Generating Colonialism

Manitoba Hydro and the State

by

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Abstract

In this paper I seek to answer the following primary research questions: What does an examination of Manitoba Hydro and its responses to Indigenous-led resistance reveal about the internal dynamics of the Canadian state and the ongoing Canadian colonial project? How has Manitoba Hydro's stance towards First Nations and other Indigenous communities changed, and why have these changes occurred? In this paper I utilize three main theoretical frameworks: Nicos Poulantzas's understanding of the state as the condensation of social relations, Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony and Peter Kulchyski's view of the "totalizing" nature of colonial capitalism.

I utilize insights from Poulantzas to examine Manitoba Hydro's relationship with the larger Canadian state. I focus on the corporation's role in the state's modernizing project, its relation to industrial capital, and the role of electricity exports in inter- and intra-state dynamics. I use Kulchyski's notion of a totalizing colonial capitalist state to examine the impacts of Manitoba Hydro's activities on Indigenous communities in northern Manitoba. I use the Grand Rapids Generating Station, the Lake Winnipeg Regulation project, and the Churchill River Diversion project as examples of the ways in which Manitoba Hydro has undermined Indigenous gathering and hunting modes of production and introduced capitalist relations to previously insulated territories. Drawing on Gramsci, I chart the development of "hydro hegemony" in Manitoba. I argue that much of Manitoba Hydro's 20th century activities were characterized by coercion, but in the 21st century hydroelectricity became the hegemonic energy strategy in Manitoba through Manitoba Hydro's partnerships with First Nations and the increasing global importance of "sustainable" energy.

Ultimately, I argue that Manitoba Hydro functions to further the Canadian colonial project by both undermining the viability of a gathering and hunting mode of production by degrading the lands and waters it affects, and also by spreading the reach of capitalist wage relations to previously insulated

Indigenous communities. I further argue that while hydroelectric projects in the 20th century were fiercely contested, in the 21st century hydroelectricity has achieved hegemonic status in Manitoba. Finally, I argue that Manitoba Hydro's adoption of a "partnership" approach with First Nations is a reflection of changes in the relational state brought about by Indigenous struggles against colonialism. Although in this new approach Manitoba Hydro offers material concessions to First Nations in Manitoba, the colonial nature of the corporation and state remains unchanged.

Foreword

This Major Research Paper represents the culmination of my coursework and research in the Master in Environmental Studies program. I am enrolled in the urban and regional planning specialization area of the MES program's planning stream. My area of concentration is "Planning, Resistance, and Crown Corporation Hydroelectricity." My overall goal in this area of concentration is to understand the relationship between planning and colonialism in the context of state-owned hydroelectric utilities in Canada. I have reworked and refined this area of concentration over the degree program, and my MRP represents the coming together of my three major components. These components are: State Structure, Power, and Space; Canadian Settler-Colonialism and Imperialism; and Planning. My Major Research Paper addresses all three of these components.

State Structure, Power, and Space

In this paper, I utilize Nicos Poulantzas's theory of the state to examine the colonial dynamics that shape the Canadian state. This research contributes to the following learning objectives:

- 1.1. To learn various approaches to studying the structure of the Canadian state
- 1.2. To examine how Canadian state power is projected and maintained

Canadian Settler Colonialism and Imperialism

This research centres the colonial relation which has historically shaped, and continues to shape the interaction between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. I examine the processes of settler colonialism at various scales, and the ways in which Indigenous communities have resisted Manitoba Hydro's incursions into their territories. This research contributes to the following learning objectives:

- 2.1. To uncover the spatial dimensions of Canadian colonialism and imperialism

- 2.2. To identify forms of resistance to Canadian colonialism and imperialism
- 2.3. To analyze the relationship between colonialism, imperialism, and hydroelectric crown corporations

Planning

While in coursework I have focused on urban and regional planning, this paper adopts a broader view of planning practice to include energy systems. Manitoba Hydro's operations require the large-scale planning of infrastructure and settlements, and such mainstream planning practices as community consultations. The corporation plans on a local, provincial, national, and even continental scale. Because of the essential nature of electricity to contemporary Canadian society, Manitoba Hydro is intimately connected to urban life. This research contributes to the following learning objectives:

- 3.1 To obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the program requirements of the Canadian Institute of Planners and Ontario Professional Planners Institute for Candidate membership.
- 3.2 To analyze the relationship between planning, colonialism, and imperialism
- 3.3 To examine the unique nature of state-led hydroelectric development in Canada

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List of Abbreviations

CRD: Churchill River Diversion

FPIC: Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

GHG: Greenhouse Gas

GRFAC: Grand Rapids Forebay Administration Committee

JKDA: *Joint Keeyask Development Agreement*

LWR: Lake Winnipeg Regulation

MH: Manitoba Hydro

MIA: Master Implementation Agreement

MIPUG: Manitoba Industrial Power Users Group

NDP: New Democratic Party

NCN: Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

NFA: *Northern Flood Agreement*

NFC: Northern Flood Committee

PC: Progressive Conservative Party

SIL: South Indian Lake

UNDRIP: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

YFFN: York Factory First Nation

1.0 Introduction

Electricity in Manitoba is both apolitical and hyper-political. It is apolitical in its ubiquity. It is apolitical in that the role of electricity in contemporary Canadian society becomes notable almost only in its absence (e.g. during a power outage). Virtually all of the modern conveniences upon which we depend rely on electricity, and in Manitoba cheap power could be considered a defining feature of the province. Electricity is hyper-political because, in Manitoba, power production is the site of intense struggle. The hydroelectric generating stations which provide low-cost electricity to southern Manitoban society are intimately tied to the dispossession and subjugation of Indigenous people and communities in the northern part of the province. Despite the "green," "sustainable," and "environmentally-friendly" labels affixed to hydroelectric power in Manitoba, this manner of generating electricity requires the damming of waterways and flooding of lands which Indigenous people have depended on since time immemorial. Electricity, primarily generated in northern Manitoba, flows to the province's southern metropolises and across national borders to far flung regions of the continent. It supports an electrified "imperial mode of living," in which the land and waterways of Indigenous peoples are appropriated to power the general consumption and social reproduction of the settler population of Canada (Brand & Wissen, 2012).

In this paper I seek to answer the following primary research questions: What does an examination of Manitoba Hydro and its responses to Indigenous-led resistance reveal about the internal dynamics of the Canadian state and the ongoing Canadian colonial project? How has Manitoba Hydro's stance towards First Nations and other Indigenous communities changed, and why have these changes occurred? In order to address these research questions, I draw on a number of primary sources, including legislation, corporate documents (business plans, annual reports, corporate publications, etc.), environmental assessment reports, regulatory filings, ministerial mandate letters, business agreements,

and modern treaties. I further draw on a large body of secondary literature rooted in Marxist studies of the Canadian state, studies of colonialism in Canada, and literature on hydroelectricity and extraction. I utilize Nicos Poulantzas's understanding of the state as the condensation of social relations in conjunction with Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony and Peter Kulchyski's view of the "totalizing" nature of colonial capitalism as theoretical frameworks. Ultimately, I argue that Manitoba Hydro functions to further the Canadian colonial project by both undermining the viability of a gathering and hunting mode of production by degrading the lands and waters it affects, and also by spreading the reach of capitalist wage relations to previously insulated Indigenous communities. I further argue that while hydroelectric projects in the 20th century were fiercely contested, in the 21st century hydroelectricity has achieved hegemonic status in Manitoba. Finally, I argue that Manitoba Hydro's adoption of a "partnership" approach with First Nations is a reflection of changes in the relational state brought about by Indigenous struggles against colonialism. Although in this new approach Manitoba Hydro offers material concessions to First Nations in Manitoba, the colonial nature of the corporation and state remains unchanged.

This research is significant because it addresses a number of gaps in literature on the Canadian state and Manitoba Hydro. The foremost of these gaps is the historical tendency in Marxist studies of the Canadian state to overlook the colonial relation which shapes all other social relations in Canada (Abele & Stasiulis, 1989; Coburn, 2016; Coulthard, 2014). In focusing specifically on the totalizing nature of the state, I foreground this colonial relation. This paper also contributes to the existing body of scholarship on Manitoba Hydro. While the utility has existed in its modern form for nearly 60 years, there are relatively few studies that focus specifically on the corporation. A large portion of scholarship directly on Manitoba Hydro is contained in only two texts and one edited collection, all published between 1993 and 2008 (Martin & Hoffman, 2008; Netherton, 1993; Waldram, 1993). Much of the

critical scholarship on Manitoba Hydro was also written in the 1980s and 1990s (Loney, 1987, 1995; Niezen, 1999; Robson, 1993), and some currents in contemporary studies take a largely uncritical approach (Fernandez, 2019; Fernandez & Ryan, 2011). I update this literature with further analysis of Manitoba Hydro's contemporary activities, and an account of the utility's transformation in the 21st century. By focusing on Manitoba Hydro and its relation to the state, I examine the corporation on its own terms, rather than through comparison with other jurisdictions.[1] In focusing on this specific provincial context, I also contribute to scholarship which does not treat settler colonialism as a monolithic formation, but rather emphasizes the uneven and context-dependent ways it is manifested. Finally, this research contributes to extractive and extractive-adjacent scholarship by focusing on Manitoba Hydro as a Crown (i.e. state-owned) corporation. Extractive literature which examines industries such as mining and oil in Canada must necessarily focus on private firms. By incorporating insights from extractive literature, I hope to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between extraction and colonialism in Canada.

I begin this paper by providing contextual information about Manitoba. I particularly emphasize the historical and ongoing processes of colonialism which have shaped and continue to shape the province. I then provide a general overview of hydroelectric production in Canada, and a brief description of Manitoba Hydro as a corporation. In Chapter Three I provide a broad review of relevant literature, focusing on three main areas: the Canadian state, colonialism in Canada, and hydroelectricity. In Chapter Four I describe the three main theoretical pillars of this paper: Gramsci's notion of hegemony, Poulantzas's understanding of the state as the condensation of social relations, and Kulchyski's interpretation of the Canadian state as a totalizing colonial capitalist force. In Chapter Five I utilize insights from Poulantzas to examine Manitoba Hydro's relationship with the larger state during the 20th century. I focus on the corporation's role in the state's modernizing project, its relation to

1 See for example Froschauer, 1999; Martin & Hoffman, 2008

industrial capital, and the role of electricity exports in inter- and intra-state dynamics. In Chapter Six I use Kulchyski's notion of a totalizing colonial capitalist state to examine the impacts of Manitoba Hydro's activities on Indigenous communities in northern Manitoba. I use the Grand Rapids Generating Station, the Lake Winnipeg Regulation project, and the Churchill River Diversion project as examples of the ways in which Manitoba Hydro has undermined Indigenous gathering and hunting modes of production and introduced capitalist relations to previously insulated territories. In Chapter Seven I chart the development of "hydro hegemony" in Manitoba. I argue that much of Manitoba Hydro's 20th century activities were characterized by coercion. I further claim that in the 21st century hydroelectricity became the hegemonic energy strategy in Manitoba through Manitoba Hydro's partnerships with First Nations and the increasing global importance of "sustainable" energy. In Chapter Eight I return to Poulantzas's conception of the relational state to examine Manitoba Hydro's role in the contemporary state. I argue that the utility is losing its status as one of the leading apparatuses of the provincial state because it is not compatible with the dominant provincial ideology of neoliberal austerity. Finally, I conclude by assessing the explanatory power of Poulantzas's relational state when examining the specific apparatus that is Manitoba Hydro. I argue that this conception of the state accounts for both hydroelectricity's change from non-hegemonic to hegemonic and the continuity of its role as the apparatus through which totalization is enacted.

2.0 Manitoba Hydro: Setting and Context

2.1 Manitoba

Manitoba is Canada's fifth-largest province, and is home to approximately 1.35 million people (3.6% of the total Canadian population) (Statistics Canada, 2018). Roughly 60% of the provincial population is concentrated in the metropolitan area of the province's capital, Winnipeg (Statistics

Canada, 2017). Winnipeg is by far the largest settlement in the province and is over thirteen times larger than the next largest city in the province (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Manitoba was formed through Indigenous resistance to colonial power. Like all of what is now Canada, Manitoba encompasses the territories of a number of Indigenous peoples, including the Cree, Oji-Cree, Dene, Anishinabe, Dakota, and Métis (Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc., 2009; Toews, 2018). The province of Manitoba was created from a portion of Rupert's Land, an enormous portion of the North American continent granted to the Hudson's Bay Company by the British empire in 1670. For the period of the fur trade this territory remained largely distinct from the Dominion of Canada. In the mid 19th century a Canadian expansionist movement developed under the ideology of "[white] racial manifest destiny," and was materially driven by both a global crisis of overaccumulation and the desire of Canadian capital to exploit new markets and resources, as well as the spectre of American dominance over the western portion of the continent (Toews, 2018, pp. 35–36). Driven by these impulses, the Canadian government purchased Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1868 without the input of the people and nations who occupied the territory. This purchase was widely viewed as illegitimate by Indigenous peoples of the area, and in response they engaged in armed revolt against Canada. The Red River Resistance (1869-1870) was headed by Métis leader Louis Riel, and established an autonomous, self-governing territory called Assiniboia in the area around the meeting of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers (Perry, 2016; Toews, 2018). This uprising eventually led to the *Manitoba Act* (1870), which functioned as a treaty between Assiniboia and Canada, and led to the creation of Manitoba as a province, rather than a colony of Canada (Perry, 2016; Toews, 2018).

In addition to the *Manitoba Act*, land in Manitoba is subject to a number of other treaties. The *Peguis-Selkirk Treaty* (1817) was signed before confederation to govern the creation of a small Scottish settlement in what is now Manitoba (TRCM, 2020a). In the post-confederation period, territory in

contemporary Manitoba was included in many of the numbered treaties, including: *Treaty No. 1* (1871), *Treaty No. 2* (1871), *Treaty No.3* (1873), *Treaty No.4* (1874), and *Treaty No.5* (1875-1876, with adhesions in 1908-1910) (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2015; TRCM, 2020b). Four communities in Manitoba are signatories to *Treaty No.6* (1876) and *Treaty No.10* (1906), but these treaties do not cover any territory in contemporary Manitoba (TRCM, 2020b).

2.2 Hydroelectricity in Canada

At its most basic, hydroelectricity is the use of moving water to generate electricity by turning a turbine. There are three methods of hydroelectric generation in Canada: reservoir, run-of-the-river, and pumped-storage (CER, 2019). Reservoir hydro power is perhaps the most well-known method of generation, consisting of the damming of a source of running water and capturing it in a reservoir (either natural or constructed). This method allows for consistent electricity production that is largely autonomous from weather-related or seasonal changes in water flows (CER, 2019). Run-of-the-river hydro power relies on an existing source of fast-moving water, usually with some degree of change in elevation. In this method, a portion of the river's flow is diverted through a generating facility and returned to the river at some point downstream (CER, 2019; US Department of Energy, n.d.). The final method of hydroelectric generation used in Canada is pumped-storage. In this method, electric pumps are used to transfer water from a low to a high elevation during periods of low electricity demand, and when demand increases, the water is released through a turbine, generating electricity (US Department of Energy, n.d.).

Hydroelectricity is the dominant means of electricity production in Canada, accounting for 59% of Canada's electricity generation in 2015 (CER, 2019). However, its production is not evenly distributed throughout the country. Québec is by far the largest producer of hydroelectricity in Canada, accounting for approximately half of the country's generating capacity (CER, 2019). British Columbia,

Ontario, Newfoundland, and Manitoba are also significant producers of hydroelectricity. These five provinces together make up approximately 90% of Canadian hydroelectric generating capacity, although hydroelectricity is produced in all provinces and territories except Nunavut and Prince Edward Island (CER, 2019, pp. 2–3). Importantly, each of these top-generating provinces is home to a provincial crown corporation engaged in hydroelectric generation (Hydro-Québec, BC Hydro, Ontario Power Generation, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, and Manitoba Hydro).

2.3 Manitoba Hydro

Manitoba Hydro (MH) is a Crown corporation of the Manitoba provincial government. From the late 19th to mid 20th century, electric power generation in Manitoba was primarily the domain of private corporations (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-a). In 1951, the Manitoba Hydro Electric Board (the precursor to the modern MH) was created, and in 1961 became Manitoba Hydro (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-a). MH developed a provincial monopoly on electricity generation through a series of mergers and acquisitions of private sector and municipal power companies, and with the 2002 purchase of Winnipeg Hydro became the only electric utility in Manitoba (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-a). MH's enabling legislation is the *Manitoba Hydro Act*. Under the *Act*, MH must:

> "provide for the continuance of a supply of power adequate for the needs of the province, and to engage in and to promote economy and efficiency in the development, generation, transmission, distribution, supply and end-use of power [as well as]…. to provide and market products, services and expertise related to the development, generation, transmission, distribution, supply and end-use of power, within and outside the province; and… to market and supply power to persons outside the province on terms and conditions acceptable to the board." (Manitoba Hydro Act, 1987, sec. 2).

