Saskatchewan, those Métis more actively involved in the capitalist economy were relegated to road allowances and segregated small communities as squatters. The segregation from European areas was enforced by the pass system as a policy under the Indian Act for reservation Indians, and vagrancy laws for Métis. The reservation system and Indian Act disallowed Indian direct participation

Source: Saskatchewan Archives Board R-A18666-1
Aboriginal road crew working in northern Saskatchewan, post-World War II.

in the greater capitalist economy other than as labour. Any commodity production such as in agriculture for outside sale was seriously restricted. Whatever economic development did take place was geared towards the natural subsistence reproduction of the population at its lowest common denominator. In addition to the policies and legislation, institutions such as residential and industrial schools under the authority of the Churches also contributed to the preparation and delivery of labour into the local and regional capitalist economy. Métis and Indians were subjected to direct coercion by the Canadian state becoming a needed reserve army of marginal labour super-exploited in seasonal agrarian support work for settlers, as bush cutters and railroad and road gangs, often paid in kind supplemented by natural subsistence.[64]

In northern Saskatchewan the circumstances of Indians and Métis were different from the south. While the south was developing with agricultural and industrial policies of modernization, the north, comparatively, remained backward in what can be characterized as an underdeveloped mercantile economy of fur and fish production. Historic forms and divisions of labour established with the mercantile fur trade going back to the late 18th and early 19th centuries continued without serious alteration. In this type of economy the Indians and Métis constituted a super-exploited indentured labour force engaged in the commercial production of fur and fish as luxury goods for the developed external market place, supported by some wage labour, natural subsistence and debt.

In 1906, the federal government formally extended the Indian Act with Treaty 10, imposing a racial-legal division on Métis and Indians based on intermarriage. The

Métis in northern Saskatchewan had deep shared ethnic, cultural and economic roots with the northern Cree and Chipewyan-Dene peoples for over a century. What differentiated Cree and Chipewyan-Metis from the Cree and Chipewyan was mostly a nominal definition by local clerics and commercial enterprisers based on arbitrary intermarriage reinforced by the old HBC Indian and Servants tariffs defining the division of labour between primary production and wage labour. Unlike the south, the reservation system in the north was never enforced, mainly because trappers and fishers had to be mobile in order to carry out their work.[65]

In southern Saskatchewan the state system of segregation and coercion of labour continued well into the 20th century until World War II. As a result there was created in Western Canada a racial-legal division of labour between Indian and Métis and European, supported by the policies and legislation of the Canadian state. As an expression of Social Darwinist ideology, the Indian Act and the reservation system were applied to those Indian persons who were deemed by the state not to possess the innate social characteristics necessary to immediately participate in a capitalist society. It was, therefore, seen as necessary that they undergo an experiment in social engineering, with the responsibility given to the residential and industrial schools to carry out the task.

The state system of racial-legal division did not apply only to Indian and Métis peoples. It was also made to apply to other non-European peoples, such as the Chinese, Japanese and East Indians as immigrant labour. What was manifested in mostly Western Canada including British Columbia from the late 19th century to World War II was the fabrication of an elaborate system of social legislation creating a legally distinct, racial caste system where each had separate and unequal rights. In some respects Ottawa imposed on the Indian and Métis peoples in Western Canada policies similar to what the British imposed on the African peoples in Southern Africa, though in Western Canada there never was an apartheid situation. What these two areas share in common is the imposition of Social Darwinist policies and legislation, but for different reasons.[66]

Summary and Commentary

The intent of this chapter is to show why and how Aboriginal workers were incorporated historically into capitalism as a labour force. In the case of the Cree and Chipewyan-Dene of northern Saskatchewan their history as workers go back to the late 18th and early 19th centuries with the mercantile fur trade. The same is the case for northern Cree and Chipewyan-Metis. Why there are "Indian" and "Métis" had nothing to do with intermarriage, but more so with the creation of class and race divisions by exploitive relations of production defined within capitalism.

