A VULTURE IS NOT A DOVE: 
THE POLITICS OF INDIGENEITY AND RESISTANCE TO CANADIAN EXTRACTIVISM IN THE AMERICAS

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Introduction

Canadian mining companies are the most dominant force in global resource extraction, operating worldwide. Nearly two-thirds of the world’s mining companies are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, with global assets in excess of a quarter of a trillion dollars.¹ Over half of those assets are found in Latin America, where Canadian extractive activities have exploded over the past 15–20 years; Canadian companies are active in every country in the region, where they currently have close to a hundred mines in production or late development, and over a thousand more projects in early exploratory or developmental phases. The majority mine for gold, silver or copper, and use the lower-cost, chemical and water-intensive open-pit method, which can cause dramatic environmental and health consequences in regions surrounding the mine. These projects are often carried out under the discursive banner of bringing badly-needed development and democracy to impoverished regions of the globe; studies have shown, however, that many projects have lead to increased poverty, environmental degradation, violent conflict, militarization and insecurity in nearby communities (Amnesty 2016; Gordon and Webber 2016; Imai et al. 2017; Kuyek 2006; Moore et al. 2015; Munarriz 2008; Veltmeyer and Petras 2014). Several years ago the Toronto Star reported that “Canadian mining companies are far and away the worst offenders in

environmental, human rights and other abuses around the world, according to a global study commissioned by an industry association but never made public” (Whittington 2010). Egregious violations of human rights and grave, potentially irreparable, environmental damages have been documented at Canadian mines throughout the region. Despite this, obtaining the requisite permits, exploration, and exploitation licences from host country governments is often a matter of mere formality. Winning the support of the surrounding communities and the local populations in general, however, has proven far more challenging, as numerous countries in the Americas and beyond have seen burgeoning grassroots resistance movements rejecting the presence of Canadian extractive projects in their regions (Gordon and Webber 2016; Mowforth 2014; Nolin and Stephens 2010; Petras and Veltmeyer 2014; Sieder 2011; Working Group 2014).

These projects are frequently built upon or are adjacent to territories inhabited by Indigenous populations, and acts of resistance against them are often expressed in the form of defending Indigenous ways of life and human rights claims. These include arguments that the potentially destructive method of mining that Canadian companies have brought or wish to install—again, for the most part being the water and chemical-intensive method of open-pit metal mining—is entirely incompatible and incommensurate with local Indigenous value systems that call for non-dominating and non-exploitative relations, for the husbanding of the environment for generations to come, and forbid inflicting harm upon the earth, water, or air. A common rights-based grievance is that the mine had been installed without the national government having first consulted with and attaining the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of the local Indigenous populations, as legally mandated by International Labor Organization Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989), which most countries in the region have ratified (ILO 2013). In response, Canadian mining regimes operating in resistant Indigenous communities throughout Latin America are embarking upon initiatives and campaigns that endeavour to remake the meaning of Indigenous subjectivity, seeking to secure support for mining projects along many of the very lines that they are rejected.

This paper argues that discourses of democracy and development increasingly are used to advance projects widely experienced by those most directly affected by them as fundamentally anti-democratic, destructive, and

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exploitative, and that this represents a critical component of a nascent strategy by which neoliberal regimes of capital accumulation are advanced and legitimized today. This work further argues that strategically configured discourses of Indigeneity are being carefully deployed in regions where a large Indigenous population base is resisting a mine, in attempts at winning “social license” for extractive projects that are simultaneously often resisted on the basis of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, with resistance claims legally leveraged with, or anchored in, the right to FPIC as mandated by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), and its forerunner, the legally-binding ILO 169.

**The Discursive Politics of Indigeneity**

Canadian resource companies’ engagements with Indigenous communities throughout the Americas increasingly reconfigure discourses of Indigeneity—understood as a common set of values and principles that constitute an Indigenous identity, and the common heritage and collective responsibility that such an identity seeks to defend—along lines that privilege some of the most characteristic features of neoliberalism, including exploitation and accumulation, jettisoning in the process notions of a trans-species “community of life,” collectivity, solidarity, positive reciprocity, and sustainable coexistence. This strategy seeks to co-opt Indigenous movements’ grassroots strivings for self-determination, community empowerment, and state recognition of Indigenous rights in order to channel that energy into supporting, indeed *demanding*, a model of extractive capitalism that emerges from and replicates many of the very same colonial systems and power structures that these social movements endeavour to resist. This paper offers examples from ongoing extractive-related struggles in Guatemala, Chile, and Panama, through which it considers the implications for political subjectivity.

Michel Foucault’s later work on governmentality, along with the work of Indigenous scholars Glen Coulthard and Taiaiake Alfred that addresses processes of decolonization through the assertion of an “authentic” Indigenous identity, will help to ground my claims. Coulthard’s and Alfred’s work on the politics of recognition that foregrounds processes of decolonization, which they both claim are urgently in order, when combined with wider discourses on political economy, provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding how resistance to Canadian mining activities in Latin America is challenged. Political-economic scholars Todd Gordon and Jeffery R. Webber argue that David Harvey’s concept of accumulation by dispossession—which he asserts constitutes the dominant economic policy in the West under neoliberalism and
the modus operandi of contemporary forms of imperialism—is a most useful optic for understanding “the predatory activities” of Canadian mining companies forever seeking new frontiers in Latin America and beyond, and the power of the Canadian state that is marshalled to support them (Gordon and Webber 2008; Harvey 2004). While certainly apt, it is also important to consider how the nature of dispossession morphs when resistance movements emerge against the dispossession that can frequently be brought by the capital accumulative activities of Canadian mining companies in Latin America.³

Coulthard and Alfred both suggest that Indigenous communities will never be well-served by the purportedly conciliatory gestures of accommodation, reciprocity, and mutual recognition advanced by settler states; as both have argued, the contemporary liberal pluralist model of recognition will do little more than reproduce, under the guise of the extension of rights, many of the very same edifices of racism, patriarchy, colonialism, and structural inequality that Indigenous movements are struggling against (Alfred 1999, 2009; Coulthard 2008, 2014b). Instead, both Coulthard and Alfred call for an alternative, resurgent politics of self-determination that is not contingent upon external recognition by the state, but one rather that turns inward and emerges from reconnection with values and traditions that have served Indigenous communities since long before colonial contact. Alfred refers to this as “resurgence and the politics of authentic self-affirmation [which can] combat contemporary colonialism’s objectification and alienation and manipulation of our true selves” (Alfred 2014, x). Coulthard thus calls for a “resurgent politics of recognition,” which he refers to as “one that is less oriented around attaining legal and political recognition by the state, and more about Indigenous peoples empowering themselves through cultural practices of individual and collective self-fashioning that seek to prefigure radical alternatives to the structural and subjective dimensions of colonial power” (Coulthard 2014b, 18).

Accumulation by Self-Dispossession

At work in the activities of Canadian miners in Latin America, however, is a globalized neoliberal politics of recognition, whereby attempts are underway to cultivate Indigenous subjectivities in ways that co-opt their aspirations for decolonization, self-determination, and demands for the recognition of

³ Dispossession can take the form of land expropriation and forced evictions of people residing on or near a concession, but also loss of territory from environmental damages effected by the mining project, such as the contamination or drying of water sources, rendering agricultural activities unfeasible or outright impossible.
Indigenous rights that scholars like Coulthard and Alfred call for and celebrate; it is perversely these aspirations and their commanding assertions of dignity and autonomy as Indigenous populations that are channelled into demands for the political-economic structure that has largely disenfranchised Indigenous populations in the South and enriched a regime of capital accumulation in the North. Canadian mining companies and representatives of the Canadian state are educating desires and aspirations by seducing subjects in Central America to improve and empower themselves via identification with the carefully configured discourses of democracy, development, and Indigeneity that they proffer. Indigenous communities in the Global South are invited to reorient their understandings of and strivings for self-determination, to demand what is ultimately an entrenchment of the political-economic model that bears the hallmarks of colonial power—and all in the name of anti-colonial struggle, Indigenous empowerment, and the recognition of cultural rights. This strategy reflects a contemporary form of accumulation by dispossession: accumulation by self-dispossession (or more pointedly, accumulation by coerced self-dispossession). It is a strategy orchestrated and deployed by the Canadian mining industry, its affiliated industry associations, and a number of willing Indigenous leaders from Canada working as industry consultants, and all with the support of the Canadian state.

This paper is not an evaluation of the relative merits and costs of communities engaging with high-impact industrial activities on their territories, important and worthy as those analyses and discussions may be, especially when grounded in specific cases. Nor is this paper meant to essentialize the positions involved—and certainly not to demonize or disparage those who may embrace industrial development, nor to romanticize those who may resist, nor otherwise to oversimplify the myriad of potentially ambivalent and conflicted positions that exist between these two extreme poles. Needless to say, Indigenous communities are neither historical artifacts nor homogeneous entities, and decide upon their futures and possibilities for well-being by navigating, on the one hand, their aspirations for collectively living well and securing the health, security, and prosperity of future generations, and on the other, the often difficult, conflicting, and imperfect conditions of the present that comprise the context in which those aspirations play out. What this paper argues, rather, is that when Indigenous communities in the Global South do present unanimous or near-unanimous rejection of the particular, dominant model of high-impact resource extraction that Canadian mining companies in particular have effectively exported globally—again, mostly open-pit metal mining—they frequently face formidable material and discursive regimes that seek to seduce them into embracing what they reject, and often upon the very
terms with which they articulate their rejection and defiance. This strategy seeks to counteract the emergence of Indigenous rights movements and community appeals to Indigenous rights in order to assert control over their territories by co-opting the aspirations that fuel those movements, channelling that energy into an embrace of the model of extractivism that is the very target of the resistance. That model becomes discursively cast as an engine of Indigenous development, for which it is one’s Indigenous noble right to demand. Those resisting the mine become discursively cast as agents of externally originating colonial forces seeking to deprive Indigenous communities of their rightful development and prosperity.

Neoliberal Governmentality

“Neoliberalism” is admittedly a broadly-applied term, the meaning of which often morphs across the constituencies where it is deployed. Here I refer to an ensemble of economic and political policies (at their core, championing the private control of all economic enterprise, including those related to natural resources; globalized liberalization of trade and industry; and the so-called “deregulation” of the economy writ large), a form of governmentality whereby the entrepreneurial logic of these policies is extended to the social sphere more broadly, and the underlying ideological presumptions that underpin both policy prescriptions and modes of governance. Neoliberal market reforms have radically altered the world in which we live. They have ushered in the privatization of state enterprises, a retreat of the state from the responsibilities of ensuring the public welfare, the debilitation of labour rights and job security, trade liberalization and investment protection measures that encourage foreign investment and secure the global mobility of capital (but not the mobility of labour), and extended the logic of the commodity and market capital to the farthest reaches of the globe. Ideologically speaking, neoliberalism has globally exported the hegemonic notion of the purportedly inexorable superiority of unencumbered market forces and logics dictating the terms and conditions of the social sphere, and not vice-versa.

Emerging under these very conditions of neoliberalism, however, has also been the broad dissemination of universal rights discourses that had not been previously accessed in many localities, producing citizens who articulate rights claims on multiple of levels—from land and resources to human rights and self-determination—in ways that were previously unfathomable (or at the very least, inaccessible). The aforementioned ILO 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples are but two examples (Couso 2010).
Foucault’s later work on biopower and governmentality also yields a useful optic to render and distil current struggles over Canadian resource extraction in Indigenous territories in Latin America and beyond. Arturo Escobar succinctly defines biopower as “the appearance of forms of knowledge and regulatory controls centred on the production and optimization of life…. [It entails] the ‘governmentalization’ of social life, that is, the subjection of life to explicit mechanisms of production and administration by the state and other institutions” (Escobar 2012, 228, note 1). Governmentality, which is often defined most basically as the “conduct of conduct,” as Foucault has argued, involves initiatives that may not necessarily be state-based in origin, but which seek to shape the conduct of entire populations along specific lines. Foucault notes that its purpose is to secure the “welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, and so on” (Foucault 2000, 217). As Tania Li explains, distinct from earlier conceptions of disciplinary power that seeks to transform subjects at the individual level, governmentality, rather, operates by targeting the population as a whole, by “educating desires and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs” (Li 2007, 275). People with the “right” desires and aspirations need no direct coercion; power under governmentality operates en masse and at a distance, often making it difficult to see how consent to a given distribution of power is being won.

