

**THE COLONIAL PRESENT: BOTANICAL GARDENS AS
SITES OF NATIONALISM, ENVIRONMENTALISM AND
ABORIGINALITY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

by

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ABSTRACT

Recent scholarship on post-colonialism highlights the enduring legacies of colonial institutions. This thesis uses ethnographic research and historical analysis to investigate one set of colonial institutions: botanical gardens. The research was carried out in British Columbia, Canada and examines this site in relation to other British settler societies such as Australia. British botanical gardens played a key role in the larger colonial project. Such gardens were part of transnational scientific networks, which encouraged entrepreneurialism and guided people and plants through imperial centers. Canadian botanical gardens, as a social institution, have played a role in aboriginal dispossession and nationalist projects. These botanical gardens selectively erase and appropriate aboriginal knowledges and histories in ongoing projects of nation formation. Starting in the 1960s, botanical gardens in British settler societies, such as Canada, disrupted England's reign as the key center and institutional compass as these post-colonial sites established their own transnational networks.

Keywords: historicity; post-colonialism; decolonization; indigenous knowledge; transnational science

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Shamsi Ashti. She is as warm, loving and life-giving as the sun. I am thankful for her unending emotional support and encouragement.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Set up (Scope and Theoretical Focus)

How do the colonial legacies of settler societies such as Canada inform their post-colonial present? I start by establishing how British colonies came to be known before discussing the post-colonial present in Canada. The dramatic transformations of these geographies have been possible through two interlinked processes: surveys and settlement. British colonial explorers, with their social, political and racial assumptions about the world outside Europe, worked in unison with botanical gardens to conduct topographical surveys. The search for economically valuable resources and plants brought British explorers to unknown lands, which not only set in motion profound geographical and social changes but informed the British Crown about potential lands for colonization (Brockway 1979; Crosby 1986; Schiebinger and Swan 2005). Botanical gardens were also used by European colonial powers to establish monopolies on the cultivation of certain plants, decreasing dependence on networks outside of their colonial domain. A prime example is the British establishment of tea plantations in India to reduce their dependence on Chinese tea or the cultivation of rubber in Southeast Asia to undercut Brazil's monopoly on rubber production (Sharma 2006; Brockway 1979). The work of botanical gardens generated massive profits and propelled new economic ventures (MacLeod 2000; Schiebinger and Swan 2005). The Western appetite for foods found in the Global South such as tea, sugar and fruits, as well as medicines such as quinine ensured a continued reliance on botanical gardens to "bioprospect", to find new plants of potential use to Europe (Brockway 1979; Mintz 1985; Fan 2003, 2004; Schiebinger 2004).

In British Columbia, Canada, botanical gardens did not play a pivotal role in colonization because other colonial enterprises, such as Hudson Bay Company (HBC) and Canadian Pacific Rail (CPR), and the actual settlement of the province were much more transformative. The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway and a massive influx of immigrants¹ disrupted aboriginal livelihoods and displaced them from their lands (Barman 2007). British Columbian botanical gardens worked within a colonial framework that permitted the appropriation of both the land and knowledge of aboriginal people, regarded as a vanishing group. More recently, the institutional frameworks strategically include aboriginal knowledge. Since the 1960s, the 'Canadian' identity has been concretized through the efforts of various Canadian institutions, such as botanical gardens. This national identity has been built through an erasure of Canada's colonial past and a celebration of Euro-Canadian historical beginnings. How can we write richer accounts of national formation that go beyond Euro-Canadian origins and institutional domination? I argue that writing 'against the grain' can offer a possibility to explore more holistic accounts of national narrative. I examine indigenous peoples' places within the post-colonial nation state of Canada and, to a lesser extent, Australia. I explore how colonialism², and aboriginal knowledge, claims and rights are addressed by the Canadian government and individuals in charge of Canadian institutions and non-aboriginal 'Canadian' public. Through an exploration of British Columbian botanical gardens, this thesis shows the perpetuation of settler histories and their contributions to Canada and the tendency to see colonialism as a finished era belonging to the past.

¹ Through out this thesis, I use the word 'immigrant' to refer to a larger grouping of non-aboriginal people, including settlers, who call Canada, and other British settler societies, home.

² In this thesis, I do not compare the various national variants of European colonization, such as Spanish, French, Dutch or English. Instead, I examine some of the particularities of British colonial thoughts and the larger impact of European colonization on the world.

This thesis builds on a rich tradition of post-colonial studies in diverse historical and social locations. A number of authoritative approaches to post-colonial studies focus on the European and British colonies in Africa, India, and South East Asia (Fanon 1963; Spivak 1999; Stoler 2002). Other scholars examine post-colonialism in the British settler societies of Canada and Australia (Blomley 2004; Edmonds 2010; Mawani 2009; Thrush 2006; Stanger-Ross 2008; Barman 2007). Much of this work examines the contemporary issues aboriginal people face within urban centers, such as the emergence of the politics of “indigeneity” (Hathaway 2010b). The ways non-indigenous peoples in various British settler societies think about the past, indigenous rights, and indigenous resistance affects the ability of indigenous people to mobilize and receive recognition for their rights and land.

My understanding of post-colonialism is grounded in “historicity” that “opens out the temporal focus to a ‘past-present-future’” where past, present and future bleed into one another and are continuously produced (Hirsch and Stewart 2005: 261). I have also relied on Ann Stoler’s (2006) understanding of post-colonialism because her interchangeable use of post-colonial studies and colonial studies frames colonialism as an ongoing endeavour. Stoler uses “the term post-colonial to signal a cross-disciplinary political project... that rejects colonial categories and scholarship that takes them for granted [and instead treats] colonialism as a history of the present, to focus on the aftermath of empire and on contemporary hybrid cultural forms that follow from it” (2006: 59). In other words, postcolonial scholars explore how colonial processes continue in the present, tracing how unjust historical legacies have consequences for contemporary societies (Bhabha 1994).

This thesis also contributes to scholarship that examines the urban presence of aboriginal people and their continued struggle for recognition and rights in the post-colonial

present. I argue that post-colonial approaches have been under-explored in Canada. The under-explored phenomenon of Canadian colonialism is reflected in the governmental and public denial of such histories. In September 2009 at the G20 news conference, Prime Minister Stephen Harper stated that: “We also have no history of colonialism. So we have all of the things that many people admire about the great powers but none of the things that threaten or bother them” (Barrera 2009). The government of Canada’s refusal to acknowledge its colonial history denies the real impact of this past for contemporary aboriginal people. The contemporary citizens of Canada are often unwitting participants in the lingering effects of colonialism and the continuing marginalization of aboriginal populations.

In particular, Vancouver’s colonial history remains relatively unexplored. But for a handful of local scholars, the history of aboriginal dispossession and displacement in British Columbia has been ignored. Through a series of maps that start in the 1850s, Bruce MacDonald shows how ‘Vancouver’ was built on aboriginal village and camp sites, which not only required the removal of aboriginal populations, but also the allocation of native reserves by the Crown and governmental bodies (1992). According to Jordan Stanger-Ross, in early 20th century, the municipal government of Vancouver sought ways to eliminate and unsettle the Kitsilano and Musqueam reserves in Vancouver to render the land available for urbanization and commercial purposes, effectively recognizing the interests of newcomers, bureaucrats and businessmen (2008: 541-545). Even though the Musqueam reserve remains intact, most other aboriginal inhabitants of Vancouver have been displaced, and their sites of settlement often burned down. Yet, their rights and title to the land have not been officially extinguished, but still remain unacknowledged by the provincial and federal governments (Barman 2007; McDonald 1996; Blomley 2004; Harris 2004; Mawani 2009).

Shaped by Euro-Canadian political and social investments in 'Canada', the two botanical gardens I have chosen as my fieldsites (the VanDusen Botanical Garden and the University of British Columbia Botanical Garden), reflect settlers' interactions with the past. Staff and volunteers at these botanical gardens varied considerably in their understandings of Canadian institutional beginnings, colonialism and aboriginal rights. Staff at the UBC Botanical Garden were significantly more cognizant of these histories and willing to discuss such pasts. Some of the staff and volunteers of these botanical gardens' distorted vision of the past is exemplified by Bruce Braun's (1997) argument that there is often an institutional and governmental tendency to imagine a historical barrier between the colonial past and the post-colonial present. Botanical gardens' compartmentalization of history tends to view the "past as a foreign country" (Hartley 1953). Institutional actors responsible for the historical narratives of botanical gardens showcase the present while briefly highlighting the less-appealing past.

Fieldsites (Historical Background)

In the mid 1850s, British Columbia was a highly attractive destination for migrants from Asia, the Americas and Europe, who arrived in search of gold, employment and the prospect of owning land (Harris 1997). By the late 1860s, with the increasing influx of people and accelerated division of land, a new geography was born. According to Jean Barman, "Vancouver is a relatively late creation, originating in 1886 as the western terminus of the transcontinental rail line [Canadian Pacific Rail], where "[u]ntil then, Burrard Inlet, on whose south shore Vancouver sits, was home to a handful of newcomers alongside Squamish and Musqueam people who used the area's resources of sustenance" (2007: 3). The displacement of the aboriginal population from their traditional lands allowed for the repurposing of the land, the establishment of settler claims, and the creation of infrastructure and institutions (Roy 2002; Stanger-Ross 2008). In the

next chapter, I examine the emergence the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden as examples of institutions that came into existence through—and benefitted by— colonial activities that created what we now understand as ‘Vancouver’.

I conducted my fieldwork at two botanical gardens in Vancouver: the VanDusen Botanical Gardens and the University of British Columbia Botanical Gardens. Through interviews and archival data, as well as studies of secondary literature, I have been able to gain a fuller sense of their institutional histories. The two fieldsites speak to the complex processes of colonization and the subsequent repopulation by settler communities, who continue to rework these terrains. There are some fundamental differences between these two botanical gardens. Besides the obvious temporal gap, the creation of the first UBC Botanical Gardens in 1916 and VanDusen Botanical Gardens in 1975, the lands and their ownership set the gardens apart. While both gardens were born out of the clearing of forests, often involving removing second growth forest. The site of UBC Botanical Gardens is situated on the Musqueam Bands’ traditional territory, which has likely motivated a stronger acknowledgement of aboriginality. Aboriginal connections to VanDusen’s site, on the other hand, are less well known or acknowledged by the garden; the site’s ownership is traced to the Canadian Pacific Rail (CPR).

These botanical gardens would not have been possible without an influx of European settlers, some of whom came to British Columbia after facing difficulties in Europe. One of those individuals was John Davidson, who could not afford university tuition at home in Scotland to study botany but managed to teach as an assistant at Marischal College at the University of Aberdeen (John Davidson 2010a). But in 1911, the college ruled that the faculty must have a university degree in their field in order to teach and this prevented Davidson’s promotion to assistant professorship. Thus, he left Scotland and headed for Canada. In British Columbia, he

met the Provincial Secretary and Minister of Education, Dr. Henry Esson Young, to promote the idea of a 'provincial botanical survey'. Davidson argued that a survey would be critical for the use of a botany department once the planned University of British Columbia was constructed. Davidson was hired to create a provincial botanical office and a botanical garden, named the Essondale Botanical Garden, which had three broad aims:

1. Assemble a representative collection of plants from all parts of the province.
2. Grow sets of species belonging to 'critical' genera for study and research, [and] to determine accurately their species and apply their valid names.
3. Create an outdoor museum, to provide living material for teaching, and a source of supplies for undergraduate laboratory work, as well as for post graduate research (John Davidson 2010c).

In 1916, the botanical garden was relocated from Essondale to the newly established Point Grey campus, which had only one permanent building and two temporary buildings. The following describes how the grounds of the garden was created:

[The on-campus botanical garden was made possible through transforming] the logged forests of Point Grey... clearing the second growth of native trees and stones, blasting the stumps and growing a series of crops that were then ploughed back into the soil as fertilizer. Although this clearing of the land was necessary for growing plants, it made the land suitable for construction as well.... Davidson planted an arboretum that contained all of the genera and most of the species of BC trees and shrubs. He also created lawns, herbaceous beds, borders of native plants and more... Davidson also set up a variety of themed gardens. The exotic garden housed non-native plants, and the medicinal garden allowed pharmacy students... to identify plants used in medicines (John Davidson 2010f).

Thus, this garden began with the systematic, scientific study of botany in British Columbia, which was initiated by Davidson's botanical surveys. Davidson strove to conduct surveys in accordance with UK botanical gardens' methods and established connections with England, in terms of plant material, knowledge, and goals. He also created other British-inspired botanical garden collections, such as exotic plants, which were brought to BC from British botanical gardens with the help of settlers. The garden's land was made available by provincial and federal mandates that legalized the appropriation of aboriginal territories in the early 20th

century in order to remake, develop, and 'improve' the land. By the 1930s, the founders of the UBC Botanical Garden had to cope with difficulties, including the Depression, but during the post-WWII boom, a renewed interest in botany prompted the construction of a larger botanical garden at the university in 1968, where it now stands (John Davidson 2010f).

The new botanical garden was possible through the appropriation of unceded Musqueam land. This land was claimed following the University Endowment Act (1907), which set aside 175 acres of Point Grey for the development of the university (Norman 2010). The Musqueam continue to challenge this infringement in and out of the court system, thus showing how the post-colonial present is haunted by the colonial past (Roy 2002). Thus, this botanical garden is part of a larger situation, where rights to land and resources are part of on-going negotiations.

As well, the site of the VanDusen Botanical Garden has seen many changes since the mid 19th century. The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Rail (CPR) ushered in a severance of aboriginal ties to the land. From the late 19th century to the early 20th century, the CPR was granted large land concessions and aided city-building efforts along the railway line. From 1899 to 1918, the CPR claimed major acquisitions in forests and real estate, mostly under the presidency of T.G. Shaughnessy, and was involved in oil, gas and mining (Chodos 1973). As part of its real estate investments, the CPR constructed the Shaughnessy neighbourhood outside of downtown Vancouver. According to Shaughnessy Place's website, "Vancouver's more affluent residents found in Shaughnessy a neighbourhood that reflected their wealth and status [and] they appreciated its location on the edge of the city, a dignified distance from their downtown offices" (Shaughnessy Place 2010). Similarly, Bruce MacDonald states that "today Vancouver's most prestigious neighbourhood is still Shaughnessy. ...The CPR developed phase one of this

subdivision by pouring an unprecedented amount of money into landscaped boulevards, parks and concrete sidewalks, ensuring its exclusiveness” (1992: 4). In 1911, the Shaughnessy Golf Course, the future site of the VanDusen Botanical Garden, was developed on land leased from the CPR. The golf course, and later VanDusen, created a landscape without obvious traces of previous aboriginal connections and usage. Jean Barman examines the “erasure of indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver” where “[p]ersons who were indigenous to the area, and considered it their home long before the arrival of outsiders, were first removed from the land they called their own and then saw even their memory deliberately lost from view” (2007: 4).

By the 1950s, the CPR needed a separate division to manage its vast, nationwide real estate holdings and created the Marathon Realty Company, which managed the Shaughnessy Golf Course (Chodos 1973). According to my informants, in the late 1950s land and property values rose in Shaughnessy, forcing the relocation of the golf course to the University Endowment Lands. In the late the 1960s, developers planned to turn the golf course into condominiums, and a group of wealthy Vancouverites, under the banner of ‘Save our Parks’, lobbied at both the provincial and federal levels of government to turn it into a park land (Stubbs 1985). The land was purchased from Marathon Realty for three million dollars with funds from the province, the federal government and Whitford Julian VanDusen, a well-known lumber magnate and philanthropist. Construction of the garden began in 1971 and the garden was opened to the public in 1975.

The original funds for the garden were linked to fortunes from forestry. W. J. VanDusen completed a forestry degree at the University of Toronto in 1912 and came to British Columbia to work as a forester (The History of Metropolitan Vancouver, 2010). In 1919, VanDusen joined the H.R. MacMillan Export Company to sell British Columbian lumber on the world market and

soon VanDusen became a business partner (University of British Columbia Library 2010). The Export company aggressively marketed their products, purchased from sawmills and timber companies, and then built a plywood plant in 1935. In 1945, after steady growth, VanDusen became the senior vice president of the company, which was renamed MacMillan Bloedel in 1951, and he rose through the ranks until his retirement in 1969 (The History of Metropolitan Vancouver 2010). His company was not only the first and most powerful privately-owned lumber exporter in British Columbia, but its enormous economic capital shaped Vancouver and fostered an elite economic class. Following the merger, MacMillan Bloedel came to own enormous tracts of BC forest and, like the CPR, relied on funding and support from the Canadian government (Chodos 1973: 55). In 1970, MacMillan Bloedel became the province's second largest corporation, worth \$750 million, second only to CPR's value of one billion dollars (ibid). This large capital gain by a privately-owned enterprise was made through claims to timber on unceded aboriginal territory that effaced aboriginal ownership and denied economic compensation.

The settlers' engagement with British Columbia's landscape reinforced their ties to England. Men moved from England and Scotland to British Columbia, finding employment at the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden. Such transplanted men included John Davidson (mentioned earlier), Bill Livingstone and Roy Forster. Livingstone was the self-taught son of one of Vancouver's first nurserymen. In 1911, when Livingstone was an infant, his parents moved from Scotland to Vancouver. "Horticulture was already in his blood then, his father having been a nurseryman in Scotland" (Queen Elizabeth Park 2010). Bill Livingstone worked for the Vancouver Parks Board, and was responsible for the creation of Queen Elizabeth Park and the VanDusen Botanical Gardens (ibid). Livingstone was not only able to forge powerful partnerships in Vancouver but also build strong ties to England and Scotland and their botanical institutions.