Exports are an essential feature of MH's operations, and the United States is the primary export market. The corporation claims that selling power to American utilities subsidizes domestic electric rates (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-d). MH has standing power sale arrangements with the Wisconsin Public Service, Minnesota Power, Northern States Power (Xcel Energy), Great River Energy, and the Basin Electric Power Cooperative, all of which are located in the United States, as well as with SaskPower in Saskatchewan, Canada (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-k).

MH produces electricity in 15 hydroelectric generating stations using the power of the Nelson, Winnipeg, Saskatchewan, Burntwood, and Laurie rivers in Manitoba (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-e). It also produces power using two thermal (gas combustion) generating stations, as well as four diesel fuel generating stations in remote communities not connected to the wider grid (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-f). Additionally, the corporation purchases wind power from private wind farms in Manitoba. Through this mix of generating methods, approximately 96% of the electricity MH generates is from its hydroelectric system (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-e).

Many of MH's generating stations built in the latter half of the 20th century had major impacts on northern Indigenous communities. The flooding caused by the Grand Rapids generating station displaced the community of Chemawawin, and the impacts of the Churchill River Diversion (CRD) and Lake Winnipeg Regulation (LWR) displaced South Indian Lake (Kulchyski & Neckoway, 2006; Waldram, 1993). The CRD, LWR, and Grand Rapids projects also negatively impacted a number of other Indigenous communities in northern Manitoba.

MH has recently adopted a new "partnership" approach to hydroelectric projects in northern Manitoba, ostensibly in a turn away from the displacement and destruction its earlier projects wrought. The Keeyask generating station (which is currently under construction) on the lower Nelson River is being developed as a partnership between MH and Tataskweyak Cree Nation, War Lake First Nation,

York Factory First Nation, and Fox Lake Cree Nation (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-g). Similarly, the Wuskwatim generating station, constructed from 2006-2012 was developed and is operated through a partnership agreement with Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-f). The specific details of these partnerships vary, but they both emphasize the collaborative nature of the developments and feature some mechanism for revenue-sharing (Buckland & O'Gorman, 2017; Kulchyski, 2008; Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, 2014; Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b).

3.0 Literature Review

In this section I review literature relevant to my examination of Manitoba Hydro. I organize my review around three broad subject areas: the Canadian state in Canadian political economy, colonialism, and hydroelectricity. In reviewing these bodies of scholarship, I identify key gaps in the literature. Firstly, studies of the Canadian state have not adequately considered the colonial relation which shapes all of Canadian society. Secondly, studies of colonialism in Canada could benefit from a more thorough engagement with the Canadian state. Finally, literature about hydroelectricity in Canada can be sharpened by considering in a more systematic way the role of hydroelectric projects and corporations (particularly Crown corporations) in the broader Canadian state.

3.1 The Canadian State in Canadian Political Economy

Many scholars have developed formulations of the Canadian state, however the centrality of colonial dispossession to the structure and nature of the state has been under-emphasized. In the 1970s and 1980s, a number of scholars made contributions to Marxist literature on the Canadian state. Leo Panitch (1977) discusses Canada using Karl Marx's writings on the state, and conceptualizes Canada as a quasi-colony of the United States whose economy is colonized by American capital (1977). Furthermore, Panitch gives particular attention to the personal connections between the Canadian bourgeoisie and the state leadership (1977). Alternatively, Peter Usher (1976) examines the Canadian

state through a North-South framework, emphasizing class conflict and the exploitation of (northern) hinterlands by (southern) Canadian metropolises. He views the state in an instrumental fashion, arguing that Canada's ruling classes impose their will on the dominated classes through the state (1976, p. 29). Usher is somewhat unique in that he considers the impact of colonialism, arguing that the imposition of an extractive capitalist economy on the North presents a danger to Indigenous non-capitalist economies (Usher, 1976).

Wallace Clement (1989) and Greg Albo and Jane Jenson (1989) identify the staples thesis as a key element of Canadian political economy. Clement defines staples as "natural resource products that have undergone minimal processing and that are exploited for the purpose of export to other areas where they are manufactured into end products" (1989, p. 38). For Clement, while the staples thesis focused almost exclusively on trade dynamics, with little attention paid to national and class power, the underlying assessment of the Canadian economy remains useful (1989). Clement compares Canada's trade in raw goods (i.e. staples) to Australia and the United States in order to emphasize the continued importance of staples to the Canadian economy (1989, p. 43). Albo and Jenson (1989) discuss the staples thesis in their overview of scholarship on the relationship between the Canadian state, economy, and social classes. The authors identify staples thesis as the dominant understanding of the state in the early 20th century. The authors identify the New Canadian Political Economy of the 1960s as the next major school of Canadian state theory (1989). This approach combined elements of the staples thesis with dependency theory, and aimed to explain what adherents saw as "the apparent paradox of a rich dependency with levels of socioeconomic development comparable to other advanced capitalist countries but imbedded [sic] in an industrial structure similar to peripheral societies" (Albo & Jenson, 1989, p. 188), and was connected to a surge of left-nationalist politics in Canada (Watkins, 2003). This dependency-influenced approach led to an understanding of Canada as colonized by American capital

(Albo & Jenson, 1989, p. 190). Mel Watkins similarly assesses the Canadian state and economy (2003). While he rejects the most extreme conceptions of Canada as a "region" of the United States, Watkins argues that the Canadian economy is becoming increasingly oriented towards the United States, and "less globalized" in regards to the rest of the world (2003, pp. 11–12). Like Panitch's, this view of the state privileges the role of external forces, rather than the internal dynamics of historical and contemporary colonialism.

Other scholars emphasize the need to centre colonialism in Canadian scholarship. Frances Abele and Daiva Stasiulis (1989), identifying a clear gap in the literature, argue that studying Canadian political economy requires considering the intertwined colonial and white supremacist dynamics at the heart of the state building project. Against simplistic understandings of colonialism in Canada, Abele and Stasiulis argue that Indigenous labour was important to the early colonial period. They note that before settlement became the primary goal of colonialism in Canada, European imperial powers were concerned with reaching and controlling Indigenous labour (1989, p. 253). The authors further identify that Indigenous non-capitalist economies existed outside of, and in relation to Canadian capitalism well into the 20th century, and that Indigenous nations "controlled or contested control" over large swathes of territory claimed by Canada (1989, p. 252). Elaine Coburn (2016) similarly focuses on the colonial relationship in her assessment of the state of historical materialist literature in Canada. For Coburn, debates about imperialism, colonialism, and dispossession in Canada are "usually understood as happening 'outside' of Canada," and Indigenous political thought is largely absent from the new Canadian political economy (2016, p. 286). Joyce Green uses colonization as a framework arguing that the Canadian state is fundamentally colonial, but in the context of globalization the Canadian state is itself becoming colonized by transnational capital (2003, p. 56). While she acknowledges internal colonial dynamics, Green again emphasizes the role of forces external to the Canadian state.

3.2 Colonialism

3.2.1 Settler Colonialism

A number of scholars have written about the common characteristics of settler colonialism in contexts across the globe. While specific definitions vary, this body of scholarship emphasizes both the long-term presence of settlers and the pursuit of land for settlement as central elements of all settler colonial projects. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang frame settler colonialism in spatial terms, arguing that in settler colonial societies "there is no spatial separation between metropole and colony," meaning that the colonial dynamics of extraction and subjugation occur in the same territorial and social formation (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). Lorenzo Veracini uses a similar formulation. He argues that both involve the imposition of a foreign body into a given environment, however colonialism requires colonized people to replicate itself, while settler colonialism does not require colonized people to maintain and expand itself (2014, pp. 619, 624). In further scholarship, Veracini argues that through transforming nonhuman nature, establishing independent settler nations, repressing Indigenous populations, and regulating difference, settler colonial societies attempt to achieve a "postcolonial" or "settled" status (Veracini, 2011, p. 3). For Glen Coulthard, settler colonialism describes the intersecting relation of powers which create "a particular form of domination…. [that] has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchical social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority" (2014, pp. 6–7). Patrick Wolfe also conceptualizes settler colonialism in terms of ongoing social relations, arguing that it operates according to a "logic of elimination." Wolfe famously claims that "invasion is a structure not an event," meaning that the processes of settler colonialism are ongoing, and not relegated to the past (2006, p. 403). He further argues that access to land is the most fundamental element of settler colonial projects (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388).

3.2.2 Colonialism in Canada

Another body of literature is focused on the specific dynamics and manifestations of settler colonialism in Canada. Audra Simpson (2014) and Glen Coulthard (2014) discuss colonialism in terms of recognition and assimilation. For Simpson, the visibility of settler colonialism in Canada means that its project of eliminating, assimilating, dispossessing, and disappearing Indigenous people is incomplete (A. Simpson, 2014). A. Simpson uses debates about membership in Kahnawà:ke and the use of Haudenosaunee passports to highlight the role of "refusal" in anticolonial politics, which she calls "a willful distancing from state-driven forms of recognition and sociability in favor of others" (2014, p. 16). Coulthard (2014) uses "the politics of recognition" to refer to the changing orientation of the Canadian state towards Indigenous people, where "instead of more overtly exclusionary and violent forms of rule, this politics [of recognition] operates through recognizing and including Aboriginal peoples' cultural rights within the framework of the Canadian state and its capitalist mode of production" (Coulthard, 2017, pp. 35–36). Coulthard further draws on insights from Karl Marx and Frantz Fanon to examine what he calls the "colonial relation." Grounded in Marx's theory of primitive accumulation, Coulthard uses the colonial relation to emphasize the dispossession, rather than the proletarianization of Indigenous people in Canada (2014, p. 13). Through this concept of the colonial relation, Coulthard centres the role of land in both colonial dispossession and anti-colonial resistance, particularly highlighting ways in which relationships to and with the land shape Indigenous struggles in Canada (2014).

Taiaiake Alfred, Cole Harris, and Gabrielle Slowey focus on the role of the state in the dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Alfred (2009) argues that the Canadian state attempts to undermine Indigenous people's autonomy by destroying Indigenous economies and imposing settler political institutions in order to integrate Indigenous people into the settler capitalist economy and undermine precolonial political structures (2009). Alfred further connects colonization's rupture of

Indigenous societies to detrimental impacts on the mental and physical health of Indigenous people (2009). Cole Harris (2004) focuses on the various "disciplinary technologies" (e.g. maps, numerical statistics, British property law) that allowed for the transformation of Indigenous territories into alienable parcels of land which could be administered from the imperial core (Harris, 2004). For Harris, the impetus for settler colonialism in British Columbia can be located in the transition from mercantile (fur trade) capitalism to industrial capitalism, and the emergence of extractive industries in the colony (2004). Harris also identifies individual settlers as a second driving force of dispossession, many of whom he argues were seeking land to escape proletarianization in Europe (2004). Slowey (2008) identifies a shift in state-Indigenous relations under neoliberalism. She emphasizes that neoliberalism is a restructuring, rather than a scaling-back of the state, and argues that, in the context of Canadian colonialism, this restructuring is most clearly evident in the Canadian government's turn to "the promotion of partnerships" with First Nations (2008, p. 44). According to Slowey, "[land claims] are important to the state because they promote stable economic growth and protect the basis for material relations and the basis for Canadian wealth" (Slowey, 2008, p. 45). In this body of literature it is clear that, like in Wolfe's (2006) formulation colonialism is an ongoing process in Canada, not an historical event. The way this colonial relationship manifests itself changes in response to broader political and economic dynamics, but its colonial character remains unchanged.

3.2.3 Gender and Colonialism

Other scholars centre the role gender plays in Canadian colonialism. Audra Simpson (2016) and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2017) argue that the control and disappearance of Indigenous women was (and is) central to the Canadian colonial project. For A. Simpson, the Canadian state is a gendered entity: "The state that I seek to name has a character, it has a male character, it is more than likely white, or aspiring to an unmarked center of whiteness, and definitely heteropatriarchal" (2016, para. 3).

She argues that Indigenous women, as powerful actors in Indigenous political orders, were and are targeted for disempowerment by the state (and also by individuals as evidenced by the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls) as a means of undermining alternatives to a colonial political and gender hierarchy (A. Simpson, 2016). For A. Simpson, Indigenous women are viewed by settler states as embodying "the dangerous possibility of reproducing Indian life and most dangerously, other political orders" (A. Simpson, 2016, para. 17). L. B. Simpson focuses on "bodies," as Indigenous women and girls are able to create more Indigenous bodies, Indigenous bodies are the foundational unit of Indigenous nations, and the existence of Indigenous nations is an impediment to the colonial drive to seize land (2017, pp. 87–88). Simpson uses examples from residential schools, Christian missionaries, and *Indian Act* policies to demonstrate how the sexual and gender expressions of Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit and queer people are scrutinized and criminalized in order to subject them to settler patriarchy and to reduce their political power (2017). For both scholars, the role of gender is not external to an even and uniform process of colonialism. Rather, colonialism in Canada is by nature a gendered process, and the oppression of Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit and queer people is foundational to the colonial subjugation of Indigenous nations.

3.2.4 Colonialism and the "Settler City"

A number of scholars have studied the relationship between colonialism and urban space in Canada. This body of scholarship highlights the specific manifestations of colonialism and anti-colonial resistance in the urban context, as well as the connections between colonial dynamics at various scales.

Writing about Winnipeg, Manitoba, Adele Perry, Julie Tomiak, and Owen Toews emphasize the specific role of cities in the processes of colonialism. Perry (2016) charts the development of the Winnipeg aqueduct, which transports drinking water to the city from Shoal Lake on the

Manitoba/Ontario border. The construction of this aqueduct turned Shoal Lake 40 First Nation into an artificial island, and in so doing left the First Nation without access to clean drinking water (Perry, 2016). Julie Tomiak argues that "in the Canadian context, cities have been constructed as settler space through discursive and non-discursive practices intended to evict, displace, and invisibilize Indigenous peoples and place-making in urban areas" (2016, p. 9). In her examination of the creation of an urban reserve in Winnipeg, Tomiak argues that the creation of urban reserves demonstrates a specifically neoliberal brand of colonialism, where in the urban context the state positions "First Nations as investors and entrepreneurs, not as sovereign rights- and title-holders" (Tomiak, 2017, p. 940). In his history of Winnipeg, Owen Toews (2018) highlights the ways in which historical and ongoing processes of colonialism, and the resistance to these processes, has shaped the city. Toews connects capitalist accumulation to the displacement and dispossession of Indigenous people in Winnipeg using settler colonialism (as a specific form of racial capitalism) as a framework to examine municipal development plans (2018).[2] For Perry, Tomiak, and Toews, settler colonialism works both in and through the city, refuting conceptions of the city as settler space.

Similar to Toews, Heather Dorries, David Hugill, and Julie Tomiak (2019) use Winnipeg as an empirical reference point to argue for the greater inclusion of a framework of "racial capitalism" in the study of settler colonialism in urban contexts. For the authors, settler colonial analyses "often occludes anti-Blackness by narrowly focusing on land theft without interrogating the global processes that make this theft possible…. [and] focus on the activities of the nation state" (2019, p. 6). The focus on global anti-Blackness in the racial capitalism framework can account for these shortcomings and produce a more comprehensive analysis of ongoing colonial processes (Dorries et al., 2019). Adam Bledsoe, Tyler McCreary, and Willie Wright (2019) also merge settler colonial and racial capitalism frameworks in their study of the "diverse economies" of Indigenous housing projects in Winnipeg and Minneapolis,

2 For further discussion of planning and colonialism in Winnipeg, see Dark (2019)

Minnesota, and Black urban commoning in Detroit, Michigan, and Jackson, Mississippi. For the authors, these practices of resistance demonstrate the distinct but interconnected struggles of Black and Indigenous people under racial capitalism (Bledsoe et al., 2019).

Other authors focus primarily on processes of erasure in Canadian cities. Writing about Toronto, Ontario, Victoria Freeman (2010) emphasizes the ways in which the city attempted to erase Indigenous people from its history. She argues that in the celebrations of the anniversary of Toronto's incorporation, civic leaders connected the city to settler modernity, while at the same time adopting "the Indigenous name 'Toronto'… marked the assertion of the city as a uniquely North American place and the 'indigeneity' of its settler population, which was of course appropriated from the Indigenous peoples the city had displaced" (Freeman, 2010, p. 22). For Freeman, this representation of Toronto's history obscured the violent dispossession of colonialism and allowed for a rewriting of history that justified a colonial racial hierarchy (2010). Jordan Stanger-Ross (2008) similarly challenges Indigenous erasure in the construction of Canadian cities as settler space. Using Vancouver, British Columbia as a case study, Stanger-Ross examines the process of "municipal colonialism," which he "use[s] to describe settler territorial claims that were predicated on the supposed requirements of urban vitality and development" (Stanger-Ross, 2008, p. 544). By focusing on the history of reserves inside Vancouver's boundaries, Stanger-Ross highlights the historical and ongoing presence of Indigenous people in so-called settler cities. Also using Vancouver as a case study, Jean Barman (2007) discusses the city's attempted removal of Indigenous people and presence within its boundaries. She describes the process by which Indigenous people were displaced from reserves in the city to make way for land uses prioritized by settlers, and the subsequent "replacement of indigenous Indigeneity with a sanitized Indigeneity got from elsewhere" which emphasized the historical (but not ongoing) presence of Indigenous people (Barman, 2007, p. 26).

