

Land, Decolonization and Self-determination

*A conference to confront Canadian colonialism and
strengthen movements for self-determination*

May 13-15, 2005

Montréal,
Occupied Kanien'keha:ka Territory



Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)

Pavillon Hubert-Aquin, Room A-M050

400 Ste-Catherine East  Berri-UQAM

Basis of Unity

We reject the mutually reinforcing structures of capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, patriarchy and racism, and the institutions in which they are embodied. We are organizing this conference with the understanding that capitalist globalization is nothing new - it is simply a new name for the colonialism and culture of genocide which Indigenous peoples have been resisting for centuries. We challenge anti-war and social justice activists and organizations to recognize that there can be no justice on stolen land.

We assert that decolonization 'at home' is an integral part of the struggle for global justice and self-determination - in concretely targeting the roots of injustice inside Fortress North America, we oppose injustice everywhere.

We advocate the use of a broad range of tactics and creative initiatives in building a decolonization movement, and affirm the importance of building relationships of mutual aid and solidarity, within and across our movements, ranging from anti-poverty and prison abolition to queer and trans liberation, from immigrant and refugee struggles to environmental justice.

We see decolonization as being only possible through active and collaborative efforts. This necessarily requires a parallel process of mutual self-determination and active solidarity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, founded on a respect for the autonomy of all peoples, groups and individuals.

Groups Endorsing the Basis of Unity

Arise for Social Justice – Springfield, USA

Block the Empire (BLEM) – Montréal

CKUT Radio

FromOccupiedPalestine.org

Grassroots Anti-Imperialist Network (GRAIN)

[York University]

Haiti Solidarity B.C.

International Solidarity Movement (ISM)

[Montréal]

Kahnawake Tobacco Association

Kersplebedeb Montréal

Land, Freedom and Decolonization coalition

Latin American Solidarity Coalition (LASC)

Comité chrétien pour les droits humains en
Amérique latine (CCDHAL) [Montréal]

Mexico-Montréal Collective [Montréal]

No One Is Illegal (NOII) [Montréal]

No One Is Illegal (NOII) [Toronto]

No One Is Illegal (NOII) [Vancouver]

Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG)

[Guelph]

Philippine Network for Justice and Peace

[Toronto]

Philippine Solidarity Group [Toronto]

Praxis Productions

Prisoner's Justice Action Committee [Toronto]

Projet Accompagnement Solidarité Colombie

(PASC) [Montréal]

Réseau International pour les Droits Humains

Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR)

[McMaster University]

Students Taking Action in Chiapas (STAC)

[Montréal]

Committee of Indigenous Solidarity-DC

Zapatistas

South Asian Women's Community Centre

The Foster Care Council of Canada

Vancouver Status of Women

Young Geographers' Society [Montréal]

The Conference

Land, Decolonization and Self-Determination aims to demystify the process of decolonization in the 'Canadian' state. The conference will bring together those at the forefront of self-determination struggles, and organizers and activists participating in solidarity work across Turtle Island (ie. occupied North America).

This conference will strategize ways to dismantle the colonial 'Canadian' state, break down the walls of Fortress North America, and forge links of resistance. Let us share information, advance dialogue and fight together.

About Decolonization

The 'Canadian' government, in its propaganda and legislation, has perpetuated the idea that decolonization means taking Indigenous Peoples out from under the yolk of the Indian Act by making them Canadians and allowing delegated governance.

This conference will expose the 'Canadian' government's current legislative drive as nothing more than an attempt to complete the colonial project, and acquire legal access to remaining Indigenous lands and resources in order to successfully compete in the global economy. Participants will learn what decolonization means from the perspective of Indigenous and other self-determining communities. We will learn of the many strategies employed past and present - legal, political, social and cultural - by

Indigenous and other oppressed peoples in their fight against 'Canadian' colonialism.