Roy Forster, an English transplant, came to Canada following WWII after he was unable to secure a position at Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew. Forster first worked for the Royal Botanical Garden in Ontario and was recruited by Bill Livingstone to come to Vancouver, where they created the VanDusen Botanical Garden. These men possessed transferable skills that served them well in British Columbia. Their entrepreneurial and networking abilities helped them acquire respectable positions as curators and directors in British Columbian botanical gardens. The work of such individuals has sustained the institutional channels between British Columbia and botanical gardens at Kew and Edinburgh. The VanDusen Botanical Garden's involvement with these two botanical gardens was evident even before its construction. To determine the suitability of the former Shaughnessy Golf Course as a site for a botanical garden, members of the Royal Botanical Garden in Edinburgh conducted independent studies on the planned garden site, and staff from the Royal Botanical Garden at Kew were consulted (VanDusen Botanical Garden 1993). The VanDusen and UBC Botanical Garden borrowed stylistic and operational elements from Edinburgh and Kew such as dividing the garden into sections representing the world's botanical regions, an emphasis on European explorers and scientists, and educational programs.

Both the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden relied on an influx of immigrants to Vancouver for their operation and growth. The UBC Botanical Garden also relied on the Vancouver Natural History Society, started in 1918, which brought together members of the British Columbia Mountaineering Club (BCMC) and an urban beautification league. The commitment of the BCMC was particularly significant for UBC's Botanical Garden, as their members offered their "hearty cooperation" to Davidson and assisted him in the collection of geological, entomological, and botanical specimens, as well as in the topographical work of mapping specimen locations (John Davidson 2010d). The VanDusen Botanical Garden's

connections to the local community were started by Roy Forester. In the late 1960s, he placed an advertisement in the *Kerrisdale Courier Newspaper* seeking volunteers to work in the garden. Community support and volunteer efforts have been instrumental to the operations of the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Gardens ever since.

Access to Fieldsites

My entry into the VanDusen Botanical Garden was made possible through becoming a volunteer. Along with twenty two other volunteers, I attended the VanDusen's volunteer orientation in May, 2009. One cool, damp Sunday morning, we met at the entrance of the garden by the 'Mosquito', a cedar totem pole commissioned by VanDusen Botanical Garden Association (VBGA) in 1976, and carved by Earl Muldoe, a member of the Gitksan First Nation from K'san (VanDusen Botanical Garden 2010). Although the placement of the totem pole at the garden's entrance gives an impression of aboriginal inclusion, in a multicultural Canadian state, in reality the garden does not recognize aboriginal claim to the land and presents a "romanticized Indigeneity" (Barman 2007: 27). The Gitksan people are not local to Vancouver therefore the totem pole "provides an encounter with Indigeneity safely removed from real life" (Barman 2007: 28) and feeds into larger definition of British Columbia through its aboriginal images and art. After meeting the Volunteer Coordinator, we trekked through the garden and arrived at MacMillan Bloedel Place, a 7,000-square-foot exhibit named after its funder (VanDusen Botanical Garden Association 1976). The centre maintains its 1970s décor, and is filled with promotional materials from the timber industry, including wood samples and pro-timber industry posters, which have remained unchanged since the garden's inception. MacMillan Bloedel Place represents a snapshot of history when British Columbian logging industry was highly vocal and celebrated. Yet, contemporary environmental concerns now

challenge the legacy of such logging operations, which might explain why the coordinator did not discuss the history of the building but focused on volunteer education.

Once we were settled, the volunteer coordinator showed a handful of slides, which depicted the planning stages of the garden. Through years of recruiting volunteers, VanDusen's volunteer orientation had become a standardized template. The volunteer coordinator along with two seasoned volunteers seemed quite comfortable discussing the history of the gardens and used positive and celebratory language. For example, they established the roots of botanical gardens in Renaissance Europe and showcased how VanDusen's plant collection and operation was inspired by British and Scottish botanical institutions. They said that there were four different choices for volunteer groups: special event assistants, flower arrangers, library assistants, and seed collectors. At a subsequent date, we were interviewed by the volunteer coordinator, and we declared our preference for a certain group. While I was concerned that if I was rejected as a volunteer it would have serious repercussions for my research, such worries were short-lived. My request to join the seed collectors' group was accepted.

I chose the seed collectors' group due to their involvement in VanDusen's daily operations. There were two groups: the Tuesday group and the Sunday group. The Tuesday group was an older, more homogenous demographic, mostly females of European descent in their 50s to 80s, some of whom volunteered at the garden since its inception. The Sunday group was a younger, more diverse demographic, consisting of almost all recent female immigrants in their 20s to 40s, some Euro-Canadian females in their 30s to 60s, and a few male volunteers of European descent in their 70s. Even though I wanted to join the Tuesday seed collector's group in order to talk with the more seasoned volunteers, I was assigned to the Sunday group. As the coordinator explained, "Given your age and interests, I suggest you join the Sunday seed

collectors' group. There'll have more volunteers closer to your own age with similar interests". I complied, as I knew that I could visit the Tuesday group on my own time.

The main goal of seed collectors is to raise funds for the VanDusen Botanical Garden Association through the sale of garden-collected seeds. Our weekly meetings consisted of cleaning, sorting and packaging seeds for approximately one hour, followed by a guided tour of the garden in search of more ripened seeds. The seed collectors' Sunday morning meets were reminiscent of attending church: the congregation of volunteers came together for a common cause and received a weekly sermon from the volunteer guide. Like in church, volunteers brought food, shared recipes, talked about their troubles, and discussed family matters. We formed a cohesive group that enjoyed each other's company in and out of the garden. Sunday seed collectors' meetings offered ample opportunities to ask volunteers about the social value of the work done by VanDusen Gardens. Access to the field required forethought and planning. I wanted to become an insider at VanDusen before conducting my ethnographic fieldwork. Through my seven months of volunteer work with the seed collectors, I developed friendly relations with the volunteers and volunteer guide, and gained insights into the operation of VanDusen. Many facts about VanDusen's history and the social alliances of its directors and staff emerged out of conversations with seasoned volunteers, volunteer guides, and staff, as well as at the VanDusen lecture series. By the time my graduate courses were completed and I had received ethics approval to begin my research, I had already established strong connections. I used my knowledge of the garden and social relationships to help gain institutional access.

My participant observation and volunteerism at the VanDusen Botanical Garden provided sufficient background to proceed with interviews and archival research. I met the director of the gardens to discuss my research project. I introduced myself as a VanDusen

volunteer, which created an atmosphere of trust and comfort. In our meeting, two matters of concern were raised. First, he requested that I create a template for other garden associations interested in forming their own botanical gardens. I interpreted the desire of the director to control access to the archives as a form of institutional gate-keeping. Second, he asked that I sign forms to access the garden's archive. As the researcher, I was expected to adhere to certain protocols (Creswell 2009). This is how the director expressed his concerns:

I would want you to sign forms each time you access our archives. We need to have a system where I know what archival materials you have looked at, taken out, or photocopied. Let me know when you are about to start your research and we'll do something.

The institutional control of public records speaks to the desire to manage an institution's image. The director's desire that I produce a botanical garden template was a form of institutional bargaining. His approval of research was expected to be paid back with my free labour. He sought to use my work as a vehicle to strengthen his gardens' presence and reputation. Although I was willing to comply with these wishes, he later waived his requests for the botanical garden template and the need to sign the release forms.

My access to my second fieldsite, the UBC Botanical Garden, was easier. A member of my graduate committee helped me contact UBC Botanical Garden's administrative manager. Her institutional leverage provided invaluable assistance. At the UBC Botanical Garden, I encountered a more casual institutional approach to research. The staff, possibly due to their university involvement, were familiar with research projects and were forthcoming.

My social immersion at both the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Gardens was instrumental in gaining institutional access and being able to negotiate the terms and scope of my research at each site. I became a paid member at each garden, which not only allowed me

easy exploration of the sites but also enabled me to attend guided tours. Almost all the individuals I interviewed at the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Gardens were made possible through snowball sampling, “starting with one or two people and then using their connections, and their connections’ connections, to generate a large sample” (Palys 2003: 145).

Methods (Ethnographic Fieldwork and Archival Research)

According to Clifford Geertz, anthropological analysis depends on ethnographic fieldwork to produce a fuller understanding of a given social phenomenon (1973: 6-7). I started my ethnographic fieldwork with participant observation and establishing rapport with selected informants, eventually progressing to interviews, which I later transcribed. I believe ethnographic research is the most fruitful approach to see how post-colonialism in British Columbia is understood and expressed in the present and how its institutions are connected to transnational networks. I wanted to know how the staff and volunteers viewed botanical institutions and their involvement with the larger world. As Margery Wolf argues, for anthropologists, “human behaviour is the data, and a tolerance for ambiguity, multiplicity, contradiction, and instability is essential” (1992: 129). Participant observation and interviews require a respect for informants and their dignity, and a need to treat the ethnographic process with sensitivity (Charmaz 2006). I gathered data through multiple strategies, which included interviews, observations, documents (such as newsletters, archival reports, and websites) and academic sources. Over three and a half months of fieldwork, I analyzed the data through an inductive approach and tried to uncover participant’s meanings and how they understood the process at hand (Creswell 2009).

Over the length of the project, I began to appreciate the many benefits of having two fieldsites. I could cross-reference informants’ responses and had access to the archival

resources at each institution, which were essential for understanding institutional histories and foci. Through interviews, I learned about a range of actors' perspectives and their institutional narratives. I conversed with the directors of the botanical gardens, the curators of plant collections, public educators and others who were completely immersed in the operation of botanical gardens. I became familiar with concepts, histories, and networks that the botanical garden staff used and discussed. Older volunteers told me that in the 1970s, VanDusen became a meeting place for them, at a time when relatively few institutions were recruiting volunteers. I observed how various events, such as the annual plant sale, plant society meetings, and clean up activities, worked to foster a sense of connection between VanDusen's volunteers.

Daily activities at the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Gardens often implicitly addressed the historical processes that I sought to know about: aboriginal displacement, the creation of colonial cities, and the myriad traces of a British presence in its former colonies. My challenge was to make visible the implicit or buried channels of institutional operation. I looked for informants' shared narratives, which drew from a limited set of sentiments, languages, and definitions to talk about institutional goals and networks.

During my research, I began to see political and social alliances of the volunteers and the staff at the two botanical gardens. VanDusen's volunteers talked about my research with a mixture of curiosity and caution. One member of the Sunday seed collectors' group told me:

God bless you for doing a research project about VanDusen. It's great to see someone studying the great work that this garden is doing. I can't wait to see your completed research.

The statement expressed the social and political importance of the site to the volunteers and staff. The individual envisioned my research as a celebration of the garden, as a way to showcase the "great work that the garden is doing", which included the education of the

public about plants and natural habitats, garden's importance as places to appreciate nature, and the involvement of the staff of the garden with networks of scientists and directors of the older, more established British botanical institutes.

When volunteers asked about my research, I explained my interest in the historical processes that brought British Columbian botanical gardens into being and their contemporary operations. Most volunteers were satisfied, but some asked more questions, such as Why did you become interested in looking at botanical gardens? Why did you pick VanDusen? What is the degree that you are working toward? What is your ethnic background?. I responded to informants' inquiries by creating a personal narrative. I established myself as a gardener by talking about my garden and interest in plants, attempting to establish a common ground, but that strategy was not always successful. Informants inquired into my ethnic background and how I came to be in Canada. I thought about my status as an immigrant from Iran to Canada, where, in my teenage years, I had to learn a second language. Besides informants' natural sense of curiosity, I wondered how such inquiries signalled power imbalance and the ability of some informants to aid or hinder my research. Given that I wore the badge of a researcher, how did my race, ethnicity or possibly my accent, complicate rapport-building in the field and more immediate access to informants, even though I was supposedly conducting research 'at home'? How did informant's notion of me as possibly "not white" affect my interactions? Cheryl Harris's examination of whiteness shows that perceptions of race not only allows or denies access to social actors but it also legitimizes rights, memberships, and privileges (2003). I argue that the informants at the VanDusen took their ethnicity, racial, and cultural capital for granted; they wear a badge of the "'Canadian' majority [who are notably] from northern and central Europe" (Stanger-Ross 2008: 557). Given that whiteness is the 'visible majority' in British Columbia, the informants characterized me as a 'visible minority' due to my race, non-English name, and

accent. They also saw themselves as promoters of VanDusen and asked about my research goals and intentions. The actions of the staff and volunteers were not dissimilar experiences at the United States-Canada border, where guards barraged me with questions. At the garden and the border, people amplified a sense of cultural and social difference, and questioned my intentions and desire for 'entry'. Their actions complicate the reality that Canada is my second 'home'. Even though my fieldwork could be labelled as explorations in my own backyard, I often had to grapple with informants' beliefs about what constitutes a 'proper researcher' (Knowles 2000). These notions were often racialized and carried particular cultural baggage. The following excerpt sums up one informant's examination of my social alliances before the start of the interview:

Him: Who is your supervisor in your program, again?

Me: Dr. Michael Hathaway.

Him: I see. That's a fine English name.

The informant was pleased to know that an 'English' body oversaw my research project. The tone of his voice implied a perceived trust and, in turn, he was forthcoming with information and historical details about the garden. I wondered whether the informant's reaction and his subsequent desire to share 'quality' interview data might have been different if my supervisor had not possessed an Anglo-Saxon name. Was I one of the "third-world anthropologists competing in first-world academia" (Wolf 1992: 138)? This experience only underscores my argument that British-informed ideas of inclusion and exclusion traveled to colonial sites, such as BC, and continue to be relevant in their contemporary institutional operation. On numerous occasions, informants referred to Vancouver's markedly British neighbourhoods, such as Shaughnessy, Kerrisdale, and Point Grey, where British immigrants sought to replicate British institutions to reflect their cultural preferences. I argue that these

British immigrants held notions of the role of ethnicity in social place and in producing authoritative knowledge, notions that continue to inform Canadian institutions.

Interview Process

Interviews were a key element of my research and I conducted seventeen semi-structured, open-ended interviews with individuals presently or formerly involved with the two botanical gardens. There was almost an even gender split among informants: nine females and eight males. Their ages ranged from the mid 30s to the mid 80s and their involvement in the botanical gardens was varied, but the majority had either volunteered or worked at the gardens for between 10 and 40 years. All of the informants were of European descent, many of whom moved from England to Canada after WWII.

Before proceeding with the interviews, I had to follow informed consent protocols. Although the interviews were marked by power differentials, I attempted to ground my research on the basis of mutual trust and respect (Fine, Weis, Weseen, and Wong 2000). During my interviews, I realized that my research evolved as I learned more in ‘the field’.

Recording the interviews was not always straightforward. Johannes Fabian suggests that “[he] always tape[s] what [he] consider[s] truly important- after learning what is important” (1995: 45). As a seasoned ethnographer, Fabian has a much better sense of ‘what is important’, a luxury I did not possess as I embarked on the interview process. Instead, all of my interviews were digitally-recorded with the permission of informants. After transcription, I obtained a better sense of informants’ interactions with the interview questions and could begin to see ‘important’ thoughts. I aimed to discover how informants referred to similar themes, historical accounts, and institutional networks. During my research, I worked hard to stay reflexive, trying to grasp my positionality as a researcher, my preconceived notions about the field, as well as the

line of inquiry that would be most fruitful. I came to see myself and my informants as “positioned subject[s]” (Rosaldo 1993) with particular social and political investments and worldviews. My examination of ‘Canadian’ culture and institutions prompted me to think critically about “what I was doing and why” (Mason 2002). As evident thus far, my research project reveals the continuing dominance of England as one of the key sources of Canadian identity and challenges the belief in a single, unified Canadian identity. To understand informants’ understanding of Canada and its national identity, I had to interpret “what informants [were] up to or [thought] they [were] up to” (Geertz 1973: 15). An important methodological issue arose as I started my interview process: how should I treat the informants’ responses? Part of ethnographic reporting is to show what an anthropologist has come to ‘understand’ through fieldwork. Johannes Fabian cautions that explaining what has happened can actually be confused with “ethnographic misunderstanding and not-understanding” (1995: 42). Silverman and Marvasti argue that the informants’ replies could “be treated as giving direct access to ‘experience’ or as actively constructed narratives involving activities which themselves demand analysis” (2008: 69). The latter understanding requires careful attention to informants’ continual positionings. I noted informants’ tone of voice, comfort levels, reoccurring or shared narratives, institutional loyalties and their effect on the interview process.

I chose open-ended interviews as my main mode of inquiry because it encouraged Informants to elaborate on their answers and there were possibilities for uninterrupted conversations. The best interviews I conducted resembled semi-choreographed conversations, in which the questions flowed naturally and the need for me to refer to a list of questions was minimized or eliminated. I tried to “[I]listen while remaining aware of the process as well as the substance” (Seidman 1998: 64). I pursued tangential and casual references shared by informants by asking follow up questions to allow them to expand on their thoughts. Tangential thoughts

could be useful for re-formulations of interview questions and gave a richer context to the interview. I did not hesitate to follow hunches and ask for clarifications if it did not disrupt the flow of the interviews or if the informants were vague in their responses or relied heavily on institution-specific jargon. After each interview, I evaluated the effectiveness of the interview questions and their order. As new themes appeared, I revised the interview questions.

I was conscious of the fact that, for the most part, I was “studying up” (Nader 1972). I was interviewing individuals who occupied higher positions of social status than myself. These informants enjoyed considerable agency in what they chose to share and how they represented themselves and their institutions. As the interviews progressed, I came to have a better sense of topics or discussions that they saw as ‘political’. Interview questions based on interrogations about the past, such as the settlement of British Columbia, the reshaping of its geography, and the continuous influence of settlers on Canadian institutions were pursued with caution. Such lines of inquiry implicitly acknowledged aboriginal land claims and permitted the flow of the past into the present. Conversely, interview questions focusing on the parameters and functions of botanical gardens were met with great enthusiasm; informants talked at length about the defining features of botanical gardens, and the contemporary relevance of such institutions.