3.2.5 Extraction and Colonialism

Other scholars focus on the specific relationship between the extractive industries and colonialism in Canada. As I discuss below, despite its unique characteristics, hydroelectricity has a great deal in common with industries more traditionally considered to be "extractive." Literature on extraction and colonialism therefore can yield useful insights into the study of hydroelectricity. Discussing resistances to the Enbridge Line 9 pipeline project, Sâkíhítowín Awâsís argues that, beyond the detrimental impacts of oil and gas extraction and transportation on the environment "by devastating the land, the colonial government is also devastating the peoples whose clans systems, knowledge, and governance come from the land" (2013, p. 55). For Awâsís, the destruction of the land by extractive projects is an alienating force which disrupts interpersonal relationships, and also relationships between people and the land (2013). They further connect anti-extractive struggles in Canada to the treaties between the Crown and Indigenous nations, arguing that Canada does not have the authority to decide the terms of treaties without the involvement of Indigenous signatories (2013, p. 60).

Responding to land theft and resource extraction in Canada, Hayden King and Shiri Pasternak advocate for a simple solution: "land back" (2019). The authors argue that resource extraction projects "fence off access points to traplines and waterways, impede access to sacred and ceremonial sites, erode sensitive areas, and fragment the land base, prohibiting the establishment of viable and sustainable economies" and thereby undermine the ability of Indigenous nations to assert their autonomy (2019, p. 17). For Pasternak and King, "land back" (the return of stolen land to Indigenous nations) is not just a slogan, but a key first step in addressing the harms of settler colonialism.

3.3 Hydroelectricity

3.3.1 Manitoba Hydro

The literature on Manitoba Hydro (MH) is very diverse. Some authors chart the relationship of MH to the Government of Manitoba through changing policies and party platforms, and others focus on the corporation's role in the provincial economy. The largest subsection of literature on Manitoba Hydro is concerned with its impact on Indigenous communities, especially in northern Manitoba.

Alexander Netherton (1993) and Karl Froschauer (1999) both relate Manitoba Hydro to the wider state. Netherton charts the changing relationship between MH and the Manitoba provincial government from the 1920s through the late 1970s using "policy paradigms" (1993, p. 25). Adopting a neo-institutionalist approach, he argues that the various twentieth-century debates about the Canadian state do not adequately explain the interactions between MH and the wider state (1993, pp. 4–15). In further scholarship, Netherton examines MH and Canadian hydroelectricity production in general using staples theory, arguing that the industry has followed a quasi-staple, staple, post-staple trajectory (2007, p. 117). Importantly, he emphasizes that, unlike other primary commodities (e.g. coal, oil, etc.) hydroelectricity cannot be shipped and stored, and thus requires a complex system of transmission, distribution, and management which must be considered in addition to generating facilities (Netherton, 1993). Froschauer examines the barriers to the creation of a national power grid in Canada (1999). Focusing on Manitoba, he argues that despite the view held by provincial officials that hydroelectric development could be used to attract energy-intensive industry to the province, the cheap power provided by MH did little to attract industry, and the linkages from MH dam construction primarily benefited non-local firms (Froschauer, 1999, p. 157).

Because of its role in the provincial economy and politics, public policy advocacy organizations like the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) have also produced publications about MH.

Lynne Fernandez of the CCPA outlines the spectrum of debate about MH in provincial electoral politics, claiming that the corporation "has been painted as a jewel… a publically [sic] owned gem which provides reliable, affordable energy" or alternatively "as an inefficient government monopoly which, by virtue of it being publically [sic], not privately owned, is susceptible to questionable manipulation by government" (2019, p. 1). These assessments of MH roughly correspond to the orientations of the two dominant political parties in Manitoba: the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Progressive Conservative Party (PC), respectively. Lynne Fernandez and John Ryan (2011) further argue (in the context of a looming provincial election) that Manitoba Hydro is more valuable to Manitobans as a Crown corporation than as a private enterprise. While Fernandez acknowledges the detrimental impacts of MH's operations on northern Indigenous communities, she maintains that MH is an important tool for the public good.

Further policy-oriented studies of MH focus on its role in northern economic development. In their assessment of MH's Keeyask dam project, Jerry Buckland and Melanie O'Gorman emphasize the potential benefits of MH's new "partnership" approach to First Nations (2017). While the authors acknowledge the harms past hydroelectric developments have inflicted on Indigenous communities in northern Manitoba, their primary consideration appears to be practical issues they identify in the structure of the partnership, like its job creation scheme (2017). The authors further call the project's irreversible impacts on the nonhuman environment and land-based modes of living an "immensely important yet difficult issue" to which "simple solutions are not available" (2017, p. 86). For Brian Craik, MH is unable to act as an economic driver for northern Indigenous communities (2008). Comparing MH with Hydro-Québec, he argues that MH's relatively smaller revenue and the relatively larger northern Indigenous population who is affected by MH's operations limits MH's capacity to spark northern economic development (2008, pp. 291–292). In a variation on this trend, Adam

Wellstead and Jeremy Rayner use the proposed construction of MH's Bipole III transmission line along the east of Lake Winnipeg as a way of studying changes in Manitoba's integrated land use management practices (2009). Their work is primarily concerned with understanding the changes to land use management through processes of "policy layering" and "policy conversion," but their study offers insight into the apparent lack of coordination between MH and the provincial land use planning apparatus.

There is also a very robust body of critical scholarship on MH's activities in northern Manitoba. Much of this scholarship is situated in or close to the field of Native Studies. In this literature there are many important insights about colonialism in general, but because of their specific focus on MH and Indigenous people I have grouped these texts together. James B. Waldram examines the impact of hydroelectric generation on three communities in Treaty 5 territory: Cumberland House, Easterville, and South Indian Lake, the latter two of which are located in Manitoba. Waldram argues that there is a continuity between the "philosophies and procedures" of historical treaty-making processes in Canada and negotiations regarding contemporary hydroelectric projects in Manitoba (1993, p. 4). Peter Kulchyski has written extensively about the impacts of hydroelectric projects on Indigenous people in northern Manitoba. He focuses on the detrimental impacts that MH has had on human and nonhuman nature in the region and emphasizes how the corporation's activities have undermined Indigenous subsistence economies (2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016a). Kulchyski and Ramona Neckoway (2006) also examine the specific impacts of MH's Grand Rapids dam on the community of Grand Rapids First Nation, and the colonial dynamics of this hydroelectric project. Martin Loney has also studied the Grand Rapids project, arguing that "hydro development destroyed the traditional Cree way of life whilst offering no alternative economic future" (1987, p. 58). For Loney, against any claims that poverty is inherent to northern Indigenous communities and land-based modes of living, it is the

activities of MH that have made previously self-sufficient Indigenous communities dependent on state welfare (1987). Steven Hoffman comes to a similar conclusion in his study of South Indian Lake, arguing that MH's displacement of the community and manipulation of the water levels in Southern Indian Lake have impoverished a once-prosperous community (2008).

In further scholarship, Loney uses the framework of "community trauma" to argue that both the damage caused to the land and waterways by hydroelectric generation, as well as MH's "indifference" to this damage has had lasting detrimental effects on the social well-being of hydro-affected Indigenous communities (1995). Similarly, Thibault Martin and Steven Hoffman use the framework of "social capital" to analyze MH's impact on South Indian Lake, another community displaced by flooding for hydroelectric generation (2012). Asfia Kamal et al. examine the specific impact of hydroelectric generation on food practices in O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation near South Indian Lake, Manitoba (2015). The authors identify the harms to local food systems caused by MH, and evaluate the potential benefits of a local food sovereignty program to address these harms (Kamal et al., 2015). Robert Robson uses housing as a way to assess the impact of community relocations caused by flooding for hydroelectric generation (1993). Robson exhaustively catalogues the deficiencies in the housing provided to seven relocated Indigenous communities and argues that the spatial arrangement and housing types provided to these communities were ill-suited to meet their needs (1993). Ronald Niezen, writing about the community of Pimicikamak, argues that the community's refusal to sign an implementation agreement under the 1977 Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) was the spark for a larger political shift away from government forms imposed by the Canadian state to traditional methods of governance (1999). Lydia Dobrovolny (2008) further argues that MH's lack of a clear monitoring and reporting regime makes it difficult to determine whether the corporation is meeting its obligations under treaties and partnership agreements with First Nations.

3.3.2 Canadian Hydroelectricity

There is also a large body of scholarship on Canadian hydroelectricity outside of Manitoba. Matthew Evenden and Jonathan Peyton (2016) provide a historical overview of hydroelectricity in Canada. Despite the destructive social and environmental impacts of large hydroelectric projects, Evenden and Peyton identify a nation-wide trend in which hydroelectricity is advertised as "green energy" in an attempt to co-opt environmental concerns (2016, p. 268). In his study of hydroelectricity in Canada, Karl Froschauer traces the attempted development of a national electricity grid (1999). For Froschauer the combined effect of interprovincial and federal-provincial tensions, as well as provincial economic development goals led to a general turn towards integration with continental electricity markets, rather than the creation of a unified national grid (1999). Rosenberg et al., discuss various impacts of Canadian hydroelectric development on nonhuman nature such as shoreline erosion, mercury contamination, the release of greenhouse gasses (GHGs), and the disruption of plant and animal life caused by the alteration of seasonal water flows (1995). They argue that a narrative of "waste" is used to justify dam and generating station construction, in which the unimpeded flow of water into the ocean is framed as a wasted opportunity for power generation, rather than a useful ecological process in its own right (1995, p. 136). Focusing specifically on the Ontario region, Daniel Macfarlane and Andrew Watson employ the framework of "hydro democracy" to explain how the materiality of hydroelectricity affects politics in the province (2018, p. 2). Caroline Desbiens uses Hydro-Québec to examine "neocolonial" relationship between southern Québec and the water resources of James Bay in the north (2004). For Desbiens, hydroelectric production is connected to the assertion of Québecois sovereignty and national identity.

Many scholars focus on hydroelectricity in Québec, often contrasting the operations of Hydro-Québec and MH. Thibault Martin and Romuald Wera (2008) outline the creation of the two utilities, the character of their interactions with Indigenous communities, and role of the provincial and federal

governments in these interactions. The authors identify many similarities between MH and Hydro-Québec, but they argue that the utilities have adopted divergent contemporary approaches to Indigenous communities (2008). The authors argue that through the 2002 *Paix des Braves* agreement, Hydro-Québec has engaged with Cree people of northern Québec collectively, whereas MH, by adopting a "divide and conquer" approach to northern Cree communities is "restricting rather than enabling Crees' political and economic autonomy" (Wera & Martin, 2008, p. 73). Much like Manitoba, 20th century hydroelectric projects in Québec disrupted the land-based economies and modes of living of northern Cree communities, and in the 1970s the Government of Québec signed a modern treaty with the northern Crees (Desbiens, 2004). Again in a similar manner to Manitoba, in the decades following the establishment of this modern treaty, its promises went largely unfulfilled and in 2002 the *Paix des Braves,* a new treaty between the Crees in northern Québec and the provincial government, was signed (Slowey, 2008). This treaty differs from MH's partnership model in three key ways: it adopts a nation-to-nation framework between Québec and the Crees, it features flexible and ongoing commitments, and it engages with the Crees as a collective nation, rather than as individual communities (Craik, 2008; Martin, 2008; Slowey, 2008). Similarly to Desbiens, Martin suggests that this shift in approach has been influenced by the Québecois sovereignty project and understanding of nationhood (2008, p. 32). Kulchyski, while critical of the *Paix des Braves* agreement, argues that the structure and content of the agreement is "far better" than any of the partnership agreements between MH and northern First Nations (Kulchyski, 2014, 8:50). He emphasizes that, in contrast to the finality of agreements made by MH, the payments to the Crees under the *Paix des Braves* will be renegotiated 50 years after its implementation in order to maintain the same level of benefits for the nation (2015). Craik similarly highlights the perpetual nature of the *Paix des Braves,* noting that after the initial 50 year period, "the government of Quebec's obligations to the Crees will remain unchanged,

constitutionally protected, and available to ensure that future generations of Crees have a perpetual basis for a stake in their traditional lands and resources" (2008, p. 291).

Other authors focus on the colonial dimensions of hydroelectricity projects in Canada in other jurisdictions. In his discussion of Canadian water management practices, Frank Quinn argues that Indigenous communities across the country have disproportionately suffered as the result of corporate and government water resource projects (1991). Daniel Macfarlane and Peter Kitay (2016) use the notion of "hydraulic imperialism" to analyze the Canadian state's manipulation of Lake Abitibi for hydroelectric development. They argue that this was both a means for the state to assert itself over Indigenous communities in the James Bay watershed, as well as drive industrialization in the region (Macfarlane & Kitay, 2016, p. 383). In a policy brief for the Yellowhead Institute, Kornelsen et al. argue that Indigenous rights have not been meaningfully considered or included in Canada's transition to a low-carbon economy, and that hydroelectric projects are a particularly dangerous form of "renewable" energy to Indigenous people's lives and livelihoods (2019). Brittany Luby (2015) examines the impacts of hydroelectric projects on Anishinabek women's breastfeeding practices, exposing the uneven gendered impact of environmental degradation.

3.3.3 Extraction

While hydroelectricity is not strictly "extractive," the similar impact it has on the environment renders a number of insights from literature about the extractive industries useful to the study of hydroelectricity. In particular, Anna Zalik's (2015) notion of "resource sterilization" is useful to studying hydroelectricity. For Zalik, this concept "is salient to constituting normative understandings of value, emphasizing the importance of market value over so-called traditional aboriginal use" (Zalik, 2015, p. 2461). Similarly, Fabiana Li (2011) uses the concept of a "logic of equivalence" to refer to the commensuration (e.g. by assigning a monetary value) of the impacts of resource extraction and the

mitigation of these impacts (Li, 2011, p. 62). Li further describes how the division of labour in mining corporations facilitates this logic of equivalence, as individual engineers and consultants are limited in their roles to providing answers to technical questions, rather than ethical ones (i.e. to determine *how* something might be done, rather that *if* it should be done) (2011, p. 64).

On a macro scale, John Bellamy Foster and Brett Clark (2004) use the notion of "ecological imperialism" to explain the relationship between the global core and periphery, in which the core capitalist countries disproportionately appropriate the world's resources for themselves and externalize the negative impacts on peripheral nations. Ulrich Brand and Markus Wissen build on the concept of ecological imperialism through their framework of an "imperial mode of living" (2012). For Brand and Wissen, this term refers to the everyday practices of production and consumption which have permeated all levels of society in the Global North and rely on the "principally unlimited appropriation of resources, space, labour capacity, and sinks elsewhere" (2012, p. 550). Warren Bernauer et al. (2018) apply Foster and Clark's notion of "ecological imperialism" to the colonial contexts within Canada. Focusing on Indigenous resistance to extraction, they argue that criminalization is the state's response to Indigenous people who threaten the process of capital accumulation (Bernauer et al., 2018).

Some authors use variations of dependency theory to discuss the extractive industries. Norman Girvan utilizes a core-periphery model in his study of what he terms "mineral-export economies" (1976). Girvan focuses on the role of the transnational corporation in the exploitation of the resources of the periphery by the core countries. While Girvan examines this issue from a global perspective, his insights into the structure and operation of the archetypal extractive corporation, especially in its relative separation from local economies, can also yield useful insights within a national context. Bernauer uses this framework to explain the relationship between southern and northern Canada, in which the periphery (the Indigenous North) is dominated politically and economically by the core

(settler southern Canada) (Bernauer, 2019). Bernauer differentiates his use of this concept from earlier Canadian political economists by centring processes of colonialism, arguing that the benefits of resource extraction in Nunavut accrue in southern Canada, while the territory gains relatively little (Bernauer, 2019). Peter Usher (1982) discusses this same phenomenon in terms of a "frontier" between the settler South and Indigenous North.

Focusing on the relationship between the Canadian state, extractive capital, and the modern treaty-making process, Bernauer and Kulchyski argue that the modern treaty process, while offering some protection of Indigenous hunting and other subsistence activities, functions primarily to "extinguish Aboriginal title and tie Aboriginal institutions into a logic of capital accumulation" (2014, p. 20). For the authors, the institutions created by modern treaties are reliant on extractive projects for revenue and are therefore poorly positioned to protect land uses (e.g. subsistence hunting) that conflict with resource extraction (Kulchyski & Bernauer, 2014). Again focusing on extraction and resistance in Nunavut, Bernauer (2018) uses analytical tools from Gramsci and Poulantzas to examine how extractive capital achieved hegemonic status in the territory. Here, Bernauer argues that the Canadian state functions as an organizer of capital, imposing limits on specific extractive projects and offering material concessions to impacted Inuit in order to create the necessary conditions for the reproduction of extractive capital (2018).

4.0 Methodology and Theoretical Framework

In this paper I examine MH's role in the Canadian colonial project and its relation to the larger Canadian state by analyzing the following primary sources: MH corporate policy documents, business plans, and annual reports; provincial legislation and ministry mandate letters; publications from First Nations in Manitoba; and reports and other published material from independent commissions.