Our vision of decolonization at this conference includes deepening our analysis of the various ways in which colonization manifests itself. We encourage the participation of people active in diverse social justice movements so that we can collectively strategize; we include movements that address occupations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Haiti and elsewhere; the attacks on the rights of immigrants and refugees; the Prison Industrial Complex; the 'war on drugs,' the 'war on terrorism,' reparations campaigns; anti-racist, anti-patriarchy and queer liberation movements; capitalist globalization, police harassment and brutality, attacks on the poor; and more.

About the Organizers

The **Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement** (IPSM) is a Montréal-based collective of non-Native people from various communities. Our primary goal is to ally ourselves with Indigenous peoples in the active fight for mutual self-determination and decolonization. Over the past 3 years, the IPSM collective has participated in direct solidarity work with Indigenous communities (including Anishnabe community members of Grassy Narrows and Kanien: keha'ka community members of Kanehsatake), organized a wide array of public education events, and mobilized actively in support of diverse struggles for decolonization and self-determination, both at home and abroad.

The **No One Is Illegal** campaign brings together Montreal-area activists in defense of the rights of immigrants, refugees and indigenous peoples. Confronting a colonial system built on the dispossession and genocide of indigenous peoples and racist anti-immigrant laws, we maintain that there are no illegal human beings, only inhumane laws and illegal states. We recognize that struggles for self-determination and for the free movement of people against colonial exploitation are led by the communities who fight on the frontlines. Our campaign lends tangible support to these struggles in our capacity as allies. In doing so, we seek to contribute to building a global movement for justice and building links between communities of resistance worldwide.

Schedule of Events

Friday (May 13)

11AM-6PM:

Film screenings (A-M050, Pavillon Hubert Aquin):

11:30 am **Power: One River Two Nations** 1:00 pm **Rocks at Whiskey Trench**

3:00 pm **The Business of Fancy Dancing** 5:00 pm **Self Respect, Self Defense & Self Determination**

6:30PM-9:30PM:

Opening panel and discussion (A-M050)

Canadian Colonialism, Anti-Colonial Struggles & Resistance

Speakers: Joane Bourget, Harsha Walia, Arnie Jack

Saturday (May 14)

8:30 - 9:30	Check in and Breakfast (A-M050)			
9:30 - 11:30	Colonialism at Home & Abroad	National Liberation, Nationalism & Decolonization	Justice, Security & Self-Determination	Colonization, Militarization and Resource Extraction: An interactive visual tour (A-M050)
11:30 - 11:45	Break			
12 - 2pm	Prisons & Decolonization	Solidarity and Self-Determination	Decolonizing Identity	Migration, Displacement & [De]colonization
2 - 3pm	Lunch break			
3 :00- 4:45pm	Strategy Session: Building a Decolonization Movement			
4:45 - 5pm	Break			
5 - 7pm	Closing Panel: Decolonization in Practice			

(Room numbers will be posted on site.)

Sunday (May 15)

Atwater Square (corner Atwater and Ste-Catherine, Metro Atwater*)

11am: **Brunch and Speakers**

12pm: **Land, Decolonization and Self-Determination March**

* In case of rain, brunch and speakers will move to Native Friendship Centre (2001 Boul. St. Laurent)

The Workshops

Canadian Colonialism, Anti-Colonial Struggles & Resistance

Joane Bourget, Harsha Walia, Arnie Jack

The opening panel will look at Canadian imperialist ideology and colonial practice as historical foundations of the Canadian state. It will also explore the global nature and impact of colonialism and its repercussions on displaced and racialized communities. Finally, it will expose some of the facets and strategies used to resist Canadian imperialism, via the exploration of some contemporary initiatives, in a perspective of decolonization and self-determination.

Decolonizing Identity

Natalie Lloyd, Dolores Chew, Joane Bourget

Colonialism is often solely regarded as a process based on the occupation of land and the domination of colonized people, thus overlooking the significant impacts of colonialism on an emotional, cultural, psychological and spiritual level, both individually and collectively. Over time, colonialism has played a defining role in constructing, reconfiguring, and manipulating identities of individuals, communities and entire peoples. With the imposition of white supremacist, capitalist patriarchal structures on communities, and with the advance of neo-colonialism, notions of gender, race/ethnicity, and sexuality have been drastically affected. This workshop will look at ways in which people's identities have been colonized, and how people are struggling to reclaim and reconstruct their identities in resistance to colonial hegemony.