The Discursive Politics of Canadian Mining

Discourses on the meaning of Canadian mining practices circulate far beyond merely the communities affected by such activities. On 20 November 2017, less than a week after the Zimbabwean military had initiated its campaign to depose President Robert Mugabe, and a day before he officially resigned, the Toronto Star ran a column urging Canada to take the lead in helping Zimbabwe “onto the path of peaceful, sustainable development,” to ensure that the crisis gripping the country may resolve towards “a more peaceful, democratic and prosperous end.” The column’s author, Sebastian Spio-Garbrah, elaborates how peace, democracy, prosperity, and sustainable development may be ushered into a post-Mugabe Zimbabwe: he urges Canadian mining companies to avail themselves of the newfound investment opportunities that would assuredly emerge, and, moreover, for the Canadian state to support these activities. He maintains that,

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4 The column lists his affiliation as director of the Canada-Africa Chamber of Business and chief frontier markets analyst of the international risk advisory firm DaMina Advisors.
If Canadian companies, reputed globally for their equitable governance practices, to corporate social responsibility (CSR) protocols and respect for labour rights, Indigenous rights and environmental consciousness, prepare to work in tandem with the Canadian government to co-invest in a new Zimbabwe, more exploitative non-Canadian companies will not win one of Africa’s final investment prizes. (Spio-Garbrah 2017)

Otherwise, he warns of a significant risk that, “exploitative non-Canadian mining companies, which have no regard for CSR or environmental standards, become the prime movers in a new Zimbabwe.”

The idea of Canadian mining companies, in tandem with the Canadian government, saving Zimbabwe from exploitative and destructive non-Canadian extractive enterprises and helping to usher in a more peaceful, prosperous, and democratic society, may sound hyperbolic (to say the least), but the conflation of Canadian mining activities worldwide with increased democracy and development in the regions where they operate is not a new trope; indeed, it captures precisely the dominant branding strategy developed and deployed by Canadian mining companies, mining industry associations, and the Canadian state over the past ten to fifteen years. In April 2012, when then Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper had the opportunity to directly address 34 heads of state at the sixth Summit of the Americas in Cartagena, Colombia, he devoted his entire 10-minute address to extolling the virtues and expertise of Canadian mining companies and the various ways in which the Canadian government facilitates and supports the industry. After boasting that 60 per cent of the world’s mining companies are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, with global assets then of nearly $200 billion CAD and a contribution of $50 billion to Canada’s GDP in 2011, he announced plans to expand the already extensive Canadian mining investment found throughout the Americas, in an effort to, as he put it, “promote prosperity, democracy and security throughout our hemisphere … [and] to help local governments and communities implement related development projects for the benefit of people living near mines or other development activities.” Harper’s government sought to bolster the development credentials of Canadian miners operating in the Americas and beyond, through such taxpayer-funded initiatives as the partnering of Canadian mining companies with Canadian “development NGOs” in order to build CSR “development projects” at the sites of Canadian mines worldwide (Brown

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2016), eliminating funding to NGOs that had shone critical light on malfeasance perpetrated by Canadian mining companies abroad (Berthiaume 2010), and through steadfast refusal to recognize growing calls from communities worldwide, and civil society organizations within Canada, for legislating a binding accountability mechanism that would hold Canadian mining companies liable for human rights violations or environmental damages abroad (Brown 2016; Canel et al. 2010; Coumans 2010, 2011, 2012). These initiatives came in addition to governmental support already provided in the form of diplomatic assistance, favourable financing provided by Export Development Canada, and investment by the Canada Pension Plan.

It is likely that the heads of state whom Harper addressed would already have been familiar with his chosen topic, for the sheer scope and scale of Canadian mining activities in Latin America is difficult to exaggerate. Whereas twenty years ago there were only a handful of Canadian mining projects in the region, Canadian extractive activities have since dramatically proliferated throughout, spurred in part by the investment-friendly neoliberal mining law reforms that swept Latin America in the 1990s (of which the Canadian government and companies played a hand in drafting), bilateral trade agreements that facilitate extractive activities, favourable tax regulations governing Canadian mining companies that operate abroad, relatively lax disclosure requirements for listing a mining company on Canadian exchanges, and technological developments that have facilitated the profitable exploitation of low-grade deposits (Dougherty 2016; Gordon and Webber 2016; Studnicki-Gizbert 2016). As a result, Canadian mining concessions in Latin America

6 In place of binding regulation, the Harper government introduced the Office of the Extractive Sector CSR Counsellor, whose stated mandate is to advise “extractive companies and other stakeholders on the implementation of CSR performance standards and guidelines” (See http://international.gc.ca/csr_counsellor-conseiller_rse). While the office purports to facilitate dialogue between Canadian mining companies abroad and local community members who may hold grievances about the company’s conduct in the area, the office is little more than a red herring, as it lacks the means and mandate to thoroughly investigate complaints, rule if human rights or environmental standards had been breached, and if so, to mete out binding sanctions. Participation by companies is also voluntary. The office persists to this day.

7 Common elements included the removal of limitations on foreign direct investment and foreign ownership restrictions, the provision of tax holidays for foreign mining companies, the establishment of royalty rates that are amongst the lowest in the world, the enabling of forcible expropriation of land from landowners within a mining concession who may be unwilling to sell to the company, the legalization of the chemical and water-intensive open-pit method of mining, and permitting mining companies unlimited access to water available at the mine site and in neighbouring municipalities, in order to meet its extraordinary needs.

8 Peru offers but one example; prior to the 1990s, Canadian mining investment in the country was negligible; by the end of that decade, over 60 Canadian mining companies were active
now comprise hundreds of millions of hectares, constituting extraordinarily vast amounts of many states’ territories—nearly a third of the entire landmass of Honduras and Panama, and nearly a quarter of the territory of Mexico (Studnicki-Gizbert 2016, 101).

While the Harper government is no longer in power, there is certainly nothing antiquated about the discourse that he deployed, nor has the present Canadian government significantly changed tack on this issue, despite publicly presenting itself as advancing a more progressive agenda than its predecessor. While Harper was not exaggerating the sheer scope and reach of Canadian mining activities globally, it is curious to deploy the rhetoric of democracy and development in the framing of the activities of Canadian mining companies operating internationally, for as noted earlier, studies have shown that these projects can often lead to increased poverty, environmental harms, violent conflict, and insecurity in nearby communities. The report mentioned above—according to which the Toronto Star reported that “Canadian mining companies are far and away the worst offenders in environmental, human rights and other abuses around the world, according to a global study commissioned by an industry association but never made public” (Whittington 2010)—had been commissioned in 2009 by the mining industry association the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) with a grant contribution from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). As the Star

there with combined investment exceeding $4 billion USD, comprising over half of the mining projects in the country (De Echave 2006, 17; Munnariz 2008, 440).

Calls for the federal government to implement binding mechanisms holding Canadian mining companies accountable for crimes committed abroad have continued unabated since Justin Trudeau’s Liberal government came to power in 2016. In April 2016, over 180 NGOs in Latin America sent a letter to Trudeau, urging his government to finally take seriously the harms caused by Canadian mining companies operating in the region, by regulating their activities in a way that would have tangible results on the ground. More recently, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, echoed that call. See: Jaime Porras Ferreyra, “Justin Trudeau and the Sludge of Canadian Mining Companies,” New York Times, 3 November 2016. Available at https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/04/opinion/justin-trudeau-and-the-sludge-of-canadian-mining-companies.html. See also, Jorge Barrera, “UN Indigenous rights watchdog calls on Trudeau government to regulate Canadian mining firms operating overseas,” APTN, 25 July 2017. Available at: http://aptnnews.ca/2017/07/25/un-indigenous-rights-watchdog-calls-on-trudeau-government-to-regulate-canadian-mining-firms-operating-overseas. As of December 2017, the Canadian government has intimated that it would soon announce the office of an extractive industry ombudsperson, although the details or certainty of such an office are yet to be seen.

Entitled, “Corporate Social Responsibility: Movements and Footprints of Canadian Mining and Exploration Firms in the Developing World,” it was written by the independent non-profit think-tank, the Canadian Centre for the Study of Resource Conflict. Available at:
reports, the study was never released but a leaked copy is telling, not least for revealing why it was likely never meant to see the light of day. It states that

Canadian companies have played a much more major role than their peers from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States [in environmental harms and human rights abuses]…. Canadian companies are more likely to be engaged in community conflict, environmental and unethical behaviour…. Of the 171 companies identified in incidents involving mining and exploration companies over the past 10 years, 34 per cent are Canadian. Canada has been the most involved in these incidents, tripling its closest peer, Australia. (Canadian 16)

In terms of the nature of the incidents in question, the report avers that, “Of the events involving Canadian companies, 60% are related to community conflict, 40% to environmental degradation and 30% to unethical behaviour.” This, despite most companies’ very public assertions to being valuable and virtuous “corporate citizens” in the regions where they operate—or as the report states, “nearly eight in ten companies that have been involved in incidents currently have a CSR [corporate social responsibility] policy of some kind” (11).

Mining-related conflicts have only increased in the years since this report was written. In 2013, the McGill Research Group Investigating Canadian Mining in Latin America (MICLA) and the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting documented over 85 ongoing mining-related conflicts involving Canadian projects in Latin America, and MICLA is currently researching an additional 11 conflicts (Studnicki-Gizbert 2016; MICLA). In 2017, the Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America (Observatorio de Conflictos Mineros de America Latina/OCMAL) recorded 219 active conflicts related to 229 mining projects in Latin America, affecting 334 different communities (OCMAL).11 This number accounts for all mining-related conflicts, not just those related to Canadian projects; however, between 50 to 70 percent of all mining activity in the region is conducted by Canadian companies (Working Group 2014, 4).

The conflicts that have ensued throughout the region between Canadian mining companies and communities resisting unwanted extractive projects in their midst have taken formidable tolls on the local populations (Amnesty 2016; https://miningwatch.ca/sites/default/files/CSR_Movements_and_Footprints.pdf.
11 The Environmental Justice Atlas—EJAtlas—also chronicles mining conflicts in Latin America. See http://ejatlas.org/featured/mining-latam. For further information on the atlas and the work of environmental justice of which it is a part, see Temper et al., 2015.
Moore et al. 2015; Working Group 2014). In 2017, the Justice and Corporate Accountability Project (JCAP) at Osgoode Hall Law School at York University released a report compiling acts of violence and criminalization of dissent at Canadian mines in Latin America from 2000–2015. The report documents incidents involving 28 different Canadian companies during this period, involved in

44 deaths, 30 of which we classify as “targeted”; 403 injuries, 363 of which occurred in during protests and confrontations; 709 cases of “criminalization,” including legal complaints, arrests, detentions and charges; and a widespread geographical distribution of documented violence: deaths occurred in 11 countries, injuries were suffered in 13 countries, and criminalization occurred in 12 countries. (Imai et al. 2017, 4)

Furthermore, the report observes that publicly-listed Canadian mining companies overwhelmingly neglect to disclose these incidents in their requisite filings, or as the report states: “Canadian companies that are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange do not include reports of violence in their mandatory reports on company performance. Between 2000–2015, publicly listed companies reported 24.2% of the deaths and 12.3% of the injuries listed in this report” (4). Given the report’s methodology that only incidents that could be corroborated by two independent and reliable sources would be included in their tally, and the levels of intimidation and fear often experienced by those resisting Canadian mining projects throughout Latin America—and as a consequence, reluctance to report the types of incidents that the report documents, it is almost certain that the actual numbers are higher (47).

Resistance in Guatemala

Guatemala tops the list on the JCAP report with the highest number of registered deaths and injuries related to conflict over Canadian extractive activities, at 12 and 89, respectively. Some of the earliest such conflicts surround the open-pit and subterranean Marlin gold mine, which is owned and operated by Canadian mining giant Goldcorp, and located in the western

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12 As the report states: “This link [to a Canadian mining company] is established if there are at least two independent reports providing information or analysis that credibly establishes that the project’s presence in the region is likely to have made a substantial contribution to the death, physical injury, instance of sexual violence or instance of criminalization. A Canadian company must have owned or operated the mining project in question at the time of the incident, or be substantially connected to the project or interest at the time” (47).
highlands of the country. In 2005, when the mine was under construction, it was met with immense levels of protest, including road blockades: people were outraged, claiming they had not been previously consulted, making the project illegal under ILO 169, of which Guatemala is a signatory (Imai et al. 2007; Imai et al. 2012; Maheandiran et al. 2010; Nolin and Stephens 2010). The mining company’s reputation had also already been tarnished, in large part over reports that had been emerging for years from residents of the Siria Valley in neighbouring Honduras, over their experiences of living beside the company’s San Martín open-pit gold mine, which had opened five years previous. Locals residing near that mine had been reporting that a wide variety of problems had been emerging in the region since the mine began operating, most alarming of which included the drying up of 90% of the rivers and streams in the valley and the contamination of water sources that remained, as well as a rash of emergent health problems that had never been seen in the region prior to the mine, including a dramatic spike in the level of miscarriages—both in people and livestock. Locals attributed both to the dangerously high levels of heavy metals, such as mercury, arsenic, and lead, that had been found in blood samples taken from residents living beside the mine\(^\text{13}\) (Cuffe 2005; Schertow 2012; Spring and Russell 2011; Younger 2008).