I have, to a degree, tried to deal with the issue of racism. My impression is that some people see racism as a major problem and many more find it confusing. I suggest that what is labelled as racism today is mainly conflict amongst peoples due mostly to government policies. Racism first emerged as an ideology of the dominant capitalist classes and has served throughout history as an ideological weapon of domination, reinforcing and reproducing social divisions, as well as legitimizing

exploitation. We see this in the 1680s around Hudson's Bay with the use of religion, creating a difference between Indian and British and then again in the Red River colony during the mid-1800s with the invention of the "White race" by the ruling class, creating a social control buffer between themselves and the threat of labour disloyalty from the mass of Europeans, Indians and Métis. In the settlement of Western Canada and Saskatchewan, I suggest that "White race" as policy was also used. What at the time comprised the totality of immigrant European settlers from a multitude of different ethnic backgrounds was intentionally re-invented as the "White race" principally as a buffer population guarantying social control and ruling class domination of European, Indians and Métis, and at the same time dividing one from the other.

The Métis first emerged as a wage labour category, albeit as a cheaper source of wage labour than in Britain during the industrial revolution of the late 18th century. The mostly Métis labour force, but also including Indians, became the social base for what were political struggles for liberal democracy demanding popular suffrage. These struggles, primarily led by a Métis middle class, began in the 1830s and continued over a fifty-year period until 1885. They were directed at the worst excesses of colonial capitalism. The nationalism which emerged among the Métis was not restricted to them. It was a nationalism which was inclusive to both Indians and Europeans, illustrated in the insurrection of 1885.

The post-World War II period was a watershed of Keynesian economic and social policy expansion by the provincial and federal governments transforming northern and southern Saskatchewan. The late 1950s and early 1960s saw the emergence of reform liberalism with the abolition of the racial-legal caste system, the extension of popular sovereignty and political rights with the right to vote for all citizens and social reform. In the south the old system of segregation was dissolved. Status-treaty Indians were given the right to vote and allowed unrestricted exit and entry from reserved areas. The Métis, in turn, were no longer restricted from "white" areas by enforced laws. These changes allowed for the formal but unequal incorporation of Indians and Métis into the greater wage labour market.

During the 1950s and 1960s in conjunction with resource capital's movement into northern Saskatchewan, historic forms of labour established with the mercantile fur trade were transformed by the provincial and federal governments with ill-defined Keynesian policies. Driven from the land as the major source of their productive activity, northern Indians and Métis were incorporated into the labour market, but as marginally employed wage labour. In both the northern and southern regions of Saskatchewan Indians and Métis were formally proletarianized without becoming consistently active proletarians. The problems which have arisen from this time period for Indian and Métis peoples are not due to Keynesian policies themselves, but rather to the fact that these policies did not go far enough. What was required at the time, and may still be required today, was for the state to address the historic and fundamental causes of unemployment and poverty by using aggressive Keynesian policies. Such policy options for Aboriginal people should be appropriate for unemployment and poverty among non-Aboriginal people as well. Today, there is a major,

ongoing neo-liberal transformation of the Canadian economy and social policy, resulting in structural unemployment that quite likely may be permanent. Some more insightful political economists who study capitalism as a world system are predicting the Western industrial world including Canada will gradually decline into "Third Worldism" with growing internal marginalization and pauperization of what was at one time an active labour force. The transformation of the Canadian economy and dismantling of the social safety nets also affect Aboriginal peoples with ever deepening unemployment and poverty. One wonders if the current Aboriginal Rights policy and programmes directed at creating enclaves of "sovereignty" by the Canadian government along with the decentralization of powers to the provinces is not an intended part of the overall neo-liberal transformation which is taking place.

The proposition that Aboriginal Rights have an inherent, eternal truth in British and therefore Canadian constitutional and common law history—and that today these "rights" are finally going to be realized as a matter of righting an historical injustice and inequity - is, surely, a myth that could very well disguise growing social injustice and economic decline. When the real existing lives of Aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan for over one hundred years are explained in these terms, then you can assume the myth is in full bloom. Rather, we have seen that British and Canadian laws and policies did not observe inherent rights of Aboriginals but instead created them as categories of surplus labour available for exploitation.