Methodologically, I examine these documents in the manner of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992, 1995). For Norman Fairclough,

> "'discourse' is [the] use of language seen as a form of social practice, and discourse analysis is analysis of how texts work within sociocultural practice. Such analysis requires attention to textual form, structure and organization at all levels; phonological, grammatical, lexical (vocabulary) and higher levels of textual organization in terms of exchange systems (the distribution of speaking turns), structures of argumentation, and generic (activity type) structures" (1995, p. 7).

This approach further requires that the "production, distribution and consumption" of a text is considered as part of any analysis (Fairclough, 1995, p. 9). Fairclough argues that discourse analysis becomes critical when "it takes a 'pejorative' view of ideology as a means through which social relations of power are reproduced" (1995, p. 17), and contains an ethical call to intervene in these relations in order to facilitate positive change (1992, p. 9). Through a close reading of these documents, I analyze the way MH represents its mission, operations, and relationships with Indigenous people and communities. I further examine how MH as a specific apparatus relates to the larger Canadian state and to various fractions of capital. Drawing on a large body of secondary literature, I critically evaluate the claims the corporation makes against the impacts it has had on Indigenous communities.

My analysis is grounded in three theoretical frameworks: Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony, Nicos Poulantzas's theory of the capitalist state as a social relation, and Peter Kulchyski's understanding of the Canadian state as a totalizing colonial capitalist force. I largely adopt this framework from Bernauer's (2018) doctoral dissertation, in which he examines extraction in Nunavut. These frameworks synthesize insights from 20th century Marxist theories of the state, and contemporary scholarship on ongoing processes of colonialism in Canada. Through this combination of theoretical

frameworks, I am able to examine MH as both an agent of colonialism and also a particular expression of social class relations.

4.1 Gramsci and Hegemony

Hegemony for Gramsci is the way ruling classes exercise power. Gramsci contrasts hegemony with the concept of direct domination which is applied "through the State and 'juridical' government" (1971, p. 12). Hegemony is the process where "the dominant class, specifically the bourgeoisie, dominates cultural discourses and symbols" which is contrasted with subaltern hegemony, which challenges this domination and the assumed naturalness that accompanies it (Cox & Schilthuis, 2012, p. 1). For Gramsci:

> "the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed – in other words, that the leading group should make sacrifices of an economic-corporate kind. But there is also no doubt that such sacrifices and such a compromise cannot touch the essential; for though hegemony is ethico-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity" (1971, p. 161).

Gramsci emphasizes that the compromises between dominant and subordinate classes are continually being made and remade, however the "development and expansion of the particular group are conceived of, and presented, as being the motor force of a universal expansion" (1971, p. 182). Reflecting the relationship of political and civil society in Gramsci's integral state, maintaining hegemony in civil society supports the dominant class's endeavours in political society, which in turn reinforces its hegemonic position in civil society, continuously shaping and reshaping the integral state

and its institutions (Thomas, 2009). Peter D. Thomas emphasizes that this civil-political distinction is only a methodological one "within a unified (and indivisible) state-form" (2009, p. 163). In this conception it is clear that hegemony is not opposed to, but rather complementary to domination, acting "as strategically differentiated forms of a unitary political power" (Thomas, 2009, p. 163). For Thomas, strategies of consent are used to build class alliances under the leadership of the dominant class, while coercion is wielded against those classes outside this alliance (2009, p. 163). Importantly, the ability of the dominant class to build consent relies on its capacity to deploy coercion and vice-versa, as the two are "theoretically distinct but really united as moments… of a political hegemonic project" (Thomas, 2009, p. 167).

Gramsci identifies two strategies for communist hegemony: wars of position and wars of manoeuvre. A war of manoeuvre refers to an assault on the apparatuses of state power and can exist only as long as it prevents the state from utilizing the full extent of its hegemonic capacity (Gramsci, 2000, p. 230). A war of position is a long-term campaign, much like the trench warfare of the First World War (Morton, 2007, p. 97). Wars of position are protracted struggles by the dominated to subvert and overcome the hegemonic institutions held by the dominant classes in a "reciprocal" siege (Gramsci, 2000, p. 230). On wars of position, Gramsci emphasizes the importance of studying institutions in civil society that act as "defensive positions" which protect the existing order (Gramsci, 2000, p. 228). In my analysis, I will utilize these insights to explain how hydroelectricity in Manitoba has changed from the site of contestation to a widely-accepted energy strategy.

4.2 Poulantzas and the State as a Social Relation

Marxist theorist Nicos Poulantzas is perhaps best known for his relational theory of the state. For Poulantzas, the state must be understood as "a relationship of forces, or more precisely the material condensation of such a relationship among classes and class fractions, such as this is expressed within

the State in a necessarily specific form" (Poulantzas, 2000, pp. 128–129). In this conception, Poulantzas rejects the instrumental view of the state as a "thing," which can be used as a tool by the dominant classes at will, as well as the view of the state as a "subject" which operates according to its own logic outside of existing social relations (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 129).

Poulantzas was concerned with studying the particular form of the capitalist state, rather than theorizing about a general trans-historical state. For Poulantzas, "though the State is the site of the political condensation of struggle, it is not external to the relations of production, but penetrates them and, indeed, is constitutive for them" (Hall, 2000, p. xvi). In Poulantzas's theory, the state's primary function is to organize the dominant classes (whose individual self-interests are in conflict with one another) into a power bloc, led by a particular fraction of the bourgeoisie, and to coordinate the "long-term political interest" of the power bloc in general (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 127). The state is relatively autonomous from any specific fraction of the power bloc, allowing it to create the general conditions required for the power bloc's ongoing domination. This function is present throughout all of the state's apparatuses, and it made possible through the relative autonomy of the state (Poulantzas, 2000).

In this relational view, the state not only mediates relations within the power bloc, but also between the power bloc and the dominated social classes (Poulantzas, 2000). Poulantzas emphasizes that the struggle between the dominated and dominant classes does not exist outside of the state, but rather is present in, through, and even beyond the state (2000, p. 141). In its dual role as organizer of the dominant and disorganizer of the dominated, the state reflects the conflicts both within the power bloc and between the power bloc and the dominated classes (i.e. class struggle). This struggle is reflected in concessions won by the dominated classes, but these concessions must also be seen as part of the long-term organizing of the power bloc's interests through the state. This view of the state allows for a nuanced understanding of state actions and policy as the product of the "class contradictions

inscribed in the very structure of the State," and explains the seeming incoherence of these actions as part of the long-term organization of the interests of the power bloc (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 132).

A key concept from Poulantzas's state theory is the *institutional materiality* of the state. In Poulantzas's theory, "political class domination is inscribed in the material organization and institutions of the state system; and that this 'institutional materiality' is grounded in turn in the relations of production and the social division of labour" (Jessop, 2008, p. 120). For Poulantzas, the various apparatuses of the state reflect in their very structure the social relations and relations of production that exist in and beyond the state (Sotiris, 2018). The state in this view is not an even, unchanging plane, but rather represents a "strategic field and process of intersecting power networks, which both articulate and exhibit mutual contradictions and displacements" (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 136). State apparatuses are therefore also tied to struggles between the dominant and dominated classes, and also between different fractions of the power bloc. These struggles are reflected in state apparatuses and are received and reflected differently in various state apparatuses. Despite this, Poulantzas asserts that the various state apparatuses are not "detachable parts," but rather operate according to a unity of state power, which is created in the state through the hierarchical bureaucracy, the social division of labour, the relative separation of the state from the relations of production, and through the hegemony of the leading fraction of the power bloc as reflected in the relationship of forces within the state (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 116). In the following chapters, I will use this understanding of the relational state to help explain the changing relationship between MH and Indigenous people, and MH and the larger Canadian state.

4.3 The Totalizing Colonial Capitalist State

Peter Kulchyski (1992, 2005, 2013, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2017; Kulchyski & Bernauer, 2014) has written extensively on colonialism in Canada. Kulchyski uses the Marxist concept of "mode of

production" to differentiate between the capitalist relations of settler Canada and the non-capitalist gathering and hunting mode of production which characterized (and characterizes still) many Indigenous peoples in what is now Northern Canada (1992). For Kulchyski, various terms used in the study of colonialism in Canada (including "Indigenous" and "Aboriginal") are not analytically specific categories (2017, 13:18). For Kulchyski, distinguishing between "gathering, hunting, and fishing" and "agricultural or tributary" modes of production is essential to the study of colonialism and the interaction between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production (2017, p. 13:25). Importantly for examinations of northern Manitoba, Kulchyski defines the gathering and hunting mode of production as "characterized by nomadic and semi-nomadic bands where the primary producer has both access to the means of production and 'ownership' of the products of… [their] labour…. there is no extraction of economic surplus, but rather systems of generalized reciprocity" (2005, p. 41).

For Kulchyski, the Canadian state is *totalizing*. Kulchyski (drawing on Poulantzas) argues that multiple modes of production can be simultaneously present in one social formation in a non-antagonistic relationship (1992, p. 174). However, he further argues that capitalism has a uniquely "totalizing" nature and "attacks all social forms that impede its progress and oppose or do not accord with its order" (Kulchyski, 1992, p. 174). Totalization for Kulchyski refers to the expanding and homogenizing nature of capitalism, which in the Canadian context has taken the form of assimilationist policies and programs directed at Indigenous people (Kulchyski, 2005, p. 23). His understanding of capital as totalizing is augmented by a Poulantzian understanding of the state as a separate (but related) totalizing force (Kulchyski, 1992, p. 177). Here, the state creates time and space according to its logics, and individualizes and homogenizes its population (Kulchyski, 1992, p. 177). He argues that the totalizing dynamics of capital accumulation and the commodity form ("commodification") are made possible by the totalizing state which carries out the "serialization of social life, presupposing and

thereby imposing the dominant logics of instrumental rationality and possessive individualism that work together in constructing the established order" (2005, pp. 265–266). He expands on this understanding of the state, arguing:

> "although the State is itself a relation and a site of struggle, it structurally is positioned to move in the direction of totalization. The State's objective, aside from the wishes of its individual agents, is to find a mechanism to incorporate Aboriginal peoples into the dominant order. This is a structural exigency and will never cease as long as the dominant order depends on the logic of capital accumulation and the expansion of the commodity form. It is not this or that individual or even this or that policy that Aboriginal people find themselves opposed to, it is an underlying logic embodied by the State, articulated through a trajectory of policies." (Kulchyski, 2005, p. 16).

Kulchyski further notes the important role of alienation and atomization in totalizing projects (2005, p. 59). From this analysis of the Canadian state, it is possible to identify specifically settler colonial relations of production. He pairs this notion of totalization with that of subversion, which "involves a strategy of reading and a practice of redeployment where a sign or structure or object that has been fashioned as a tool of totalization is reconfigured as a mechanism expressing cultural resistance," often as "micropolitics" in the practices of everyday life (Kulchyski, 2005, p. 25). I will use Kulchyski's notion of totalizing to explain the fundamental continuity of MH's role in the Canadian colonial project.

5.0 Manitoba Hydro and the Relational State in the 20th Century

In this section of the paper, I examine the relationship between MH and the larger state in the 20th century. I argue that MH was one of the leading apparatuses of the provincial state at this time. For

Poulantzas, the "different apparatuses, sections, and levels serve as power centres for different fractions or fractional alliances in the power bloc" (Jessop, 2008, p. 123). For most of its existence in the 20th century, MH seems to have been the "power centre" of industrial capital. The utility developed incredible generating capacity for existing and future large industrial users, many of whom failed to materialize.

MH was the apparatus through which a modernizing vision was imposed on northern Manitoba. In the Poulantzian view, the relational state can be understood as "a strategic field and process of intersecting power networks" in which tactics and directives originating in the dominant classes must "traverse the bureaucracy and state personnel according to complex lines of division and in a manner that varies with the given branch or apparatus of the State" (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 136). MH was central to the 20th century advancement of a vision of modernization and industrial diversification in Manitoba. The Government of Manitoba attempted to use MH as a modernizing force in the province to create a consumer society premised on cheap electricity and a diversified industrial economy.

While MH's ambitious dam-building program failed to attract dependent industry, cheap electricity remained important throughout the 20th, and into the 21st century. During this period MH largely enjoyed support across elected regimes, especially in the 1960s through the end of the 1970s. Because of the inconsistent industrial usage of MH's generating capacity, the utility began to export electricity to the United States in the 1970s, further enmeshing MH in a web of overlapping and occasionally contradictory jurisdictions. To highlight MH's role in the Canadian colonial state, in the following section I discuss modernization in Manitoba, and MH's role in this project. Next, I examine the relationship between MH and industrialization in the province. Finally, I examine the development of electricity exports from MH's excess generating capacity.

5.1 Modernization and Industrialization

MH in the 20th century was used to advance a vision of what Netherton calls "provincial continental modernization" (Netherton, 1993, p. 293). This vision was premised on three tenets: building excess generating capacity rather than importing power from other jurisdictions, exporting excess power to make hydroelectric megaprojects economically viable, and most importantly ensuring that MH "possessed the only legitimate claims over northern water resources. Any other claims and resource uses were not calculated or recognized in the physical design or economic evaluation of hydro projects" (Netherton, 1993, p. 294). In the immediate postwar era, provincial power commissions (which would eventually become MH) embarked on a program of rural and farm electrification (Netherton, 1993). In the 1930s, City Hydro, Winnipeg's municipal hydroelectric utility (which would eventually be absorbed by MH) subsidized the purchase of electric appliances to promote the widespread adoption of electricity in the city, and following its creation in the 1960s MH continued to subsidize the purchase of such household goods (Netherton, 1993). This practice was relatively common among Canadian hydroelectric utilities at this time (Evenden & Peyton, 2016). In this modernizing drive, the Government of Manitoba (through the specific apparatus of MH) sought to spark economic development and industrialization in the province, and to create a consumer society based in cheap and readily available hydroelectricity (Netherton, 1993). For Netherton, "the modernization programme was premised on a 'modernization above classes' in that most class and social categories would gain substantially from reformed provincial institutions and state-led economic growth," however in actuality its impacts and benefits were unevenly distributed, with gains accruing to international capital largely at the expense of northern Indigenous communities (1993, p. 296).

Modernization as experienced by Indigenous communities was a destructive, totalizing force. Focusing specifically on housing, Robson notes that the relocation of Chemawawin and South Indian Lake, as well as housing initiatives on Northern Flood Committee communities "never clearly

recognized the unique quality of Native culture nor the specific community needs of Manitoba's First Nations" and sought to impose modernity on First Nations rather than address actual community needs and desires (1993, p. 124). As noted above, hydroelectric projects undermined the viability of a land-based way of life in much of northern Manitoba. Far from an accident, this was seen as a positive outcome in pre-project reports commissioned by MH, in which Indigenous communities would be brought into modernity by making other modes of living impossible (Waldram, 1993).

As part of this modernizing vision, hydroelectricity was used in the 20th century to attract energy-intensive industries to Manitoba. The Kelsey Generating Station, the first hydroelectric dam on the Nelson River, was built by MH to provide cheap and reliable electricity to the International Nickel Company's mining and smelting operations, as well as its company town at Thompson, Manitoba (Netherton, 1993). The generating station was not even connected to the provincial power grid until 1967 (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-f). The International Nickel Company provided the Government of Manitoba a full one-third of the capital required to begin development to ensure that it would be built, and built quickly (Netherton, 1993). In 1973-1974, MH had 15 major industrial users, consisting of mining (3), pipeline (1), paper (2), chemical (2), steel (3), oil refinery (2), and railway (2) firms (Froschauer, 1999, p. 152). These customers represented 65% of total industrial electricity usage, while the other 8 568 industrial customers (split between MH and Winnipeg Hydro at that time) represented the remaining 45% (Froschauer, 1999, p. 153). In the mid-1970s through mid-1980s, the vast majority of electricity used in manufacturing in Manitoba was limited to four sectors: primary metals, pulp and paper, food and beverages, and chemicals (Froschauer, 1999, p. 153). In general, these major power users represent resource extraction and primary manufacturing. Notably absent are the value-adding processes of higher stages of manufacturing. Despite the attempts of the Government of Manitoba to use MH as a tool to spark domestic industrial diversification and attract energy-intensive industries, the

few firms that did relocate to Manitoba did so for location advantages other than electricity (Froschauer, 1999). Furthermore, Alcoa, a transnational aluminum mining and processing firm, used Manitoba's relocation incentives as a bargaining chip to extract concessions from other jurisdictions, and ultimately chose to set up operations elsewhere (Froschauer, 1999, pp. 156–157). Froschauer further notes that the Manitoban economy in general, and the operations of MH in particular (dam building, turbine manufacturing, etc.) were reliant on foreign, rather than domestic firms (1999, p. 157).