When the protest movement erupted in Guatemala, Canada’s ambassador at the time, James Lambert, took to the newspapers and airwaves to

\(^{13}\) As open-pit metal mining is incredibly water-intensive, local community members attest to needing to cope with the effects of drastically reduced water supplies since the mine began operation. The main source of economic development in the region had been agriculture; as rivers and streams dried up, the valley that had previously exported its surplus food production to the capital city and beyond found itself importing food. Thousands of agricultural workers also had to embark upon the treacherous journey to the United States to seek employment as undocumented manual labourers. Many locals complained of the emotional and financial strain of spending their diminished financial resources on medical aid in attempts at addressing the health complications that they attest emerged in the region after the mine began operation. Water scarcity and pollution of existing sources also prompted some locals to purchase water, although doing so was an expensive luxury that was simply out of reach for many Hondurans living in the valley. For an account of locals’ responses to living near the mine, see Schnoor 2008; excerpt available at: https://youtu.be/-tmqXc5rX8s. The mining company has consistently denied any connection between the mine and any of these issues, even going so far as to declare that there’s “just nothing that can be corroborated that shows that there’s any contamination or any environmental effect due to our [Honduran] operation”—this, despite the fact that the Honduran government had already fined the company one million lempiras for having contaminated surface and ground water sources, and that world-recognized hydro-geologists have indeed documented alarming examples of contamination emerging from the mine, including acid mine drainage, both during the mine’s operation and subsequent to its closure in 2009 (see for instance Younger 2008).
extol the virtues of Canadian mining companies and urge Guatemalans to embrace the many development opportunities that Canadian mines would invariably bring. On 23 January 2005, less than two weeks after a protest against the mine’s construction at which the police and army opened fire, leaving one campesino dead and numerous others wounded, Lambert went on the popular Guatemalan television talk show Libre Encuentro to assure the country that Canada’s model of mining development is not only harmless, but greatly beneficial to local communities. He assured viewers that Canadians abide by only the highest of operational and safety standards, and offering a comparison, claimed that Indigenous people in Canada have greatly benefitted, both directly and indirectly, from mining activities on their territories. He invoked Jerry Asp, a Tahltan chief from northern British Columbia, whom he claimed unequivocally praises the rewards that extractive industries have brought to Indigenous people in Canada. Indeed, Asp did bring an appeal directly to the Guatemalan people one month earlier, when he partook in a public forum on mining in Guatemala City. His visit had been arranged by the Canadian embassy in Guatemala City and funded by the Indigenous Peoples Partnership Program (IPPP), a federal government initiative administered at the time by the Canadian International Development Agency, with the stated aim of building “the capacity of Latin American Indigenous organizations [in] natural resource management” (Gordon and Webber 2016, 27). Lambert asserted that,

In the mining forum that was here [Guatemala City] at the beginning of December [2004] we invited a Canadian chief from an Indigenous group from B.C.—Chief Jerry Asp. He came here, and precisely what he said was that 25 years ago when mining activity came to his Indigenous reservation in B.C., the people had the same concerns that rural Guatemalans have: we don’t have the capacity to face a corporate entity, with lawyers, with so much knowledge—if we did, they’d eat us alive. But he said, rather, that in confronting these challenges, they developed a capacity not only to manage a mine on their territory, but they’ve already worked as consultants with other Indigenous communities in Canada and in other countries to sell this experience.

Implying that resistance to this model of development would be both vacuous and futile given the inevitability that he attributed to the form of transnational extractive capitalism that Canada was seeking to import into the country, he

14 See http://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/a031825001.
concluded in a manner directly echoed in the foregoing *Toronto Star* opinion piece from twelve years later:

Sooner or later, Indigenous communities in Guatemala have to face the reality of a global society. So I believe that we should see it as an opportunity, instead of a threat. One cannot close society nor the economy, so one must seize the opportunity, and hopefully working with companies like the Canadians, which are reliable, is the better way, because if they don’t come, other interests will somehow come to do the same.15

This statement bears several hallmarks of the shoring up of hegemony: the ambassador, an authoritative “expert,” first frames Indigenous communities in Guatemala as being somehow outside of, yet needing to be eventually integrated into global history, or “reality”; he then offers a foreign-owned, mega-mining “development” model as natural and inevitable, given the apparently unavoidable and incontestable “reality of a global society.” The ambassador sounds calm, rational, and definitive. The only conceivable alternative is presented as radical, unrealistic, naïve, and illegitimate: “one cannot close society nor the economy.” Given that a majority of Guatemala’s population is Indigenous, Lambert targets their concerns about Canadian mining by citing a Canadian Indigenous leader, Jerry Asp, who evidently wholeheartedly endorses Canadian mining practices. Crucially, just like Guatemalan subjects today, Asp was similarly concerned when Canadian miners first entered his community 25 years ago, but has since come to see the error of those earlier concerns, as everything has ostensibly transpired optimally. Lambert, as the respected authority, holds out a consummate model of Indigenous subjectivity to which viewers are invited to aspire: the entrepreneurial Indigenous leader who abandons fears of confronting colonial power structures—“to face a corporate entity, with lawyers, with so much knowledge”—and in so doing, has come to realize that not only must Indigenous people embrace the mining model that Guatemalans now confront, but in the enterprising spirit of neoliberal capitalism, has discovered the capacity to leverage that opportunity further, to accrue even more value-added deliverables: they can also work “as consultants with other indigenous communities in Canada and in other countries to sell this experience.”16


16 Asp has continued this work, and in 2014 he co-founded the Global Indigenous Development
It was not unusual for the ambassador to make public declarations of this nature. Two months previously, he had presented a similar sentiment in an editorial that he published in Guatemala’s major national newspaper, *Prensa Libre*, in which he urged Guatemalans who may be debating the potential impacts of large-scale mining projects, to consider how prosperous Canada has become by exploiting its natural resources, noting that over a thousand Canadian Indigenous communities, “through the sustainable development of their mineral resources … are creating economic, social and cultural infrastructure necessary to secure their future and the future of their children,” and that Canadian companies are “at the forefront of many of the most successful mining operations in the world” (Lambert 2004).

Lambert was quickly criticized in the Guatemalan press for making such a crudely over-simplified, jingoistic pitch. As a columnist in the next day’s paper noted, the comparison is sharply misleading: unlike Canada, Guatemala lacks the regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms required to ensure the safety of local residents and the environment, nor does it have the political or economic climate to ensure that the wealth generated would indeed produce prosperity that could be enjoyed by society at large (Rey Rosa 2004). Indeed, Guatemala lacks the entire social and political structure through which some Indigenous communities in Canada have managed to negotiate Impact and Benefit Agreements and state concessions that members of some communities have found favourable. The ambassador’s specious comparison also ignored the fact that Guatemala lacks any semblance of a functioning justice system, that labour leaders and rights activists are routinely threatened and assassinated, and that approximately 1% of the population still owns over two-thirds of the land (Amuchastegui 2007).

One criticism that never surfaced following Lambert’s television appearance, however, involves not his claims but what he conveniently neglected to mention: at the very moment at which he referenced Canadian Indigenous chief Jerry Asp on Guatemalan national television to exemplify Indigenous support for mining activities in Canada, dozens of Tahltan elders between the ages of 55 and 84 had been occupying his band council office in

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Trust, which announces itself as “a new and innovative Canadian Not-for-Profit founded in 2014 by leading Canadian Aboriginal leaders who wanted to empower Indigenous peoples around the world to be authors of their own development.” See [http://globalIndigenoustrust.org/about-us](http://globalIndigenoustrust.org/about-us).

17 Events such as the 4 August 2014 disaster in which the tailings dam ruptured at Imperial Metals’s Mount Polley mine, also undermine Canada’s claims to effective resource governance and environmental protection. See [https://www.desmog.ca/mount-polley-mine-disaster](https://www.desmog.ca/mount-polley-mine-disaster).
Telegraph Creek, BC, outraged and embarrassed at Asp’s public conduct. They had already been there for a week and would continue to occupy the office for another month. The elders asserted that Asp was corrupt—that he had been thoroughly bought out by pro-mining interests and had utterly abandoned traditional values in pursuit of the money, travel and other personal benefits that he was being showered with for singing the praises of the extractive industries. They also pointed to the glaring conflict of interest of Asp also acting as Chief Operating Officer of Tahltan Nation Development Corporation—a corporation that he’d founded twenty years earlier—which provides construction, maintenance, and support services to several extractive industries operating on or near Tahltan territory. Asp was also the vice-president of Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association—a group that he had also helped to create—which encourages extractive industries operating on First Nations territory. The Tahltan elders who had occupied Asp’s band council office asserted that he no longer spoke for his people and must therefore step down as chief (Hume 2005; Hume and Stueck 2005). In a joint statement released during the occupation, the elders declared that, “Jerry Asp has lost all credibility. He is far too cozy with industry and government, and poses a threat to our very existence…. He has done enough harm to our people and puts us in danger of losing everything … our land, resources and rights are being sold out from under us … this day will go down in Tahltan history as the day the Elders took back their power” (Paulsen 2005).

Lambert had carefully selected not only an Indigenous leader who faithfully conveys and exemplifies the desired discourse on Indigeneity—one that abandons irrationality and fear of colonial power structures, and in so doing, successfully leverages economic development opportunities afforded by engaging with the model of resource extraction that Canadian companies were wishing to install in Guatemala—but he had also selected only those parts of the narrative that assisted in buttressing that particular discursive construct. As noted earlier, the strategy explored here operates by selectively and strategically offering a particular discourse on Indigeneity; in this case, a more full and accurate disclosure—including revealing the lack of legitimacy that Asp experienced from his home constituents, and the fact that there are indeed numerous Canadian Indigenous leaders who publicly espouse the very opposite of the stance that Asp put forth—would have disrupted this carefully configured narrative. It is unclear how Lambert’s pitch can be reconciled with the dramatically different experiences Canadian First Nations have encountered from the federal and provincial governments when, like the resistance movements in Guatemala and beyond, they refuse to accommodate “the imperatives of state and capital” (Coulthard 2008, 192), by, amongst other
things, resisting resource development upon their territories. In such cases, Canadian First Nations have commonly met a different face of the Canadian state than the benign one presented in public pitches: state repression in the form of criminalization of resistance, incarceration of leaders and campaigns of infiltration and surveillance of Indigenous environmental movements, have been common experiences. It is also unclear how Lambert’s pitch can be reconciled with the drastically different social and political realities facing Indigenous peoples in many places outside of Canada, including Guatemala, in which opponents to resource extractive projects are routinely targeted for assassination, in which land expropriation and other forms of dispossession is the norm and not the exception, in which the recognition of even a modicum of the rights enjoyed by some Indigenous peoples within Canada (that is, when they don’t obstruct “the imperatives of state and capital”) is but a faint glimmer on the horizon, in which labour conditions in mines can be appalling, and in which equitable distribution of wealth in mining-affected communities is almost always unheard of.