Nationhood, National Liberation, Nationalism & Decolonization

Ashanti Alston, Harsha Walia

The role of nationalism and national liberation movements in opposing colonial regimes has been a contentious one. Pitfalls of the national liberation model include the reproduction of oppressive systems of governance and economy, an emphasis on cultural and/or racial purity, forced identification into rigid pre-determined categories of culture, race, class, and gender, and, ultimately authoritarianism and coercive violence.

The weakening role of nations in the neo-imperial

economy is leading to more nations, not fewer, and to the rise of new concepts as well: of nations as voluntary choices for people; of nations as being forms for change as well as tradition.

Can nationalism – or nationhood – be a force of liberation? This workshop explores nationhood and nationalism in both its formulation by the state, and by oppressed peoples as a rejection of, and separation from, the state. The importance of recognizing nationhood as an organizing model for peoples affirming their autonomy and asserting self-determination will be highlighted.

Justice, Security & Self-Determination

Roderick Carreon, Kukdookaa Terri Brown, Paul Delaronde Tekarontake

This workshop looks at alternatives to the colonial justice system that are based on community experience in self-determination. Indigenous and other oppressed people will share their perspective on courts, policing and repression these systems inevitably bring, as well as ideas on community-organized resistance.

Colonization, Militarization and Resource Extraction: An interactive visual tour

The Beehive Collective

With a huge portable mural of an elaborately illustrated poster and an engaging narrative...the Bees will take you on an interactive visual tour of the connections between colonization, militarization and resource extraction in the Andean region of South America. Join in as they deconstruct the complex and overwhelming issues that are shaping our world using metaphors and bio-regionally accurate depictions of animals and insects ... it's a storytelling picture-lecture to be understood by anyone, not just the experts and political analysts!

Prisons & Decolonization

Sky Bellefleur, Jonathan Wilson, Antonia Baker

The targeting of racialized and impoverished communities which have long struggled against colonial occupation and domination stands as a clear expression of the ways in which the prison-industrial complex remains an integral component of the

corporate and state colonial apparatus. In an attempt to undermine people's livelihoods, dignity, and self-determination, the (in)justice system claims to "cure" social "deviancy" through repressive and draconian measures of incarceration which entrench -- rather than uproot -- social injustices, thus perpetuating and institutionalizing the oppression of colonized peoples. By sharing the experiences of the presenters in prisoner solidarity and prison abolitionist work, this workshop will explore the manner in which the prison and detention systems operate as tools for furthering colonization.

Migration, Displacement & [De]colonization

Tess Agustin, Smail Behlouili, Harsha Walia, Clifton Arihwakehte

A defining feature of colonial control has been the migration of people away from their lands, and internal displacement on their lands. So-called "third world" peoples migrate in the tens of millions to the "first world", while indigenous nations (the so-called "fourth world") are internally displaced off their lands into reservations or urban communities, to enable capitalist control of territories and resources while deliberately perpetuating cultural genocide. Colonial and neo-colonial displacement reflects both global and domestic apartheid.

This workshop will share histories of migration and displacement, and make links between self-determining communities. There will be a focus on the common challenges of confronting the various policies and programs of the national security state (eg. "smart cards," the "smart border," racial profiling) that specifically target migrant and indigenous communities. A premise of this workshop is that an alliance between all displaced peoples – immigrant and indigenous – is crucial to the building of a truly effective decolonization movement in confrontation with the Canadian state.