In the view of dependency theorists, this situation is endemic to "mineral export economies" that are dominated by foreign firms (Girvan, 1976). In this view, few linkages are made between transnational extractive firms and the local economies in which they operate, and the firm makes little impact in the local economy when compared to the economic value it extracts (Girvan, 1976, p. 32). Notably, Girvan discusses the ability of transnational mineral firms to draw from a variety of sites, while mineral export economies are necessarily restricted to a specific territory (1976, p. 41). The posturing of Alcoa demonstrates the limitations of a mineral export economy, as the transnational firm played jurisdictions off one another in order to achieve a desired outcome. Of course, Manitoba is not in the global periphery, and mineral extraction represents only part (although the largest individual part) of power consumption in MH's major users group. Dependency theory therefore cannot entirely address the relationship between MH and industry in Manitoba. In Canadian political economy, this relationship between MH, extraction and primary manufacturing, and foreign firms aligns closely with the staples thesis. Extraction and primary manufacturing, and the failure of Manitoba to capture forward, backward, or consumer linkages from these activities are characteristic of this understanding of Canadian political economy (Clement, 1989). In this way, the staples thesis offers some explanatory power for the relationship between MH and the industrial economy in Manitoba.

5.2 Exports and the Canadian State

Hydroelectricity also exposes fault lines in the internal organization of the Canadian state. The constitutional position of hydroelectricity is somewhat unclear. Provinces are responsible for provincial Crown lands and natural resources within their boundaries, but the federal government has jurisdiction over navigable waterways, inland fisheries, trade, and First Nations (Netherton, 2007). Across Canada, cheap and plentiful electricity was a key element in the construction of a mass consumer society following the Second World War, and both the enormous geographical and financial scope of this project necessitated the involvement of governments through the creation of vertically-integrated provincial utilities (Netherton, 2007). While private utilities were common throughout the country prior to WWII, Netherton argues that this fraction of capital was unable to become organized to protect its long-term interests, and therefore could not be the vehicle through which mass cheap electrification could be carried out in Canada (Netherton, 2007). The provincial crown corporation structure offered easy access to financing as their debts were guaranteed by provincial governments, as well as a "monopoly over the technical expertise needed to manage the design and construction of the new energy systems," and became the dominant means of power provision in postwar Canada (Netherton, 2007, p. 110).

This constitutional conflict and the provincial-federal antagonism that accompanies it offers some explanation for MH's export orientation towards the United States. Despite efforts by various administrations throughout the 20th century, a national power grid was never created in Canada (Froschauer, 1999). In utility planning, provincial governments across the country built transmission infrastructure to and signed export agreements with American electricity markets (Froschauer, 1999). For Froschauer, this was an assertion of provincial independence from the federal government, as provincial governments were wary of federal ownership over a potential trans-Canada power grid

(1999, p. 27). Provincial governments further sought to use low-cost hydroelectricity to attract power-hungry industries and to collect revenue from electricity exports (Froschauer, 1999, p. 54).

This trend characterizes much of MH's activities, with some notable exceptions. In a mixing of jurisdictions, the federal government built transmission lines from Nelson River generating stations in northern Manitoba to the southern part of the province, in part to serve as a segment of the planned (but never realized) national power grid (Froschauer, 1999). Manitoba captured few linkages from MH's program of northern dam building. Northern hydroelectric projects did little to attract long-term energy-intensive industry, existing Manitoba industry was ill-suited to manufacturing generating station components, and the northern Manitoban workforce lacked the skills required to localize dam-related production (Froschauer, 1999). Despite claims that cheap hydroelectricity would help diversify industry in the province and attract international firms, MH's increasing generating capacity had little impact on industrial development in the province (Froschauer, 1999, p. 156). Most of MH's major industrial customers used electricity in extraction and "traditional semi-manufactured goods production rather than for diverse manufacturing" (Froschauer, 1999, p. 152). Because MH increased its generating capacity before attracting new industrial customers, as well as the fluctuating power demand of existing industrial customers, the utility was left with excess system capacity (Froschauer, 1999).

Beginning with the construction of international transmission infrastructure in 1970, power exports to the United States became increasingly important to MH over the 20th century (Hoffman & Bradley, 2008). Netherton argues that "though Manitoba's export strategy was also based upon seasonal differences in energy demand with its US partners, early years of export saw great quantities of 'surplus' energy simply dumped on the export market" (2007, pp. 114–115). However, MH increasingly developed projects explicitly to export power to the United States, rather than serve any immediate domestic need. With the advent of various Canada-United States free trade agreements in

the late 20th century, Canadian utilities (including MH) which sold power to American markets became subject to American regulations (Netherton, 2007). These regulations (or more properly, deregulations) required that vertically-integrated utilities like MH be broken into separate parts so as to be more competitive in American markets (Froschauer, 1999). While Manitoba and other provincial governments had fiercely resisted the real or perceived meddling of the federal government in provincial affairs, when it came to the restructuring of provincial utilities to meet American market requirements, "both major political parties and some representatives of labour in Manitoba were, overall, supportive of building hydro projects dedicated for US export and, to a degree, of adjusting… Manitoba Hydro to meet US regulatory requirements" (Froschauer, 1999, p. 171).

In the tradition of Canadian political economy, Manitoba Hydro's turn to electricity exports, and its integration into American utility markets and the subsequent restructuring of the corporation to conform to American regulations could be viewed as the "colonization" of Canada by American capital and interests. If, as Panitch argues state-owned utilities (among other infrastructure) "were never undertaken as ends in themselves with the aim of managing or controlling the economy, but always with a view to facilitating further capital accumulation in the private sphere to the end of economic growth," the turn towards international, rather than interprovincial power exports can be seen as facilitating accumulation for American, rather than Canadian capital (1977, p. 14). It can further be viewed as part of a general trend away from economic nationalism in Canada in the later 20th century, and an increasing integration with the United States (Clement, 1989; Watkins, 2003). This view partially explains MH's increasingly American orientation, however, as Froschauer notes, integration with continental, rather than national electricity markets is also connected to the assertion of regional autonomy by Canadian provinces against the federal government (1999).

5.3 Conclusions

For much of the 20th century, MH was both the power centre of industrial capital in Manitoba, as well as the state apparatus through which a related modernizing drive was enacted. The constitutional division of powers, the specific characteristics of Canadian geography, and the role of the government in accessing debt to finance infrastructure construction all contributed to the ascension of MH as the primary apparatus through which an electrified consumer society was built.

In the Poulantzian conception of the capitalist state, the relations of production both determine the particular form of the state and also are the site of state activity (Poulantzas, 2000). For Poulantzas, the relations of production referred not only to economic dynamics, but also political and ideological forces as well (Sotiris, 2018). Poulantzas's studies were primarily concerned with the particular development of the capitalist relations of production and the capitalist state in western Europe. In the Canadian context, studies of the state must account for specific settler colonial relations of production. As Wolfe argues, and as this examination of MH demonstrates, settler colonialism's primary drive is to acquire land (Wolfe, 2006). In the context of relations of production which require the disappearance of Indigenous people and the appropriation of their lands and waters, the state structure and the material form of its apparatuses also reflect this "eliminatory" logic (Wolfe, 2006, p. 388).

In this time period, the interests of Indigenous people were not inscribed in MH as a state apparatus. The modernizing and industrializing program enacted through MH relied entirely on the removal of Indigenous communities and modes of living which challenged the viability of this program. In a relational view of power, the ability of Indigenous communities to assert their collective interests against and through the state was limited by the dominating force of MH and the larger Canadian state (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 147). As I will demonstrate in Chapter Six, the state (through MH)

acted as a totalizing force towards Indigenous people, seeking to undermine non-capitalist modes of production and fully integrate Indigenous people into Canadian capitalism.

6.0 The Totalizing Dynamics of Manitoba Hydro

In this section I argue that MH's activities in the 20th century were characterized by a complete disregard for Indigenous people and concerns because of its role as a totalizing force. The gathering and hunting mode of production that characterized Cree communities in northern Manitoba was viewed by MH as a remnant of the past with no place in modern society. Dam construction undermined the viability of this mode of production, impoverishing once-prosperous northern Indigenous communities and weakening the autonomy of these communities from the larger Canadian state. In this way MH of the 20th century was clearly an active agent of the state totalizing project. I begin by discussing the Grand Rapids Generating station and its impacts on the communities of Chemawawin and Grand Rapids. Next, I describe the Churchill River Diversion and Lake Winnipeg Regulation projects. I then highlight how they affected communities at South Indian Lake and at Fox Lake. Through these examples, I demonstrate how MH undermined the viability of a gathering and hunting mode of production and imposed capitalist relations on these communities.

6.1 Grand Rapids Generating Station

The Grand Rapids Generating Station was MH's first foray into northern Manitoba. Built on the Saskatchewan River between 1960 and 1968 at Grand Rapids, the dam has a generating capacity of 479 Megawatts (MW) (Manitoba Hydro, 2011a). The generating station uses Cedar Lake as a hydroelectric reservoir for its operations and required the pre-project level of the lake to be raised by 3.5 m, increasing its surface area to approximately 3 500 square kilometres and flooding approximately 202 343 hectares of land (Kusch, 2010; Manitoba Hydro, 2011a). The initial impetus for this dam was to supply power to the International Nickel Company's mine and processing complex in Thompson

(Waldram, 1993). The flooding caused by this project permanently displaced the community of Chemawawin and forever altered community life at Grand Rapids.

6.1.1 Chemawawin

Chemawawin was a longstanding Indigenous community located at the intersection of the Saskatchewan River and Cedar Lake. The community was a party to Treaty No. 5, and a reserve was created there in 1930 (Waldram, 1993). Before the arrival of MH, the community maintained a resource harvesting economy, including hunting, trapping for furs, and a highly productive commercial fishery (Loney, 1987). Community members recall the productive nonhuman environment of Chemawawin, practices of sharing meat from hunting, and an overall experience of prosperity in the community (Kusch, 2010). They also emphasize the social cohesion that characterized living in Chemawawin prior to its displacement (Kusch, 2010).

In 1964 the community (approximately 350 people) was relocated about 50 km southwest across Cedar Lake to the new town site of Easterville (Robson, 1993). In contrast to the Chemawawin site, this new area was "characterized by extensive muskeg and limestone, and thus has little agricultural potential" (Waldram, 1993, pp. 81–82). The limestone cliff on which Easterville is situated made the "use of modern conveniences such as the pit-toilet… completely out of the question" and led to the contamination of the community's water supply with grey water (Robson, 1993, p. 111). This less productive environment and the environmental effects of the flooding caused by the Grand Rapids dam devastated the resource harvesting economy of the community. Fish in Lake Cedar contained increasingly high concentrations of mercury as the result of the flooding, which led to the temporary closure of the fishery (Loney, 1995). For fishers, traversing the lake became dangerous (and in some instances, deadly) because of hidden debris (Kusch, 2010). Other resource gathering activities were also negatively impacted. According to Waldram:

> "Trapping and hunting, significant activities prior to the construction of the dam, have been even more seriously affected, and today they contribute minimally to the local economy. Periodic wage-labour activities provide an additional source of cash to the residents, but these activities are generally non-productive 'make-work' schemes implemented by the federal or provincial governments, designed to temporarily alleviate the stresses of poverty." (1993, p. 82)

Loney emphasizes the poverty created by this forced relocation, identifying that in 1962 Chemawawin had 42% of the average Canadian per capita income, while in 1989 this had fallen to 21%" (Loney, 1995, p. 234). In 2010, the community had an approximate unemployment rate of between 25% and 50%, depending on the season (Kusch, 2010). In Chemawawin, housing had been mostly self-built log or tar paper structures (Robson, 1993). While MH claims that "at Easterville, the families were provided with two to four-bedroom, all-electric homes, built to the standards established by the Department of Indian Affairs" (Manitoba Hydro, 2011a, p. 4), Robson found that community members "did not have the income to accompany the rapid modernization process which took place in the post 1964 era," leading to a series of issues related to housing affordability and quality (1993, p. 112). Furthermore, Chemawawin has experienced increased social problems since the forced relocation, which Loney connects to collective trauma associated with the community's displacement (Loney, 1995). By any metric, the flooding, displacement, and subsequent relocation caused by MH made life for the community of Chemawawin measurably worse.

6.1.2 Grand Rapids

The community at Grand Rapids was also impacted by the Grand Rapids Generating Station. At the time the dam was built, this community consisted of Misipawistik Cree Nation (known at that time as Grand Rapids First Nation), and a community of non-status and Métis Indigenous people. It is

located directly adjacent to the dam, and while it was not relocated like Chemawawin, Grand Rapids has nonetheless felt the impacts of MH's activities. The construction of the dam at Grand Rapids triggered a seismic shift in the community's way of life. Prior to MH's incursion into the area, the community was not connected to southern Manitoba by road and subsisted primarily on a harvesting economy with little wage labour (Kulchyski & Neckoway, 2006). For the community at Grand Rapids, the dam had the effect of "drying up the site of the once-sacred rapids, flooding land, and every year sending more debris into the river and lake, making fishing much more difficult" (Kulchyski, 2012, para. 10). By undermining the subsistence economy at Grand Rapids, the dam transformed skilled hunters and fishers into general wage labourers (Kulchyski & Neckoway, 2006). Notably for residents, the dam also silenced the once-omnipresent sound of the rapids, changing the soundscape that had once defined the area (Kulchyski & Neckoway, 2006). Camps were set up for the project's construction workers, and with this influx of non-local workers came racism and violence (Kulchyski & Neckoway, 2006). Racial stratification still characterizes MH's operations at Grand Rapids, where "aboriginal employees push brooms and fill plates for more highly paid engineers from the south," and where electricity use in MH employee housing—but not in the homes of Indigenous Grand Rapids residents—is subsidized (Kulchyski, 2013, p. 130). Furthermore, while little distinction existed historically between the First Nation and non-status community at Grand Rapids, the presence of MH (and its construction of company housing and facilities) has deepened distinctions between these communities (Kulchyski & Neckoway, 2006).

6.2 The Churchill River Diversion and Lake Winnipeg Regulation Projects

The Lake Winnipeg Regulation (LWR) and the Churchill River Diversion (CRD) are two interrelated projects that serve to facilitate the generation of hydroelectricity along the Nelson River in northern Manitoba.

Through the LWR project, MH has transformed Lake Winnipeg, the world's tenth largest[3] freshwater lake, into the world's third largest hydroelectric reservoir (Government of Manitoba, n.d.). The level of Lake Winnipeg is managed through the Jenpeg Generating Station and Control Structure, which was built from 1972-1979 (Manitoba Hydro, 2011b). Jenpeg both regulates Lake Winnipeg water levels and also functions as a run-of-the-river generating station. MH also constructed and operates a number of channels that artificially increase the outflow of Lake Winnipeg into the Nelson River (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-h). In addition to these operating structures, MH also constructed a variety of dams, weirs, dykes, and control structures to mitigate the effects of the LWR on communities and other connected bodies of water (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-l). The LWR project allows MH to reverse seasonal water patterns to better align them with hydroelectric generation. The demand for power is greatest in the winter, when water flows are normally at their lowest, but through the LWR facilities MH can bypass this natural constraint on their business (Hoffman, 2008).

The CRD project, constructed from 1973-1976, serves to increase the flow of the Nelson River for the purpose of hydroelectric generation. It consists of three major facilities: the Missi Falls Control Structure, which reduces the flow of water into the Churchill River from Southern Indian Lake, and raises the lake level by approximately 3 metres; the South Bay Diversion Channel, which redirects flow from the Churchill River into the Nelson River system; and the Notigi Control Structure, which regulates the amount of water diverted into the Nelson River and turns Rat Lake into a storage reservoir (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-b, n.d.-l). The CRD appropriates roughly 85% of the Churchill River's flow and augments the Nelson River's flow by about 25% (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-l, p. 19).

3 By surface area

6.2.1 South Indian Lake

The CRD and LWR had major impacts on South Indian Lake (SIL), a community situated on the shore of Southern Indian Lake. SIL was not a First Nation when the LWR and CRD were constructed. The community consisted of Métis and other non-status Indigenous people, as well as a large group of status First Nations people who were at that time part of the Nelson House First Nation (now Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation) (Waldram, 1993). In 2005, after a century of asserting their distinctiveness as a community, South Indian Lake was recognized by the federal government and became O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-a).

Like many other northern Indigenous communities at that time, SIL maintained a resource-harvesting (gathering, hunting, fishing) economy, augmented with some wage labour (Waldram, 1993). Notably, in the mid 20th century, Southern Indian Lake was home to North America's second-largest white fish fishery, which continued to play an important economic role in the community until the arrival of MH (Kamal et al., 2015; Waldram, 1993). Before it was flooded, SIL utilized a largely traditional political and social structure, which combined with its prosperity allowed SIL "a high degree of autonomy from the [Canadian] welfare state" (Hoffman, 2008). The community's continued engagement in a largely non-capitalist economy and mode of living was seen by hydroelectric planners and provincial officials as disharmonious with a modern Manitoba, and that the impacts of hydroelectric development on the community would shock the community into capitalist modernity (Hoffman, 2008; Waldram, 1993).