Choreographing Subjectivity in Marching for Mining in Guatemala

Subsequent to the ambassador’s appeals that Guatemalans accept and embrace Canadian metal mining operations in their midst, the Marlin mine was indeed built; resistance, however, not only failed to subside but intensified. A movement of local consultations, or consultas, emerged, in which communities in the general vicinity of the contested project—for the most part claiming that they had never been previously consulted about the project, as is their legal right under ILO 169—took it upon themselves to organize community referenda on the topic of whether to permit mining activities on their territories. These consultas have proved to be opportunities for communities to voice near unanimous opposition to the project in particular and to mining activities in

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18 There are numerous examples of this, including the criminalization of members of the Anishnabek community of Ardoch Algonquin First Nation north of Kingston, Ontario, whose co-chiefs Paula Sherman and Robert Lovelace were each sentenced to six months in prison in 2008 for contempt of court and for failing to obey an earlier injunction ordering that they stop their activities blocking an unwanted uranium mine on their territories (Switzer 2008; CBC News 2008). It also includes the Algonquin community of Barriere Lake in Quebec, which has been fighting for years for control of their land, government, way of life, and a fair share of the estimated $100 million made annually from forestry, hydroelectricity and tourism on their unceded territory—of which they assert they do not see a cent. For a compendium of information on Barriere Lake’s struggles, see http://www.barrierelakesolidarity.org. Regarding state surveillance and infiltration of Canadian Indigenous movements involved in environmental defence, see Gill and Zwibel 2017; Robak 2016.
their regions more generally, and since the first consultas emerged during the construction of the Marlin mine, over a million Guatemalans have used the process to express their adamant rejection of open-pit metal mining on their territories (Laplante and Nolin 2014; see figures 1a–1d, photographs by James Rodríguez).19

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19 Photographs by James Rodriguez. For his photojournalistic overview of mining-related consultas in Guatemala, see “Community Consultations,” available at: https://mimundo.photoshelter.com/gallery-collection/Community-Consultations/C0000474VJDMEvJM.
In the context of this concerted and growing opposition, Canadian mining companies operating in Guatemala at the time, along with the Guild of Mines, Quarries and Processing (el Gremial de Minas, Canteras y Procesadoras), helped to stage a pro-mining “protest” march. On the morning of 10 August 2006, approximately a thousand people holding what appeared to be professionally manufactured signs declaring their support for the mining industry ambled through the centre of Guatemala City. They had been marshalled into groups, with some groups having their own uniform appearance, with similar t-shirts and other attire. Some marchers had plastic whistles to blow. The march proceeded to the Congressional building where a signed petition was presented to officials, requesting further mining operations in the country and demanding a rejection of a recently proposed moratorium on
the granting of any future open-pit metal mining concessions.\textsuperscript{20} According to
the Rural Workers Movement (MTC - Movimiento de Trabajadores
Campesinos), a Catholic social justice organization based in the diocese of San
Marcos—the region where Goldcorp’s Marlin mine operates—the participants
largely came from the two regions in the country where Canadian mining
companies have open-pit metal mines: the departments of Alta Verapaz and
Izabal, where Compañía Guatemalteca de Níquel, the subsidiary of Canada’s
Skye Resources, wished to re-open the Fenix nickel mine near Lake Izabal; and
the department of San Marcos, where Goldcorp was operating its controversial
Marlin mine. According to MTC, both Canadian mining companies coerced
their employees to participate, with some miners reporting that they had been
threatened with termination had they refused. The mining companies also
provided the workers with transportation to the capital city. MTC reports that
CGN paid its miners 500 Quetzals each.\textsuperscript{21} Goldcorp admitted that they
provided transport for their workers but denies that they gave them any
additional pay, beyond their daily wage.\textsuperscript{22}

Much can be said about manufactured protest in general, and this march
in particular. The purpose here, however, is to better understand how the
neoliberal regimes of governmentality evinced in this march seek to configure
subject positions in ways that would embrace Canadian open-pit metal mining
in the country. A discourse analysis of the march reveals an overall strategy
whereby the logic of capital and “development” is deployed in attempts at
constructing a normative barrier against the increasingly swelling tides of
resistance and articulations of rights claims that stand in opposition to the
activities of Canadian mining companies operating in the region. Some of the
banners carried by protesters bore relatively generic messages, such as
“Viva la Minería” (long live mining, see figure 2a). Others boldly connected
mining with the discourse of development, such as one banner proclaiming, “Sí
al desarrollo. Minero responsable” (Yes to development. Responsible mining,
see figure 2b). Others were more pointed still, such as one wedding mining
activities with religious belief, and by implication, linking an embrace of
mining with having a high moral caliber: “Soy minero, y también creo en Dios”
(I am a miner and I also believe in God). Another equated mining with three

\textsuperscript{20} A short clip of the march is available at: \url{http://youtu.be/Dve7Ke4JL_Yg}.

\textsuperscript{21} See “¿Dónde les quedó la ética a las compañías mineras?” (Where did the mining companies
leave their ethics?) for MTC’s account and critique of the march (14 August 2006). Available

\textsuperscript{22} As relayed by James Schenk, the company’s Manager for Sustainable Development. Personal
hallmarks of “modern,” advanced, industrialized society: “Minería es: tecnología, capital y progreso. Por ello El Progreso dice Si!! a la minería” (Mining is: technology, capital and progress. Therefore El Progreso says Yes!! to mining, see figure 2c). This banner advances a discourse of mining in line with a dominant hegemonic discourse of development by which the Global North came to exercise power over the South: technology and capital entail “progress,” hence societies lacking in both must, by implication, be inferior and regressive. Under this paradigm, modernization is equated with progress, while “traditional” ways are cast as inferior.23

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23 For a cogent critique of this, see Escobar (2012). Elsewhere he argues that, “it was in the name of modernization and development that an entire productive apparatus took charge of the management of the life of the ‘new’ nations, replacing the older and more visible forms of colonial oppression and bringing forth at the same time a different disposition of the factors of life” (Escobar 1999, 331).
Another banner makes this even clearer. It reads: “Sin minería no habría: casas, ni carros, ni celulares, ni computadoras. Solo ranchos, cuadernos y carretas de bueyes” (Without mining there would be no houses, cars, cell phones nor computers – only small farms, notebooks and ox carts, see figure 2d). The patronizing implication that this banner suggests is that those who carry this sign and those who may identify with its message are patently inferior or defective without the modern technologies of the more “advanced,” industrial societies of the Global North. Mining is presented as the magic key that unlocks the chains that keep a society in the dark, inferior world of small farms, paper notebooks and ox carts, ushering in the paradise of capitalist modernity.
Tania Li notes that for Nikolas Rose, governmental thought is that which has become “technical,” whereby technology is cast as a social saviour that generically improves quality of life (Rose 1999, 51). She points to other scholars, such as Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (1982), who argue that appeals to “expert knowledge” serve to remove political problems from the domain of political discourse and debate, “recasting it in the neutral language of science” or technology (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 196). This echoes the concerns that scholars of technology have expressed for decades, in which political and corporate elites in (theoretically) democratic societies justify consolidations of power by appealing to the purportedly neutral, scientific prescriptions of technocratic “experts,” thereby jettisoning the messy business of democratic dialogue and masking political power plays with the language of technical necessity and inevitability.24 Who are we, after all, to politicize (implying to bias, degrade, and pollute) the sacrosanct wisdom of neutral, disinterested experts, whose advice merely serves to advance the “social good”? The appeals to the technologies of “modern” societies in the banners (of figures 2c and 2d) seek to erase the political power that implicitly belittles and delegitimizes Guatemalan society as being at an impaired state of “development.” Rather, the banners state apparent truisms, that cell phones and computers are the golden rings that any healthy society must aspire towards, and that the technology, capital and progress that mining invariably entails can usher Guatemalans toward those sacrosanct goals.

24 Andrew Feenberg (1999) provides a compelling treatment of this critique in his Questioning Technology.
Many elements of the march merit analysis, but for present purposes, two brief examples will suffice of attempts at wedding an Indigenous identity with open-pit metal mining, as one important component of industry’s strategy of shoring up support and defeating the resistance movements that oppose it. As noted, Guatemala is mostly inhabited by Indigenous peoples and many resisting the Canadian mines voice their concerns in terms of their Indigenous value systems and rights claims. The strategy explored here, of Canadian mining companies and the Canadian government carefully and assiduously working to breach this correlation between Indigenous value systems and resistance to Canadian open-pit mining practices, is reflected in a number of the banners in the march: one reads, “Soy indígena y creo en el desarrollo. Minería responsable es vida para todos” (I’m indigenous and I believe in development. Responsible mining is life for everyone, see figure 2e). Here we see efforts at wedding indigenous belief systems that frequently anchor resistance to open-pit metal mining, with support for it. Critically, this banner does not speak of desiring or demanding, but believing, like the previous banner professing a belief in God. This language targets deeper than Indigenous peoples’ surface desires by speaking in the more fundamental language of underlying belief; it seeks to wed subjects’ underlying understandings of the world with a belief in mining as responsible development for the broader Guatemalan collective. Another banner invokes another powerful and fundamental aspect of the psyche: pride. It reads, “Mineros Q’eqchi. Orgullosos de nuestro trabajo” (Q’eqchi’ miners. Proud of our work, see figure 2f).
“Q’eqchi’ miners” reinforces the link between indigenous identity and mining, while the second phrase invokes the common collective in speaking of “our work.” Most importantly, however is the notion of pride: not only is one not ashamed to be partaking in potentially destructive activities, but one does so with pride. We are Q’eqchi miners, and we are proud of our work.

The strategy behind the march perversely seeks to tap into, and indeed co-opt, some of the most discerning insights of theories of emancipatory politics and self-determination. Melissa Williams situates the locus of an emancipatory politic in subjugated populations reclaiming a space of self-recognition from below, or as she offers, “an emancipatory politics of recognition may depend on the moments in which subaltern groups reorient their activity toward the work of (re)constituting themselves” (Williams 2014, 6). She elaborates:

some of the most potent transformations take place when people in dominated social positions turn away from institutionalized power hierarchies, shaping their own social orders without the approval or permission of any authority beyond themselves. These processes of self-constituting power, realized (inter alia) through acts of resistance or through prefigurative political movements, also entail struggles for recognition, but the agents of recognition are the subaltern themselves. (10)

Coulthard offers a similar sentiment in an Indigenous context, arguing that, “Indigenous societies must begin to ‘turn away’ from the assimilative lure of settler-state recognition and instead find in their own transformative praxis the
source of their liberation … [involving] some form of critical individual and collective self-recognition on the part of Indigenous societies” (Coulthard 2008, 201). The invocations of pride and beliefs in development that are reflected in the two preceding banners lie at the heart of any such “transformative praxis.” That said, one could also argue that an industry-organized march hardly constitutes the co-optation or hijacking of the spirit of “emancipatory politics” and “liberation” that Williams and Coulthard discuss, for surely the participants understand the overall strategy behind the march and refuse to invest belief in the slogans displayed on the banners that they carry. In fact, the energy of the march largely betrayed the sense of pride reflected in the banner of figure 2f: most people had staid, placid, disinterested expressions, and ambled lethargically, holding their banners with an aura of utter indifference. The protest march—an age-old symbol of collective will and empowerment—had been mimicked and staged with people choreographed like puppets, holding professionally produced signs bearing messages that they themselves played no part in inscribing. True as that may be, this analysis does not presume to offer any definitive assessment of the full multiplicity of effects the march may have had upon the psyches of the participants or bystanders, but rather to explore the intent in staging this choreographed display.

The day after the march, La Hora, a Guatemalan newspaper with national distribution, featured an anonymously written article covering the march, attesting that over 10,000 people had poured into the streets—a figure that I estimate to be exaggerated by at least a factor of ten. Nowhere did the article touch upon issues of governance and organization of the march; nowhere did it reveal that some of those marching were on a certain payroll; and crucially, nowhere did it state that the march had been a meticulously choreographed performance, and that the performers and their props were but one part of a larger and carefully conceived neoliberal strategy to buttress multinational, and largely, Canadian, mining corporations’ claims to legitimacy against growing movements of grassroots resistance. Inasmuch as one cannot know the sum total of effects that participation in the march had upon the psyches of the participants, nor what effects it had upon each of the thousands of bystanders, nor the effects the media coverage had upon those who encountered those accounts, what the march reveals is an underlying strategy by which subjects’ understandings of their Indigenous identities and aspirations for Indigenous empowerment are targeted by the very regimes that they resist. The march reflects a cross-pollination of purportedly grassroots, emancipatory, prefigurative political movements of Indigenous rights and self-determination on the one hand, and the logic, and indeed often ruthless political calculus of
inequality, of the low-cost, high-return mega-extractive model that Canadian mining companies have proven so adept at exporting globally, on the other.\textsuperscript{25}

**Indigenous Solidarity with Mining Resistance in Chile**

Attempts at cross-pollinating Indigenous rights, pride, and aspirations for development, with an embrace of large-scale metal mining activities are not confined to Guatemala, nor is Jerry Asp alone in the previously examined role that he played. Shortly after he was encouraging Guatemalans to embrace Canadian mining projects in their midst, Ron Evans, Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) reached out to the Huascoaltino Diaguita Indigenous people in Chile under the guise of cross-cultural solidarity and exchange of Indigenous knowledge and practices. For over a decade the Huascoaltino Diaguita have been resisting Barrick Gold’s Pascua Lama project—an open-pit gold, silver, and copper mine whose deposit sits in the immediate vicinity of Andean glaciers in the Huasco Valley on Chile’s border with Argentina. While Barrick has claimed it could successfully mine without disturbing the glaciers or causing any environmental damage, critics have scoffed at that claim, noting that in its exploratory and construction phases the mining activity had already almost entirely depleted three glaciers. Many residents argued that in so doing, the mine threatened to destroy the water supply used by the 70,000 farmers in the valley.\textsuperscript{26} The Huascoaltino Diaguita in Chile have been opposing Pascua Lama for the dramatic and irreversible environmental and cultural destruction that they foresee as probable consequences of the project, and in 2005, they sent out an open call for solidarity and support for their stance. The representatives of the AMC responded to the call, and in January 2006, Evans and his assistant Don Clarke traveled to Chile in order to meet with the Diaguita. The Huascoaltino Diaguita were initially willing to engage on good faith Evans’s and Clarke’s gestures of purported solidarity and proposed inter-community cultural exchange initiative, and agreed to meet. At a meeting on 19 January 2006, Evans and Huascoaltino

\textsuperscript{25} In the terms of critiques of public relations, the march can also be referred to as an example of astroturfing: creating the illusion of grassroots, community-driven campaigns that agitate for the special interests of those who have covertly organized and financed them—generally PR firms for their wealthy clients (astroturf being fake grass, astroturfed formations being fake grassroots initiatives).