The unit of resistance to expanding globalization and increasing impoverishment by corporate capital is the nation-state. The popular classes of small and medium primary producers and waged and salaried workers must dig in their heels within their respective nation-states and carve out an alternative for a national economy in their interests. This alternative must include Aboriginal peoples.

Notes

1. In Canada there is a varied and changing vocabulary referring to the original indigenous peoples and those of mixed descent. For the purpose of this article the longstanding terms "Indian" will be used when referring to the original indigenous nationalities, "Métis" when referring to those people of mixed Indian and European descent, and 'Aboriginal' when referring to both Indians and Métis. Métis is a term used to refer to Euro-Indian people who are descendants of Indian women of different indigenous nationalities and either French or British (Scots) men. Euro-Indian people originated under the colonization process. The British termed these people "half-breeds" or sometimes "half-castes." The French used the term "Métis," just as in Latin America the Spanish term for Euro-Indian was "Mestizo" or "Ladino."
2. See Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1858–1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1996).
3. Samir Amin, *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), 67; and *Class and Nation, Historically and in the Current Crisis* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980), 82–85. On racism see Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1989) particularly part 2, chapter 2, "The Construction of Eurocentric Culture"; Ian Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996); Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); Robert Miles, *Racism*

(London: Routledge, 1989); and Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, 2 vols. (New York: Verso, 2000).

The roots of racism are traceable to the dominant aristocratic and cleric classes of Western Europe in the late Middle Ages, when ideas took form about the purity and superiority of their ethnicities and being European. Eurocentrism emerged as a consciousness and prejudice about European political, economic and cultural superiority over other peoples in the world with whom Europeans came into contact. The Eurocentric prejudice was further extended to define their respective concepts of Christianity and nation as they developed over time. Previous to the 16th century there was virtually nothing in European thought that remotely suggested race existed; either as an idea or as a policy of action. For most of the mercantile period racism was expressed in feudal religious terms as the superiority of the civilized Christian European over the uncivilized non-Christian barbarians.

It was during the industrial revolution in the late 18th and early 19th century, together with the rise of secular over religious thought, that racism and Eurocentrism were transformed by Western European intellectuals and emerging industrial classes into the secular idea and world view that "race" based on biological determinism was responsible for human behaviour and development. Theories of human social evolution, such as Social Darwinism, gradually emerged in the mid-19th century which argued that humans inherited innate characteristics as "races" that were responsible for differences in their social and economic development. In their world view, the diversity of human societies was explained as a hierarchy of "races" some of whom were capable of further development while others were not, due to genetic characteristics. It was believed that since the miracle of capitalism emerged in Western Europe and not from other peoples and areas of the world, then Europeans by nature were superior to other peoples. Over the centuries, beginning with mercantilism and continuing with the industrial revolution, racism and Eurocentrism as an ideology and policy emerged within the ruling classes of Western Europe, which, in turn, became tightly meshed with the social and economic interests of rising Western capitalism, nations and states.

Beginning in the late 18th and continuing into the 19th century with the industrial revolution in Western Europe the secular idea of "race" and a hierarchy of "races" based on biological determinism developed as a world view within the ruling industrial classes and allied intellectuals. It was now argued that peoples inherited biological characteristics that were innate and responsible for differences in their social, economic and national development, and behaviour. No longer were differences and the division of labour between colonial and European peoples (British) defined in terms of the inferiority of the non-Christian and uncivilized, and superiority of the Christian and civilized. With the development of the idea of biological "race" the earlier racism expressed as the superiority of the civilized European (British) Christian, which served as a social control mechanism over the totality of labour, became that of the superiority of the "white race."