Solidarity and Self-Determination

Sarita Ahojja, Ashanti Alston, Sue Collis

In building a decolonization movement that can challenge the colonial roots of the state, the burden of fighting colonialism cannot be left to lie on the shoulders of those who are most directly under attack. It is crucial that we recognize that all our relations have been affected, and infected, by colonialism, and that, to be able to build a truly 'post-colonial' society, we need to

construct new relationships amongst our communities that will be founded on respect and mutual aid. How can we develop links of active solidarity and struggle with communities in resistance while respecting individual, community, and national autonomy and self-determination? Furthermore, how can we support communities that are at the forefront of anti-colonial / anti-capitalist struggles, while at the same time forging our own paths towards self-determination?

Canadian Colonialism at Home & Abroad

Magalie X, Maigan Agik community members, Alcan't in India, Andrea Schmidt

Today, the rhetoric of saving "failed states," "peacekeeping" and "building civil society", forms the cover for the government's agenda: corporate expropriation of resources, suppression of dissent, and neutralization of political forces that oppose this agenda. Defense Minister Bill Graham recently summed up the current policies in an address at McGill University: "We're not just here to conquer, were here to engage with a civil society." Graham's frank assessment applies within Canada's borders as well as without. This panel discussion will sketch the commonalities and differences between various forms of Canadian colonialism, nearby and far-flung.

Decolonization in Practice (Pavillon Hubert-Aquin A-M050)

Shawn Brant, Paul Delaronde Tekarontake, Kukdookaa Terri Brown, Arnie Jack

Decolonization stems from the self-determination of communities who are struggling to assert their rights and autonomy. Decolonization and resistance are parallel strategies towards the goal of freedom. Not freedom to participate and purchase as "equals" within the structures of patriarchal, colonial and imperialist capitalism as these structures have already proven their incapacity to undergo a radial redistribution of resources and community power; but freedom decolonized, pure and true. In order to really redefine our relationships, decolonization calls on both native and non-native people to embrace the momentum.

This panel presents speakers from communities actively practicing self-determination both in resistance to colonialism, and for the creation of radical new relations between individuals and collectives of peoples, and between the human and natural world upon which our survival depends.

Panelists and Presenters

Alcan't In India is a solidarity group based in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. It is aimed at supporting the residents of Kashipur, India in their struggle to preserve power over the development of their land and resources. Since 1994, the people of Kashipur have resisted (and so far prevented) the establishment of a bauxite mine and alumina plant - backed in part by Montreal multinational ALCAN - on their land.

Andrea Schmidt is an organizer with Block the Empire. She was a delegate to occupied Iraq as part of the Iraq Solidarity Project.

Antonia Baker is a member of the Prisoners Justice Action Committee (PJAC) in Toronto and the 81 Reasons Campaign to stop the new superjail for youth. She coordinates Prisoners Justice Day radio programming each summer on CKLN88.1FM and organizes a transportation program for families to visit federal women prisoners at Grand Valley Prison in Kitchener.

Arnie Jack is a militant and member of the Secwepemc (Shuswap) nation. After following the Gustafsen Lake court process, Arnie became involved with the Sunpeaks campaign, as part of the Skwel'wek'wek Protection Centre as well as with the Harvesting for Homes Campaign.

Ashanti Alston is presently a member of Estacion Libre (a People of Color organization that brings people of color delegations to Chiapas to support and learn from the Zapaptista revolution), Critical Resistance (a radical prison abolitionist organization), and is a board member of the Institute for Anarchist Studies.

The Beehive Collective is an all-volunteer graphics education collective that has gained international attention and participation for its collaboratively produced graphics campaigns focused on globalization and militarization. www.beehivecollective.org

Clifton Arihwakehteh is a member of the Kanehsatake community on Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) territory

Dolores Chew is a founding member of the South Asian Women's Community Centre in Montreal and is the president of CERAS -- South Asia Centre. She teaches History and Humanities at Marianopolis College in Montreal.

Harsha Walia is a writer and activist with the No One is Illegal Campaign and South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy. She is also active in supporting various indigenous sovereignty struggles.