The flooding and displacement caused by the CRD undermined SIL's autonomy and economy. Beginning in 1978, the commercial fishery on Southern Indian Lake experienced a decline in both quantity and quality of catch, which led to both lower prices per unit and lower overall income from the fishery (Hoffman & Martin, 2012). In addition to the impact on the fishery, "traplines were to a large

extent underwater, hunting patterns were thoroughly disrupted by the ecological imbalance caused by the flooding and on top of all this, mercury poisoning had become a way of life" (Robson, 1993, p. 115). Before the flooding, SIL was one of the most prosperous communities in northern Manitoba, and was comparable in income to southern Canadian averages. However, the average income in the community is now below other northern settlements, and extremely far from averages of southern cities like Winnipeg (Hoffman & Martin, 2012). This drop in income has been met with an increased reliance on government transfers, undermining the autonomy SIL once enjoyed (Hoffman, 2008). For Hoffman and Martin, the social trauma that was caused by the flooding and displacement of SIL provided the justification for the further breakup of families through residential and mission schools, which disrupted the intergenerational transfer of land-based knowledge and practices (2012).

The displacement of SIL by MH was viewed by the corporation and Government of Manitoba not as a necessary evil, but rather as a net *benefit* to the community. As part of the planning for the CRD, the provincial government commissioned the University of Manitoba to study the potential impacts of the CRD project. This study, completed in 1967, advocated against raising the water levels in Southern Indian Lake and for the exploration of alternatives to the CRD scheme (Waldram, 1993). Furthermore, the report specifically highlighted the ruinous effects the flooding of SIL would have on the community, its economy, and its land-based way of life (Waldram, 1993, pp. 120–121). The provincial government ultimately suppressed this study, and commissioned a different report which supported the flooding of SIL (Waldram, 1993). This second report viewed Indigenous peoples as relics of history whose way of life had been rendered obsolete, and that the social and environmental devastation that hydroelectric projects would cause was simply a "speeding up" of the inevitable forward march of history (Quinn, 1991; Waldram, 1993). As Hoffman notes:

> "From the viewpoint of the dam builders, relocation, the dismantling of a land-based economy, and the subordination of Aboriginal lifestyles were not unfortunate realities occasioned by the necessities of progress. Quite the contrary: everything done to the communities was represented and understood as positive steps that would bring about the necessary transformation of a backward-looking and ultimately unsustainable way of life" (2008, p. 127).

This paradigm shaped the entirety of MH's northern operations in the 20th century. Modernization (as discussed in Chapter Five) was not only the vision for Manitoba's underdeveloped industrial sector, but was a sweeping program meant to transform the entirety of the province. As the examples in this chapter indicate, a gathering and hunting mode of production had no place in a modern Manitoba.

6.2.2 Fox Lake

In addition to the impact of MH on gathering and hunting modes of production through the destruction of nonhuman nature, it also has acted as a totalizing force through the physical and sexual violence that accompanies MH personnel. Fox Lake is one such affected community. Fox Lake is a Cree community located on the Nelson River near the town of Gillam, in northern Manitoba. Gillam was transformed into a hub for MH's activities in northern Manitoba, and especially its projects on the Nelson River. Fox Lake was affected by the flooding and environmental impacts of the CRD and LWR, but also by the mass influx of non-local, mostly white male MH workers. Fox Lake community members recall being displaced to make way for MH worker housing, and the local resource gathering economy being decimated by MH employees who hunted, fished, and trapped for leisure (Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, 2018b). In some instances, MH bulldozed houses that, to the utility, were literally standing in the way of progress (Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, 2018a). Fox Lake community members experienced a sort of hydro-apartheid in the new community, and were

subject to racism and discrimination in schools and other facilities in Gillam, and land-based practices were restricted by the imposition of a colonial legal order and a wage economy (Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, 2018b). Fox Lake residents were also subject to physical violence at the hands of the local RCMP and MH employees (Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, 2018a, 2018b). Many community members have accused MH employees of enacting horrific sexual violence against the women of Fox Lake, with one alleging that the RCMP went so far as to arrest (i.e abduct) women and bring them to the local jail in order to facilitate sexual assaults by MH employees (Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, 2018a, p. 70).

6.3 Conclusions

In this section I have demonstrated that MH's activities in northern Manitoba are consistent with an understanding of the state as a totalizing force. In Chemawawin, Grand Rapids, and South Indian Lake, hydroelectric generation degraded nonhuman nature to such an extreme degree that the viability of non-capitalist gathering and hunting modes of production was threatened. In the case of SIL, longstanding precolonial political structures were harmed through the displacement of the community and destruction of its economic base. By rupturing the relationship between the people and the land through displacement and environmental degradation, MH undermines political orders that are based in that relationship (Awâsís et al., 2013). This attack on political orders can also be seen as part of the atomization at the heart of the totalizing dynamic, and the creation of dependency on the Canadian state (Alfred, 2009; Kulchyski, 2005). The divisions created between status First Nations and non-status Indigenous people at places like Grand Rapids also function to break down collective political and social structures.

The gendered physical and sexual violence enacted on hydro-affected communities is a foundational element of this totalizing process. As Leanne Betasamosake Simpson and Audra Simpson

argue, Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit and queer people challenge the heteropatriarchal hierarchy embedded in the colonial capitalist project (A. Simpson, 2016; L. B. Simpson, 2017). This sexual violence is an assertion of settler dominance at both the most intimate scale, but also at the level of political formations.

In keeping with Kulchyski's understanding of totalization, the attack on Indigenous gathering and hunting modes of production, and the political and social structures that they facilitate is used to advance capitalist relations in previously insulated areas. The integration of Indigenous workers into the lowest rungs of the labour force at Grand Rapids and the forced dependency on state relief at Chemawawin are attempts to assimilate Indigenous people into the settler capitalist social order. In this assimilation, the totalizing state attempts to eliminate the barrier that Indigenous gathering and hunting modes of production presents to the continued expansion and reproduction of capital and capitalist relations.

7.0 The Creation of Hydro Hegemony

As I have demonstrated above, MH's early activities in northern Manitoba were clearly characterized by a coercive approach to Indigenous communities. The corporation, provincial government, and federal government colluded to impose destructive hydroelectric projects on the region against the wishes of Indigenous residents. However, in this section I argue that hydroelectricity in Manitoba has shifted from a model of coercion in the 20th century to a hegemonic project in the 21st century. Whereas previously Indigenous communities strongly resisted the imposition of MH's dam infrastructure on northern waterways, in 21st century project First Nations have been involved in the development and operation of hydroelectric infrastructure. Additionally, hydroelectricity in Manitoba has become increasingly important in the context of intensifying global climate change. Hydroelectricity in Manitoba has been aggressively promoted by MH and various other state

apparatuses as a "green," "environmentally-friendly," and/or "sustainable" means of producing electricity. Discussions of hydroelectricity in this framework are limited to its GHG emissions and elide the destructive impact MH has had on human and nonhuman nature in northern Manitoba.

Through the dual paradigms of "partnership" and "sustainability," it is evident that hydroelectricity has achieved hegemonic status in Manitoba. In this instance, hegemony refers to the universalizing of the interests of the dominant (settler) classes in Manitoba, and the creation of compromises with northern First Nations. Hydroelectricity has become hegemonic in that both the colonial state and northern First Nations have come to accept the damming of northern waterways as a common-sense approach to the production of electricity. Under the hegemony of hydroelectricity, debate on the subject is limited to *how* best to develop hydroelectric infrastructure, rather than *if* rivers and lakes should be dammed.

7.1 Reliance on Coercion

In the postwar decades, hydroelectricity was not a hegemonic project in Manitoba, and MH's large dam projects were fiercely contested by the Indigenous communities they affected and also (to a lesser degree) by settler environmental organizations far removed from the dams' direct impact. Through protracted court battles, stalling techniques, and negotiations initiated as flood waters rose, MH and the provincial government made little attempt (if any) to build consent for northern hydroelectric projects. Negotiations were largely limited to dulling the worst of the impacts of hydroelectric generation, and to extracting some form of compensation from MH for its harms. It is exceedingly clear that in this period MH's projects would go ahead regardless of the concerns of affected Indigenous communities. Rising floodwaters proved to be a powerful coercive tool. In this section, I highlight the resistance to MH from Chemawawin, SIL, and the Northern Flood Committee in order to emphasize the contested nature of hydroelectric projects in the later 20th century.

7.1.1 Chemawawin

In its relocation to Easterville, the community of Chemawawin was subjected to coercion through a dizzying array of legal and bureaucratic mechanisms. According to MH, "the residents of Easterville formerly lived on or near the Chemawawin Reserve, located 50 km away (by water) in an area that was required for the generating stations forebay" (Manitoba Hydro, 2011a, p. 4). This notion of requirement was central to the legal channels through which the corporation dispossessed Chemawawin. As Waldram notes, although planning for the Grand Rapids dam began as early as 1953, it was not until 1960 that the Manitoba provincial government created the Grand Rapids Forebay Administration Committee (GRFAC) to address the impending relocation of Chemawawin and informed the community of its plans (1993). The GRFAC did not meet with residents of Chemawawin until 1962. In the interim, the federal Department of Indian Affairs suggested that residents of Chemawawin and other potentially affected communities should have some involvement in the planning processes, but the Government of Manitoba "felt such representation to be unnecessary" (Waldram, 1993, p. 86). The GRFAC was made up of senior bureaucrats who worked on the committee in a part-time capacity, and no representatives from Chemawawin or other affected Indigenous communities were included in its personnel (Waldram, 1993). As Waldram notes, this was an in-built limitation to the GRFAC's ability to complete its mandate:

> "While [the GRFAC was] charged with the task of successfully relocating the community, and by inference representing its interests, the members were also federal and provincial civil servants with long records of loyalty to their respective departments. To support too strongly the Native position… would be to invite criticism from their colleagues and superiors (and possible dismissal). To support too stringently the governments' position would also lead to criticism, from the community and Native organizations. In the final analysis, their allegiance to the government apparently won out, and the committee became,

> in the words of one critic, ‘a bargaining agent of government with responsibility for limiting the demands of those affected by the flooding’” (1993, pp. 87–88).

While the Province of Manitoba and MH claim that Chemawawin chose the Easterville site of their own volition, internal documents suggest that the Easterville site was chosen by the government, who promoted it to Chemawawin (Waldram, 1993). The GRFAC acted as the facilitator of Chemawawin’s dispossession. When it participated in meetings with Chemawawin community members, the committee emphasized that the Grand Rapids project would go ahead (and by extension Chemawawin would be displaced) with or without the community’s involvement (Waldram, 1993, p. 94). Chemawawin was not provided with lawyers during negotiations and key information about the impact of the flooding was withheld by the GRFAC (Waldram, 1993, pp. 94–99). Importantly, few community members spoke English, and meetings between Chemawawin representatives and the GRFAC (conducted in English) had only “crude” translation available which prevented meaningful local participation (Loney, 1987; Waldram, 1993, p. 98). Loney argues that nothing in the experience of northern Cree would have prepared them to enter into negotiations regarding a project of this size. He claims that “to the local Cree it was literally inconceivable that water should rise, as in a flood, and yet not recede” (1987, p. 83). Negotiations between the GRFAC and Chemawawin were unclear in the written record, the GRFAC had little authority or power to implement agreed-upon items, and (much like the treaty process many years earlier) oral agreements and written documents promised different things (Waldram, 1993).

In facilitating the expropriation of reserve land, the federal government was also complicit in the dispossession of Chemawawin. The Government of Canada in an “unorthodox, yet apparently legal” process, expropriated Chemawawin’s reserve land and transferred it to the Province of Manitoba so that it could be flooded (Waldram, 1993, p. 105). When Chemawawin identified lands to replace

those that had been expropriated, the provincial government refused to part with “prime land or locations” (Waldram, 1993, p. 110). After a protracted period of legal action, in 1990 MH “paid the community $13.7 million to resolve any outstanding claims for adverse effects related to its relocation and the generating station project,” thereby (in the view of MH) settling the matter (Manitoba Hydro, 2011a, p. 4). However, as Waldram notes: “[In Chemawawin] the economy is still suffering. Social life has deteriorated significantly. And Cedar Lake is still over three metres higher than their Creator originally intended” (1993, p. 114).

7.1.2 South Indian Lake

The CRD would have devastating impacts on SIL. As proposed in the late 1960s, the CRD project was expected to raise the water level of Southern Indian Lake by approximately 10 m. Upon learning about MH’s activities in 1968, SIL organized a flood committee and retained lawyers to protect their territory, arguing that the flooding caused by MH would violate their rights as established by *Treaty No. 5* (Waldram, 1993). Neither the federal nor provincial governments provided funding for their legal action. Their cause was supported by a wide range of citizens’ groups in Winnipeg, and MH was subject to intense criticism in the press and in project hearings (Waldram, 1993). Despite these legal and popular challenges, MH continued to tender construction contracts and proceed with designing the CRD (Waldram, 1993). Despite a change in government in 1969, in an election that Waldram argues was a rejection of the formerly governing Conservative party’s mandate to continue the diversion project, the CRD continued, albeit at a lower 3 m water level (1993, p. 131). When challenged, the new NDP government argued that too much money had been committed to the project to stop it from proceeding, and eventually adopted a crude cost-benefit stance towards the damage to Indigenous communities and nonhuman nature the CRD would cause (Waldram, 1993). The federal government did not assist the people of SIL, despite the large population of status-holding First Nations

people, because the community was not on a reserve and therefore (in the eyes of the federal government) its rights under the *Indian Act* were not being affected (Waldram, 1993, p. 139). Ultimately, MH proceeded with the "low level" diversion of 3 m, displacing approximately half of SIL with the rising waters, and eventually "the entirety of the community was forced to move in order to access infrastructure, including the school and nursing station" (Kamal et al., 2015, p. 561).

7.1.3 The Northern Flood Committee

Seeing the impacts of MH on Chemawawin and SIL, the communities of Nelson House, Norway House, Cross Lake, Split Lake and York Factory formed the Northern Flood Committee (NFC) in 1974 as a way of collectively resisting MH's activities in northern Manitoba (Waldram, 1993). Wera and Hoffman describe the development of the NFC as follows:

> "Initially, the idea was that the committee would consist of both treaty and non-treaty communities affected by the hydro project. However, because Canada is responsible for treaty communities and Manitoba for the non-treaty communities, the membership of the Northern Flood Committee was narrowed down to the communities of Split Lake (Tataskweyak), York Landing [York Factory] (Kiche Waskihekan), Nelson House (Nisichawayasihk), Cross lake (Pimicikamak), Norway House (Kinosao sipi), and Fox Lake. The non-treaty communities, including South Indian lake, did not form a united committee and as a result were excluded from the negotiation" (Wera & Martin, 2008, p. 68).

Unlike SIL, the federal government (through the Department of Indian Affairs) provided the NFC with technical and financial support, perhaps because of the 1973 Supreme Court decision in *Calder et. al v Attorney General of British Colombia*, in which the existence of Aboriginal title was confirmed (Waldram, 1993, p. 149). Waldram notes the somewhat contradictory nature of the federal

government's position, as the NFC communities (much like SIL) consisted of both status First Nations people and non-status and Métis Indigenous people, and the organization explicitly represented the interests of all of these people (Waldram, 1993, p. 150). The NFC also invoked rights under *Treaty No. 5* as the foundation of their position, and explicitly connected the negotiations around MH hydroelectric projects to the original treaty negotiations a century earlier (Waldram, 1993). MH resisted recognizing the NFC as an official representative of the five communities, and asserted that it had the legal power to flood reserve lands while also approaching individuals in the affected communities with compensation packages in an attempt to sow division in the NFC (Waldram, 1993). In 1976 the Province of Manitoba recognized the NFC, by which point it was too late to stop the CRD and LWR, forcing the NFC to negotiate for compensation (Waldram, 1993).

The *Northern Flood Agreement (NFA),* a modern treaty between the NFC communities, MH, the Province of Manitoba, and the Government of Canada was signed in 1977 (Kamal et al., 2015; *NFA,* 1977). The *NFA* includes a number of concessions to the NFC communities, including adverse effects compensation, new territories to replaced flooded reserve lands, support for community development initiatives, and the infamous "Schedule E" which promised the mass alleviation of poverty and unemployment (Kamal et al., 2015; Kulchyski, 2008; *NFA, 1977;* Wera & Martin, 2008). However, the agreement "recognized no inherent Aboriginal rights but instead created a claims procedure requiring a long and usually unsuccessful, at least from the Aboriginal point of view, arbitration process," and few of its promises ever came to fruition (Wera & Martin, 2008, p. 66). The Manitoba government and MH delayed implementing the measures agreed to in the NFA, and within eight years MH began attempts to settle and extinguish the ongoing obligations contained in the agreement (Kulchyski, 2013; Slowey, 2008). Instead of honouring the NFA as written, MH, the Government of Canada, and the Province of Manitoba, have entered into master implementation

agreements (MIAs) with four out of the five NFC communities. Through these agreements the NFC is removed as the collective agent of signatory First Nations, meaning that each community must represent itself (*Nelson House MIA*, 1996; *Norway House MIA*, 1992; *Split Lake MIA*, 1992; *York Factory MIA*, 1995). Through the implementation plans outlined in these MIAs, the outstanding obligations of the NFA are determined to be settled (*Nelson House MIA*, 1996; *Norway House MIA*, 1992; *Split Lake MIA*, 1992; *York Factory MIA*, 1995).