\textsuperscript{26} A summary of environmental concerns over the project compiled by the Latin American Observatory of Environmental Conflicts (Observatorio Latinoamericano de Conflictos Ambientales—OLCA) is available at: http://www.olca.cl/oca/chile/pascualama.htm.
Diaguita chief Sergio Campusano signed a formal agreement of cooperation between the two peoples, which among other things, pledged solidarity with the Diaguita’s desires to defend their traditional knowledge and recover control over their traditional lands, which, as the accord states, “in many cases [have been] stolen and illegitimately taken by the State, companies or outsiders.” A week later, Evans surprised Campusano when he asked to formally, legally represent the Huascoaltino Diaguita in negotiations with Barrick Gold. As Campusano recalls: “What happened is that at that time, it was the first time we were faced with a project of that scope. They said that in Canada, Indigenous Peoples had good agreements with the companies in their territories—they received up to 50 per cent of the production profits, that they were given university [education], that thanks to the money they had houses, had work” (Cuffe 2012). Campusano was taken aback, noting that he and other members of the Huascoaltino Diaguita leadership who had met with Evans had clearly relayed their community’s opposition to the project, and had understood the AMC overture as a gesture of solidarity in resistance. Campusano recalls that, “Ron Evans said that they could achieve much … but only as long as we gave them the mandate to negotiate for us, because they had experience getting more money, more profits for the benefit of the community. [AMC requested to be] legally authorized representatives” (Cuffe 2012). Nonetheless, the Huascoaltino Diaguita leadership shared this proposal with their community members, who rejected it. Campusano says that he was immediately concerned that AMC representatives Evans and Clarke may have actually been working with Barrick Gold and that the connection between the two parties was not a gesture of solidarity with the Huascoaltino Diaguita’s opposition to mining, as had been communicated and understood, but was actually part of an initiative to gain “social license” at the mine site and undermine community resistance to the project. The Huascoaltino Diaguita leadership demanded an explanation from Evans, and when none was forthcoming, they renounced the program of cooperation and formally cancelled any arrangements or agreements made between the two Indigenous communities.

Something else that Campusano did not know was that like Jerry Asp, Ron Evans’s legitimacy as a leader was also problematic within his own home community of Norway House in northern Manitoba, where he stood accused of corruption, election fraud, and other abuses of power (CBC News 2006; Curry

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27 Campusano also holds the title of President of the Huascoaltino Diaguita Indigenous and Agricultural Community.

2006; Yake 2010). Merely one month after Evans and Campusano signed their accord in Chile, a Canadian Federal Court judge in Ottawa, Justice Pierre Blais, ruled that Evans had flagrantly abused his power as chief of Norway House Cree Nation, engaging in practices that “failed to respect the notion of representative democracy,” including blackmail and influence peddling. Justice Blais offered a scathing rebuke of Evans and other band council leaders, stating that their behaviour was “deplorable and has no place in democratic institutions” (Curry 2006). Of great concern to Campusano is how Evans used his status as an Indigenous leader to seduce a relationship of purported solidarity with the Huascoaltino Diaguita people, how he neglected to mention any relationship that he may have had with Barrick Gold, and how he may have been involved in attempts at facilitating the Huascoaltino Diaguita’s acceptance of the mine, despite their clearly stated opposition to the project. Campusano says that he came to understand that Evans may have been working in the capacity that Ambassador Lambert had celebrated on Guatemalan television: as a consultant who had been hired to work “with other Indigenous communities in Canada and in other countries to sell this experience,” of embracing Canadian mining. Instead of being forthright and disclosing this, however, Campusano states that Evans sought to win his trust by speaking of Indigenous issues and values, and of cross-continental Indigenous solidarity. Evans even presented himself in traditional Indigenous garb, wearing a beaded vest and a ceremonial eagle-feather headdress (see figures 3a–3c). Campusano maintains that subsequent to Evans’s ill-fated solicitation of the Huascoaltino Diaguita over a decade ago, the region has been visited by further Canadian Indigenous leaders who likewise extol the virtues of mining.

29 The accusations relate to his conduct towards a band councillor, Marcel Balfour, who’d been openly critical of Evans while Evans was chief there. Balfour was subsequently elected chief of Norway House following Evans’s departure to take up the position of Chief of AMC.


31 Personal interview with Sergio Campusano. Vancouver, 2 June 2012.

32 Comments delivered at public address at McGill University, 4 April 2017.
Figure 3a: Sergio Campusano (L, white shirt) and Ron Evans (R, headdress)

Figure 3b: Accord signed by Sergio Campusano and Ron Evans

Figure 3c: Sergio Campusano (L) and Ron Evans (R)
Educating Desires in Panama

Evans’s assistant, Don Clarke, has done similar work in Ecuador and the Indigenous semi-autonomous zone in western Panama, the Ngäbé-Buglé Comarca. Like Evans, Clarke identifies himself as working with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs; he also identifies as a member of the Black River First Nation in Manitoba, as general manager of the firm Clarke Educational Services and as head of a consulting company, Kokopelli. Clarke appears to position himself in two primary ways, depending upon the constituency he’s targeting: to industry, he positions himself as a consultant with an expertise in community engagement, which he can offer to ostensibly prevent or mitigate the social conflict that may sabotage a mining project and threaten investment. He positions himself in this manner in online postings, short writings for industry publications, at conferences that he has organized through his consulting firm Kokopelli—namely “Mining for Success” and “Mining for Success II,” which were held in Panama (see figures 4a and 4b)—and at other forums. At a November 2017 mining conference in Colombia, he delivered a presentation on the importance of assessing the social risks that a mining project today will likely face (see figure 4c). His slideshow begins by stating that, “As a result of the recent mining boom and an ever increasing global appetite for metals mining companies have ventured into non-traditional mining jurisdictions and not only have discovered a bonanza of new deposits, but they have also encountered a wave of unprecedented social opposition and conflict.” In elaborating upon “social-political risks” that mining projects face today, his presentation warns that, “in today’s political and social environment our sector continues to be more and more exposed to higher levels of activism than ever before as miners continue to struggle to meet the demands of a broad stakeholder base.” He thus asserts that, “Due to these growing risks mining companies need to continue to integrate risk-based corporate social responsibility strategies and develop and measure performance indicators with the same diligence that are used to track exploration and production results.”

33 See http://www.kokopelli.ca/miningforsuccess.

34 His presentation was entitled, “Addressing the Social & Political Challenges of Mining in 21st Century” [sic], and delivered at a session entitled “Optimizing Community Relations” at the Colombia Gold Symposium, held in Medellin, Colombia, 14–15 November 2017. His conference bio states that he “advises several publicly traded junior and mid-tier mining companies on political/social risk management, stakeholder relations and CSR.” His slideshow is available at https://colombiagold.co/memorias/2017/day2/Birsa.pdf and his bio is available at https://colombiagold.co/en/speaker/don-clarke. Other presentations available at https://colombiagold.co/en/2017-cgs-presentations.
On the other hand, to local Indigenous groups, he positions himself as a Canadian Indigenous leader and educator with an expertise in community development via resource extraction; in leading “educational sessions” on how mining can bring about collective prosperity, he seeks to build trusting relations. In this apparent strategy, he positions himself as intermediary between...
community and corporation: “educational sessions” that reference the prosperity that has allegedly been attained by Canadian Indigenous communities who have embraced resource extraction on their territories, seek to obtain social license to operate at the local level; this consent, if attained, then bolsters his credentials as an industry consultant with an expertise in community engagement and risk mitigation by facilitating mining activities in potentially reluctant Indigenous communities.

One such reluctant Indigenous community is the Ngäbé-Buglé Comarca in western Panama, which is home to Cerro Colorado, one of the largest copper deposits in the world.\(^35\) The Ngäbé and Buglé residents in the region have fought for decades, beginning in the 1970s, to expel the various mining companies seeking to develop the concession, and subsequent to the comarca’s establishment in 1997, concerted efforts unfolded seeking to block any mining activities anywhere within the comarca. This resistance is largely based in many of the very same foregoing concerns and grievances expressed in other countries in the region, by communities residing near open-pit projects there (Gjording 1991; Simms and Moolji 2011; Young and Bort 1999). Not only is the mountain considered sacred to local inhabitants, but its delicate position, of lying at or very near the headwaters of three principal rivers—the San Félix, Cuvibora, and Cricamola ensure that any environmental contamination resulting from mining activities there could be devastating. In fact, in Ngäbé and Buglé cosmology, the spiritual and environmental importance of the mountain are not mutually exclusive, but rather deeply interconnected: as Gjording (1991) reports, the local Indigenous population refers to Cerro Colorado as “a mountain that gives birth to rivers” (Gjording 1991, 7).

Throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, several mining companies, including Canadian Javelin, spent millions of dollars extensively drilling and exploring the deposits. For several reasons, including concerns over economic feasibility, these operations had largely suspended by the early 1990s, but in 2008, Canada’s Corriente Resources expressed an interest in attaining and developing the concession. The following year, conservative supermarket magnate Ricardo Martinelli won the presidential election in the country and shortly thereafter, announced his intention to open the country to further mining development. To this end, his government implemented mining law reforms to greater facilitate the entry of foreign direct investment. All of these factors led to a renewed intensification of protest activity in the comarca (see figures 5a–

\(^{35}\) The total resource is estimated at containing approximately 4.5 billion tonnes of copper with 0.45% mineralization. The open-pit component of the reserve is estimated to contain 1.4 billion tonnes at 0.78% copper mineralization (Cumming 1997).
v. Facing formidable social opposition to the project, Corriente hired Clarke to help facilitate their acquisition of the Cerro Colorado copper deposit. He had previously done work for EcuaCorriente, Corriente Resources’s subsidiary in Ecuador, helping to form a small pro-mining Indigenous Shuar NGO led by an individual who had been expelled from other Indigenous organizations in the country (Cuffe 2012). Part of the work of that NGO involved denouncing voices that had shone a critical light on Corriente’s project, and condemning those who had been resisting the mine as foreign agitators seeking to deprive the Shuar of badly-needed development, in order to keep them impoverished (Moore 2008).

36 Clarke had also worked in Ecuador as an adviser to the mining committee of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. He explained the appeal of working as a mining industry consultant by noting that, “we see a real business opportunity for our First Nations people to capitalize on the knowledge that we have and the experiences” (CBC News 2007).