Research Findings

Although botanical gardens in British Columbia were not as instrumental to colonialism as other botanical gardens in India or the Caribbean, BC botanical gardens are strongly influenced by colonial legacies. The staff of VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden’s understandings of global botany, amassing of plant collections, and *modi operandi* were adopted from British botanical gardens. My research at the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Gardens revealed three general shifts in their roles within domestic and transnational networks.

First, from their beginnings, botanical gardens in British Columbia have maintained strong links with England, but starting in the mid 1960s, UBC Botanical Garden started to bypass British centers to link directly to global networks. BC botanical gardens began to forge their own transnational relationships, which not only facilitated in the flow of seeds and plants but also enabled internationally-organized plant expeditions to countries that epitomized long desired sites of botanic riches, such as China. The fact that the UBC Botanical Garden has built strong institutional relationships with China and elsewhere has not only increased their status, but specifically helped them create a position less dependent on British centers.

Second, around the same time, settler colonies such as Canada and Australia started to more actively foster their own national narratives. This departure from British identities meant an increased interest in defining themselves through their native geographies. For these colonially-established states, one remaining tension is an inability to have unequivocal claims over these colonial sites where aboriginal rights have not been extinguished. The settlers' attempts to vocalize their ownership of such geographies through the appropriation of the native flora, not to mention aboriginal botanical knowledge, and land, remain socially-charged and ongoing sources of national tension.

Third, many colonial processes continue to be salient. By the 1990s, botanical gardens came to see and represent their work as a form of nature conservation. Although unintended, environmental and conservation discourses often efface aboriginal concerns (Braun 1997). The rise of environmentalism may mean that lands are increasingly taken from logging companies and given to conservation managers, thus recolonizing the province.

The implications of these findings centre around the complexity of institutional operations in a post-colonial world. Canada cannot start afresh and so must work through

contemporary hybrid engagements, drawing from European legacies, but also refashioning them in the “New World” in light of new geographies, projects of citizen formation, and ongoing negotiations with aboriginal claims.

CHAPTER 2. LONGING FOR HOME: REPRODUCING EUROPEAN SOCIAL GEOGRAPHIES IN COLONIAL SETTINGS

Motivations for British Colonialism and its Social and Environmental Costs

In this chapter, I explore the social motivations for British imperialism, the institutions that aided British colonization, and the social and environmental consequences of British settler societies.

In the late 1960s, scholars began to examine British colonialism and its imperial policies in a new light (Arnold 1996; Said 2001; Asad 1973). Older scholarship highlight the sense of adventure associated with British expeditions and their desire to know and record the world (Pyenson 1993b, 2009; Lamb 2010) emphasizing European agency and control. More recent scholarship, however, highlights the negotiations and uncertainty that marked British colonialism. The British came into contact with diverse peoples, who challenged and expanded the foundations of British, and, by extension, European, knowledge (Grove 1995; Schiebinger 2004; Sodikoff 2003). The expansion of the British Empire was critical, not only to gaining access to valuable commercial products, and securing strategic zones of trade, but also building nationalist agendas and identities (Brockway 1979; Crosby, 1986; Adas 1997; Drayton 2000; MacLeod 2000; Arnold 2005).

British colonial ventures involved a diverse cross section of people such as navigators, scientists, missionaries, and merchants, many of whom travelled with their own agendas. This is how one informant vocalized the colonial ventures:

Again it was imperialism. It was colonialism and the reason for those scientists being on the ships. And even if you want to talk about Christianity and the way that religion spread through the world, it is kind of the same thing. These were not single minded people. Maybe what I am trying to say is that one ship carried a lot of people with different aims and objectives in mind.

This informant captures the sense of the diverse set of individuals who fit into a larger picture of colonial pursuit. As Christians, many of these colonial agents shared certain beliefs in a greater cosmic plan. Chandra Mukerji suggests that colonial explorers' actions were undergirded by a "dominant moral mandate for Christian governance" (2005). Colonial botanical gardens were major instruments in the realization of such godly missions. English colonial agents navigated the globe, persuaded local people to divulge their botanical knowledge, and searched for markets (Schiebinger and Swan 2005). One informant discussed the divine plan that guided early botanists and subsequent shaping of botanical gardens in the following way:

[Botanical gardens] started as very utilitarian [then moved to the] display of exotics. And we didn't entirely lose this thinking. There was utility in what we were doing. We grow these plants because they are useful to us. It was soon after those first voyages of discovery from Europe to other parts of the world that [explorers] ended up bringing plants back to Europe. The botanical directors in the early days were medicinal doctors ... They knew what plants were used for. They valued plants and the religious feeling behind [plant exploration]: 'God put these things here for us to use. [Our] job is figure out what that is and try to understand what God meant for us by giving us these plants.' So... all these plants started to come back to Europe from different parts of the world and they didn't know what they were used for (laugh).

The playful way in which the informant talks about colonial plant-hunting is telling of the ambiguous initial movements of European explorers and their interactions with world outside of Europe. Explorers did not know what they would encounter or how they should interpret such

worlds. These scenarios placed European expeditions ‘in motion’, where unknown objects are sought in unknown geographies (Thomas 1991; Appadurai 1988). Starting in 1759, after the establishment of Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, England has procured plants from across the globe with greater speed and vigour. Kew assisted in the establishments of plantations in India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and the Caribbean. Much of Britain’s wealth was generated by these plantations of tea, rubber, cinchona, and sugar, which in turn relied on plant explorers who ‘discovered’ plant species in the name of science (Brockway 1979; Mintz 1985). With the help of the British military and the Crown, Kew expanded transnational channels and enabled the garden to maintain its centrality as a global botanical hub (Desmond 1995). This is how one informant talked about the legacies of the Kew Botanical Garden:

From the historical point, Kew, of course, is well known. It goes back into the colonial times, to the [rule of King] George, and the expansion of the British Empire and...Kew’s involvement in plant exploration and bringing important plants back to the ‘mother country’—as they used to call it—and then distributing them through what was called the British Empire. So Kew had that major role of plant transportation, plant dissemination, plant research, and over all the plant collections, which is second to none in the world.

The informant’s talk about the role of Kew in “plant exploration and dissemination” leaves out the larger activities Kew was involved in. Botanists such as Joseph Banks accompanied colonial expeditions led by such individuals as Captain Cook. Such expeditions often carried missionaries, cartographers and illustrators, who not only mapped ‘new’ lands and catalogued numerous flora and fauna but also recorded detailed ethnographic observations (Smith 1999). The entrance of such lands into the colonial psyche also encouraged their assessments as suitable lands for colonization. Penelope Edmonds describes Captain Cook’s geographical explorations and the ensuing annexation of ‘new’ land in the following way:

Cook's three voyages between 1768 and 1779 unlocked the Pacific for Europeans... Cook and his crew circumnavigated New Zealand, charted over eight thousand kilometres of the Australian coastline, made contact with Aboriginal people of its eastern shores, and, without their agreement, claimed the eastern seaboard for Britain... between 1776 and 1780, he . . . mapped the Pacific Northwest Coast, [and] sojourned at what would come to be known as Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island to trade with the First Nations (2010: 23-24).

These expeditions affected the native peoples. In the Americas and Oceania aboriginal populations were devastated from outbreaks of diseases such as smallpox, measles, and tuberculosis, all of which led to significant population loss (Kelm 1998; Smith 1999; Machen 2000). The social costs were compounded by environmental ones. The European explorers' exploitation of natural resources, often through the uncontrolled harvesting of timber, severely altered landscapes (Grove 1995; Sodikoff 2003).

The British explorers' claims to Canada and Australia placed these lands under the auspices of the Crown (Smith 1999; Foley and Anderson 2006). The British colonial agents treated such lands as *terra nullius* where they did not recognize native title and sovereignty. According to Louise Mandell, *terra nullius* was based on European's notions that "[a]boriginal peoples are so low on the scale of social organization that their traditional lands can be treated as vacant and unoccupied for the purpose of issuing Crown grants pursuant to laws enacted by settler governments without regard to the prior occupation of Aboriginal Peoples" (2003: 166). The dismissal of aboriginal land use and the Crown's depiction of 'British Columbia'³ as a land ready for the taking brought colonial missions to 'British Columbia' in the 1860s and set into motion its colonization. Harris describes one such colonial encounter in British Columbia between a young English business man, Gilbert Malcolm Sproat and the Nuu-chah-nulth people,

³ Even though British Columbia is a colonially assigned geographical category, it is difficult to talk about the land outside the bounds of it. For the sake of clarity, I use 'British Columbia' to refer to the land occupied by aboriginal people and non-aboriginal populations before entrance of the land into the confederate Canada.

(what he called Aht), in the 1860s (2002: xv). The following is Sproat's account of his visit with the Aht chief:

[The chief] said that his people 'hear things that make our hearts grow faint. They say that more King-George-men will soon be here, and will take our land, our firewood, our fishing grounds; that we shall be placed on little spots, and shall have to do everything according to the fancies of the King-George-men.' Yes, Sproat replied, much of this would take place, but the whites would buy the land at a fair price... Moreover, because the Aht were not using the land, the high chief of the King-George-men order them to sell it...Sproat simply declared that the whites would come... [and] they were the Aht's superiors (ibid).

The "King-George-men" forced the Nuu-chah-nulth people off their lands and the Crown severely restricted the movement of aboriginal bodies. In 'British Columbia', colonial agents' attempts to implement land management policies were less than smooth (Mawani 2009; Shore and Wright 1997; Barman 2007). Aboriginal people protested their forceful control and displacement, and resisted the Crown's plans (Edmond 2010; Jacobs 1997). However, the aboriginal population's resistance was short lived (Harris 2002). The British military intimidated the aboriginal populations with canons and guns and quelled uprisings with considerable force (ibid). England's 'British North America Act of 1867' put the Federal government of Canada in charge of Indian reserves and brought Canada under the blanket of the Crown, which fuelled the inflow and adoption of British institutions (Stanger-Ross 2008; Walkem and Bruce 2003). With a firmer colonial claim to the land, the province adopted a land ownership policy inspired by John Locke's notions of property. This privileged individualized rights based on monetary purchase of land, which ensured an engagement with the market and denied aboriginal land use as a basis for property ownership (Masco 2005; Smith 1999; Harris 2002; Stanger-Ross 2008). The settlers, provincial and federal governments relied on British understandings of law, property and institutions to colonize the land. As it becomes clear in my interviews and the archival data, England's scientific systems and institutions have come to be a measuring stick and "a constant"

(Drayton 2000) by which British settler societies shaped and understood their interactions with land. Informants often reaffirmed this understanding of history, in which institutional foci and ideas moved unidirectionally from England to its colonies. Canada's colonial beginning parallels Australia's "ecological imperialism", in which colonial agents worked to create "Britain's so-called New World" (Griffith 1997; Anderson 2000). The creation of these New Englands were possible through a process whereby settlers were organized and governed as British subjects who drew on "mentalities, rationalities, and practices" from England in creating with new worlds (Foucault 1991).

The settler's repopulation and treatment of the land had considerable consequences for aboriginal people and their relationship to the land. The following section examines these physical and social transformations in British Columbia.

Immigrant Inclusion and Aboriginal Exclusion

The early 19th century marked the emergence of British colonial trading posts in what would become 'British Columbia' (Wolf 1982). Scholars have argued that the initial economic gains of aboriginal people who trapped fur, fished for salmon, and traded with the Hudson Bay Company and the British colonial agents quickly dissipated (Wolf 1982; Cranmer-Webster 1992; Harris 2002; Carlson 2003). The Royal Proclamation of 1763's promise of treaty negotiations between "the Royal Majesty and the Indian Nations of Canada" was not upheld and aboriginal collective land use and ownership was ignored (Walkem and Bruce 2003: 33). The exclusion of aboriginal people from political and economic decision-making and the restrictions on their cultural practices and way of life severely affected their health and well-being (Masco 1995; Kelm 1998).

The mid 19th century colonial assumptions about the supposedly "vanishing Indian" prevailed in 'British Columbia' (Raibmon 2005). The settlers' characterization of aboriginality as

fleeting gave agency to settlers to decide the fate of aboriginal people and preservation of their cultures. Even before the formation of colonial cities like Vancouver, colonial agents and incoming settlers pushed the aboriginal people to the margins of society (Blomley 2004; Edmonds 2010).

In the late 19th century, 'British Columbia' attracted gold seekers and other immigrants through its advertisements as a land of opportunity (Mawani 2009; Ward 2002). The British Crown's investment of considerable resources, such as military support and rewards for private enterprises to appropriate territories in Western Canada, encouraged agents, settlers, and entrepreneurs to transform these colonial territories (Harris 2002). The industrial revolution and idea of progress seemed to offer proof of England's claims of 'superiority' and fuelled the transformation of the land and its government into an image of England (Wolf 1982; Pyenson 1993b). In the mid 1850s and 1860s, with increased settler populations and a higher demand for land, anti-aboriginal sentiments in 'British Columbia' became more vocal. According to Nicholas Blomley, "a relatively liberal provincial policy gave way, in 1864, to the assertion that native people had never owned land, thus rendering extinguishment irrelevant. This 'white myth' declared 'that British Columbia had been in essence an empty land, devoid of society, government, or laws [...A]ll land in the colony was not only under British sovereignty but also directly owned by the Crown'" (2004: 107).

The establishment of the Crown's claim to the land launched new activities. In the 1860s, Vancouver was home to a number of government and military reserves built on and around aboriginal villages and lands frequently used for everyday needs, such as timber, plants and game (MacDonald 1992: 14-15, 18-19). In 1885, the Dominion government of Canada transferred the massive land holdings from the Hudson Bay Company to the Canadian Pacific

Rail (CPR), purchased by the government for 300,000 pounds in 1869 (Chodos 1973). This cooperation between the Dominion government and a colonial enterprise, the CPR, was motivated, in part by fear of an American takeover (Harris and Warkentin 1991). These organizations worked together, challenging the notion that the CPR was a private enterprise.

According to Robert Chodos,

Just as the Holy Roman Empire was neither holy nor Roman ... so are most private enterprises... neither private nor an enterprise. They are not private because of governmental grants, government contracts, and an easygoing government ... It is not surprising, therefore, that the two entities, that of the CPR and that of the state, sometimes get confused (1973: 148)

The Canadian government rewarded the CPR for its colony-making ventures. In the 1880s, “much of what is now Vancouver’s west side was given to the CPR” (MacDonald, 1992: 4) along with “25 million acres of land ‘fairly fit for settlement’” in BC (Chodos 1973: 22). The Crown’s transference of aboriginal land ownership to a third party, in this case the CPR, is undergoing legal challenges by aboriginal people, but in other cases, treaties with the Crown present more difficult challenges in reasserting aboriginal title (Mandell 2003: 167).

The settler society’s social investment in absolute and individualized property rights demanded an almost complete displacement of aboriginal populations (Edmonds 2010). A map of British Columbia in 1881 shows the emergence of a new human geography that included people from European and Chinese backgrounds, where property boundaries ensured the rights of landowners, but limited the movement of native people (Harris 2004). In Australia, as in Canada, governments created native reserves that were a fraction of their previous territories (Dyck 1991; Edmonds 2010). Australian and Canadian colonial agents often broke up the living arrangements of large aboriginal families, and advocated a nuclear family structure. Both governments often removed children from families and placed them in state-run residential

schools (Kelm 1998; Edmonds 2010). Yet, there were also important differences between Canada and Australia. While in Canada there was an initial willingness to work with aboriginal people, Australian colonialists were fuelled by social evolutionist beliefs that Australian aborigines were ‘stuck in the stone-age’ and almost subhuman (Castle, Kalantzis, and Morrissey 1988; Reynolds 1996; Jacobs 1997). Thus, in Australia, colonists refused to enter into any treaties, an important legacy that continues to powerfully shape state-indigenous relations.

Colonial activities in Canada not only appropriated aboriginal land, but also transformed the land literally and figuratively. In this section, I try to evaluate the invisibility of aboriginal knowledge of land and ongoing, and the persistence of such aboriginal land knowledge, in British Columbia. Perhaps for aboriginal people living here settlers’ interactions with the land was a process of ‘Entstellung’, or the “a process of displacement, distortion, dislocation and repetition” (Laplanche and Pontalis 1980 as cited in Bhabha 1994). Settlers not only encroached on aboriginal land but ‘distorted’ and ‘displaced’ aboriginal knowledge of land in British Columbia, often homogenizing diverse aboriginal cultures in BC and creating “Imaginary Indians” (Roy 2002; Francis 1992). Besides a few Anglicized Halkomelem and Squamish words, such as Kitsilano, Musqueam, Capilano, Coquitlam, and Tsawwassen, there is a complete reliance on an Anglo-Saxon, and to a lesser extent Spanish, lexicon to rename aboriginal lands in Southwestern British Columbia. The Stó:lō, Musqueam, and Squamish names describe sites by identifying their geographical markers, including burial sites. For these First Nations groups in BC archaeological sites, such as Marpole Midden found in Musqueam territory located in the southern Vancouver, represent “tangible representation of long-standing connections among people, their ancestors and place” (Roy 2006: 72).