4. Tamas Szentes, *The Transformation of the World Economy* (London: Zed Books, 1988), 33–43; and Harry Magdoff, "Imperialism: A Historical Survey," pp. 11–17 in Hamza Alavi and Teodor Shanin (eds.), *Introduction to the Sociology of "Developing Societies"* (New York: The MacMillan Press, 1982).
5. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 3 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), ch. 20, "Historical Facts about Merchant's Capital;" and Samir Amin, *The Law of Value and Historical Materialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978), 9–11.
6. Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), 3, 88, 134; *Unequal Development*, 73–74, 187.

7. Amin, *Unequal Development*, 204–05, 295–96.
8. Eleanor Leacock, *North American Indians in Historical Perspective* (New York: Random House, 1971); "Women's Status in Egalitarian Society: Implications for Social Evolution," *Current Anthropology* 19: 247–75; and Eleanor Leacock and Richard Lee, *Politics and History in Bank Societies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 159–68.
9. K.G. Davies (ed.), *Letters From Hudson's Bay, 1703–40* (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1965), 43.
10. HBCA, York Factory Post Journal, May 1716, B239/a/2, fo. 35d.
11. HBCA, York Factory Post Journal, May 1716, B239/a/2, fo. 28d.
12. HBCA, London Committee to Governor John Hullertine and Council, Albany Fort, 23 June 1702, A6/3, fo. 99; and London Committee to Chief Officer and Council, Albany Fort, 30 May 1705, A6/3, fo. 133.
13. HBCA, E2/4, fo. 22d.
14. HBCA, Moose Factory Post Journal, 4 March 1743, B135/a/14, fos. 63-5.
15. See E.E. Rich (ed.), *Copy Book of Letters Outward, 1679–1694*, vol. 11 (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1948), and *Copy Book of Letters Outward, 1688–1696*, vol. 20 (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1957); and HBCA, York Post Journal, 3 June 1716, B239/a/2, fo. 35d; and Humphrey Martin to Thomas Moore, 28 Sept. 1767, B3/b/5, fo. 1d. Since there was no pricing system in operation indigenous to the Indian economies, the HBC created one called "Made Beaver" (MB) based upon the prime winter beaver in good condition. MB thus became the standard whereby each trade good and all other furs and natural produce were valued. It also became the means by which the officer traders could determine that the value of furs received was greater than the value of goods sold, resulting in surplus value, the source of profit.
16. HBCA, London Committee to John Hullertine and Council, Albany Fort, 23 June 1702, A6/3, fo. 99.
17. HBCA, Albany Post Journal, 21 Feb. 1706, B3/a/1, fo. 28; and Prince of Wales Journal, 26 Nov. 1750, B42/a/36, fo. 19-20.
18. HBCA, London Committee to Thomas Bird, Albany Fort, 18 May 1738, A6/6, fo.16.
19. HBCA, London Committee to Robert Pilgrim, 6 May 1747, A6/7, fo. 222.
20. HBCA, London Committee to Gov. Nixon, Instructions, 29 May 1680, A6/1, fo. 5
21. Ibid.
22. HBCA, London Committee to Governor Geddes, Fort Nelson, 2 June 1688, A6/2, fo. 2.
23. HBCA, York Post Journal, 27 Dec. 1715, B239/a/2, fos. 11, 75.
24. HBCA, London Committee to Officers, York Factory, 31 May 1799, A6/16, fo. 128; and Edith I. Burley, *Servants of the Honourable Company: Work, Discipline, and Conflict in the Hudson's Bay Company, 1770–1879* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997), 5.
25. HBCA, York Post Journal, 7 July 1791, B239/a/91, fo. 28.
26. HBCA, London Committee to William Tomison, York Factory, 31 May 1799, A6/6, fo. 128.
27. HBCA, John Thomas, Moose Fort to John McNabb, Albany Fort, 9 April 1794, B3/b/31, fo. 17.
28. HBCA, London Committee to John Hodgson, Albany Factory, 31 May 1806, A6/17, fo. 103.
29. HBCA, Edward Jarvis, Albany Fort to London Committee, 28 Sept. 1783, A11/4, fo. 200.
30. HBCA, London Committee to Ferdinand Jacobs, York Fort, 31 May 1763, A6/10, fo. 107; and Edward Jarvis, Albany Fort, 19 May 1784, A6/13, fo. 94
31. HBCA, Edward Jarvis, Albany Fort to London Committee, 28 Sept. 1783, A11/4, fo. 208.