37 Moore (2008) reports that part of the work of that individual in question, Rubén Naichap, involved writing a “malicious” letter to Canadian mining watchdog NGO MiningWatch Canada (MWC), falsely accusing it of “genocide” and of having paid protesters to block the road in Ecuador. Despite being patently false allegations, on 1 and 2 August 2007, The National Post ran articles by Peter Foster attacking MWC in its The Financial Post, which reported some of Naichap’s spurious claims. These included allegations that MWC has committed “economic, cultural and social genocide,” and that they “live on [Indigenous] poverty.” In response, MWC clarified that the allegations against it were baseless and absurd, stating: “MWC’s entire involvement with Corriente’s Mirador project amounted to posting three (3) texts related to the Mirador mine on the MWC website. All three were posted within a 6-week period in 2006. Two of these were posted only after a Presidential order was issued to immediately suspend all mining activity in the area. None of these three texts were generated by MiningWatch Canada but rather came from groups in Latin America” (MWC 2007). Furthermore, Naichap’s attacks on MWC in the name of defending Indigenous rights to “development” through mining, appear to be initiatives of Corriente Resources that had been designed to appear as though they had come from a “grassroots” Indigenous organization; as Moore reports, “It was later verified that the correspondence from Naichap was written on a computer owned by Corriente Resources” (Moore 2008).
A Vulture is Not a Dove

Part of Clarke’s work in the Comarca Ngäbe-Buglé entailed orchestrating “educational sessions” to “educate” the local population about mining. He described this work in testimony delivered on 29 November 2010, before a Canadian Parliamentary committee studying the viability of a proposed bilateral trade agreement between Canada and Panama. He referred to himself as a mining promoter, and to his firm, Clarke Educational Services, as “a First Nations-based professional services firm that works with Canadian and Latin American Indigenous communities, governments, and companies in developing inclusive businesses that promote the use of natural resources in a culturally appropriate and socially and environmentally responsible manner” (Standing Committee 2010). He stated that his company had been in the comarca since mid-2008, comprising “a skilled team of professionals who are working with the Ngöbe people … to advance the Cerro Colorado copper project in a socially
inclusive and economically viable manner.” He referred to Cerro Colorado as a “world-class copper project.” He claimed to have “worked and trained with approximately 2,000 Ngöbe people in the Cerro Colorado area. These are individual landowners and community people who live in the direct and indirect impact area of this potential copper mine development.” In these “training sessions,” he attests that he and his colleagues “had to teach the people what this mining thing is,” and that due to the illiteracy of many, Clarke notes that they needed “to draw pictures, make diagrams.” He testified that he and his firm had been leading the training sessions consistently for over two years, “week after week after week with people, making sure they have the right information.” He claimed to be educating participants on “what to look for in terms of bad projects, what to look for in terms of how to deal with large mining companies, and we believe that now we have an informed population.”

University of California Davis student Maria Gray attended one of Clarke’s sessions in Hato Chamí, which she describes in a February 2010 report:

With a generator-powered laptop and projector, the presentation given by Clarke was reminiscent of a lecture in a large hall at UC Davis. During the class, only a few men asked questions. One topic raised involved the negative effects of mining, to which Clarke replied that if everything goes according to carefully conducted plans, the Cerro Colorado mine will not have any negative consequences. (Gray 2010, 6–7)

Clarke maintained that his sessions were ultimately designed to empower the local population, for he stated, “they’re pushing the Panamanian government right now to participate and they want a percentage of this concession.” This claim is dubious and misleading at best, however, regardless of whether he means to suggest that prior or subsequent to his firm’s arrival, the local population had been “pushing the Panamanian government” for participation in,

38 Gray also elaborates upon how the sessions are structured to incentivize support for mining: “Corriente provided a large-portioned hot meal for every participant of the class. According to Volunteer B, at the end of a series of classes (divided in levels), the participants are to take a test to determine their eligibility to continue to the next level. If they do not obtain a certain score, they must repeat the previous level. At the end of the Responsible Mining sessions, the 10 highest scoring individuals, including at least 2 women, were offered ‘promoter’ positions to ask their community members their opinions concerning the mine. For each of these promoters, Volunteer B has reported that Corriente pays 150 dollars a month, an extremely generous sum in the Comarca Ngöbe-Buglé” (Gray 2010, 7).
and a stake of the Cerro Colorado deposit. In his testimony, he neglected to mention the overwhelming and concerted opposition to the project found in the region. As in previous examples, he also invoked the discourse of Indigenous rights, testifying that “our company is Indigenous-rights focused”; that said, as with the previously examined cases as well, this claim does not appear to include Indigenous rights to outright reject extractive activities on their territories, but rather to embrace them. This may account for why, despite his public proclamations of the need for mining companies to mitigate the risk of social conflict as they venture into projects on Indigenous territory, his activities in the comarca were perceived as having generated immense amounts of conflict. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that, as noted, the region has a long history in which the majority of the population has overwhelmingly rejected mining on their territory, and he held an unabashed interest in working against that interest, or as he testified, “we’re hoping in the future that they will want to advance this project.”

While Clarke’s testimony elicited an appreciative response from some committee members, such as the committee chair, Conservative MP Lee Richardson, who acclaimed, “it’s great to hear from someone on the ground,” the response from people within the comarca was anything but grateful. Condemnation from the leadership in the comarca over Clarke’s testimony and his activities in the region was swift and unequivocal. A 23 January 2011 letter sent to Canadian Parliamentarians Peter Julian and John McKay by Pedro Rodriguez and Octavio Rodriguez, President and Secretary, respectively, of the General Congress of the Ngöbé Buglé Comarca, decried that the voices of the elected leaders of the comarca had not been represented before the Parliamentary committee. They condemn Clarke’s activities in the region as manipulative, refer to him as self-interested and debunk his purported claim to be interested in alleviating poverty. In essence, they suggest that his “educational training” classes bankrolled by Corriente amount to little more than propaganda indoctrination sessions that have little to do with providing full, unbiased and balanced information, and everything to do with securing local consent, indeed embrace, of the acquisition and development of the deposit which Corriente aspired to obtain.

A 25 January 2011 letter to committee chair MP Lee Richardson from regional chief Celestino Mariano Gallardo (see figure 6) was even more scathing. Mariano excoriates Clarke for having entered the comarca and engaged in his activities without having sought the prior consent of the traditional leadership. The letter calls Clarke’s testimony “quite absurd to our reality and of great disrespect to our peoples, traditional authorities of the Comarca and our legislation.” Mariano disputes Clarke’s claims that thousands
in the comarca are in favour of mining, and lambasts him for having neglected to follow due process and consult with the directorship of the Congress and the district chiefs prior to embarking upon his activities in the comarca; instead, Mariano alleges that Clarke formed and paid a committee of individuals in the comarca who intimidated locals who were not in favour of mining, and interfered with local elections. Mariano did not mince words in condemning how Clarke’s deceptive and manipulative practices purported to emerge from and represent Indigenous values, suggesting that despite his couching of his activities in the discourses of Indigeneity, a predator should not be confused with a bearer of peace and pacifism: “I want to make clear that we do not accept a representation of international organizations or events without authorization of the authorities of the Comarca, regardless of whether or not they are Indigenous (because a vulture is not a dove)” (Gallardo 2011).

Figure 6: Celestino Mariano Gallardo gestures at Cerro Colorado

39 See supra note 38 for an account of selected participants of the “Responsible Mining [training] sessions” being paid to work as “promoters” in the communities.
40 “Quiero dejar claro que no aceptamos una representacion antes los organismos internacionales o eventos internacionales sin autorizacion de las autoridades de la Comarca. Ni tampoco si no son indigenas (porque un gallote no es igual a una paloma)” (Gallardo).
Rejection of Clarke’s activities was not confined to the leadership in the comarca, and opposition to his presence had been growing in the region—something that Clarke also neglected to mention in his testimony. Protests had formed denouncing his activities, and less than three months after his testimony before the Standing Committee, Clarke and his colleague Loretta Cubillos were officially expelled from the comarca for having fomented conflict through their mining promotional activities (La Estrella 2011; La Prensa 2011; Panamá América 2011; Radio Panamá 2011; Zea 2012).41

The Canadian Connection

Invocation of the discourse of Indigenous rights to embrace large-scale resource extraction is not the only similarity linking Clarke with previously examined cases; he also deploys the discourse of being Canadian in his overtures abroad. Not unlike Ambassador Lambert deploying Jerry Asp in Guatemala as an example of auspicious relations between the Canadian state, industry, and First Nations, Clarke claims that the relationship that Indigenous people have with resource extraction in Canada forms part of his mining promotional “educational sessions.” He testified that his objective was to educate locals in the comarca “about responsible mining practices and the experiences of Indigenous peoples from Canada with respect to mining and our relationships with Canada” (Standing Committee 2010). To Canadian industry, this translates into a competitive advantage, or as he affirmed, “Canadian business, particularly in the resource sector, has a significant amount of experience in working with First Nations people for common and mutual benefit. These experiences could be used as a competitive edge for Canadian companies interested in working with Indigenous peoples here in Canada and throughout the region,” for Canadian companies, as he stated, operate at “a higher standard of CSR, a higher standard in working in and engaging communities.”

Beyond the fact that this claim is contested by numerous studies, even if his claim were valid, his leveraging of a Canadian connection is especially misleading, for Corriente had made no secrets of their intents to secure the concession in order to sell it to another company for exploitation (Zea 2012); as

41 On 23 February 2011, government minister Roxana Méndez issued an expulsion order mandating that all foreigners promoting mining in the comarca must vacate the territory within two weeks. According to a government communiqué, “the measure seeks to prevent persons alien to the Indigenous people from generating unrest, disrupting the peace and tranquility enjoyed by the Ngöbe Buglé community” (“la medida busca evitar que personas ajenas al pueblo indígena generen desasosiego, alteren la paz y la tranquilidad que disfruta la comunidad Ngöbe Buglé” (“Ngöbes No Ceden”).
such, Clarke would ostensibly have no power or control over which company might end up exploiting the deposit and thus could not possibly know their history of environmental protection and respecting human rights standards. That said, the track record for Canadian open-pit metal mining in Panama is also far from encouraging: the Molejón gold mine, owned and operated by Petaquilla Gold, a subsidiary of Vancouver-based Petaquilla Minerals, operated in Panama from 2009–2013. Clarke referred to it in his testimony, stating, “We’ve had our stakeholders go out to the Petaquilla gold mine. They’ve come back and they’re very excited by what they’ve seen there.” He does not elaborate upon what excited his stakeholders, but the Molejón mine proved to be the cause of severe environmental damage in the area, including water contamination and biodiversity loss. The company was found to have violated 28 provisions of its own environmental impact study.\(^\text{42}\) Locals residing near the mine complained of several incidents in which the nearby river turned a milky white colour, had a strong chemical odour, and all life forms in the river appeared to have been killed. They also reported burning and itching sensations on their skin when entering the river during the mine’s operation.\(^\text{43}\) The mine was abandoned in 2013 and the site was never remediated; personal visits to the site in 2015 and 2016 revealed abandoned equipment and chemicals (see figures 7a–7e), including barrels of cyanide sitting in the open in an accessible storage building (see figure 7f). A large pipe leading from an abandoned tailings pond also appeared to be draining the tailings directly into the local river (see figure 7g).\(^\text{44}\)

\(^{42}\) See [http://micla.ca/conflicts/molejon](http://micla.ca/conflicts/molejon).

\(^{43}\) Personal interviews with locals residing near the concession, April 2015.

\(^{44}\) For a compendium of information on Petaquilla, see [https://miningwatch.ca/search/site/Petaquilla](https://miningwatch.ca/search/site/Petaquilla).
Figure 7e

Figure 7f: Abandoned cyanide barrels

Figure 7g: Pipe draining from tailings pond
On a deeper level, however, it is even further disingenuous and specious for industry promoters to present as an aspirational model the experience of Canadian Indigenous communities propitiously engaging with the Canadian state and industry, for this narrative occludes the critique that the legal and political system in Canada in no way facilitates the aspirations of Canadian First Nations who may wish to reject the presence of high-impact industrial activities on their territories—which is precisely the position taken by the Latin American Indigenous communities where the Canadian leaders examined here are intervening. As noted earlier, the Canadian state does not balk at criminalizing and surveilling First Nations environmental movements when they resist “the imperatives of state and capital” (Coulthard 2008, 192), by rejecting natural resource development projects on their lands (Crosby and Monaghan 2016). In this regard, scholars have also argued that Canada’s land claims process is itself an engine of dispossession (Samson 2016), for in ultimately denying Indigenous peoples consent over the relinquishment of their territories, the process fails to live up to the standards of free prior and informed consent as enumerated in international human rights treaties, including the 2007 UNDRIP (Samson and Cassell 2013).