7.2 Creation of Consent

Manitoba Hydro's shift to a partnership model can be seen as the result of both the particular struggles of Indigenous people against the utility in Manitoba, and also the more general Indigenous anti-colonial struggles that took place across Canada from the 1960s to the 1990s. As I have outlined above, the resistance of the NFC against MH forced the corporation, along with the provincial and federal governments to sign the modern treaty that is the *NFA*. The NFC was only one of many Indigenous anti-colonial struggles taking place at that time.

A number of different events across Canada forced the state to alter its orientation towards Indigenous people and paved the way for MH's adoption of a partnership model. Coulthard points to the backlash from Indigenous people to the infamous 1969 "White Paper," the recognition of Aboriginal title through the 1973 Supreme Court *Calder* decision, and the highly visible Indigenous mobilizations against energy projects in northern Canada in the 1970s as watershed events in the changing relationship between the Canadian state and Indigenous people (2014, pp. 4–6). The 1982 recognition of Aboriginal rights in s. 35(1) of the Canadian constitution, and the 1984 *Guerin*, 1990 *Sparrow,* 1990 *Sioui*, and 1996 *Van der Peet* court cases are also important landmarks in establishing a doctrine of Aboriginal rights in Canada (Coulthard, 2014; Kulchyski, 2013). Coulthard conceptualizes this shift through a "politics of recognition," in which the settler state absorbs "Indigenous assertions of

nationhood… [through] the accommodation of Indigenous identity claims in some form of renewed legal and political relationship with the Canadian state" (2014, p. 3). Despite this shift in tactic, the Canadian state remains fundamentally colonial.

In this section, I argue that, through this partnership model, hydroelectric development has achieved hegemonic status as an energy strategy in Manitoba. While in the 20th century Indigenous communities and (to a lesser extent) settler environmental organizations questioned whether large-scale dams and modifications to the land and water *should* be pursued, questions in this contemporary period are centred on *how best to proceed*, assuming that hydroelectric development will continue in perpetuity. The dual narratives of "cheap power" and "sustainable energy" are used to create a cross-class (and through the partnership model, First Nations-settler) consensus in support of pursuing hydroelectric generation as a general strategy. I will highlight examples of the creation of consent through the Wuskwatim and Keeyask projects, and through the emergence of a "sustainable" energy narrative.

7.2.1 Wuskwatim

The Wuskwatim Generating Station, built from 2006-2012 is the only hydroelectric facility completed by MH in the 21st century. It is a "low-head, modified run-of-the-river" generating station, which MH claims created under half of a square kilometre of (new) flooding (Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, 2004, p. 3; Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-f). It is also the first of a new series of "partnership" developments between MH and First Nations in northern Manitoba. Wuskwatim was jointly developed and is owned by the Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership, a venture jointly controlled by MH (67%) and NCN (33%) (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b). MH, through a subsidiary entity called the "general partner," manages the operations of the Wuskwatim facilities. The transmission infrastructure associated with the Wuskwatim project is entirely owned by MH and is

outside the limits of the partnership agreement. The initial capital for the project was acquired partially through jointly-held debt (75%), but the remainder of the funds (25%) had to be provided in cash by each partner, proportional to ownership (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b). In order to come up with these funds, NCN had to borrow money from MH, and therefore much of the initial revenue the community receives from the project must be used to pay back these loans (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b). NCN is guaranteed $3 million per year in this early period to fund community programs (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b).

As part of the project agreement, a technical school and training centre was established in Nelson House, which trained NCN citizens for employment on the Wuskwatim project. According to NCN, since 2003 over 300 NCN citizens participated in training programs through this technical school, and "many" utilized this training in jobs stemming from the Wuskwatim project (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b). However, Fernandez argues that in the Wuskwatim and Keeyask projects, MH "miscalculated how much time and education was necessary to train the northern workforce for the positions that opened up. This oversight meant that Northerners were not able to realize as many long-term benefits as they should have" (2019, p. 21). On average, an Indigenous worker (in general, not only from NCN) was employed for only six months, and training initiatives were ineffective in preparing workers for project jobs (Buckland & O'Gorman, 2017, p. 85).

7.2.2 Keeyask

The Keeyask Generating Station is a dam that is currently under construction on the lower Nelson River in northern Manitoba. Originally, the project was supposed to enter service in November 2019 at a cost of $6.5 billion, but is now expected to cost $8.7 billion and begin operations in August 2021 (Manitoba Hydro, 2017). Much like Wuskwatim, the Keeyask project is being developed by the Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership, which is a partnership between MH and four First Nations:

Fox Lake Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, War Lake First Nation, and York Factory First Nation (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-g). The project is jointly funded by MH and the First Nations signatories, and ownership is divided between these parties. MH owns a minimum of 75% of the project, Tataskweyak Cree Nation and War Lake First Nation can jointly own up to 15% of the project, and Fox Lake and York Factory First Nations can own up to 5% each (Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership, 2012).

The Keeyask project has been widely viewed as "usher[ing] in a new participatory era in hydro development" (Buckland & O'Gorman, 2017, p. 7). Buckland and O'Gorman, in a content analysis of CEC hearings on the Keeyask project, identify a number of benefits associated with the project, including: its development in partnership with First Nations; its use of Indigenous knowledge in project planning, dam design, and environmental assessments; the economic benefits the project is expected to bring, such as jobs and skills training for First Nations members and contracts for northern businesses; and the "sustainable" energy provided by hydroelectric generation (2017). Other participants expressed concern about the impact of further hydroelectric projects on the viability of Indigenous land-based economies, the continued disregard for Treaty Rights, and the extreme power imbalance between MH and northern First Nations in Manitoba (Buckland & O'Gorman, 2017).

7.3 "Sustainable" Energy

The role of MH in the state apparatus has changed somewhat in this contemporary period. Hydroelectric generation as an energy strategy has achieved hegemonic status and has avoided the sort of popular and legal conflicts that characterized large scale hydroelectric development in the 20th century. This is largely due to its ostensibly "sustainable" nature, especially when compared to fossil fuels. However, unlike in previous eras, MH does not enjoy political support from across the electoral spectrum. MH, as a Crown corporation with large capital expenditures, a highly unionized workforce,

and a significant degree of debt, is antithetical to the neoliberal austerity agenda of the governing PC party in Manitoba.

In the context of global climate change, hydroelectricity is positioned as an important part of the transition to a sustainable low-carbon future by federal and trans-provincial organizations (Canadian Energy Strategy Working Group, 2015; National Energy Board, 2017). Hydroelectricity is also the core of *Manitoba's Clean Energy Strategy* (Manitoba Innovation, Energy and Mines: Energy Division, 2012). In this context, MH positions itself at the forefront of the sustainable energy movement in terms of Manitoba's energy landscape, and also as a greening agent in export markets, where MH claims it displaces more polluting energy forms (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-c, 2019b). MH also emphasizes the inclusivity and sustainability of its new partnership model, pointing to reduced flooding in "low-head" dam designs produced in consultation with First Nations and the low GHG emissions of the corporation in terms of both provincial and national emissions (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-c). MH's financial and export forecasts are at least partially tied to its low GHG emissions, as it assumes that both domestically and in export markets some sort of GHG or carbon pricing mechanism will be introduced, making low-GHG emitting hydroelectricity an economical and attractive option (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-c; Public Utilities Board of Manitoba, 2014).

The new MH headquarters (called Manitoba Hydro Place), which opened in 2009, is a monument to MH's particular understanding of sustainability. The 22-storey office building is located in a prominent location in Winnipeg's downtown, and fronts onto Portage Avenue, one of the main east-west arteries in the city and one of the busiest streets in the downtown area. The building is very energy efficient, utilizing green roofs, passive temperature control systems, geothermal heating, and technological elements like programmable lights to save energy. It has a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) "platinum" certification attesting to its sustainable operations and was

the first office building of its size to hold this distinction (KPMB Architects, 2020; Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-j). The new headquarters consolidated MH operations from a number of separate sites, which the corporation further argues reduced inter-office travel and therefore GHGs (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-c). However, as Kulchyski sarcastically notes in his assessment of Manitoba Hydro Place: "[one has] some dim memory that recycling existing buildings is the most ecologically friendly architectural practice" (2013, p. 156).

Sustainable energy is advertised by MH, as well as municipal and provincial authorities as a strategic advantage for businesses in Manitoba. Publications intended to attract new businesses to the province emphasize MH's large generating capacity, and the cheap and renewable electricity the utility provides, especially as compared to other North American locations (Department of Economic Development and Training, n.d.; Economic Development Winnipeg, n.d.-a, n.d.-b). Sustainable energy is also envisioned as the basis of an eco-friendly consumer society based on the mass adoption of electric vehicles (Manitoba Innovation, Energy and Mines: Energy Division, 2012).

7.4 Conclusions

In this section I have argued that hydroelectricity in Manitoba was not hegemonic in the 20th century but became so in the early years of the 21st century. In the postwar period and subsequent decades, First Nations in northern Manitoba fought against the damming of highly productive waterways and the large-scale flooding of resource-harvesting lands. However, despite their efforts hydroelectric infrastructure was imposed on northern Manitoba. In the 21st century, some of these same First Nations became involved in hydroelectric generation. This new era came about as the result of both the particular struggles of Indigenous communities against MH, and the general struggles of Indigenous people for self-determination and Indigenous rights across Canada. Through partnership agreements with MH, First Nations became active participants in dam-building projects, and part-

owners of generating stations. In an adjacent process, MH and hydroelectricity in general were promoted as a viable alternative to carbon-based energy sources. In the context of a global climate crisis, this narrative carries a great deal of weight. MH has strengthened this framing through the construction of Manitoba Hydro Place, a monument to the type of selective sustainability the utility represents. Through this monument to MH, the corporation projects the image of a progressive, green utility to the more than half of the provincial population that lives in Winnipeg. The partnership model and the "green"/"environmentally-friendly"/"sustainable" narrative have helped secure the hegemonic status of hydroelectricity in Manitoba. While MH faces various challenges in implementing its preferred development plan, the underlying idea that hydroelectric generation is worth pursuing remains unchallenged by both settlers and northern First Nations. Hydroelectric infrastructure is no longer debated in terms of if construction should occur. Rather, this debate is largely limited to how to proceed in a responsible, respectful manner.

8.0 Manitoba Hydro and the Relational State in the 21st Century

In the first part of this section I examine MH's transition to a new "partnership" model of development with Indigenous communities in northern Manitoba. I argue that MH's adoption of a partnership model reflects the changing balances of forces between the settler state and Indigenous people both in Manitoba and across Canada. In the second part of this section, I further examine MH's relation to the larger state. I argue that, unlike in the 20th century, MH no longer occupies a leading position among state apparatuses, and does not enjoy support across the entirety of the electoral political spectrum. The 2016 election of the PC party to power in Manitoba highlights this fracturing within the state. Also while MH remains an important apparatus to industrial capital in Manitoba, the corporation is now subject to an ideology of neoliberal austerity, which has curtailed its program of northern dam construction and its role as a job creator in the province.

I begin this section with a critical evaluation of the Wuskwatim and Keeyask Generating Station projects. From this examination it will become clear that MH remains important in the Canadian colonial project. Next, I discuss the changing relationship of MH to the larger state and to industrial capital in Manitoba. Here I highlight the relative decline of industrial capital and the increasing importance of a neoliberal austerity agenda. Finally, I examine the increasingly important role of electricity exports to MH's business activities. Through this I emphasize the increasing integration of Canadian and American energy markets, and the ways in which American laws and regulations change the structure and behaviour of MH.

8.1 Wuskwatim and Keeyask: A Critical Evaluation

8.1.1 Wuskwatim

Examining the Wuskwatim project, it is clear that MH stands to gain a great deal from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nations's involvement, while NCN holds a great deal of risk. For MH, "NCN's benefit comes from two sources: the risk it will jointly assume and the political capital it provides to the project" (Kulchyski, 2008, p. 136). In the Wuskwatim *Project Development Agreement*, NCN is contractually bound to "not object to the development of the Wuskwatim Project and will provide reasonable and practical support for the development of the Wuskwatim Project," contingent on the fulfillment of various articles of the agreement (*WPDA*, 2006, sec. 2.4). This clause seems (at least in a layperson's understanding) to compel the NCN government to both act as a vocal proponent of the project, as well as contain any internal community dissent. NCN is entitled to seats on the project's board of governors, but its representation is limited to a *maximum* of its ownership stake (i.e. 33%) rounded down, and if for any reason its representation drops below its proportion to ownership, the board of directors may continue business as usual (*WPDA*, 2006, sec. 3.1-3.5). MH's proportion of appointed directors must at all times be at least two-thirds of the board (*WPDA*, 2006, sec. 3.2). The

current board of the Wuskwatim project consists of four MH appointees and two NCN appointees (*Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership*, n.d.).

The risk NCN holds as a member of this partnership was made clear in the late 2000s, when the community's financial stake in the project was threatened by a number of factors, such as: the Great Recession and associated increased value of the Canadian dollar, increasing project costs, and decreased electricity export demand and prices (both due to the recession and the American fracked oil boom) (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b). Combined, these factors led to a renegotiated project agreement, signed in 2015 that altered MH's loan provisions, NCN's payment timelines, and other aspects of the project agreement (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, n.d.-b). The Wuskwatim project lost $25 million in the 2017-2018 financial year, and $9 million in 2018-2019 (Manitoba Hydro, 2019a, p. 44). NCN's proportion of those losses was $8 million and $3 million, respectively (Manitoba Hydro, 2019a).

8.1.2 Keeyask

The Keeyask partnership is governed by a board of directors. The *Joint Keeyask Development Agreement* guarantees partner First Nations board representation as long as they continue to own shares in the project (*JKDA*, 2009). The First Nations are guaranteed five board seats: Tataskweyak Cree Nation is guaranteed two board seats, and War Lake, York Factory, and Fox Lake First Nations are guaranteed one each (*JKDA*, 2009, sec. 4.8.2). Like in the Wuskwatim agreement, board meetings, business, and decisions will continue as normal even if partner First Nations are unable to fill their board seats (*JKDA*, 2009, sec. 4.8.4). The current Keeyask board has 14 members, five of whom represent partner First Nations (Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership, 2020a). The efficacy of this partnership arrangement is questionable at best. Martina Saunders, an Indigenous woman, resigned from the Keeyask partnership board of directors in 2017, alleging that "she and other Indigenous

members were being ignored and bullied" (Lambert, 2018). Furthermore, the ownership of the Keeyask project structure gives MH an absolute voting majority in meetings of the project partners, not only in board meetings (*JKDA*, 2009, sec. 4.2.1).

Much like the Wuskwatim project, the *JKDA* contractually obligates partner First Nations to support the project. It requires that partner First Nations "provide reasonable and practical support for the Keeyask Project…. [and] cooperate fully with the Limited Partnership in a timely and effective manner to make the Keeyask Project a successful and profitable development through all of its phases" (*JKDA*, 2009, sec. 6.1.1a-b). Most notably, it also appears to require partners to silence potential dissent or direct action against the project by "assist[ing] the Limited Partnership, as required, in dealing with any concerns or issues regarding the Keeyask Project expressed by [First Nation] Members, Regulatory Authorities, or the public" (*JKDA*, 2009, sec. 6.1.1c).

In a report submitted as part of environmental impact studies for the Keeyask project, York Factory First Nation (YFFN) highlights the pressure put on the community by MH's negotiation structure. When YFFN conducted a community referendum on whether or not to support the Keeyask project, two other partner communities had already completed voting (York Factory First Nation, 2012). The partnership structure outlined in the *JKDA* only requires that a simple majority (by band population) of partner First Nations approve the agreement (*JKDA*, 2009, p. 21; York Factory First Nation, 2012). Therefore, by the time YFFN voted, the Keeyask project had enough support to proceed with or without the community (York Factory First Nation, 2012). YFFN notes that this had an impact on their referendum, but ultimately decided that "we [YFFN] can stand by and watch this happen, or we can try to have a say in the governance and management; to share in the potential benefits of revenues, jobs, training, capacity-building and community empowerment" (2012, p. 24).

The few jobs created by the Keeyask project for northern Indigenous people appear to be of low quality. Currently, the Keeyask project has created 22 148 total hires, of which 40% (8 798) are Indigenous people, and 18% (4079) are from communities in the Keeyask partnership (Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership, 2020b). The Keeyask partnership does not appear to publish information about what type of jobs Indigenous people have secured in this project, but Fernandez, examining employment data from 2012-2018 claims that despite "a commitment from MH to train and hire northerners in the trades, support and services and staff and in supervisory positions… all successful trainees were hired for the trades and service positions; none was hired for supervisory/managerial positions" (2019, p. 20). Other reports emphasizes that the "highest concentration" of Indigenous workers on the project work in hospitality services (D. Carriere & Associates, 2017, p. 5). Many of the jobs created by the project for members of partner First Nations will be short-term and low-paying.