32. HBCA, London Committee to William Williams, Governor of Rupert's Land, George Simpson, Governor of the Northern Department, and Andrew Bulger, Governor of Assiniboia, 1 June 1822, A6/20, fos. 51d-54; E.E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company, 1670–1870*, vol. 3 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960), 428–31; and Hudson's Bay Company, *Charters, Statutes, Orders In Council, etc. Relating To The Hudson's Bay Company* (London: Hudson's Bay Company, 1963), 75–78. A colonial political and state apparatus was created with the formation of the Council of Rupert's Land, overseen by the Governor of Rupert's Land and comprising the chief HBC traders, that administered the overall fur trade and held supreme executive power over all of Rupert's Land. Then there was the Governor and Council of Assiniboia, responsible for the management of civil affairs within the colony. The Council of Assiniboia was neither representative nor responsible. It was appointed by the Governor of Assiniboia in conjunction with the Governor of Rupert's Land and served only to advise on civil affairs.
33. HBCA, London Committee to Governor of Rupert's Land and Council, 1821-28, A6/20-21; and George Simpson, York Factory to London Committee, 31 July 1822, D4/85, fo. 13.
34. HBCA, London Committee to Robert Semple, Governor, Rupert's Land, 27 March 1815, A6/18, fo. 326; London Committee to James Bird, York Factory, 20 May 1818, A6/19, fo. 77; British Colonial Office, National Archives of Canada, series Q, vol. 133, p. 59, Joseph Berens, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company to Lord Bathurst, Secretary for War and Colonies, 18 March 1815; and D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye, *The Genealogy of the First Métis Nation* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983). Sprague and Frye offer an analysis of land ownership and class formations within the European and Métis population.
35. HBCA, W.H. Cook to Mr. Swain, 17 Dec. 1811, B239/b/82, fo. 92d.
36. HBCA, William Auld's Memorandum Book, 1810-11, B42/a/136a, fo. 17-18.
37. Cited in Mike Brogden, "Law and Criminal Labels: The Case of the French Métis in Western Canada," *The Journal of Human Justice* 1, no. 2 (1990): 15–16.
38. See Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*.
39. Carol M. Judd, "Native Labour and Social Stratification in the Hudson's Bay Company's Northern Department, 1770–1870," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 17, no. 1 (1980): 311.
40. National Archives of Canada, Church Missionary Society, Rev. Cockran to Rev. E. Bechersteth, 3 Aug. 1829.
The boat brigades from the Red River were a part of an extensive transportation system established by the HBC. The tripmen, like the earlier Orcadian tripmen from York Factory to Cumberland House in the late 1700s, were highly skilled labour performing dangerous work. In modern day terms they were virtual railroaders. The Red River brigades would run return trips between the colony and York Factory, touching at posts along the way. Brigades would also run from the Red River connecting at Norway House with returning York brigades, then continuing on through Grand Rapids and the Churchill river system unloading at Cumberland House and Isle a la Crosse all the way to Portage LaLoche. At LaLoche they would connect with the Mackenzie river boat brigades exchanging their cargoes of manufactures for furs and hides then return by the same route to Red River loading fur along the way.
41. See HBCA, B49/a/1-54, Cumberland House Journals, 1787–1846. The journals document on a day-to-day basis how Amerindians were incorporated into the mercantile fur trade, and with intermarriage the emergence of Métis in a social division of labour within the Cree ethnic environment.
42. HBCA, George Simpson, York Factory to London Committee, 5 Aug. 1822, D4/85, fo.