In the colonial geography of British Columbia, settlers used many aboriginal sites without regard for—or knowledge of—their significance. On a 1850s map of Vancouver, the present site of the VanDusen Botanical Garden was not only a forest of firs, cedars, and hemlocks used by the Musqueam people but is also identified as a ‘native artefact site’ by contemporary archaeologists (MacDonald 1992). But colonial enterprise has erased a “continuous genealogical past and uninterrupted residency by [Coast Salish people] within [their territories]” therefore denying “contemporary Aboriginal people from a lengthy history of occupation” (Roy 2006: 82). I argue that as part of the on-going colonial project in British Columbia, botanical gardens are used as “tools of dispossession”, which place non-aboriginal “territorial claims” ahead of aboriginal ones (Stanger-Ross 2008: 543-544). The colonial, Euro-Canadian possession of the land is perpetuated by those who work at the VanDusen Botanical Garden, but also by the larger ‘Canadian’ public. Roy Forster, one of the creators and the original curator of the VanDusen Botanical Garden, describes the VanDusen Botanical Garden’s history as follows: “Before the VanDusen site became a botanical garden, it was used as a golf course for over half a century. Prior to that, the site was mature forest” (1985: 30). The staff describe the history of the site after its colonization, after the Canadian state and province of British Columbia was established. Given the many incarnations of the land since colonial contact, (from its ownership by the CPR, the golf course, and the garden), older aboriginal meanings are forgotten and pre-colonization aboriginal markers are erased. These broken aboriginal connections to the land signify a “historic rupture” (Connerton 1989: 6) whereby the aboriginal ownership of Vancouver is not public knowledge because of the dominance of Canadian settler histories.

The contemporary site of UBC Botanical Gardens is located at Point Grey, known by Musqueam elders by a series of geographical markers: Kwa’apulthp (‘crab-apple tree’), Pookcha

(‘floating whale’s back’), and Ka’wum (‘howling dog-rock’) (MacDonald 1992: 10-11). Even though these aboriginal geographical markers are not known by most contemporary citizens of Vancouver, the staff of the UBC Botanical Garden are willing to talk about the aboriginal claim to the land. The garden’s acknowledgement of the Musqueam Band’s title has been a reaction to the Musqueam Band’s legal challenges of the province of British Columbia. According Susan Roy, “in 1966 the Musqueam joined the newly formed Confederation of Native Indians of British Columbia, a largely Salish-based organization established to coordinate land claims across the province...in 1966 the Musqueam Band Council considered ‘the Musqueam land question’ and discussed a separate and distinct Aboriginal title claim” (2002: 69) and submitted a comprehensive land claim to the federal government in 1984 (56). The land where the UBC Botanical Garden stands on has become part of a larger discussion of Musqueam title therefore those whose work at the garden cannot avoid the ongoing Musqueam interest in the land. In my interviews, I noticed a depoliticized discussion of aboriginal land ownership by the garden staff, who did not want to talk about the Musqueam Band’s transformation of the site. Instead the garden’s staff talked in passing about the existence of the garden and the Pacific Spirit Park on Musqueam territory and the staff saw themselves in charge of the treatment of the land and deciding its future. In the following excerpt, one informant moves through the history of the site used for the UBC Botanical Garden, keeping in mind the aboriginal linkages to the site:

... there is connection to the past. The second growth forest is a connection with the past but these things are only hundred and fifty years old. So you look around and say basically everything is younger than hundred and fifty years old- except for those two trees. When I look at those trees, I think of Captain Vancouver because easily they were big when Captain Vancouver sailed by or when the First Nations were here. They [First Nations] probably didn’t spend a lot of time up here but down below in Musqueam territory or on the other side, in Jericho; there were First Nations, they were paddling around the point

for 10,000 years. Yes, so that's our connection with the historical. I would certainly never want to create a garden that did not reflect to some degree the history of gardening- basically obliterate and create a blank canvas... I think that goes against the West coast philosophy of gardening. I think that does exist in the UBC Botanical Garden so that's another piece of who we are.

This informant acknowledges the multiple histories of Vancouver and the need to keep these narratives alive. His acknowledgement of the garden's occupation of the Musqueam territory softens the ongoing occupation of the land by a non-aboriginal institution. His account stood in contrast to those who worked and volunteered at the VanDusen Botanical Garden, who understood the site of the VanDusen outside the bounds of aboriginal interactions and possession. The VanDusen staff and volunteers were unaware of the aboriginal significance of the site before the CPR's transformation of the land. Most accounts of VanDusen's history portray the land before its Euro-Canadian ownership as simply "bush" (Stubbs 1985). This perpetuates an institutional neglect of the indigenous history of the land, and celebrates the settlers' drive to 'improve' the land.

Contemporary scholarly works are starting to shed some light on colonial histories of Vancouver (Blomley 2003; Edmonds 2010; Roy 2002; Stanger-Ross 2008). In the following passage, Emma Spenner Norman, an archival librarian at the UBC, highlights the aboriginal ownership of Point Grey in Vancouver:

The idyllic setting of Point Grey, [in Vancouver] surrounded by water and sweeping views of snow-capped mountains, is a place of true inspiration. This coveted location, now called Point Grey, has been home to the Musqueam Band since 'time immemorial'. Only in recent history has this place been known as 'University of British Columbia'. However, long before the university was established, this land was used for education. The Musqueam people used the peninsula as a training site for their youth. The sea was used for canoe pulling and fishing, the forest for hunting and gathering, and the beaches for crabbing. The land itself was, and is, a place for education, for growth (Norman 2010).

Norman's account offers insights into the aboriginal's use of the land and the importance of this site to the Musqueam people. She acknowledges that the site "has been home to the Musqueam" since time immemorial but she avoids discussion of the site of UBC as unceded aboriginal territory, which would give Musqueam people the agency to decide its fate and treatment in the future. She does not cite Musqueam names when referring to the site. Her description of the land as a place "for education" seems to justify the reappropriation of Musqueam land by the 'Crown' and the decision to construct the UBC campus on such unceded land. She states,

Recognizing that the location was ideal for educational purposes, the University Commission recommended Point Grey for the location of the University of British Columbia in 1910. The commission noted that the peninsula was suited for higher education because of its natural beauty and because its geography separated it from the growing urban center of Vancouver. The commission noted that the students could benefit from the proximity of the city without being exposed to the 'city's nefarious influence' (Norman 2010).

The university, at its start, was exclusively a 'European' space that offered a safe zone to affluent immigrants who wanted to avoid the "nefarious influence" of the city. Jean Barman (2007) examines the fears and social discomfort with urban reserves in Vancouver in early 20th century. The aboriginal reserves were described as an "eyesore to the citizens of Vancouver for many years and hindrance to the development of city" and "a blemish" that needed to be removed (Barman 2007: 17, 19). This social division sought by settlers expresses "protective segregation" (Beckett 1988: 7) and larger fears about social pollution and other associations with aboriginal people and squatters that compromised settlers' desire for social and economic security (Mawani 2009; Stoler 2002).

Settlers reconfigured visible aboriginal sites of occupation and laid the foundation for colonial institutions and infrastructures. The natural resources of the colonized were used to fund the construction of colonial institutions. According to Emma Spenner Norman, "Even after

Point Grey became known as 'Crown Land' under the British Empire and eventually part of the University Endowment Lands, the rich resources of Point Grey continued to support its [new] inhabitants. The forest resources, liquidated as cash assets, provided the funds needed for the Province to build what is now the University of British Columbia" (2010). Here, Norman implies that the real beneficiaries of the university were the new settlers who have benefitted from the inequitable extraction of aboriginal land and resources, which portrays the colonial appropriation of aboriginal land and resources as apolitical and part of the history of how Vancouver's first university was created. Contemporary critical scholarly attention to the legal and ethical implications of colonial activities in BC implicates settler populations and BC institutions, like the UBC Botanical Garden, in the pursuit of British colonization. The actions of settlers in British Columbia reflect the Canadian government's "internal colonization" of aboriginal people and their land (Hechter 1975). In my interviews, some of the UBC Botanical Garden staff revisited the garden's colonial history but avoided conversations about "benefits" settler enjoyed, which (arose from appropriation of the Musqueam lands) and the construction of the university and the garden.

Thus far in this chapter, I have showcased the various transformations of the physical and social landscapes in British Columbia. In the following section, I continue with a fuller exploration of the remaking of colonial landscapes and production of geographical realities more aligned with England.

Settlers' Preferentialism and Landscape-Making

British settler societies were made possible through tremendous environmental transformations, which demanded new uses of the land and the implementation of a new order (Harris 1997, 2004; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Smith 1999; Edmond 2010). In the southwest

corner of British Columbia, the heavily forested land, dotted with bogs and wetlands, was seen as an obstacle to creating a “settler-colonial city” that would later be known as Vancouver (Blomley 2004). The solution conceived by settlers was swift. According to David Brownstein, settlers cut down massive tracts of forest in the 1860s (2010). Due to the absence of adequate infrastructures to move or process timber, trees were either burned or blasted to clear the land. The removal of trees left behind a wet, inaccessible land, inconducive to good health (ibid). The Royal Engineers were brought in by the Crown from England to drain the city’s fourteen bogs and swamps and to build waterways in order to ‘dry out’ Vancouver and make it suitable as a city (ibid). By the 1880s, mills and logging companies further accelerated this deforestation (MacDonald 1992). The land came to have European owners and started to resemble the preliminary grid of contemporary Vancouver (ibid).

Settlers’ interactions with Vancouver reemphasized colonialists’ sentiments about the existence of a pristine landscape before the arrival of settlers:

In Davidson’s view, the province’s flora had once developed without human interference, which no doubt accounted for the wealth and variety of plant life in British Columbia. Davidson was quite concerned about the environmental effects of European settlement in Vancouver, stating: ‘hardly a trace can be found of the native plants which inhabited the ground on which the city now stands, and it is impossible to distinguish where bogs previously existed from those places which formed the habitats of plants preferring dry situations’ (John Davidson 2010e).

This narrative of British Columbia celebrates the sheer force of Europe to completely overpower landscapes at the same time as it ignores indigenous histories (Said 1978; Arnold 2005). The phrase “developed without human interference” reflects colonial thought that settlers could change the land, whereas aboriginal interactions with the land had no influence. Often official statements about the interactions of aboriginals and nature conjure up essentialized and romanticized images of aboriginal peoples’ harmonious relationships with nature and promote Euro-centric notions of aboriginality (Braun 1997). Studies by Bruce Braun

(1997, 2002) and Nancy Turner (1995, 2005) offer richer pictures of aboriginal interactions with the land that go beyond the bounds of the traditional generic picture of harmonious relations. Turner not only cites instances when the “[aboriginal people of British Columbia] took too much of a resource” but also debunks the idea that the inference with—and exploitation of—nature as essentially European (2005: 14). Braun (2002) and Turner (2005) also highlight the biological diversity and richness of British Columbia that supported the substantial aboriginal populations who thrived before colonialism.

In the following sections, I examine the settlers’, Canadian government’s and institutions’ treatment of the land and its consequences for alternative, aboriginal understanding of BC’s nature. The colonial takeover of British Columbia pulled the land into England’s colonial web, allowed for the study of its flora, and invited comparative floral studies with botanically rich sites such as China. The minor praise bestowed upon BC’s flora is reflected in the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden’s plant collections, which only display a small sample of 2000 species of British Columbia. One informant described the representation of BC native flora in the following way:

Me: In the beginning, you talked about the flora of British Columbia, specifically. How do you think the richness of British Columbian flora has been represented here?

Him: Not really well, unfortunately. It certainly has its temptations. The flora of British Columbia, while it’s very beautiful and quite varied is quite meagre, really, because of glaciation; it’s only 10,000 years since the ice has left this area. The flora is relatively meagre compared with Appalachia or with Himalaya and lots of other areas of the world...

The informant’s characterization of BC flora as meagre justifies the dedication of significant space in the garden to plants from China, the Himalaya, and Japan. Given the British

background of the informant, and his intimate familiarities with established British gardens, I wondered if the praise for global botany reflected British social preferences. The directors and curators at British Columbian botanical gardens preferred European and Asian landscapes, prioritizing these instead of collections of native BC plants. The diminished value of 'wild' BC landscapes and native flora allowed for the creation of British Columbian botanical gardens with the flora and landscapes of Asia and Europe. This is how one informant justified the preference of a director of a BC botanical garden for exotic, global plant collections:

Very few gardens can afford the luxury of limiting the collections solely to native plants. While this is a worthy aim, it is not likely to appeal to the wider public beyond the botanical and horticultural community...Some geographical areas are endowed with such botanical riches that the introduction of foreign plants would be superfluous and disruptive. However, most botanical gardens, of necessity, are located in areas of high population density, and these areas are seldom endowed with great floral variety. It is perhaps appropriate that the cosmopolitan populations of the urban areas are served by collections of exotic plants that are [both] hardy outdoor and conservatory collections of the [more] tender exotic species.

The informant's sentiment reflects the priorities of the garden whereby native flora are neglected compared to flora from elsewhere. According to the informant, the directors of botanical gardens can decide the "appropriate" plant collections and knowledges that visitors of botanical gardens encounter. This intimate linkage of knowledge and power (Foucault 1983) has consequences for British Columbia. My informants defined themselves and their understanding of British Columbia botanical garden in relations to England. Some informants oriented their discussions of botanical gardens towards Canada while others favoured England as the source and foundation of such gardens. The Canadian-oriented informants were more willing to see Canadian institutions as self-sustaining and not necessarily in need of England for their

institutional directionality. Here is how one Canadian-oriented informant responded to my inquiry about the development of Euro-Canadian botanical gardens:

Me: Would there be VanDusen if they were no Kew or Edinburgh in existence?

Her: I find that puzzling. I don't think we are dependent on Kew or Edinburgh.

The Informant omitted Canada's colonial borrowing of a European institution to imagine a locally-emerging British Columbian institution. The informant saw my suggestion of a definite flow between England and BC as an insinuation that diminished BC's ability to produce its own independent operative models. Unlike the informant above, the England-oriented informants, who had emigrated from England to Canada in the 1950s and 60s, still had strong emotional and intellectual links to England and their national and institutional barometer continues to be England. This is how one informant talked about these links and the importance of British botanical gardens to the creation of Canadian ones:

Me: Do you think the UBC Botanical Garden, and I put VanDusen in the same category, would have been in existence if there were no European botanical gardens before?

Him: No. Probably not.

Me: Do you see this as one leading to another?

Him: Yes, absolutely... I can feel the Britishness in both gardens. It is not just a juxtaposition of elements in the gardens but the way plants were acquired. This garden [UBC Botanical Garden]..., in the modern sense, the first 20 years, almost everything...planted here came from the UK so that's a lot of the material. So I can see exactly the same plants when I go to gardens in England. So there is a very direct connection. And in the design of the garden, you know, it's very West Coast but it still has a Physick garden, it has a fruit garden, it has these elements that are historically tied to a kind of traditional English botanical garden. Certainly, there are links to Kew. Just the way we look at the

classification of plants came from a European tradition. So sure, we model a fair amount of things after the systems that have been set up there.

This constant reference to British institutions and their bearing on Canadian institutional cues and narratives allowed the England-oriented informants to bypass Canada and use England as ‘a constant’ against which they understand the world. For these individuals, England continues to be a weighty node and they reemphasize the ‘British’ in British Columbia and, by extension, in the Canadian institutional identity. These informants pointed out the climatic and geographic possibilities of southwest BC to house a large repertoire of global plants, in the tradition of British botanical gardens. Here is how one informant referred to BC’s botanical gardens’ participation in a British tradition:

Me: How does BC lend itself better to a European style botanic garden?

Him: It has enabled us to almost imitate some of the great gardens, particularly in England. Continental Europe is different. It’s colder. Because of the culture, they [continental Europeans] haven’t adopted such a wide spectrum of species as you find in the British gardens- where it is a national pastime. So yes, I think our climate here lends itself perfectly to that kind of a garden. It’s sort of- the term I often use- gardenesque. It is not strictly botanical and it is not strictly display- it’s sort of in between. So it was with that historical background – and of course- my ideas too were shared very much by people here. Bill Livingstone came from a line of Scottish nurseryman and he had visited and had good friends in the botanical gardens in Britain- notably the Edinburgh Botanical Garden. He was of Scottish ancestry and he was good friends with the some of the staff at Edinburgh- so he had a quite a bit of sympathy with the historic functions of botanical gardens and philosophy of them.

The informant illustrates how channels between BC and the UK have remained open. The notion of “sympathy” reveals the deep sentiments and political leanings of settlers toward England. In other interviews, informants vocalized similar British cultural alliances. The love of plants, plant-explorations and botanical gardens are portrayed as constructs essential to the

British or Scottish national and cultural identities (Tilley 2008). British Columbia-England alliances and institutional borrowing attest to the power of colonial networks. Implicitly, BC has become a benefactor or heir to British imperialism and its colonial botanic ventures, resulting in a wide range of plants species and cultural sentiments having been moved from England to British Columbia.

I argue that the firm connection between British Columbia and England has happened at the expenses of alternative, aboriginal understandings and treatment of BC's geography and flora. In my ethnographic fieldwork, I observed numerous systemic and personal obstacles that prevented the staff of botanical gardens' full promotion of aboriginal knowledge within the gardens. The staff of these botanical gardens juggled a desire to showcase global botany with a desire to accommodate local flora, often with mixed results. During construction of the VanDusen Garden, there were plans to showcase both global collections and native flora. According to Roy Forester, "[...] a garden will reflect, expand, and enhance the best and most suitable species for the locality and larger region that surrounds it ...The best policy is to expand upon the various natives or if need be, the exotic plant genera that succeed particularly well in the area" (1985: 16). Despite its institutional efforts, the VanDusen Botanical Garden has fallen short in its attempt to give weight and centrality to BC's native flora. The planners of the garden did not designate a space for the inclusion of a BC native plant collection or to those of significance to aboriginal people. The idea to include BC native flora took root in the late 1980s, once the garden had been operational for more than a decade. A small plot of land was designated to the native plant collection in one of farthest corners of the garden. I argue that the peripherality of the BC native plant collection speaks to its marginal social importance. The VanDusen's archive shows that BC's native flora was officially included at VanDusen in 1991, when an aboriginal "medicinal plant collection [was] added to the Canadian Heritage Garden"

(VanDusen Botanical Garden 1993). The Canadian Heritage Garden consists of a farm planted with 'heritage' fruit trees and heirloom vegetables that celebrate the European roots of Canada. The inclusion of a plant collection of aboriginal importance within the Canadian Heritage Garden allows the staff of the garden and the larger Canadian public to reassign aboriginal knowledge as belonging to a larger 'Canadian' public. This continued incorporation of aboriginal knowledge into the larger Canadian narratives enriches a Canadian national identity, but it does not create an inclusive "imagined community" (Anderson 1991) because aboriginal claims and bodies are left out. I argue that 'Canadian' public, influenced by settler narratives, continue to see indigenous knowledges as without owners and belonging to all 'Canadian' people.