Most importantly for this paper, what may be most eclipsed of all by the mining-promoting consultants examined here and their chosen discourse of mutually advantageous relations between the Canadian state and First Nations, is a cogent and incisive critique offered by Coulthard: he argues that the process of negotiations over land and natural resources in Canada is ultimately designed to convert Indigenous people into willing subjects of colonial sovereignty and market capitalism. In reference to land claims negotiations with the Dene in the 1970s and early 1980s, he argues that in its engagement with Indigenous communities agitating for political-economic sovereignty and self-determination, the Canadian government sought to placate and derail demands deemed threatening to the state’s exclusive and sovereign jurisdiction over territory and natural resources by defusing Indigenous movements’ calls for reconfiguring control over resources and distribution of wealth; this was done in part through offering a diluted and “depoliticized conception of Aboriginal cultural rights divorced from any substantive notion of Indigenous sovereignty or alternative political economies” (Coulthard 2014a, 164). At the time, the Crown entered into land negotiations in order to extinguish broad, undefined rights and title claims in exchange for small, limited sets of rights and benefits. Coulthard notes that in the 1970s, the Crown still explicitly required Indigenous interlocutors to “cede, release and surrender” Aboriginal rights and title before

45 See supra note 18.
resolving land settlements, in order to guarantee the state’s continued capacity to exploit Indigenous territories for economic development: “the state insisted that any institutionalized accommodation of Indigenous cultural difference be reconcilable with one political formation—namely, colonial sovereignty—and one mode of production—namely, capitalism” (Coulthard 2014a, 160). While the Canadian state may no longer, as a matter of policy, explicitly demand such relinquishment as pre-condition to dialogue—that is, the extinguishment of all undefined rights and title claims anywhere in the Dominion of Canada, Coulthard argues that the purpose of the claims process in Canada today is essentially still the same: it is ultimately an exercise designed to bring Indigenous communities into the fold of the contemporary model of neoliberal capitalism that underpins the Canadian state, or as he writes, to “facilitate the ‘incorporation’ of Indigenous people and territories into the capitalist mode of production and to ensure that alternative ‘socioeconomic visions’ do not threaten the desired functioning of the market economy” (Coulthard 2014a, 160, quoting Green 2003, 52).

Support for, and solidarity with “alternative socioeconomic visions” are precisely what Sergio Campusano had thought he had been discussing with the AMC representatives on their aforementioned visit to Chile. As the accord that they had signed states, the mandate was that the two Indigenous communities would work to support the Diaguita’s “work towards building sustainable economies and communities through the development of mutually beneficial long-term partnerships with other Indigenous governments, non-Indigenous governments, industry, and non-government organizations.” As Campusano has asserted, the Huascoaltino Diaguita had been very clear that their community is anything but generically “anti-development,” and indeed welcomed a Canadian Indigenous community’s support for their aspirations to achieve, as the signed accord states, “community level sustainable economic development based on traditional and community based knowledge of the natural environment.” What was explicitly not included in this model of development—and in fact was seen as a fundamental existential threat to the community and its capacity to dictate the terms and conditions of their own development, on economic and other lines—was the exploitative top-down model of development that they felt Canadian mining giant Barrick Gold was imposing upon them. The Huascoaltino Diaguita leadership maintain that AMC representatives Evans and Clarke were attempting to, as Coulthard writes, facilitate their ‘incorporation’ into the model of extractive capitalism that they were explicitly and adamantly opposed to. The fact that this attempted incorporation came under the guise of Indigenous solidarity for the defense of territory and Diaguita values made the endeavour all the more alarming to Campusano, and the same critique could be
advanced regarding Clarke’s further activities in the Comarca Ngäbé Buglé of Panama.

Marching for Mining in Panama

As noted, several months after he lauded his work in testimony before the Parliamentary committee, Clarke and his colleague were expelled from the comarca. 46 Conflict over mining in the comarca did not subside with his expulsion, however, and at a 5 February 2012 protest, the police opened fire on a road blockade at a protest against mining and hydroelectric activities, killing three Ngäbé protestors and injuring scores more (Helmore 2012). A month later, the protest movement, after years of struggle, appeared to score a major victory with the National Assembly of Panama passing Special Law 415, which amends the country’s mining law and cancels all concessions for the exploitation of mineral resources in and near the comarca. Law 11, passed the same year, prohibits future mineral exploration or exploitation in the comarca (Cultural Survival 2012). While overwhelmingly celebrated by the majority of the population in the comarca, these prohibitions against mining quickly provoked the ire of a new NGO that had appeared in the comarca shortly after Clarke began his mining promotional activities there. Based in the town of Hato Chami—the very town where Clarke had led his educational sessions for Corriente—the group is called Jädrán Nigue Nirien Ngöbe (Ngäbere for “something that we Ngöbe all grow together”). Jädrán hosts what appear to be exactly what Clarke had testified he had developed for Corriente: “educational sessions” about mining and the prosperity that it can bring. Jädrán encourages locals to demand a repeal of Law 11 and embrace the development opportunities that mining can bring to the comarca, as part of their Indigenous rights to development. These demands are also expressed at rallies and protest marches that Jädrán organizes in the comarca. 47 Distributed materials at Jädrán events include coloring books for children about mining, and T-shirts adorned with the Jädrán logo and the slogan “Cerro Colorado is Ours!!!” (see figures 8a–8f). 48 They also host a nightly radio show in which they wed narratives of

46 See supra note 41.
47 For example, see https://youtu.be/XaMgEt8rfeY.
48 Gray reports a similar strategy used by Corriente during her time in the comarca. She writes, “As part of Corriente’s local publicity efforts, many community members in the surrounding areas of Cerro Colorado received large stickers marked with the company name and its motto “Responsible Mining,” written in Spanish. While working with the children of Hato Chami, we noticed that many notebooks displayed these large stickers. Similarly, Volunteer A has informed me that the company has been distributing “a ridiculous number of T-shirts to the
Indigenous empowerment and self-determination with an embrace of the economic development opportunities that exploiting the Cerro Colorado deposit may bring. A 2013 letter penned by the leadership of Jädrán to James Anaya, the then UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, decries the injustice of Law 11, demands the right—indeed Indigenous right—to embrace large-scale mining projects within the comarca, and denounces those who resist mining as the dupes of foreign-originating colonial forces that wish to keep the local population impoverished (Sandoya et al. 2013).

people” with catchy slogans such as “No Más Pobreza, Minería Responsable” (translated to “No more poverty, Responsible Mining”) and “Los Mineros Somos Más” (“Us Miners are Better”)” (Gray 2010, 8).
Figure 8c: Woman with colouring book at Jadran gathering, “What is a Mine?”

Figure 8d: Child with colouring book at Jadran gathering
There are striking similarities between the August 2006 pro-mining “protest march” in Guatemala described earlier and Jädrán’s marches in the comarca, in that both are ultimately the creations of industry seeking to coalesce support for extractive activities they wish to partake in, in the face of staunch resistance. What the marches target in participants and bystanders is also strikingly similar, and again, Coulthard and Alfred prove most useful in revealing the strategy at work here: as noted, Coulthard has incisively argued how discourses of Indigenous empowerment, self-determination and anti-colonialism can insidiously and perniciously form the core of contemporary forms of misrecognition, by which grossly inequitable colonial political and economic relations come to be stabilized (Coulthard 2008, 2014a, 2014b). At
root, a similar strategic function is at work in regards to the constitution of subjectivity in the practices explored here: for Coulthard, the Canadian state’s proffering of politically inert and innocuous cultural rights to Indigenous communities as a means of diverting and disarming more radical demands for reconfigurations of existing distributions of wealth and resources, functions as a form of governmentality that seeks to produce Indigenous subjectivities that are amenable to maintaining the status quo of inequitable and oppressive social, political and economic relations. It is a strategy that reveals, as he argues, “the productive capacity of colonial power to construct conciliatory Indigenous subjectivities through the scripted exchange of recognition” (Coulthard 2014a, 169).

The incidents examined here, such as pro-mining “protest” marches, extend the logic that Coulthard examines a critical step further: calls for the advancement and defense of Indigenous rights, as explored in the foregoing case studies, do not merely seek to leave undisturbed the colonial logic of capital accumulation, but in fact function to further entrench it. The strategy examined here is less intent upon pacifying a potential force of resistance against this logic than activating a sector of the local population into agitating and struggling for it, which perversely seeks to exploit the very ways in which Coulthard and other contemporary Indigenous thinkers have suggested their communities respond to the challenges that they currently confront. The fuel of that activation is the Indigenous pride that is invoked in the banners of both pro-mining marches examined here, such as the banners at a Jädrán march through the comarca on 27 January 2011, which stated, “Jadran es Orgullo Ngöbe” (Jadran is Ngöbe Pride, see figure 9a). Coulthard, in invoking thinkers such as Fanon and Alfred, urges Indigenous communities to empower themselves through self-recognition that rejects colonial forms of misrecognition that devalue Indigenous societies, or as he writes: “the colonized must initiate the process of decolonization by first recognizing themselves as free, dignified, and distinct contributors to humanity” (Coulthard 2014b, 43). As mentioned earlier, it is the very struggle entailed in the process that is crucial, or as he states: “Indigenous societies must begin to ‘turn away’ from the assimilative lure of settler-state recognition and instead find in their own transformative praxis the source of their liberation” (Coulthard 2008, 201). For Coulthard, this “transformative praxis” is key to decolonization; he argues that,

it is through struggle and conflict … that the colonized come to purge the “arsenal of complexes” driven into the core of their

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49 Video of the march is available at [https://youtu.be/u9xSALI3eBA](https://youtu.be/u9xSALI3eBA).
being through the colonial process. In this sense, struggle—or as I will argue later, transformative practice—serves as a mediating force through which the colonized shed their colonial mentalities and imperial modes of conduct. (Coulthard 2008, 194)

The regimes of governmentality responsible for the marches, along with the other elements in the case studies explored here, are targeting grassroots struggles for liberation and emancipation. Struggle becomes the key to the promise of decolonization that permeates Jádrán’s march, along with the other cases examined. This accounts for the language of struggle and rights found in other banners, such as one reading, “Luchamos por Nuestros Derechos” (We are struggling for our rights, see figure 9b), and another stating, “No Mas Pobreza, No Mas Mentiras. Por Nuestros Derechos y la Ley 10” (No more poverty, no more lies. For our rights and Law 10, see figure 9c).
As noted, it is perversely in demanding a form of economic development that so closely resembles “imperial modes of conduct,” as Coulthard writes, that subjects in the pro-mining marches are coerced to express their struggles for decolonization. Alfred adopts a similar stance, speaking in the language of love and self-affirmation in addition to struggle. In an assessment of “the present reality of Indigenous Peoples,” he argues that,

the problem that we have inherited in this generation is our disconnection from what it is to be Indigenous.... Living our responsibilities as humans, struggling for balance, demanding respect is the Indigenous way … fighting for our survival in the twenty-first century is less about defeating the aggression of an external enemy than it is about finding new ways to love the land, and new ways to love ourselves and our people. (Alfred 2008, 9–10; emphasis mine)

The pro-mining protest marches from Guatemala and Panama seek to choreograph a subjectivity of, as Alfred writes, “what it is to be indigenous,” to channel demonstrations of pride and self-love into an embrace of the large-scale model of resource extraction that Canadian companies are wishing to install. Banners in the Jädrán march that link discourses of pride and rights aspirations with a mining project make this clearer, such as: “Sin Jadran No Hay Proyecto” (Without Jadran, there is no [mining] project, see figure 9d) and “Nuestros Recursos. Nuestros Derechos. Nuestro Futuro” (Our Resources. Our Rights. Our Future, see figure 9e).
Extending Coulthard's and Alfred's insights into dynamics of recognition and colonization/decolonization is not intended to presume that their own analyses are blind to the possibilities that the “transformative praxis” of which they write can itself be hijacked. In fact Alfred offers a withering account of the colonization process in Canada that suggests such a possibility. He writes:

The white élite undertook to manufacture a Native élite. They picked promising youths, they made them drink the firewater principles of capitalism and of Western culture; they educated the Indian out of them, and their heads were filled and their mouths were stuffed with smart-sounding hypocrisies, grand greedy words that stuck in their throats but which they spit out nonetheless. After a short stay in the university they were sent home to their reserves or unleashed in the cities, whitewashed. These walking lies had nothing to say to their brothers and sisters that did not sound false, ugly, and harmful; they only mimicked their masters. From buildings in Toronto, from
Montréal, from Vancouver, businessmen would utter the words, “Development! Progress!” and somewhere on a reserve lips would open “. . . opment! . . . gress!” The Natives were complacent and compliant; it was a rich time for the white élite. Then things changed. The mouths of Natives started opening by themselves; brown voices still spoke of the whites’ law, democracy, and liberal humanism, but only to reproach them for their unfairness and inhumanity. (Alfred 2014, ix)

If one were to extend his analysis to the context examined here, the buzzwords marshalled to seduce consent for a particular form of capital accumulation are not only “Development!” and “Progress!” but “Self-determination!” and “Indigenous rights!”