Joane Bourget is a nurse who has been working on Inuit Land since 1995. She has spent some time in Gaza, occupied Palestine in 2001.

Jonathan Wilson is a 26-year old multiracial anti-authoritarian living in Brooklyn, NY. He has been organizing with Critical Resistance NYC (CR-NYC) for the last 3 years, particularly active in two primary projects: La Casita and Thru The People. La Casita is a Residential Treatment Center in the Bronx, for Women and their Children. CRNYC has been building with them for over three years. Thru The People is a collaborative zine between prisoners and CR-NYC members to "challenge the way that prison walls silence someone's spirit," currently working on their 6th issue. He is currently an instructor of urban ecology and urban design in Brooklyn.

Past NAC and NWAC president, **Kukdookaa Teresa Brown** is a member of the Tahltan Nation from Telegraph Creek BC. Spokesperson for the Tahltan elders, she was part of the ongoing occupation of the band council office where the Tahltan elders have denounced their band council's continual corruption.

Magalie X is an organizer with Vwa Zanzet (Voice of the Ancestors), a group that defends the rights of the people of Haiti.

Natalie Lloyd is an Inuk woman with mixed ancestry. Her mother is Inuk from Labrador and her father is white from England. She first came out as a lesbian over 10 years ago and then learned about two-spirited teachings of the First Nations and identifies with being

two-spirit. She works presently as the APHA (Aboriginal People Living With HIV/AIDS and/or HCV) Fostering Peer Support Coordinator at the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal. There she develops services for Aboriginal APHA's in order to provide support, advocacy and social services.

Patricia Sky Bellefleur, grandmother of 5, activist, musician/poet, currently a crisis counsellor and life skills trainer at the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal. Sky was a political prisoner in the 60's when she marched and organized against the Vietnam war, and continues to work as an advocate and resource person within the prison system, with Native inmates and their families. She follows the Good Red Road of Medicine Ways and dedicates her work to her grandfather, a former fireman and paramedic. Aho.

Paul Delaronde Tekarontake is a life long indigenous activist. In 1989, he was a founding member Mohawk Warrior Society. Paul Delaronde is also one of the founders of Ganienkeh Nation, established in 1974 as a community initiative to break away from the colonial form of government for the indigenous population by building a self-sufficient agricultural community run by and for native people according to their own laws, customs, and traditions. In March of 1990, during the 11-day armed standoff between Ganienkeh and police, Paul Delaronde was the spokesman for the Mohawks who blocked police from entering the territory.

Roderick "Bhok" Carreon is a labour and community activist. A founding member of the Filipino workers support group and also a founding member and

coordinator of KM-Kabataang Montreal. Roderick's main work for the last eight years has concentrated on fighting for the rights and welfare of immigrant workers and their families. He also works at advancing national democratic change in the Philippines.

Sarita Ahojja is a Montreal-based organizer, involved in the Solidarity Across Borders campaign, No One Is Illegal, CLAC (anti-capitalist convergence), and the Montreal-Mexico solidarity committee.

Shawn Brant is a Mohawk from the community of Tyendinaga and has been involved in a number of political issues and organizations to further the causes of the Mohawk Nation - sovereignty, integrity, and a decent standard of living for Native people. He has also been actively involved in the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) since 1994 fighting for the rights of people living in the streets and people living in poverty in urban centers.

Smail Behloui is an organizer with the Action Committee of Non-Status Algerians (CASS) and Solidarity Across Borders in Montreal

Sue Collis is a resident of the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and a long-standing member of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty.

Tess Agustin is a founding member of PINAY (Association of Filipina Women of Quebec) and an organizer with the International Women's Day (March 8) Women of Diverse Origins Committee

Thanks!

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Guelph, Pain, Panais et Liberte, Peoples' Potato, Praxis Productions, Réseau International Pour les Droits Humains, Santropol, Trevor, 242 Young Collective, Comité québécois pour la reconnaissance des droits des travailleurs haïtiens en République dominicaine and all others who made the conference possible and continue to fight colonization.