The establishment of aboriginal medicinal plants and the medicine wheel at the garden were not reflective of the larger attitudes among the staff in the early 1990s. This claim was substantiated by what I heard in my interviews. A former employee of VanDusen, Carolyn Jones, with the help of a native elder, envisioned the inclusion of BC native flora and those of aboriginal significance within the garden⁴:

Me: We have the Sino-Himalaya area, the Japanese area, the Korean Pavilion, the aboriginal medicine wheel and medicinal plant collection, the heritage vegetable area...how do you see those areas?

Her: I really like that we do have those geographical/cultural areas. I have been sort of the organizer for the medicine wheel ceremony over the years and again Harry [Jongerden, the current director of VanDusen] is great in the sense that he is open to it. Yes, so bringing people in who would not necessarily have come in otherwise. It [the medicine wheel] is a ceremonial space that is inclusive, I think; it's great to have that space for all, totally... In the 90s, we had a horticulturalist called Carolyn Jones [who] forged a relationship with a native

⁴ Given that Carolyn Jones is longer with the VanDusen Botanical Garden, and it proved impossible to reach her for an interview, I relied on other informants' memories her work at VanDusen.

elder...And I think she got a grant to have native youth come in. So they came and between the 2 of them [Jones and the native elder], they created the space (in theory) and they had bunch of people...I think she [the native elder] actually came and gave out the direction. But we had one staff member [Jones] who was interested in it and she left. I took over and I had an interest in it and for a while there was less interest from the administration. There were some worries that it was a religious ceremony and they would end up with many religions trying to do things in the garden and that wasn't really good.

The individual initiation of aboriginal inclusion within the garden, and not by the VanDusen Botanical Garden Association or the Vancouver Parks Board, conveys the contemporary discomfort of Canadian institutions with aboriginal inclusion. The staff of the VanDusen and the larger bodies that regulate the garden feared disruptions of the institution's operation.

According to Noel Dyck, "legal distinctions and administrative practices have historically separated Indians and non-Indians" in Canada (1991: 98). This separation of populations has been especially felt on aboriginal reserves where "federal laws mandated economic activity and infrastructure, [which] fell under the jurisdiction of the Department of Indian Affairs, rather than municipal officials" (Stanger-Ross 2008: 548). What are the consequences for separate governance of aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations? Himani Bannerji argues that "certain features of the colonial state coexist with those of a liberal democracy... [whereby] special departments such as the Department of Indian Affairs in Canada, govern the population differently" (1997: 32). The separate governance of aboriginal people and their absence in public Canadian institutions do not allow contemporary aboriginal issues to be heard by the 'Canadian' public. The emergence of Canadian multicultural policies in the 1980s did little to include aboriginal voices (Mandell 2003). A "racist culture" (Goldberg as cited in Bannerji 1997: 30) operates alongside Canada's multicultural veneer. Employees of Canadian institutions do

not have templates for the consistent inclusion of aboriginal people, so aboriginal people's voices and needs are rarely expressed, or only done so peripherally and sporadically. Often public performances that appear to give aboriginal support to these endeavours, such as opening ceremony for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, pave over the inequitable treatment and continued exclusion of aboriginal people in Canada whereby what is considered aboriginal is usurped and made 'Canadian'.

In the post-colonial present, many Euro-Canadians and institutions struggle with multi-cultural policies and have yet to acknowledge the aboriginal ownership of significant portions of Canada. According to a 'Petition by the Indian People of Canada to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II' in November of 1980, "over 40% of the land in Canada is unceded Indian Territory, some of which is being illegally occupied by Her Majesty's subjects" (Walkem and Bruce 2003: 33). In the post-colonial setting, the pronouncements of aboriginality is politically charged because immigrants, aboriginal people and the Canadian government continue to disagree on, and negotiate, aboriginal ownership of land and its implications. In my interviews, I came to see the discomfort of some volunteers with the peripheral, yet socially significant, addition of aboriginality in the VanDusen Botanical Garden (by means of the native medicinal plants and the medicine wheel in the VanDusen). This is how one volunteer explained the discomfort of her fellow volunteers:

When I take people out on the garden, I always make sure that I take people there [to the medicine wheel and aboriginal medicinal plant section] because other guides don't go. A lot of the guides don't particularly feel comfortable. It's very interesting- I have managed to do a lot of work up there and I am very comfortable there.

The informant communicates a source of tension in the acknowledgement of plant collections of aboriginal significance within the garden. In my interviews, I noticed the

discomfort the informant referred to when some volunteers did not want to reflect upon the aboriginal significance of the BC and Canadian flora.

In the following section, I examine the appropriation of native flora and aboriginal knowledge to build national narratives and 'heritage'. According to Jean Barman, Vancouver has a long history of "making the province's indigenous heritage fashionable in sanitized form that did not reflect the realities of [the city]" (2007: 28). The staff of VanDusen and UBC Botanical Garden are under increasing pressure to talk about aboriginal knowledge and produce distinct Canadian national narratives. One such attempt has been to construct and perpetuate geographically-informed "national myths" and "pioneer stories" to produce a unified past (Proudfoot and Roche 2005). This is how one informant described the emergence of Canadian nationalist narratives within botanical gardens:

So our origins were for the understanding and collecting of native plants then we broadened and... got into the Asian garden ...We have always had, or at least since the 1970s, our native garden. I think what we have tried to do recently is that our locals love seeing our global plants, as do our visitors. But tourists are very interested in learning about Canada when they come here from somewhere faraway...they want to learn about our identity and our natural environment. So we have always had our natural garden but that is part of the impetus for putting in our Garry Oak ecosystem and the Carolinian forest and there are plans in the future to put in a BC slope garden because we saw there was this interest out there... And for myself because I work with the public a lot, I can say that from the public's perception and tourists who are international, they have a great interest in learning about Canada and experiencing the plants that make up the Canadian identity. So usually I explain it to them that the garden went through an evolution; it started with BC plants because that's where we were and it evolved into an interest in collecting global collections of plants, which is very important. And now we're returning to our roots, we still have a global collection of plants and we are still adding to it but we are also paying attention to what's in our own backyard.

The informant shows that the construction of a distinct national identity has been a response to external forces and demands. The need for a distinct Canadian national identity has been remedied by the appropriation of native flora and inclusion of aboriginal botanical knowledges in a larger narrative of how immigrant populations have amassed vast knowledge about 'Canada' and come to forge their own cultural associations with the land. According to Bruce Braun (1997), the designation of nature as the rhetorical space of the nation promotes a 'Euro-Canadian' national image. He shows the pervasiveness of nature as part of the Canadian identity by offering the following words from world-renowned nature painter Robert Bateman, "the world recognizes Canada as containing one of the last great remnants of wilderness and we Canadians have always prided ourselves on our natural history" (Braun 1997: 23). I argue that Canada and Australia's use of their native flora to construct their national identities is evidence that colonization continues to work in these two countries. Immigrants tell stories of their connections to—and reverence for—those colonized natural environments. The appropriation of native flora to form nationalist orientations is part of contemporary post-WWII processes in British settler societies, such as Canada and Australia, which allowed these former colonies to forge national identities less dependent on British connections. The following quote shows the formation of national narratives in Australia: "During the 1960s, there was an emphasis on field collecting, with major trips of several months duration as far afield as Western Australia to ensure that the collection was truly 'national' in character" (Australian National Botanical Gardens 2010). The investment in native plants in Canberra, Australia and British Columbia, Canada by the contemporary citizens, and those guiding institutions, has helped in the emergence of 'heritage' narratives. The Canadian and Australian national narratives and the machinery of heritage offer these countries distinct identities and histories, which distinguishes them from England. According to Susan Roy, "for many Canadians, indigenous culture signified

national antiquity... [t]he 'modern' and 'progressive' state claimed its historic roots in an Aboriginal past" (2002: 65). The appropriation of aboriginality and its portrayal as in the past downplays aboriginal ownership of land and the continued struggle for recognition of title.

CHAPTER 3. SALVAGE BOTANY: IMPERIAL NOSTALGIA AND COLONIALY INFORMED INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

Celebration of Colonial Science, Scientists and European Institutions

In this chapter, I explore the continued investment in European science and institutional beginnings at botanical gardens. I examine the persisting desires of the staff of botanical gardens to know the world through its collections. I evaluate the consequences of cataloguing nature by those in curatorial capacities in botanical gardens within a museum model.

Botanical gardens are frequently viewed as “scientific” in nature. In this section, I explore how scholars have begun to question dominant narratives about the origins of science, and offer new alternatives. The dominant view of the origin of science as internal to Europe and as a European invention has been perpetuated by the “diffusionist model of science”, which depicts science as spreading from Europe throughout the world (Basalla 1967). The view of science as European is reinforced by the idea of a singular “scientific revolution” that saw “the rise of an increasingly mathematical and mechanistic approach to the world appeared to offer Europeans new and special modes of reason” (Drayton 2000: 90). Historical narratives about Europe’s technological and scientific innovations have promoted the idea of the universality of European forms of knowledge (Adas 1989, 1997). Scholars have pointed to the difficulty of dispelling this center-periphery model of the interaction between Europe and the world, whether in science or other spheres (Arnold 2005). I observed the potency of such center-periphery models in participation-observation at the VanDusen Botanical Garden where science was seen as a European invention. According to Dipesh Chakrabarty, European Imperialism was

influenced by a large repertoire of ideas, such as scientific rationality, modernity, and development (2000). Recent scholarship shows that European science has been a product of a melange of interactions between people from Europe, Asia, the Americas, and Africa, but such global connections are rarely highlighted and acknowledged in official accounts of scientific history (Palladino and Worboys 1993; Grove 1995; Harding 1994; Kenny 1994).

The emphasis on centuries old 'European' science and its historical legacy at the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden stands in contrast to scholarly work that show biological science as a recent phenomenon, coming into existence in the 1850s (Foucault 1994: 127). In my interviews, I observed how garden staff talked about European roots of botanical science and botanical gardens. They attribute the gardens purely to Europe, by referring to its origins in 10th century, the Renaissance and the Victorian culture, rather than a global vision. One informant said the following about the European roots of botanical gardens:

Me: ... would botanical gardens have been possible without the colonial explorations of the world?

Him: Yes, because the first gardens had very little in them. If you go back to 1545, they were not aware of the plants of the new world...couple of things might have been there but mostly their plants, their medicinal plants. If you go back to the early 10th century, Charlemagne, the holy Roman Emperor, declared that all the cities in the Roman Empire must establish gardens with the following plants...so it was all laid out so each city in Europe had to have a public garden for these plants because they were necessary. So, in fact, we sometimes point to 1545 and the first garden in Pisa but, in fact, 600 years before, Charlemagne had started something like a botanical garden.

The informant puts forth the idea that the institutional history of botanical gardens welled up from within Europe. Informant's description of botanical gardens as a European invention likely reflects wide-standing beliefs. As inheritors of British institutions, many social

actors in British Columbia are deeply connected to European institutional histories and associate Europe with the birthplace of many modern institutions.

Given that my informants (in educational, directorial and curatorial capacities) framed their work and contributions within the bounds of science, I argue that social actors' relationships with science are variable, shifting and polycentric (MacLeod 1993). The work of Bruno Latour (1987) and Emily Martin (1994) provide valuable insights into the functions and physical manifestations of science and scientists understanding and embodiment of science. Martin argues that "scientists...are always active agents...they translate, read, write, mobilize, impose, convince... impos[e] their knowledge on the world outside of science" (1994: 6-7). I argue that the staff members of botanical gardens try to "convince" the public that their work and research was necessary to understanding the natural world. These staff members who collect seeds, grow plant-tissue cultures, perform genetic testing, study newly discovered plant species, recruit funders, update Index Seminum (the records of plants held at a botanical garden), participate in international botanical symposiums, teach in the faculty of biology, and educate the public about biodiversity and the natural environment, are all enactors of the 'mission of science'.

Even though contemporary botanical gardens are informed by colonial botanical gardens, my informants rarely discussed colonialism in their discussion of botanical science and Europe's expansive collections of global botany. Science continues to lend a concrete purpose to botanical institutions and legitimize their work (Osborne 2001, 2005). The staff of the VanDusen and UBC Botanical Gardens are fully committed to gaining new scientific knowledge and bringing the world under the rubric of science. My informants talked at length about the importance and worthiness of the work of Linnaeus, often referring to the bust of Carolus

Linnaeus at the garden, who along with other European scientists 'systematized' world botany and paved the way for the future growth of botanical science. Linnaeus' belief in "the possibility of classifying living beings [...] that all of nature can be accommodated within a taxonomy" (Foucault 1994: 126) translates all natural, worldly knowledge into a European science. The Linnaean taxonomy reordered the world based on European political and social categories, such as Kingdom, Division, Class, and Family (Frison 1993; Pels 2003). The majority of natural knowledge that has found its way into European science and botanical gardens once belonged to people with their own understandings of nature (Grove 1995; Schiebinger 2004). The Euro-centric, approach to establishing taxonomical order meant that European botanists simultaneously "decontextualize and recontextualize" plants (Silverstein and Urban 1996). European explorers and scientists erased the context and meaning previously associated with botanical specimens in the Global South and assign new context and meaning to such entities. The display of plants in botanical gardens has followed such 'decontextualization and recontextualization' where the social ties and understandings that a diverse set of people shared with these plants are replaced by new 'scientific' ways to know nature.

Linnaean categorization and systemization, which gives the individual scientist the liberty and power to classify newly 'discovered' entities, produces individualized approach to science. This is how one informant talked about the process of assigning scientific names to plants:

Sure, it works on several latitudes in terms of giving the second part of the scientific name- so like *Magnolia sargentiana*, named after Sargent. You could add the last bit- it could be anything you want. There is no guidelines/codes other than it [the plant] should be properly placed within the genus. You can name your specie whatever you want. There are conventions- people name things after other people, people use place names, or descriptive terms about

the plants but there is no central authority to say it has to be in a certain way. So there is ... an example would be...a professor in University of Manitoba [who] found a sedge near a grocery chain in the States and was going to name it *Carex pigglywigglyii*. Piggly Wiggly is a grocery chain. He could have done that and nobody could have said anything...

The naming process operates in three ways. First, given that there are no guidelines to the naming process, scientists can decide what a plant would be named. Second, Linnaean botany continues to drive plant discoveries and botanical science and encourages the work of an international network of scientists (Pratt 1992 as cited in Pels 1997: 175). Third, the act of giving names to entities enacts a sense of individual ownership and reflects a European informed sense of property rights (Harris 2003). Such considerable attention to the self in the creation of science is also seen in the way these gardens celebrate the lives of individual British plant explorers. In the UBC Botanical Garden, this is how one informant described the commemoration of European explorers within the garden:

Me: As a person who is involved in botanical gardens, do you imagine stories of botanists or plant explorers who have been involved in the organization of plants (like Joseph Banks, the Hookers, father and son; Captain Cook)?

Him: Yes, very much. In a very immediate way, all of the paths in my garden are named after explorers. So we have King Edward, David Trail, and we have Wilson Trail...we have fifty trails which are all connected to some of the earlier plant explorers that worked throughout Asia. I think about it every time I encounter a botanical name—often they are connected to some of those early collectors. I think about it because I am now travelling to China as well as learning more about plants and collecting plants. And when I am over there and working with different people, we constantly encounter the areas where earlier explorers worked or references to communities they stayed in. We see beautiful old trees that were first documented in Western literature; in 1908 Jim Wilson documented a ginkgo...when we are in town we'll view the same ginkgo. I would say that I think about that work (on a daily basis).

The incorporation of the explorers' names into the physical geography of the garden is telling of the larger processes by which the legacies of European scientists are represented. Those explores live in the minds of the staff and visitors to the garden as cherished, heroic figures. When I went along for guided tours in the VanDusen Botanical Garden, I heard similar stories of the glory of botanical explorations. This is how one tour guide captured the work of British plant explorers:

Those botanists were so brave and ventured out to the remote corners of China and Nepal... which involved long treks in harsh conditions... some call China the mother-land of all beautiful plants...so the allure of travel to the Orient was tremendous... They [explorers] in turn discovered and collected many species of Rhododendrons and other beautiful species of trees... it is because of them that we have these plants here to enjoy and learn about.

Explorer-infused narratives shared by the tour guides emphasized the historical period when massive numbers of plants were 'discovered' in China and brought back to Europe (Mueggler 2005), what some people refer to as the 'golden age' of botany. Although the informant talks about rugged individualized plant explorers, colonial botany actually involved a multitude of hands and minds. Plant explorers and scientists were aided in the field by local guides and navigators, medicine men and women, and often entourages of labourers (Raj 2007). Often contemporary historical retellings of colonial botany leave out the grossly uneven power relations between Europeans and the 'local' people they encounter and the inability of European explorers to 'discover' without considerable help (Schiebinger and Swan 2005).

Institutional Justifications for Continued Botanical Explorations

In this section, I explore the contemporary drive of the scientists and curators of collection in BC botanical gardens to amass botanical specimens. Powerful and mobile discovery-oriented discourses are a striking feature of contemporary botanical gardens. Presently, scientists and

curators of the UBC Botanical Gardens work in a number of sites outside of Canada, such as China, to a mass focused encyclopaedic plant collection, which requires botanical quests to collect certain species or genus. In my interviews, the staff of the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden often considered the extensive collection of plants of a particular genus, such as rhododendron, as important in teaching the public about the diversity of plant families. In the minds of my informants, the contemporary purposes of botanical gardens included education, conservation, science and display. This is how one informant defined a botanical garden and the purpose of its collections:

The definition is a set piece. A refuge for plants from all over the world added together to display the richness and diversity of the plant kingdom. The plant collection will need to survive in our climate and consist of various types of plant collections: botanic, special interest collections, along with geographical sections. A botanical garden is also about conservation of native plants- as we are losing things in our natural environment.