That said, lest it be unclear, it is worth restating that the present purpose is neither to essentialize nor demonize selected individuals, nor offer an anti-industrial development polemic. Many First Nations in Canada are engaging in business dealings with forestry, mining, and hydroelectric companies, and while some communities are internally conflicted over the terms, conditions, and implications of these projects, others may find the arrangements that they have negotiated to be ultimately positive and mutually advantageous; if so, this analysis is by no means intended to disparage that. What ultimately is problematic is that Indigenous communities in the Global South that are clearly and unequivocally expressing their rejection of a certain model of industrial development on their territories—at times on cultural and spiritual terms, and at times on the realization that the social and political realities that they confront likely makes it a losing gamble to accept this model of development—are being coerced into embracing, indeed demanding it. Their rejection and resistance of what they often foresee as the ultimate destruction of their territories and the befalling of a host of environmental and social calamities, should be honoured and respected—inasmuch as First Nations that have decided to proceed with industrial development on their territories according to their own collectively agreed-upon terms, would likewise wish that their decisions and positions be respected.

50 For an online atlas of Indigenous communities in Canada that have signed mining agreements for projects on their territories, see Natural Resources Canada, “The Atlas of Canada - Indigenous Mining Agreements.” Available at: http://atlas.gc.ca/imaema.
Conclusion

Despite their differences, the case studies examined here all emerge from a similar strategy: a cross-pollination of purportedly grass-roots, emancipatory, prefigurative political movements of Indigenous struggles for rights and self-determination, with the logic, and indeed often ruthless political calculus, of inequality, of the low-cost, high-return mega-extractive model that Canadian mining companies have proven so adept at exporting globally. It marks a dramatic extension of, yet also a departure from, the phenomenon Coulthard has outlined in his analysis of Dene land claims and the politics of recognition in Canada’s North, where he argues that the Canadian state has employed “a carefully circumscribed politics of recognition” (Coulthard 2014a, 169) whereby “a limited set of cultural rights … [may] be exercised solely within the parameters of state sovereignty and the capitalist mode of production” ensuring that the land and resource base “remain open for exploitation and capitalist development.” Something qualitatively different and arguably more perverse is occurring here: the neoliberal regimes of governmentality driving Canadian mining projects in Latin America and elsewhere are insidiously tapping into strivings for Indigenous self-empowerment or, as Alfred writes, “new ways to love ourselves and our people,” by channelling these aspirations towards embracing—indeed, demanding—mega-extractive projects, whose actual legacies are far more likely than not to achieve the very opposite of community empowerment and the safeguarding of land and ways of being for generations to come. Regimes of governmentality seeking to shore up Indigenous support for Canadian extractive activities globally have cleverly cast aspirations for those projects in terms of decolonization: to those seduced by these interpellations, Canadian mining companies become discursively constructed as catalysts of self-determination and Indigenous empowerment, and those resisting the mining projects—on the grounds of seeking to protect land and culture for present and future generations, and often expressed in terms of Indigenous rights claims—are cast as externally originating colonial forces that seek to subjugate Indigenous populations to prevent their empowerment and self-determination. This strategy seeks to co-opt the “transformative praxis” of Indigenous rights claims that becomes the “source of their liberation,” by incorporating within that praxis an embrace of large-scale industrial extraction as an engine of empowerment.

This phenomenon is also not limited to the case studies presented: in the face of growing Indigenous rights movements in Canada and beyond, various attempts are underway to cultivate Indigenous subjectivities within Canada that are largely amenable to the accumulation of capital through large-scale industrial extractive projects. One such recent initiative is the conference, “Our
Land, Our Future: National Summit on Indigenous Youth and Natural Resource Development,” organized by the business think-tank Conference Board of Canada and held in Calgary in November 2017. It flew in Indigenous youth from across Canada for dialogue sessions with representatives of resource extraction companies and other conference participants. The conference’s appeal to sponsors notes that “many critical challenges persist” in natural resource development in Canada, and “one such challenge is the effective and meaningful engagement of Indigenous youth.” It is unclear how successful it was on this front, however, for in one account of the conference, in response to a vice-president from SNC-Lavalin who, as moderator of a panel with Indigenous youth (see figure 10), had asked the young panellists to define the good life, one Indigenous youth noted the need for clean rivers and the preservation of traditional life-ways, a second affirmed that, “Living the good life has nothing to do with money,” while a third declared that, “the government has tried to tell us who we are. We are so much more than they think.” The responses reportedly engendered loud and boisterous applause from the youth in the audience.

Figure 10: Our Land, Our Future conference, photo by Martin Lukacs

Their replies reflect a prominent stance that Alfred celebrates in the younger, emerging generation of Indigenous activists and scholars today: he writes, “they do not surrender to despair and advocate collaboration with

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51 Available at: http://www.conferenceboard.ca/docs/default-source/conf-pdfs-public/17-0073_sponsorship.pdf

52 As reported by journalist Martin Lukacs.
colonialism or stoke mindless rage. They have a stronger vision of liberation … and turn inward to focus on the resurgence of an authentic Indigenous existence and the recapturing of physical, political and psychic spaces of freedom for our people” (Alfred 2008, 11). This paper has argued that that quest for reclaiming one’s authentic Indigenous subjectivity is being targeted by regimes of governmentality seeking to coerce support for a method of economic accumulation that lies counter to many expressed Indigenous value systems, but it is not to presume that such an effect is in any way guaranteed. As noted earlier, this paper does not presume to know the totality of effects that these strategies have upon subjects; this cannot be known. That said, inasmuch as it would be erroneous to presume that the strategies explored here have no effect, it would be equally mistaken to presume an overdetermination of the intended effect of the regimes of governmentality presently treated. Rather, it is important to stress that the spirit of resistance evinced in the youth at the conference in Calgary is also clearly palpable in each incident explored in the preceding pages. In each case study explored here there have been fierce and formidable pushbacks, such as the condemnation of Clarke’s activities in the comarca by the traditional leadership there. That rejection is also not limited to the leadership; according to Pedro Nola Flores, the current President of the Congreso Ngäbe-Buglé, most people in the comarca doubt the integrity and legitimacy of Jädrán. In October 2017 he attested that

if I were to bring you up there, right now, to the place where [Jädrán is] operating, ninety-five, ninety-nine percent are opposed to their position. Because … each [member of Jädrán] has ambition for themselves, a very personal one, not for the population. Do you think that when they say 50/50 they are thinking of life and of the future generations? Of the kind of devastation this will cause to the ecology? Of the contamination? No. They’re not looking out for that. They’re looking to see how and in what way … they catch some crumbs from the company. This is what they’re looking for—not to benefits of a more social, collective kind, and above all, of [benefits] for the entire territory of the Comarca.  

A powerful rejection of Ron Evans’s and Don Clarke’s overtures in Chile was also offered by the Huascoaltino Diaguita. In October of 2006, they released a

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53 One way that Jädrán endorses mining as an engine of economic development involves encouraging locals to demand 50% ownership of the Cerro Colorado deposit (Cuffe 2012).

public communiqué to warn participants gathering at an Indigenous encuentro in Bolivia where Ron Evans and Don Clarke were expected to attend.55 According to the release, subsequent to their ill-fated proposition to the Huascoaltino Diaguita to represent them in dealings with Barrick Gold, the AMC reps had been busy networking, including meeting with the president of Chile, Michelle Bachelet. According to the communiqué, they apparently had been seeking to build an AMC “embassy” somewhere in the region, ostensibly as a base from where they may replicate what they had attempted with the Huascoaltino Diaguita. A Canadian newspaper report from the time corroborates this claim (Wiebe 2006).56 The Huascoaltino communiqué warns of the tactics used by the AMC representatives, and states, “in reality, they are commercial consultants and spearheads of the new invasion of the continent by traitors.” Rather than using the Spanish word traidor, however, the text uses “malinches,” which more infers an Indigenous turncoat.57 After warning participants of the Encuentro that the AMC representatives may try to seduce a relationship by extending overtures of Indigenous solidarity, it states, “then come the mirrors that the foreign invaders brought from their arrival to our lands, but this time in the hands of the AMC: travel promises, exchange of territories, eagle feathers and other trinkets and gadgets that try to confuse, waste time, and make the recipients dizzy and tired, easier to be destroyed.” The final phrase is conveyed by the idiom, “marear la perdiz,” which literally means to make the partridge dizzy. It emerges from a strategy of hunting partridges by repeatedly scaring them so they take flight; the tactic appears as though time is being wasted, but as the birds become fatigued, they become much easier to kill.

Text of the communiqué is offered here at some length, in an effort to convey the full extent of the rejection of the strategy that this paper has

55 The gathering was the “Encuentro Continental de Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas del Abya Yala,” La Paz, Bolivia, 8–12 October 2006, https://www.movimientos.org/enlacei/encuentroabyayala.
56 The Winnipeg Free Press reports that the AMC was seeking to set up an office in Chile, and quotes Don Clarke, as “chief of political staff for the AMC,” as stating, “Right now we’re in the process of finalizing our lease and setting up our legal status to operate in Chile … [the office] is going to also create a permanent presence for our people in Latin America” (Wiebe 2006).
57 It comes from La Malinche, who according to history was an early 16th century Nahua woman who was a mistress to Hernán Cortés, and was said to have become his advisor, interpreter, and general intermediary for the conquistadores.
58 The communiqué claims that the AMC representatives had earlier promised to fly Sergio Campusano to Canada as part of their discussed cross-cultural exchanges. Campusano asserts that this promised trip never materialized.
outlined. As Mariano lambasted in his letter denouncing Don Clarke, a vulture may not be a dove, but neither are the intended victims of these manipulative and deceptive tactics partridges who are easily confused and dizzied. The closing lines of the communiqué make this abundantly clear:

I warn the Indigenous organizations to be very careful with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, its Grand Chief Ron Evans, his Political Delegate Don Clarke … and other mercantile mercenaries, disguised as Indigenous. They believe that we Indigenous people of the South should be taught and that they know the HOW to do lucrative business with the transnationals, and that THEY ARE SURE TO HAVE THE DEVELOPMENT MODEL THAT WE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH MUST ACQUIRE FROM THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF THE NORTH. They do not realize that we are rebellious, proud people and that we have our own forms of government, our own definition of development and our own way of getting rid of the traitors. For a Free, Sovereign, Rebellious Indigenous America! Let us keep a watchful eye on the mercenaries that come from the North: Canada, Australia, Chile and others! (my translation; capitalization in the original) 

Alfred has urged Indigenous communities to do precisely what the Huascoaltino communiqué accomplishes: a clear and unequivocal unmasking and rejection of colonial epistemologies and moralities that have historically facilitated the disenfranchisement of Indigenous societies, to embrace instead value systems and ways of being and knowing that have anchored Indigenous societies for millennia prior to colonial contact. This is especially pertinent given Alfred’s observation that under today’s “postmodern” imperial conditions, oppression operates less in the form of flagrant land-grabs and more in the realms of psychology and culture (Alfred 1999, 2008). He asserts that, “Ignorance and racism are the founding principles of the colonial state, and concepts of Indigenous sovereignty that don’t challenge these principles in fact serve to perpetuate them” (Alfred 1999, 59). For Alfred, the stakes of the struggle are synonymous with its objective: “the heart and soul of Indigenous

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59 Text of the communiqué on file with the author. It had previously been published on a Spanish-language Indymedia site and on the Centro de Políticas Públicas website, but those pages are no longer available. Previously published at: https://prod.sucre.indymedia.org/es/2006/10/34633.shtml and http://www.politicaspúblicas.net/panel/news/?p=3415.
nations: a set of values that challenge the destructive and homogenizing force of Western liberalism and free-market capitalism; that honor the autonomy of individual conscience, non-coercive authority, and the deep interconnection between human beings and other elements of creation” (Alfred 1999, 60).

Throughout his work, Alfred offers a palpable sense of hope and optimism in the prospects that he sees for the task of decolonization facing Indigenous communities today. He celebrates emergent returns to “a way of life that has respect, sacrifice, love, honesty, and the quest for balance at its core” (Alfred 2014, 11) and heralds the emergence and evolution of a new critical consciousness, an “Indigenous resurgence,” evinced in thinkers such as Coulthard, who are savvy to contemporary strategies of cooptation and neocolonization. If the resistance against the tactics explored here are any indication, prospects for the resurgence that Alfred calls for appear hopeful. In this context, the grounds for hope lie in Indigenous communities in Canada and abroad, as well as their non-Indigenous allies, increasingly coming to discern the nature of the strategies underway to seduce consent for extractive projects that may, in fact, be entirely contrary to their best interests, with the result being less confusion and more capacities to both detect the forces at work and effectively defuse and resist them. May doing so lead to clarity on the best ways to confront the formidable challenges that lie ahead and open increased possibilities for alliances of solidarity that may support and invigorate struggles in defense of life, livelihoods, and territory.
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