42; and George Simpson, Norway House to London Committee, 30 June 1829, D4/96, fo. 1.

43. Parliamentary Papers of Great Britain, House of Commons, "Copy of Memorial and Petition from Inhabitants of the Red River Settlement Complaining of the Government of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Reports and Correspondence on the Subject of the Memorial," No. 227, 1849.

44. HBCA, George Simpson, Governor of Rupert's Land, Lachine to London Committee, 9 May 1850, D4/71, fo. 181.

45. BCA, Donald Ross Papers, Murdoch McPherson, Fort Simpson to Donald Ross, Norway House, 26 Feb. 1847, MS-0635, file 120.

46. Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), H.H. Sibley Papers, N.W. Kittson to H.H. Sibley, 2 March 1846, M164.

47. HBCA, Alexander Christie to George Simpson, 29 May 1849, D5/25, fo. 225; J.H. Pelly, London Committee to Herman Merivale, Colonial Office, 16 Feb. 1850, A8/6, fo. 34; J.H. Pelly, London Committee to Earl Grey, 22 Nov. 1850, A8/6, fo.116; George Simpson to London Committee, 27 Sept. 1856, D4/76a, fo. 588; and George Simpson to London Committee, 15 Nov. 1856, D4/76a, fo. 441.

48. HBCA, Alexander Christie to George Simpson, 29 May 1849, D5/25, fo. 225; and J.H. Pelly, London Committee to The Earl Grey, 22 Nov. 1850, A8/6, fo. 116.

49. HBCA, Donald Ross to George Simpson, 21 Aug. 1848, D5/22, fo. 543.

50. HBCA, Red River settlers to George Simpson, 1858, A12/9, fo. 191; and A.G. Dallas to Edward Ellice, 18 Oct. 1862, A12/43. fo. 35.

51. HBCA, B154/b/0-10, 1862-70; B235/b/10-12, 1861–67; and Governor of Rupert's Land to London Committee, 1861-69, A12/42-45.

52. George F.G. Stanley, *Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975) and *Louis Riel* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972); W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, 2d ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976); D.N. Sprague, *Canada and the Métis, 1869–1885* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988); and Frits Pannekoek, *A Snug Little Flock: The Social Origins of the Riel Resistance of 1869–70* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing, 1991).

53. J.M.S. Careless, *Brown of the Globe*, 2 vols. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1959); and PAM, Alexander Ross Papers, MG2 C14. Throughout the Ross papers are correspondence over the 1850s between James Ross while in Toronto to his family extolling the benefits which would come to the Red River colony if the HBC monopoly was ended and the colony were to be annexed to Canada West. Ross was the Métis son of a retired HBC trader and large landed settler. He had studied at the University of Toronto and previously been editor of the *Globe* newspaper in Toronto under reformer George Brown. Ross was influenced by Brown and the Clear Grit's ideas of agrarian land reform, popular democracy, their sectarian politics of perceived French Catholic domination of Canada and the interests of then small industrial manufacturing over British Canadian big financial business. Ross returned to the Red River colony in the early 1860s. While in the Red River Ross, together with William Buckingham and William Coldwell also previously of the Globe and with the Red River colony newspaper Nor'Wester agitated against the HBC, the local governing authority and British colonial rule, advocating the annexation of the Red River colony and Rupert's Land as a territory to Canada. Once annexed to Canada the medium and large landholders would have not only access to open markets for their agricultural products, but also the opportunity to accumulate wealth from the speculation in lands and at the same time receive the benefits of expected Canadian industrial expansion into the area.