The informant's use of the terms "refuge", "conservation", and an "outdoor collection" attests to the informant's embodiment of the institutional narratives. "The world" has been showcased in British Columbian botanical gardens but the colonial processes that made global botany available to contemporary botanical gardens are left out. In the majority of interviews, the informants did not see Canada through a colonial or post-colonial optic. Conversely, I picture Canada as a colonized geography and transformed by settlers who have built numerous institutions, such as botanical gardens, on aboriginal land. The staff of these botanical gardens presented sanitized histories and avoided discussions of history that they perceived as political, especially those pertaining to the colonization of Vancouver. They preferred to focus on the present and showcase botanical gardens' roles in the discovery and display of plants and education of the public about the importance of living plant collections.

The discovery-oriented function of contemporary botanical gardens continues. The Global South is still envisioned by the scientists and those involved in accessioning plant collections as places to be tapped for raw materials. The Global North is still seen by the staff of botanical garden as the repository or the appropriating center of collected entities (Wolf 1982). My informants saw field research, i.e. plant expeditions to sites like Southwest China, as necessary for plant collections and essential to building collaborative, transnational institutional relationships. In accordance with the colonial era, today's collection of plants on a global scale has not only brought plants into the Global North botanical institutions but has created opportunities for engagement with the global marketplace. One informant talked about the institutional partnership between the UBC Botanical Garden and federal organizations like the United State Department of Agriculture:

We belong to a consortium of botanical gardens- North American Botanical Gardens- whose interest is to collect plants in Asia. There are a variety of reasons for that, including disease resistance and plant breeding, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has [been involved in]. The North American Botanical Gardens have worked with the USDA who has a very long history of collecting plants and making those plants available to whomever wants them for ...breeding or reforestation or whatever reason... so the USDA is one of our partners in that consortium. So we are involved in those kinds of initiatives to collect plants for plant improvement.

The informant implicitly mentions how the botanists working in botanical gardens rely on the financial support of the USDA when going on plant expeditions and when developing patents. Although the informant does not talk about the economics of plant collection, plant breeding generates massive funds and creates many related businesses. Scientists, such as botanists and plant breeders, work with botanical gardens to introduce plants into the ornamental nursery trade and the medical field, which allows the garden to engage with the

market. Aside from the USDA and botanical gardens, who are the benefactors of the discoveries made by botanical gardens? While the scientists who ‘discover’ and collect plants may not gain immediate access to funds, their discoveries allow them to build careers. My informants focused on restriction on botanical entrepreneurialism and government control implemented by countries in the Global South rather than highlighting the benefits arising from such ventures.

In the following section, I explore the changing bureaucratic processes and institutional protocols that have changed how the staff of botanical gardens conduct their business afield. Starting in the 1960s, with larger international attention to decolonization and the recognition of the rights of people in former colonies, the citizens of these countries started to complain and organize against the extraction of large numbers of plant species from their countries, especially in regards to “biological mining” or “bioprospecting” for the production of novel pharmaceuticals (Hayden 2003). Starting in the late 1980s, international protocols from the Botanical Garden Conservation International (BGCI) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), have changed how botanical institutions and scientists in the Global North procure biological entities in the Global South and deal with institutions and governments there. The staff of botanical gardens in the Global North could no longer move large collections of live plants and seeds between transnational borders without proper compensation to the host countries in the Global South. The more stringent international protocols also limited the ability of actors in the Global North’s institutions access to botanically-desired sites in the Global South for plant collection. These changes have complicated relationships between the Global North scientists and the Global South scientists, governmental officials and citizens such as guides. Countries in the Global South, based on the mandate of the BGCI and the CBD have greater awareness and ability to manage institutions from the Global North seeking their botanical resources. Starting in the early 1990s, the UBC Botanical Garden had to modify their previous

modi operandi to adapt to changes in the Global South. Informants saw the bureaucratic processes by which plants moved outside the geographical bounds of a certain geography or home-country as cumbersome. Here is how one informant voiced such concerns:

There is a huge amount of bureaucracy involved in trying to organize a trip to another country, to work with other institutions, and to do any of this work. And of course, a lot of our institutions are associated with large universities and all that brings an added level of bureaucracy.

The informant's reflection on the "bureaucracy" and the impact of such changes on the work of scientists in botanical gardens indicates a sense of difference compared to earlier times, when scientists from the Global North were more easily able to acquire what they desired. Scientists at the two BC botanical gardens offered an array of reasons why scientific work of botanical gardens must take a precedence over the work of 'business'-oriented agents and scientists who also go out in the field. This is how one informant envisioned the real targets of internationally-agreed upon protocol and bureaucratic changes and the real committers of injustice in the field:

This is my personal opinion and an institutional opinion- that the reason the Convention on Biological Diversity was brought in was to protect countries from biological mining on the part of pharmaceutical companies and those kinds of organizations that make vast profits without giving anything back: the history of coffee or the history of tea or rubber- all of those things-...Look at the profits that were made from chocolate and no one in Mexico actually benefitted from Nestlé making billions. The kind of things that botanical gardens do is so incontestably small in terms of profitability that there really is not much point in employing lawyers to workout deals. So what we have decided to do is to put aside some money, if we do actually sell materials that have been collected... (nobody knows who you pay the money to or what you do or how you make agreements). What we have done is we have these memoranda of understanding and say we put money aside if we sell any of this

stuff and we make it available to scholars or whatever. So there is a benefit but it doesn't go to someone's pocket, it goes to conservation or something like that. So—and at this point it's all talk because we haven't really done anything that has actually made a penny or made anybody any money—it's all pretty much academic.

The informant creates two camps when he describes the exchange with—and compensation of—host countries. The first group is characterized by companies and economic ventures that operate through a framework of “biological mining” and are concerned with massive economic gains. In the second group are scientific institutions and scientists, who work in the interests of science and knowledge production, are concerned with equitable compensation of host countries and set aside funds for institutions and countries that help in the collection of entities. Through such binary categories, the informant attempts to separate the scientific and economic ventures while in reality there are no clear distinctions, as the first and second groups' activities are blurred. Although in my ethnographic fieldwork, I came to see a willingness on the part of Canadian scientists and scientific bodies to negotiate fair terms and conditions with institutions in the Global South, I argue that deeper and older asymmetries remain. My evidence for such a claim rests on one informant's observation that institutional operations went much more smoothly when Canadian scientists were not encumbered with multiple bureaucratic processes when dealing with China and other plant rich countries. According to my informants, in the 1960s and 70s, Chinese local governments permitted the unchecked collection of seeds and plants. The inconsistent and irregularly enforced Chinese institutional and government protocols allowed for unrestricted access by foreign scientists and explorers in China. But older asymmetries that aided the Global North institutions are beginning to crumble. Currently, China boasts state-of-the-art scientific institutions and is becoming a major contributor to scientific knowledge around the world (Kunming Institute of Botany 2007).

China is increasingly a global player in the production of scientific knowledge. China exerts more control over its botanical sovereignty at a national, and not a local level and strongly influences the work of NGOs and international organizations such as WWF (Hathaway 2010a).

Currently, China's ability to enforce internationally-agreed-upon institutional regulations is a source of institutional tension. Chinese botanical institutes' revised protocols and policies concerning discovery of new plants affect Canadian scientists who work in China. These Canadian scientists have to readjust and reposition themselves to adapt to these new regulations and be given future access. One informant vocalized such recalibration in the operation of botanical gardens in the Global North as follows:

...we are no longer in the driver's seat and we need to cooperate with the host countries if we want to move things out of the country.

The notion of being in the "driver's seat" implies uneven power whereby Canadian scientists, as decision makers in the Global North, once dictated the scope and direction of scientific explorations. The UBC Botanical Garden's scientists have to negotiate with Chinese scientists and government agents to gain access to various geographical sites and they need to reach a consensus at every stage of such explorations. While these checks and balances at every stage of botanical explorations might upset the old order or prevent smooth institutional operations, they signify a large democratic shift, as one informant pointed out:

I think any of the new systems that have been put in place are good, some of them make things very tedious as far as sharing and moving plant materials or accessing plant materials, in certain spaces. There is more work involved but I think it's better accountability for botanical gardens to make sure that we are not [just] talking the talk but we are walking the walk.

The staff of the UBC Botanical Garden cooperate with the Chinese scientists and governmental bodies to guarantee that the activities and conducts of Canadian scientists, especially in regards to botanical explorations, meet the standards of the Chinese government. The desire of Canadian botanical institutions to “wal[k] the walk” is the result of new laws that privilege national sovereignty. Unlike previously, explorers from the Global North cannot make deals with local governments or institutions because their contemporary access to sites in China hinges on accountability, and equal distribution of benefits arising from plant discoveries and exchanges.

In the above section, I discussed power and its effects on various functions of botanical gardens and evaluated the huge institutional investments in the collection of botanical entities. How do botanical gardens decide what to collect or accession? Botanical institutions are expected to show the fruits of their actions, there are extra pressures on botanical gardens to engage the public and show accountability when it comes to acquire plant collections. The processes through which botanical gardens amass collections will be the focus of the next section.

Significance of the Museum Accessioning Model for Botanical Gardens

Botanical gardens have been called ‘living museums’. Although some see this term as old fashioned, it holds social significance and defines the work done by botanical gardens. I have investigated the usage of ‘living museum’ because it offers justifications for the existence of botanical gardens and the ability of the staff of botanical gardens to legitimize the gardens’ work by comparing it to publicly respected institutions such as museums. The following two interview excerpts offer rather different interpretations of the idea of a ‘living museum’:

Me: What does 'living museum' mean to you?

Her: A living museum is like a reference library, but instead of having books on shelves we have plants in the beds, which people can relate to and interpret.

Me: In the VanDusen's pamphlet, there is a term called a 'living museum'. How do you see that term? How do you use that term to describe a botanical garden?

Him: Well, I don't think it describes this garden terribly well. It's a bit of a catch phrase that people like to use. I think it's all about creditability. VanDusen does nothing on plant conservation—it is featured in some degree in the education program. But physically, scientifically there isn't anything going on here, which really in a serious sense does much for plant conservation. That's not to say that the garden cannot fulfill a function in education—making people aware of problems, endangered species and so forth but to get involved actively in conservation requires tremendous amounts of funding. There are not many gardens that have the means to do that. Kew- for example- comes to mind and the one that is doing the most in America, of course, is Missouri, which has an enormous outreach program and research program. They got people in South America- in the rainforest- researching plants and hopefully the useful values of plants before they are cut down.

As highlighted by the above informants, there is power in the use of a term like 'living museum'. It showcases a botanical garden's ability to procure plants, and educate the public. The term opens the gardens to a larger array of functions, such as conservation and environmental protection, which requires institutional commitments and financial investments. As living museums, botanical gardens have accessioning policies, which regulates how the gardens acquire and display botanical specimens and how they maintain their collections. According to my informants, accession policies keep botanical gardens viable and mobilize the

need for growing botanical collections. Forster (1985) explains the operation of botanical gardens and their accessioning and record-keeping functions in the following way:

The processes of accessioning incoming new plants and subsequently maintaining records on the plant collections is one of the factors which set botanical gardens apart from gardens of less formal purpose, even when there may seem to be little difference in the layout of the collections (1985: 26). Ideally, each accessioned plant would be checked annually and the appropriate observation entered into the record. With a well-designed program, a great amount of useful information can be stored in readiness for the time when further study is required (27). Effective plant labelling rests upon the foundation of a thoroughly accurate plant accessions and records system (28). There is a natural tendency for botanical gardens to encourage and solicit collections of new plants which fits within the established collections policy. A very important factor is the horticultural expertise of the staff since a garden will not attract interesting collections unless the plants are properly...exhibited in an acceptable form in tune with the best horticultural practice (35).

The archival data, along with informants' insights, suggest that perhaps historical botanical gardens with large herbariums, as houses of curiosities (Ritvo 1987) were better aligned with the museum model. The constant need of botanical gardens to acquire botanical entities also sets them apart from the museum model. Acquisition has been built into the structure of botanical gardens and it is central to keeping them institutionally operational and viable. This is how one informant interpreted the continuous need for accession of botanical entities:

Museums might have moving/visiting collections but they don't change all that much, unless we are talking about museums that don't have large, extensive collections and need the constant influx of new items. So we have a really active acquisition policy and most good botanical gardens do. Gardens cease to be interesting when they cease to change, so we are not just a collection but we are a garden. So as a garden, things have to change to be interesting.

What types of institutional networks have to be in place to support this constant need for acquisition? Through interviews with the staff of the VanDusen and UBC Botanical Gardens, I come to see the need for Canadian botanical gardens to strengthen their institutional

positionality and create larger transnational networks to remain in conversation with greater numbers of institutions outside their geographical boundaries. Here is how one informant talked about the need to unite international botanical gardens:

It's interesting, a few years ago it was called the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA)—they shortened it to American Public Garden Association... But anyways, we all belong to that and there are a few hundred gardens in North America. And there is the bigger grouping of gardens under the Botanical Garden Conservation International (BGCI) and gardens around the world are linked through their databases and different plant conservation programs. When we get together, we talk about the 'Convention on Biological Diversity' under the UN...and within the 'Convention on Biological Diversity' there is the 'Global Strategy for Plant Conservation'. So we do link internationally with other gardens because it takes real partnership and concerted effort; no one garden can do it alone. So, we share our data, our expertise and see ourselves as part of a wider cause.

The institutional networks mentioned by the informant give us a better sense of how inter-institutional networks are built. One might assume that botanical gardens readily take part in the Botanical Garden Conservation International (BGCI) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) but content analysis of the websites for the BGCI and the CBD revealed more complex institutional realities. The BGCI was created with the hopes of larger and more internationally-linked networks of botanical gardens, but it has resulted in some unintended consequences. The BGCI holds institutions accountable to their conservation commitments. According to the BGCI's website, "472 botanic gardens from 83 countries have officially 'signed' on to the 'International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation', published in 2000, thus formally confirming their commitment to plant conservation [...and] guiding the actions of botanic gardens in conservation..." (Botanical Garden Conservation International 2010b).

Similarly, the CBD emphasizes transnational and inter-institutional relationships and pathways ensure the achievement of common causes:

The Convention's success depends on the combined efforts of the world's nations. The responsibility to implement the Convention lies with the individual countries and, to a large extent, compliance will depend on informed self-interest and peer pressure from other countries and from public opinion. The Convention has created a global forum—actually a series of meetings—where governments, non-governmental organizations, academics, the private sector and other interested groups or individuals share ideas and compare strategies (Convention on Biological Diversity 2010a).

As the BGCI and the CBD reframe the institutional focus and protocols for the international community, the expectation is that “self-interest”, “peer-pressure” and “public opinion” would persuade botanical gardens to rethink their operation. I argue that the staff of botanical gardens in British Columbia responded to such pressures and adopted new narratives about preserving biological diversity, in part to reframe botanical garden as places that protect threatened plants. The new reality of botanical gardens is guided by a higher degree of inter-institutional cooperation, especially through seed banks, Index Seminum and institutional exchanges.

In this section, I examine the emergence of Canadian transnational networks that aid an inflow of plants from the Global South, such as China, which signify a decentering of England. Through my inquiries into the accession policy of the UBC Botanical Garden, I found that their engagements ranged widely: research institutes, international symposiums, internationally-led expeditions, nurseries, private collectors and so forth. The UBC Botanical Garden’s network extends far beyond its geographical borders to include other Canadian provinces, the United States, and an assortment of European and Asian countries. My archival research uncovered a lengthy historical exchange between British and Scottish institutions and the UBC Botanical Garden. From the 1960s to the present day, the number of accessioned botanical specimens, such as seeds, tissue culture and plants, from British and Scottish botanical institutions, stands

at approximately 238 items, while the number of accessioned entities from Chinese botanical institutes for the same time period was about half: 117 accessioned entities (Eric La Fontaine, Personal communication July 20, 2010). The UBC Botanical Garden has accessioned botanical specimens from approximately 24 American and 27 British and Scottish institutions, and only 4 Chinese botanical institutes, which points to the deeper institutional relationships between Canada, the United States and the UK (ibid). Interestingly, institutional links between the United States and the UBC Botanical Garden were not described in my interviews with informants. Only one informant talked about the climatic similarities of Washington and Oregon and British Columbia and their significance as exchange partners. In contrast, informants from the UBC Botanical Garden were enthusiastic and vocal about forging on-going exchange and accessioning relationships between the UBC Botanical Garden and Chinese botanic institutes, such as Kunming Botanical Institute, in Yunnan Province. According to the Kunming Institute of Botany's annual report, "seed exchange between Chinese and foreign botanical gardens has been resumed" (Kunming Institute of Botany 2007: 35), which has paved the way for "signed cooperation agreements and memoranda of understanding for scientific research with many organizations" (2007: 2). My informants highlighted the growth of the UBC Botanical Garden's institutional networks with Chinese institutions. Notably starting in 1979, the garden's involvement in China and its botanical institutes have been galvanized by increased dealings with, and expeditions to Southwest China. The staff of Canadian botanical gardens' ability to forge such important transnational networks has allowed them to bypass old institutional center in England. The garden staff can now acquire global botanical specimens without going through England's institutions, like Kew, and directly approach sites like China.