Working conditions on the Keeyask site are notoriously bad. The worksite, which some refer to as "Keeyask-atraz," has a deeply entrenched culture of workplace discrimination, harassment, and racism towards Indigenous workers, and workers fear retribution for speaking out (CBC News, 2018; D. Carriere & Associates, 2017). A workplace culture report commissioned by the Keeyask partners found that "the level of frustration amongst workers was so high in some cases that many stated they were prepared to walk off the job, and were looking daily for opportunities elsewhere…. [and] among the Indigenous employees, many acknowledged that they remained because they had no other employment opportunities to earn an income for their families" (D. Carriere & Associates, 2017, p. 8).

Sexual violence is also a problem at Keeyask. There have been numerous sexual assaults documented at the Keeyask worksite, and Indigenous leaders suggest that many more have gone unreported both at the worksite and in hydro-affected areas throughout northern Manitoba (Kavanagh,

2018; von Stackelberg, 2019). Chiefs from all of the Keeyask partner First Nations have called for an inquiry into sexual assaults by workers on MH projects, citing this historical and ongoing sexual violence against Indigenous women, and the fear that MH personnel instill in nearby First Nations (CBC News, 2019).

8.1.3 Critical Analysis

In the framework of the relational state, "state *power* (not the state apparatus as such) should be seen as a *form-determined* condensation of the balance of forces in political and politically relevant struggle" (Jessop, 2008, p. 126). In this view, the new orientation of the state towards Indigenous people is the result of real and sustained struggles against the utility, provincial and federal governments, and against state institutions more broadly. These struggles necessarily changed the behaviour of the state, since "state power is a form-determined condensation of forces in struggle, the state apparatus and its capacity to act depend heavily on the capacities and aims of forces represented within the state" (Jessop, 2008, p. 133). Unlike the pure relationship of colonial domination that characterized MH's activities in much of the 20th century, the utility must now contend with Indigenous people as an organized political class.

However, there are structural limitations to this trend. Poulantzas argues that, in terms of its intervention in the relations of production, "the capitalist State is constituted by a negative general limit to its intervention – that is to say, by specific non-intervention in the 'hard core' of capitalist relations of production" (2000, p. 191). From this, it can be inferred that the Canadian state is unable to affect the specific settler colonial relations of production that characterize it. Any concessions won against the state by Indigenous political struggles must be examined in light of this structural limitation.

For Poulantzas, the state brings "the power bloc and certain dominated classes into a (variable) game of provisional compromises. The state apparatuses organize-unify the power bloc by permanently

disorganizing-dividing the dominated classes, polarizing them towards the power bloc, and short-circuiting their own political organizations" (2000, p. 140). In this process, the state offers the dominated classes real concessions in order to protect the reproduction of class domination as a whole (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 185). While MH's partnership model offers real benefits to First Nations and limits the impact of hydroelectric dams on nonhuman nature, the activities of the utility are still consistent with an understanding of the state as totalizing.

Northern hydroelectric projects still undermine gathering and hunting modes of production and serve to force northern Indigenous people into the lowest echelons of a capitalist wage economy. Furthermore, they are premised on the state having the sole claim to the waters and lands in northern Manitoba. The partnerships MH has negotiated are "business-only" relationships (Hoffman & Bradley, 2008, p. 151), and do not permit partner First Nations any significant degree of control over hydroelectric projects. These partnerships do provide financial revenues to partner First Nations, but they limit the ability of these communities to assert autonomy from MH through large debt loads and restrictive contracts.

8.2 Manitoba Hydro, Industrial Capital, and the Progressive Conservative Government

The dual cheap power/sustainable energy framework has created divisions between segments of capital in Manitoba and the provincial government. Industrial users in Manitoba consume enormous amounts of electricity. While in the 2018 and 2019 fiscal years they contributed approximately 22-23% to MH's domestic revenues, industrial users accounted for 34-35% of domestic consumption (Manitoba Hydro, 2019a, p. 37). The top industrial consumers (consisting of only 17 companies) account for roughly 23% of domestic consumption alone (Public Utilities Board of Manitoba, 2014, p. 62). The Manitoba Industrial Power Users Group (MIPUG) is a lobby group representing 10 major electricity users in mining, pipelines, metal refining, fertilizer production, and other extractive and heavy

industries (Public Utilities Board of Manitoba, 2014). MIPUG has lobbied against rate increases and MH capital expenditures that do not create new revenue (MIPUG, 2019; Public Utilities Board of Manitoba, 2014). Importantly, MIPUG, in pursuit of cheap power at all costs, advocates for MH to hold higher levels of debt for longer periods of time and reduce tax and royalty payments to the provincial government (Public Utilities Board of Manitoba, 2014). For MIPUG, this would allow MH to both add new generating capacity and maintain low rates. In relation to the larger Manitoban economy, manufacturing (industrial capital) is relatively more important than the extractive industries. Manufacturing represents 9.42% of GDP, while mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction only accounts for 2.47% (Statistics Canada, 2019). Manitoba has only four producing mines, and transnational mining giant Vale closed major northern Manitoban mining and smelting facilities in 2017 and 2018 (Froese, 2020; Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development, n.d.). Notably, manufacturing has experienced a decline in proportion of GDP, from 13.86% in 1997 to 9.42% in 2018, while mining, quarrying, and oil and gas has (with some fluctuations) remained relatively stable around 2% (Statistics Canada, 2019). The interests of the increasingly marginalized fractions of extractive and industrial capital are in this way opposed to the dominant trend of provincial austerity.

The PC government in Manitoba has above all else adopted a narrative of financial responsibility and prudence. Despite Manitoba's consistent economic growth in almost every year between 2000 and 2015, the PC party (elected in 2016) campaigned against the alleged "unsustainable debt, looming credit downgrades, and… [economic] decay and decline" caused by the previous NDP administration (Ghimire, 2019, p. 36). The PC government prioritizes job creation, limited spending, "improving" social services (a process which entailed closing hospital emergency rooms following the 2016 election), facilitating private enterprise, building partnerships with "indigenous Manitobans [sic]" and promoting transparent government practices (Mayer, 2019, p. 1). MH's large debt load, incurred

most recently through the Wuskwatim, Keeyask, and Bipole Three projects, is an easy target for the austerity-minded PC administration. The Department of Crown Services (which is responsible for MH) is mandated to "emphasize the need for continuous progress on spending within our budgets, reducing administrative costs and finding ways to ensure value for taxpayers' money" (Pallister, 2020, p. 3). MH's mandate letter compels it to "scrupulously manage all operating costs, defer all noncritical capital projects without a clear return on investment, and carefully examine business plans for opportunities to achieve improved financial results," as well as evaluate wages and staffing reductions in the pursuit of "fiscal sustainability" (Mayer, 2019, p. 2). In keeping with its guiding ideology of financial discipline, in 2018 the PC provincial government cancelled a compensation agreement between MH and the Manitoba Métis Federation for adverse effects caused by past hydroelectric developments (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-i). Furthermore, the government directed that "all relationship agreements, community benefit agreements or other similar agreements to which this directive applies between Manitoba Hydro and Indigenous communities and groups require review by the Minister of Crown Services before being executed" and the utility must coordinate with the Ministry of Crown Services to advance reconciliation (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-i, p. 5). This could have significant impacts on MH's future relationship with First Nations, and Indigenous people in general.

8.3 Export Orientation

MH still relies heavily on export revenue to support its domestic operations. The utility uses revenue from exports to subsidize Manitoba consumption, claiming that if it did not export power, electricity rates would be roughly 20% higher in Manitoba than current levels (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-d). In the 2018 and 2019 fiscal years, export revenues accounted for roughly 20-23% of electric revenues, and approximately 21-30% of total electricity sold (Manitoba Hydro, 2019a, p. 37). MH currently has six contracts to export power to utilities in Saskatchewan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota

(Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-k). Some of these arrangements take advantages of offset peak-usage periods between MH and other utilities, allowing each utility to purchase extra power as required, and sell excess electricity in seasons of low demand (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-k). However, MH has invested heavily in major infrastructure like the Keeyask dam and the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project in order to meet current and future export contract requirements (Manitoba Hydro, 2019a). As these figures and agreements indicate, a large portion of MH's business is now tied to market conditions in the United States, as well as in other provinces.

While for much of the 20th century, exports were framed as the unexpected consequence of industry not materializing, for the contemporary MH exporting power is a self-justifying endeavour. MH frames this export orientation as a common sense approach to power production, arguing that "we have abundant rivers and lakes. The flow of water never stops. The potential to generate power from that water never goes away. Even if we don't need the power, we can still generate and sell it" and that "if we didn't sell it [surplus electricity], the alternative would be to send the water through the spillways of our generating stations instead of the turbines, which does not make money or help keep our rates low" (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.-d). Despite its much-publicized turn to Indigenous partnerships, this conception of waterways in Manitoba is fundamentally colonial. It assumes that there are no other legitimate claims to or uses of these waterways, and to not produce hydroelectricity would be to waste this valuable resource.

8.4 Conclusions

In this section I have argued that MH's turn to a partnership model of development in the 21st century exemplifies both the gains made by Indigenous struggles against hydroelectric projects and also the continuity of the state's fundamental colonial project. The partnership model offers First Nations more control over how projects are developed, some control over how they are operated, jobs

for community members, and the promise of future revenues. When compared to the meagre retroactive settlement packages offered to Indigenous communities affected by hydroelectric development in the 1960s and 1970s, the partnership agreement offers First Nations real benefits and represents a real set of concessions won against MH and the larger state. However, the underlying orientation of the state remains colonial. The partnership agreements are primarily business relationships, and offer no way for First Nations to meaningfully pursue autonomy and self-determination.

I have further argued that the role of MH as an apparatus of the larger Canadian state has changed in the 21st century. The utility has become further integrated into American electrical markets, and its operations are increasingly shaped by international export sales. MH has also been affected by the relative decline in importance of industrial capital in Manitoba. The utility no longer has unanimous support across the electoral political spectrum in the province and, I argue, is no longer the leading apparatus of the state in Manitoba. Finally, the election of a PC government in Manitoba has put MH at odds with a larger ideological shift in favour of neoliberal austerity.

9.0 Conclusion

In this paper I sought to answer the following research questions: What does an examination of MH and its responses to Indigenous-led resistance reveal about the internal dynamics of the Canadian state and the ongoing Canadian colonial project? How has MH's stance towards First Nations and other Indigenous communities changed, and why have these changes occurred? Using the framework of a relational state in conjunction with concepts of hegemony and totalization, I have argued that an examination of MH demonstrates the fundamentally colonial nature of the Canadian state. The Canadian state (through the apparatus of MH) has consistently tried to eliminate Indigenous non-capitalist modes of production and extend the reach of capitalist relations to territories which were

historically largely isolated from these dynamics. In this way, it is clear that a totalizing dynamic is at the heart of the Canadian state. In contrast to this continuity, hydroelectricity as an energy strategy has been the site of change. While northern hydroelectric generation was fiercely resisted by First Nations and other Indigenous communities in the postwar decades, the practice has achieved hegemonic status in the new millennium. I argue that this shift can be attributed to both the concessions offered to First Nations by MH, and also by the growing importance of sustainable/renewable/green energy narratives in a time of climate crisis. While specific MH activities may still be the site of contestation, the basic strategy of building hydroelectric dams in northern Manitoba is not. Hydroelectricity has achieved hegemonic status in that it is subject only to questions of *how*, not *if* to build.

The overarching framework of the relational state offers a way of understanding both the change and continuity which characterize MH's nearly sixty-year existence. The continuity can be explained by the state's embeddedness in the relations of production. By virtue of its base in the relations of production, the state is unable to affect the basic character of these relations. In Canada, these relations of production are fundamentally settler colonial. Therefore, despite changes in strategy, the Canadian state will necessarily always reflect this orientation, unless the relations of production are altered. The changes that have occurred in MH's orientation towards Indigenous people and communities can also be explained through the relational state. Understanding the state as the condensation of social relations means that struggles of a political character inscribe themselves in the state, and are reflected in its structure and actions. Indigenous people's mobilization against MH in the later 20th century, in conjunction with broader Indigenous anti-colonial struggles throughout Canada, have changed the balance of class forces and are reflected in the state itself. The adoption of a partnership model of development reflects this new balance. Further research is required as MH develops new partnerships, and as the impacts of the Wuskwatim and Keeyask projects become clearer.

Manitoba Hydro is a complicated entity that exists at the intersection of a number of competing forces. As a Crown corporation, it operates according to a market logic, but must also act in the (narrowly-defined) public interest. It exposes divisions within the Canadian state between the federal and provincial governments, and between competing fractions and ideologies within the power bloc. Also, through its integration with American electricity markets, it is the site of competing national and international dynamics and interests. However, at its most basic, a study of Manitoba Hydro lays bare the historical and ongoing processes of settler colonialism in Manitoba, and throughout Canada. This dynamic is important to understand and interrogate, especially as hydroelectricity is positioned as a viable alternative to a fossil fuel society.

Amid proposals of Green New Deals in the United States and Canada, and wider discussions of a transition away from fossil fuels, Indigenous environmental organizations and activists have been clear that true environmental justice requires reckoning with the colonial past and present. Various critiques of the Green New Deal emphasize Indigenous people's historical and ongoing stewardship of nonhuman nature, and the need for Indigenous people to be at the forefront of any transition away from fossil fuel capitalism (Burke, 2018; Deranger, 2019; Estes, 2019; Honor the Earth, n.d.; Indigenous Climate Action, n.d.; Indigenous Environmental Network, n.d.-b, n.d.-a; LaDuke, 2006; The Red Nation, 2019). Contrary to the approach MH has taken, various Indigenous organizations emphasize the importance of Indigenous rights, the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and the need of energy projects to abide by Indigenous laws, worldviews, and protocols (Indigenous Climate Action, n.d.; Indigenous Environmental Network, n.d.-a). Proposals for a low- or no-carbon society range from advocating for small scale renewable energy and green infrastructure projects on First Nations (Harper, 2020; Mather & Sayers, 2017; Sayers, 2019), to the creation of a just society which upends the current

settler colonial capitalist political and economic orders (Estes, 2019; The Red Nation, 2019). The nation-to-nation framework and perpetual relationship represented by the *Paix des Braves* in Québec offers another path, although one which may have limited effectiveness in Manitoba (Craik, 2008). While these authors, activists, and organizations all offer different visions of the future, what is clear is that if Manitoba is to transition to a post-fossil fuel future, renewable energy like small-scale hydroelectricity can have a place in a new society. As a starting point, if Manitoba Hydro was to adopt the principles of FPIC and the UNDRIP, this could offer ways for Indigenous communities to exercise autonomy over their territories and gain more substantial benefits from hydroelectric development. Any Green New Deal in Manitoba must, above all else, uphold Indigenous rights and sovereignty.

Indigenous communities affected by Manitoba Hydro's current operations have also clearly outlined a way forward for hydroelectricity in Manitoba. York Factory First Nation, a partner on the Keeyask project, stresses the need for Manitoba Hydro to respect the community. In a cover letter for their contribution to the Keeyask environmental impact statement, YFFN's chief and council state:

> "As we look to the future, we want to work with our partners for the entire life of the Keeyask Project to sustain and achieve respect for our Cree culture and self-determination, produce sustainable, tangible benefits for our First Nation, and continue to build trust and a meaningful partnership with Manitoba Hydro and the other Keeyask Cree Nations. If we can achieve these objectives, then the Keeyask Project and Partnership will make a significant contribution to fulfilling our hopes and expectations for our current and future generations" (York Factory First Nation, 2012, preface).

Pimicikamak, the only *NFA* community which has refused to sign a master implementation agreement, has called on MH to work to gain the nation's consent for its operations, and for the Government of Manitoba and MH to provide funding for community initiatives (Pimicikamak, n.d.; Pimicikamak

Okimawin, 2017). A renewed relationship with MH, grounded in the *NFA* as a modern treaty is central to Pimicikamak's national policy: "Heal the land; heal the people; heal the nation" (Pimicikamak, n.d.). The nation has been clear that it desires no further negotiations, but rather a commitment to the *NFA* as a treaty and as a relationship. In a working paper, the nation asserts that correcting the injustices Manitoba Hydro has perpetuated on Pimicikamak territory requires a reorientation of the *NFA* relationship according to Cree perspectives (Pimicikamak NFA Working Group, 1998). Pimicikamak calls for a number of shifts:

> "• away from adversarial positions and toward mutual understandings;
>
> • away from categorical distinctions and toward holistic thinking;
>
> • away from problems and toward opportunities;
>
> • away from arbitrary authority and toward honourable standards;
>
> • away from dishonourable 'settlements' and toward honourable actions;
>
> • away from dependency and toward dignity;
>
> • away from legalistic interpretations and toward spirit and intent" (1998, p. 1)

The specific principles outlined by Pimicikamak provide a clear starting place for Manitoba Hydro in addressing past injustices, and the general principles of FPIC and in the UNDRIP give clear direction to the corporation for future operations. However, from my examination of Manitoba Hydro it is clear that hydroelectricity in Manitoba cannot be "sustainable" for human and nonhuman nature while the colonial state still stands.

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