54. Jean-Paul Bernard, *Les Rouges: Liberalisme, Nationalisme et Anticlericalisme Au Milieu Du XIXe Siecle* (Montreal: Les Presses de l'Universite du Quebec, 1971); and Fernand Ouellet, *Economic and Social History of Quebec 1760–1850* (Ottawa: the Carleton Library, no. 120, 1980). While in Quebec, Riel was influenced by and involved in the radical liberal politics of the *Rouges*. The *Rouges* advocated popular democracy and land reform against the last vestiges of serfdom, opposition to the clique of state, big commerce and the theocratic Roman Catholic Church, and anti-confederation nationalism. They also put forward a secular liberal interpretation of Catholicism which, while rejecting its doctrines and beliefs, embraced it as a national institution against forced assimilation and inferiorization by British Canada.
55. HBCA, A12/45, fo. 269, William Mactavish, Fort Garry to William G. Smith, Secretary, London Committee, 24 July 1869.
56. MHS, Alexander Ramsey Papers, Joseph A. Wheelock to Alexander Ramsey, 7 April 1870, M203.
57. HBCA, E9/1; Sprague, *Canada and the Métis, 1869–1885*, ch. 3; Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada*, chs. 4 and 5; and Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, ch. 6.
58. Sprague, *Canada and the Métis*, ch. 4; and 45, fn. 47. The census of Manitoba taken in 1870 showed 1,611 "whites;" 5,696 French Métis; and 4,082 British Métis. Combined there were 9,778 Métis.
59. Ibid., chs. 5, 6, 7, 8.
60. Canada, *Sessional Papers*, no. 18, 31 October, 1889, 165.
61. Stanley, *Birth of Western Canada* and *Louis Riel*; Bob Beal and Rod MacLeod, *Prairie Fire: The 1885 North-West Rebellion* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1984); and Donald McLean, *1885, Métis Rebellion or Government Conspiracy?* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1985).
62. See Louis Riel, *Socialisme et Colonies* (Paris: Imprimerie Georges Robert, 1886).
63. Canada, Department of Indian Affairs, National Archives of Canada, RG 10, Bluebooks, Item 50, 12 March 1935.
64. See Canadian Sessional Papers, Departments of Indian Affairs, Interior, Agriculture and North West Mounted Police, 1890s-1920s; F. Laurie Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins: The Native Policies of Tommy Douglas and the CCF* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997); Helen Buckley, *From Wooden Ploughs to Welfare: Why Indian Policy Failed in the Prairie Provinces* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Sarah Carter, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990); and Hugh Shewell, *Enough To Keep Them Alive: Indian Welfare in Canada, 1873–1965* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).
65. See Arthur J. Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); and Helen Buckley, *The Indians and Métis of Northern Saskatchewan* (Saskatoon: Centre for Community Studies, 1963).
66. See Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990)*; W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990); Constance Backhouse, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900–1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 1999); and B. Singh Bolaria and Peter S. Li (eds.), *Racial Oppression in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1988). On the comparison of Western Canada to Southern Africa see David Walsh, *The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Colonial Natal, 1845–1910* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973); and United Kingdom, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 879/97, no. 897, "Notes on a Suggested Policy towards Coloured People and

Natives," 9 January 1908, enclosed in Governor of the Transvaal to the Secretary of State, 1 February 1908. The suggested policy makes a demarcation between Coloured People (Métis) and Natives (Indians):

"*Coloured People*—Our object should be to teach the coloured people to give their loyal support to the white population. It seems to me sheer folly to classify them with natives, and by treating them as natives to force them away from their natural allegiance to the whites and into making common cause with the natives. If they are so forced, in the time of trouble they will furnish exactly those leaders which the natives could not furnish for themselves. It is, therefore, in my opinion, unwise to think of treating them as natives; and it would be as unjust as unwise. There are many coloured people who are quite white inside, though they may be coloured outside. There are some, indeed, who are quite white outside also. The problem of the treatment of the coloured people is, indeed, sadly complicated by the fact that they vary in every shade of character and colour from pure white inside and outside to pure black inside and outside…

Natives—The objects which the Government must have in view in their native policy are:

(i) to preserve the peace of the country, for nothing is so demoralising or injurious to its true welfare as a native war;

(ii) to promote the steady development of Christianity and civilisation among the natives;

(iii) to ensure the gradual destruction of the tribal system which is incompatible with civilization."

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