Even though the staff of UBC Botanical Gardens have manage to bypass the obligatory passage points, such as Kew, and forge direct institutional partnerships with China, the staff of

the garden continue to maintain institutional relationships with the Kew Botanical Garden and the Edinburgh Botanical Garden. Informants at the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical described British and Scottish botanical gardens such as Kew: as a “source of horticultural excellence”, and “the center of study for botanists...for hundreds of years”. One informant at the UBC Botanical Garden, in particular, saw great value in Kew’s ability to offer a sound institutional model:

I find some of the botanical gardens within Europe so well-established. So in my mind, I see them as being central. When a list of key botanical...key international botanical gardens is listed off, I would imagine Kew would always be ... on such a list. It’s such an automatic thing; they are so historically established...I think. To some extent, it’s related to their age but the fact that they have always managed to stay on the fore-front of that particular area. It’s the two together...When we are going to develop adult programming and other programs we often look to a garden like Kew and see what they are offering and to get ideas for our best practices. Because they- the level at which they offer things is very high. And even the way the garden is represented... then, to an extent, it is also about money; I don’t know what Kew’s financial situation is but it seems to be a lot...a lot more comfortable than we are.

The celebration of Kew’s institutional history is highly evocative of its status as an institutional model, which garners international attention and respect. In November, 2009, I witnessed how the VanDusen Botanical Garden participated in an inter-institutional seed exchange with the Kew’s Millennium Seed Bank during a highly publicized visit by British royalty to Canada. The exchange symbolized continuities in England’s deep influence in Canada’s institutions. The Duchess of Cornwall presented VanDusen with six species of ‘wild’ BC native plants, collected by British botanists during the mid to late 19th century. “Mr. Jongerden, [current director of VanDusen], presented The Duchess with [six] wild-collected BC native plant seeds for Kew’s Millennium Seed Bank, which are not currently in its collection” (VanDusen

Botanical Garden 2009). The BC-collected seeds that the Millennium Seed Bank presented to the VanDusen Botanical Garden still thrive in the wilds of BC and could be acquired by the garden through its locally sponsored collection. Even though the VanDusen did not need the seeds presented by the Millennium Seed Bank, the garden was more than willing to take part in such an exchange because it offered an opportunity to be associated with a much larger, older institution and gave a boost to VanDusen's institutional and social capital. One informant shared the following about the recent institutional exchange between the VanDusen and the Kew's Millennium Seed Bank:

So the Millennium Seed Bank will give us fifty seeds of their accessioned seeds- [regardless of how many seeds of a particular plant they hold in their collection]. I know we have sent them thousands of *Erythronium oregonum* seeds. So if some researcher goes to [Kew] and says, 'we want some of these seeds', [the researchers] will get fifty... they [Kew] will give out fifty seeds (little bits) so always keeping enough in reserve, in case that plant does ever go extinct, it exists somewhere.

The VanDusen's participation in the inter-institutional exchange and its willingness to be tapped by Kew reaffirms the existence of colonial channels and VanDusen's institutional peripherality. According to David Wade Chambers and Richard Gillespie, "centrality or peripherality [is] not primarily a matter of geographical location, but the combined effect of social, scientific...power relations" (2000: 223). England needs the affirmation of its former colonies to reaffirm the centrality of its institutions, such as Kew. I argue that the staff of Kew remain vigilant and maintain the garden's institutional authority by devising strict retention policies that keep the garden's seed bank well stocked and its plant collections protected from their host countries, and actively promotes the garden as a key hub of global botany.

In the following sections, I explore the complexity of institutional dealings of Canada with England and the consequences of the garden's interpretations of natural and cultural heritage for the aboriginal people of British Columbia. Kew may follow the British Museum, which views its institutional collections as "of international importance, that they are part of world heritage and belong to all of humankind; as such they must be preserved intact for future generations of researchers and [visitors]. It is also claimed that [entities] collected during the colonial era are part of the heritage of the collecting nation as well as that of the nation from which they originated" (Simpson 204: 2004). The conceptualization of England as the neutral center and holder of globally significant collections glosses over the role of the British military, and its scientific community, to exploit the world and bring entities back to England.

In colonial sites, such as British Columbia, botanical gardens do not enjoy the age the power of British botanical institutions to tell their histories without mentioning the colonial birth of the province. The staff of BC botanical gardens' efforts to tell the history of their collections will remain colonially-implicated until it acknowledges its province's settlement and what that did to the aboriginal people of BC. It was when I took part in UBC's 'Tree-Tops Adventure' program that I first noticed this need to understand BC in reference to its aboriginal population and flora. The Tree-Top Adventure is run by an eco-tourism company that uses bridge-like structures constructed between native cedars and firs to allow people to walk from one tree to another. Even though our Tree-Tops Adventure guide could talk about the BC's ecosystem without reference to aboriginal people, as he walked us through the bridges, he chose to frame his discussion of the importance of BC trees by referring to aboriginal people:

Here we have the Hemlocks...aboriginal people used the cambium, the inner bark of the hemlocks as a source of Vitamin C in the Winter months... Liquorice Fern was a source of pain-killer, helping infants who were teething...the

Western red cedars, two of which support the bridge, are second growth and about 150 year old. Aboriginal people also used the cedar extensively. They made clothes from the bark; they use [pause]. . . I mean they used the wood for canoes, totem poles and housing because the wood is water-repellent and fire-resistant... They also had many legends about red cedars and its life giving properties.

I was struck by the guide's reference to BC's aboriginal population's relationship with the land in the past tense. His presentation was a 'settler-inspired' interpretation that told stories about a once-thriving aboriginal people whose connections to the land and their relationships to BC forests did not persist into the present. Given that the UBC Botanical Garden is housed on Musqueam land, the unwillingness of a Canadian enterprise, Tree-Tops Adventure, shows a larger Canadian symptomatic denial, or inability to acknowledge, ongoing aboriginal claim to the land. The guide's narrative consigns aboriginality to the past, which excludes consideration of aboriginal rights in the present and denies aboriginal people's tenacity to preserve their natural knowledge (Roy 2002; Barman 2007; Culhane 2003). Mary-Ellen Kelm (1998) highlights the significance of alternative aboriginal institutions that allow aboriginal people to reassert their cultural presence. The U'mista Cultural Centre is an example of such an aboriginal institution that provides a forum for the Kwakiutl on Vancouver Island, to display repatriated potlatch goods that were seized by the Canadian government. One of the aims of the museum is to combat the persisting "salvage anthropology" models that portray aboriginal people and cultures as "disappearing" (Kelm 1998). In the 1985 film, 'Box of Treasures', Gloria Cranmer-Webster has the following to say about her people's post-colonial reality:

A lot of people have heard about the Kwakiutl. We're probably the most highly anthropologized group of native people in the world. But a lot of those people...think that we are all dead, that we've disappeared because we were the vanishing races those early White people said we were. And where you look at museum exhibits in a lot of places, it's as if we were gone. There's no reference to us still being alive. And we are (Kelm 1998: 173).

Gloria Cranmer-Webster's words resonated with my observations at Tree-Top Adventures. This well-intentioned, 'green' Canadian company implicitly, and perhaps unwittingly, retells a story of BC that sees aboriginal engagements as finished.

In the following chapter, I examine how the staff of BC botanical gardens continue to find new narratives about the gardens' future. The environmental narratives that currently circulate within BC botanical gardens have come to designate environmentalists as the rightful spokespersons for the future of biodiversity and environmental protection while leaving out aboriginal people stake in such narratives (Braun 2002). How have environmental conservation and educational discourses become new arenas of recolonization?

CHAPTER 4. CHAMPIONS OF THE WILD: CONSEQUENCES OF REVISED INTERNATIONAL PROTOCOLS

Evolution of Botanical Gardens' Purpose and Protocol

In this chapter, I explore the desire of an international community of scientists and governments to reorganize botanical gardens as participants in environmentalism, sustainability and as sites of biodiversity and the contradictions that arise from such reorientation.

According to Michael J. Hathaway, “[t]he global conservation movement of the late twentieth century represented a very different understanding of the natural world than that held by earlier explorer-naturalists. Whereas the earlier projects had focused on finding new species, bringing back specimens for herbariums and for commercial interest, new projects focused on global conservation concerns” address environmental degradation and put forward measures to protect forests and other natural habitats (2010: 428-429). These shifts in global conservation have found their way into contemporary botanical gardens and reshaped their operation. In my interviews, it became apparent that botanical garden staff understood their role as now including conservation and a broader attention to equity, sustainability, and the environment. This is what one informant shared about the change in protocols of botanical gardens:

Oh, and my other big item in that area is that the protocols are different, the rules are different. Like a 100 years ago, people didn't think in the same environmental terms that we think now. Governments did not have the same restrictions. There wasn't the concept of fairness...people went there and looked for whatever they wanted but now we would think it's the property of

the people who live there. It's a more balanced system in that way. In the past, certain groups would have dominated the explorations.

The informant argues that, in recent years, botanical garden curators and directors in the Global North have evaluated their colonial protocols, deemed them unfair, and found more equitable and democratic means to interact with other peoples. In an ever-increasing globalized and interlinked world, and with accentuated attention paid to power and equity, scientists had to pay attention to production of scientific knowledge where colonial science is no longer about the goodness and contribution of "Western forms of knowledge" (Palladino and Worboys 1993). This institutional turn directed attention to access, restriction, fairness, and a respect for the national sovereignty. The larger rethinking of power and fair dealings between botanical institutions in the Global North and the Global South have gained traction through two significant conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1987 and the organization of Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) established in 1992. Starting in the late 1980s, the CBD emphasized the importance of following proper legal channels, of "mutually agreed terms" and "Prior Informed Consent" (PIC) (Convention on Biological Diversity 2010). The PIC (endorsed by Convention on Biological Diversity) ensures that "cultural, environmental, and social impact assessment [are conducted]...which are likely to impact sacred sites and lands and waters traditionally occupied or used by indigenous and local communities" (Manuel 2003: 342). These changing protocols have limited the Global North botanical gardens' access to valuable biological resources, especially in the Global South. Given that the Global South holds most of the world's biodiversity and the largest concentration of human population, and has more chances of being 'bioprospected' by the Global North, the international community had to set in place protocols to secure plant diversity and the earth's biological resources, and ensuring human well-being (Botanic Gardens Conservation International 2010a).

The agreements signed by directors of botanical gardens in adherence to the BGCI and the CBD are supposed to be part of this larger international shifts toward environmental conservation.

This thesis contends that international attention to fairness and sovereignty has challenged the dominance of botanical institutions in the Global North. These institutions needed to find new discourses and foci to re-establish themselves as institutional compasses for the rest of the world. Given that conservationism and environmentalism are envisioned as welling up from the Global North, they offer the work of staff of contemporary botanical gardens a sense of mission, including plans for nature protection on a global scale.

Evaluating Botanical Gardens' Use of Environmentalism, Biodiversity, and Conservation

In this section, I explore the emergence and framing of environmental and conservationist thoughts within botanical gardens. According to Karl S. Zimmerer, “the world of nature is now seen predominantly as a life-sustaining ecosystem of global dimensions... [a view that] is noticeably well suited to the properties of many contemporary environmental issues, such as the biodiversity crisis...” (2006: 1). Given the global orientation of most contemporary botanical gardens’ environmentalist and conservationist narratives, the actions of these institutions are seen as contributions to the world and a form of institutional responsibility. This is how one informant framed the contemporary focus of botanical gardens:

...part of my experience/challenge is to educate the people and show them that botanic gardens are plant sanctuaries. Botanical gardens are places where plants from all over the world are protected from becoming extinct...You will never see [some plants] in the wild. Fifty years from now some those plants may not exist, except in botanical gardens... What we are doing is saving seeds, collecting seeds, exchanging seeds, and making sure that plants are being propagated- being stored for future generations.

The passage puts forward botanical gardens as agents in the promotion of biodiversity through their institutional channels of seed collection and exchange, accompanied by other inter-institutional memorandums, to ensure the continued existence of plants in the wild. I argue that centering discourses in botanical garden around biodiversity, conservation, and environmentalism paints highly positive images of the works done by these institutions. How have such new functions of botanical gardens centered around conservation and environmentalism emerged?

According to Karl S. Zimmerer, the “global casting of science policy, public awareness, and debates about environmental issues...is built upon the foundations of earlier environmentalism and environmental sciences that stem from the periods before and after the Second World War” (2006: 1). The emergence of environmental science and environmentalism has brought about a range of new organization and international groupings to address environmental change and conservation. These new groupings have been labelled transnational environmental activist groups (TEAGs), that include the World Wildlife Fund, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, and Conservation International, which work toward environmental protection on a global scale and have grown considerably since the 1970s (Wapner 1995: 315). By the 1980s and 1990s, TEAGs had millions of members, which demonstrates the wide-scale public concern with the environment (ibid). The emergence of environmentalist thoughts, starting in the 1960s, were echoed by my informants who understood and framed them as recent additions to the mandates of botanical gardens. In addressing these institutional shifts, I emphasize the development of a new nature conservation culture and the way botanic institutions have created an institutional and public culture around discourses of environmental sustainability and biodiversity conversation (Escobar 1996; Hails 2007).

Both the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) give added depth to the partnerships formed during the work of botanical gardens and related institutions. The history of BGCI speaks to the recent unification of such botanical institutions around the concept of biodiversity. According to the BGCI's website, "BGCI was established in 1987 as a small secretariat under the auspices of the World Conservation Union [...and] is now the leading international organisation working to save the world's imperilled flora" and its mission is to "mobilise botanic gardens and engage partners in securing plant diversity for the well-being of people and the planet" (Botanic Gardens Conservation International 2010a). To achieve such goals, BGCI, an international organization with 700 members consisting primarily of botanical gardens in 118 countries, works to "support ... the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation- at a global, regional, national, and local level" (ibid). The CBD emerged in response to the United Nations Environment Programme, where, at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, world leaders agreed on a comprehensive strategy for "sustainable development", containing a key agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity (Convention on Biological Diversity 2010b). The CBD has three main goals: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources (ibid).

The interlinking of human well-being, plant conservation, and mutual benefit arising from botanical resources is indeed a new focus that has impacted the work of botanical gardens since the late 1980s and the early 1990s. I argue that environmentalist and conservationist thoughts have made their way into the British Columbian botanical gardens, built on a post-colonial geography. I saw many allusions to environmentalism at the UBC Botanical Garden when informants referred to the collections the gardens. One informant discussed how the garden, with ensuing global warming and climate change, is looking to acquire plant collections

that would adapt to the changing climate. He suggested that the Garry Oak ecosystem, covering Salt Spring Island and Vancouver Island and supports a rich diversity of organisms, is an environmentally conscious collection to grow in Vancouver.

Botanical gardens are re-inventing themselves in a shifting “global ecumene”⁵ (Hannerz 1989). With the assertion of sovereignty, fear of biopiracy, and the emerging importance of environmentalism, the larger involvement of the public in such concerns has galvanized the reinventions of botanical gardens. I argue that the portrayal of a world at ‘risk’ has helped botanical gardens define themselves as protectors of nature and promoters of environmentalism. In my participant observation and interviews, I observed many instances when the staff promoted botanical gardens as places to educate the public about the importance of protecting natural habitats and ensuring biodiversity. The VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden frame their discourses within the bounds of human action and its consequences, with the larger aim to educate the public about human impact on the natural environment. In fact, there are a number of co-partnerships between the province of British Columbia and the two botanical gardens to reduce environmental impact. The UBC Botanical Garden distributes a pamphlet ‘Grow Me Instead’, a measure to encourage people not to plant “invasive species [that] have been identified by the International Union of Conservation of Nature as the most significant threat to biodiversity. As native plant communities are replaced by invasive plant infestations, biodiversity declines and habitat changes” (Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia 2009: 4). The staff at the VanDusen and UBC Botanical Garden portray the landscapes in British Columbia as under threat and point out the disruptive actions of the public that threaten the vitality and harmony of native flora and landscapes. The thoughts shared by

⁵ I use the following definition of ecumene: “a region of persistent cultural interaction and exchange” (Kopytoff 1987 as cited in Hannerz 1989:66).

informants are in line with a cross-section of environmental writings branded with the immanency of environmental disaster and an urgency to act and intervene (Hathaway 2010a). The work of cultural theorists has also produced concepts about human relationships with nature. In particular, I find the social category of 'egalitarians' "[who] regard the fragility of nature as part of their reason for existence" and their commitment to lessening environmental pressures useful to framing environmental dangers and proposed solutions by the staff of the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden (O'Riordan and Jordan 1999: 87). This is how one informant communicated 'risk' and the work of botanical gardens to combat it:

And it really wasn't until the 20th century when we started to understand the threats to nature and that in fact botanical gardens should be involved in plant conservation. So you go from utility, to more towards display and then back to utility more- (utility of a different sort based on a perceived environmental or ecological threat). So now the great trend in mid 20th century, certainly by the 60s and 70s, is plant conservation....But we get a little bit moralistic as we go along, in the last fifty years. Wow, the world is under threat, nature is under threat in a great way. 'What's our role in that?' That's why we can refer to the Convention on Biological Diversity; we can refer to Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; we can see, 'aha, this is our role!' We can really help make the world a better place or save the world... And a lot of gardens have got to the point that they feel they can and should demonstrate beyond the importance of plants and talk about how we should live in order to preserve plants...If we don't live sustainably, we risk mass extinction of species, plant communities, and ecological systems... if we continue to destroy habitats, we'll lose so many species whose purpose, function or value to us is as yet unknown.

I argue that such framing of environmental degradation as 'risk' has unintended consequences. It is a historical fact that environmental degradation in British Columbia started with the arrival of immigrant populations and their massively disruptive interactions with the land. I argue that the contemporary concerns of the staff of BC botanical gardens about

protecting biodiversity and geographical integrity stand in stark contrast to colonial interaction with the land in British Columbia. The staff of these gardens see past environmental destruction as having a bearing on contemporary emergence of environmental thoughts, but see past mistakes unrelated to present understandings of the land. The language of environmentalism and conservationism shares elements with “morality tales” and “environmental allegories” (Tsing 2003), which amplify the responsibilities of the staff of botanical gardens to communicate environmental threats to the public and moralize actions to address such threats. In the following excerpt, one informant offers insights into shifts in the functions of botanical gardens:

... we think botanical gardens are here because of plant conservation. So it helps to explain why [botanists working for botanical gardens] might have grabbed these plants from Borneo, put them in your hot house in Cleveland. (laugh) That was the sort of thing that was going on: plant conservation. At first, lip service was paid to plant conservation without enough understanding. In some cases, it was a justification for plant-hunting, but now we get into the big issue of sustainability. And we make the connection between the collection of plants, living sustainably, and preserving nature.

The informant addresses the initial inconsistencies in plant conservation programs. The informant argues that the staff of botanical gardens began to envision a new purpose for their plant collections. They reconfigured their approach to collection and aligned their activities with environmental protection where botanical gardens came to serve as repositories of botanical specimens.

Thus far in this section, I have highlighted some of the particularities of both British Columbian and the world’s construction of environmentalist and conservationist discourses. In the rest of this section, I put forward one possible way to know aboriginal understandings of environment, informed by Nancy Turner’s ethnographic work with aboriginal elders in British

Columbia, in order to further evaluate the considerable investments in institutional apparatuses that save and manage nature.

According to Nancy Turner, an ethnobiologist who has talked extensively with British Columbia's aboriginal elders, the concept of 'Earth's Blanket' "came from the depths of the [Nlaka'pmx (Thompson) Interior Salish people's] being, from their deeply held belief in the integrity of their world and their insightful understanding of the fragility of the reciprocal relationship humans with their environment" (2005: 19). The concept of 'Earth's Blanket' not only has a practical application for the preservation of human beings and nature but it also has spiritual and cosmic components (Turner 2005). Turner describes the relationship between aboriginals and the environment in the following way, "if too much is plucked or ruthlessly destroyed [the] earth [is] sorry and weeps. It rains and is angry and makes rain, fog and bad weather" (Turner 2005: 20). The aboriginal model emphasizes nature's protection as a reciprocal relationship between people and nature. According to Nancy J. Turner, aboriginal people treat nature as an active agent that possesses the power to make its mistreatment known. These insights into British Columbian aboriginal environmental knowledge stand in contrast to 'Canadian' thinking of aboriginal people as protectors of nature, an often essentialized image. According to Bruce Braun, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee argues that "only two actors are authorized to 'speak for' nature: 'traditional' native people and 'disinterested' ecologists. In essence, because the former is often an identity imposed on First Nations [rather] than ascribed by them, 'wilderness' becomes the authorial domain solely of the ecologist" (1997:23). The ecologists and environmentalists have the agency to be heard in regards to environmental issues, while the aboriginal people of British Columbia, who have more to lose from the new forms of control of the land in British Columbia, are the silent partners (Braun, 2002). Clearly, the knowledge presented by the environmental experts serve

political purposes, a phenomenon that remains relatively unexamined (Forsyth and Walker 2008: 4). Environmentalists do not simply want to speak for a mute nature or become its voice; they want to define what nature is and how others should understand it (Braun 1997: 25). In the case of British Columbian botanical gardens, the centrality of environmentalists' ideas leave out native people, who can also 'speak for' nature.

I argue that aboriginal environmental knowledge has little bearing on the work and scope of botanical gardens. Even though environmental protection has many indigenous counterparts, the audiences of botanical gardens are being immersed in new European allegories of history and social responsibility. The environmental and conservationist discourses have brought about a new focus on botanical gardens' older institutional apparatuses, such as seed banks, for example. The missions of seed banks have been reframed to either promote the preservation of nature or prevent the extinction of species. Seed banks promote the botanical garden's conservation of nature in compartmentalized systematized collections of plants and seeds. As my informants pointed out, botanical gardens serve both as safeguards and backup plans in case of loss of natural habitats. Here is how one informant explained the growing institutional investment in seed-banks:

More and more botanical gardens are realizing how difficult it is to have respected conservation programs simply by having living plants. We can say we have x number of BC native plants here and let's say we are trying to move towards having all of BC's native plants best represented in our gardens. That's great, we are doing that. Are we preserving those plants? Maybe a more effective form of plant conservation is to bank those seeds.

This new paradigm of conserving nature has justified the removal of plants and seeds from their natural habitats in the Global South and their placement in institutional sites, such as seed banks, in the Global North. My informants justified such removals of botanical specimens

given that the central botanical institutions are located in the Global North, often with seed banks and genetic banks. As institutes in the Global South, such as the Kunming Institute of Botany, gain institutional cache, there are more complex bi-directional exchanges between institutions in the Global North and Global South. Botanical gardens in North America and Europe are no longer the justifiable second homes of plants, as institutions in the Global South are demanding equal partnerships and want to participate in spearheading campaigns to promote environmental thoughts, conserve natural habitats, reintroduce and repopulate native geographies with native flora. A big component of these transnational botanical networks is the Index Seminum, a constantly updated record of all the plants in the possession of a botanical garden, which enable botanical gardens to exchange seeds and other botanical specimens between botanical institutions. Through my interviews, I learned about the exclusivity of Index Seminum, whereby only botanical gardens associated with university-associations, and with research capabilities and sufficient funds, can carry out botanic exploration trips and participate in transnational networks. Some botanical institutions in the Global North and many in the Global South cannot fulfill the criteria of the Index Seminum. This is especially true when these botanical institutions are not connected to universities, do not have research facilities and do not possess sufficient funds to conduct botanical expeditions, and are therefore unable to participate in inter-institutional exchanges. Index Seminum is one example that distinguishes the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Gardens' operations and their participation in larger institutional channels:

Me: When I was talking to people at UBC, they talked about how the UBC Botanical Garden was in partnerships with some institutions in Yunnan, China. They conduct multi-institutional seed collections...

Him: Yes.

Me: Does VanDusen collect seeds outside of BC?

Him: No. This is where we do rely on UBC a lot. UBC has better institutional connections and yes they do have a budget for travel and collecting. We used to.

I came to see how the VanDusen Botanical Garden participated in such inter-institutional exchanges through the help a better connected institution, the UBC Botanical Garden. Index Seminum's strict protocols, including a solid participation in research, exclude smaller institutions like VanDusen's, who cannot afford to extend their networks so far. It is possible to see Index Seminum and its wider institutional networks as institutional brokers, creating hierarchical categories of contributors and beneficiaries.

I have argued that new environmental thoughts and discourses have ushered in new forms of colonization. Just as settler populations decided the fate of British Columbia's natural environment over a hundred years ago, today's environmentalists reclaim the land and dictate its management. Even though the staff of BC botanical gardens embraced environmentalist and conservationist narratives, such institutional operations come with the unintended consequences of legitimizing immigrant populations' claims to British Columbia. These inconsistencies in the adoption of such narratives are the focus of the next section.

Paving over Contradictions in Conservationist and Environmental Discourses

The staff of the British Columbian botanical gardens use environmental and conservationist discourses to avoid discussions of colonialism. Although these staff talk about the ethical and moral dimensions of environmental and conservationist discourses and discuss equity, such discourses are devoid of "self-determination", which addresses aboriginal people's concerns in debates of ecological sustainability (Baviskar 2003: 309, 314). In particular, I wanted to know

how the staff of these botanical gardens, and ecologists and environmentalist circles in British Columbia, exclude aboriginal people from discussions of forest management. According to K. Sivaramakrishan, scientists use their expert categories and the ability to manipulate “local structures of authority” as powerful means to “secur[e] and contro[l] local ecological and political knowledge (2003: 255-258). Through the platform of environmental and conservationist discourses, garden staff and conservationists attempt to claim the right to manage lands in British Columbia. I argue that the uneven environmental field in British Columbia can be remedied through an ecological Marxist optic, “which hold that political and economic equity must be achieved prior to ecological conservation” (Guha 1988 as cited in Baviskar 2003: 306). In British Columbia, the aboriginal people’s exclusion from environmentalism is a reflection of their political and economic inequity in the province and a widespread resistance to recognizing aboriginal land rights.

Arturo Escobar argues that “institutions utilize a set of practices in the construction of their problems through which they control [their policies]” (1988: 435). The BC botanical gardens have constructed environmental threats as their *raison d’etre* and sought to solve such pending problems by collecting plants as a mean to ensure their protection. While on the surface the re-centering of the foci and collections around environmentalism and conservationism have offered contemporary botanical gardens a new relatively unburdened institutional image, these discourses come both with intended and unintended consequences. The ability of British Columbian botanical gardens to effectively communicate their reoriented focus to the public directly hinges on their ability to showcase concrete plans to help environmental and conservationist cause. The VanDusen’s soon to be opened Visitors Centre, which focuses exclusively on the native plants of BC, highlights the importance of protecting BC

flora and biodiversity and educating the public about threatened environments. Here is how one informant described the recent government's support for the VanDusen's Visitor Center:

There hasn't been as much, traditionally, public support for botanical gardens as you might find in Britain. The federal government in Canada has been notably niggardly around allocating money to arboretums and botanic gardens. Having said that, [VanDusen] got 6.3 million [for the new project] - I suppose that's as much as a political statement as a wish to invest in botany.

The governmental support for the VanDusen Botanical Garden's new project indicates political and social reinvestment in Canadian botanical gardens, possibly due to their larger environmental focus. Given the overwhelmingly positive portrayal of the current programs and environmental focus of BC's botanical gardens, it is important to mention the relative historical youth of notions of conservation, environmental sustainability, and assurance of biodiversity. In the following excerpt, one informant treads gently through the past mistakes of plant explorers and the negative consequences of colonial botanical explorations that have allowed contemporary conservationist foci to emerge:

I just think there is a greater accountability on the part of botanical gardens...I mean, everybody has been at fault at some point. Even, plant collectors that thought they were documenting plants...in the learning of 'man'...they took too much from wildlife... If in fact we are assisting a collection of plants for conservation, we have to make sure that the practices through which we attain plants are appropriate, legitimate and safe, even if we are not getting something from the wild—if we are getting it from another institution that we know they are following the same procedures.

The informant's emphasis on sources that are "legitimate", "safe" and "appropriate" mark a new institutional consciousness shows how the staff of botanical gardens are forced to be more vigilant in their contemporary actions and practices. Nonetheless, I argue that contemporary staff of botanical gardens draw inspiration from colonial botanical gardens and

they cannot completely break with those older institutional practices. Contemporary botanical gardens can try to carve new paths and hope not to make the mistakes of earlier botanists, but striking a balance between historical and contemporary concerns is challenging. The following excerpt highlights the juggling act that most botanical gardens perform:

There is in the native plant movement this idea that if it's native, it's natural, and it's good. It is born out of a kind of unrealistic view of nature; that is the pristine mountain- and people want to bring that into the city or into their environment. The problem with that is that [recreating and repairing native landscapes] is more difficult to actually do than almost anything else. So [a botanical garden] is a more appropriate treatment. That is to grow plants that bring people pleasure... plants that are more easily grown...creating an environment is more easily done than trying to repair it. The idea of repairing the natural environment- you can't do that here- it's almost unworkable.

The informant highlights the various ideas about representing nature and whether showcasing native or global flora would be a more appropriate activity at a botanical garden (on a land significantly altered by colonial processes). The informant challenges the possibility to recreate native landscapes and cautions against an essentialized understanding of 'native' landscape and attempts by post-colonial citizens to recreate such landscapes. Given that the informant spoke of a post-colonial geography as irreparable and unpreservable, he placed the staff of botanical gardens in charge of the reorganization of the landscapes and highlighted the power invested in a Canadian institution to decide the fate of this post-colonial land. I argue that the informant's commitment to the introduction of non-native flora in British Columbia as the more appropriate solution than repairing the native landscapes shows the complexity of the treatment of land in post-colonial British Columbia. Given the entangled interests of aboriginal people, immigrants and the province, with divergent plans for the land and no consensus about its treatment, often immigrants, notably environmentalists, take charge of protection of British

Columbian natural habitats and address the environmental threats facing the province (Braun 1997).

In the following sections, I explore the reinclusion of aboriginal plant knowledge and show how new found respect for native flora by immigrant populations paves over the long denial of aboriginal knowledge systems and claims to land.

Even though the preservation of nature has its limitations, it has kept the staff of botanical gardens invested in environmental discourses and encouraged them to reinvest resources in such discourses. Such re-discursive orientation of botanical gardens can be framed through “projects”, “relatively tight clusters of ideas and practices that appear as particular historical undertakings” (Greenough and Tsing 2003: 15). Conservationist projects create synergy for the work of botanists, horticulturists and other staff at the VanDusen and UBC Botanical Gardens because these staff have a unified language to communicate to the public that their work has practical applications, an example of which is the ‘the UBC Botanical Garden’s series on biodiversity’. Similarly the staff of the VanDusen Botanical Garden’s cooperation with the British Columbia Native Plant Society, have reinvested value in the native flora of the province. An unintended consequence of such reinvestment is the emergence of new ‘experts’ whose praise for British Columbian flora accentuates and fetishizes native plants. This is how one of my informants explained these new institutional changes:

We have seed collectors- currently they collect seeds from outside the garden because we want to feature native plants. Then, how do we get outside the walls of our garden? Through partnerships...we have talked to the Native Plant Society and they are very interested. They have connections all over the place with people- there are cottage businesses or industries out there ... I don’t know where to find the seed of a certain plant, perhaps, but the BC Native Plant Society does, for example they’ll know someone on some island

somewhere who got seeds of this plant. These are passionate volunteers who have connections to the community that we don't have, so it's very helpful for us to connect with them.

I argue that the partnership of VanDusen and the BC Native Plant Society has the potential to open up and expand VanDusen's approach to native BC plants. To contextualize the BC Native Plants Society's institutional focus and its particular attention to BC's flora and habitats, I have provided a shortened list of the plant society's code of ethics that the members of the society abide by:

Acknowledge the intrinsic value of native plants and habitats, recognize the botanical history and diversity of the province, acknowledge human impacts on native plants and habitats, be respectful of and receptive to First Nations' traditional knowledge and unique relationship with the plant world, and conserve native plants and habitats and maintain biodiversity of natural ecosystems (Native Plant Society of British Columbia 1999).

The Society advocates "respectful of and receptive to First Nation's traditional knowledge"; something that is only implicitly mentioned at the VanDusen and the UBC Botanical Garden. I argue that the two botanical gardens can learn work more closely with aboriginal people of British Columbia and try to be more inclusive of aboriginal people's plant knowledge. Consultations with British Columbia's aboriginal people about important BC native plants can give more recognition to aboriginal knowledge and rights, and give aboriginal people a more prominent place within institutions in post-colonial British Columbia. I argue that the VanDusen's vision of re-investment in BC's native plants and habitats does not include a partnership with aboriginal people. The garden wants to lend legitimacy to its own environmentally-conceived causes.

The reorganization of British Columbian botanical gardens around conservationist and environmental discourses has introduced ethical considerations and has moralized their work.

These botanical gardens seek new bodies that take on and embody these institutional discourses, which signify the emergence of new nodes of power. This is how one informant framed the new categories of botanical specimens sought by the VanDusen:

‘What’s the most valuable seed?’ Seed collected in the wild, ethically collected in the wild- that’s the top. And then you would have seeds collected from a botanical garden, from plants that themselves came from the wild. But there can be some cross-pollination that occurs once you get out of the wild. There is a bit of a question mark around seeds coming from the botanical garden so you have different levels of ... ‘ok, the top...ok, if this is all that we have let’s go with this seed’. And it moves down... We are always concerned with provenance. For us the big word is provenance, I had to explain it last week to a landscape architect: ‘We want the plants you bring to this garden for this new project to be of known provenance’. Landscape architect: ‘what do you mean?’ and I had to explain it, ‘we want native plants in a native garden where we know where the seeds came from. That it was not just nursery trade, mass produced seeds’ ... almost ask landscape architects to provide a certification that these plants are wild or close to it.

In the VanDusen’s Visitor Center, the new native plant collections will be built around the notion of “provenance” and ethically collected plants. The botanical garden is expecting a new breed of plant collectors who are environmentally conscious and willing to adopt the new institutional approach. I see these new categories of plant collectors as new, ‘highly adaptable persons’ (Florida 2002) who meet the demands of botanical garden in hopes of having continuous economic or professional relationships with such institutions. These shifts around the collection of plants nurture the birth of a new breed of botanical gardens. The institutional demands for ethics not only breaks with the traditions of older botanical gardens and signifies the need for new botanical brokers, but also emphasizes a unified institutional code of conduct. I argue that this optimism and drive for new institutional paths has created, and will continue to create, new sets of institutional stress, tensions, and expectations.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

Using British Columbian botanical gardens as one example of how post-colonialism works, this thesis has examined the colonial legacies and effects of British-colonization on Canadian geographies. I have argued that the social investment in ‘Canadian’ populations and institutions has further marginalized the aboriginal people in the post-colonial lands. A study of British Columbia’s botanical gardens has revealed the fact that the aboriginal populations whose lands these gardens were built on continue to face post-colonial challenges, notably, their exclusion and displacement from their traditional territories and the lingering negative effects of settler populations’ destruction. The ongoing transference of the deep aboriginal knowledge of the land and its flora, to scientists and other non-aboriginal groups have ushered in the active appropriation of aboriginal land, and a stronger sense of settler ownership on the part of the colonists’ descendants.

Although the marginalization of aboriginal people by the British Columbian government and the Crown has led to a loss of cultural knowledge, aboriginal people continue to pass on and produce such knowledge. Some of this is contained in records by anthropologists and historians and reveal the flourishing aboriginal plant knowledge and understandings of the land as alive (Turner 1995, 2005; Roy 2002; Smith 1999; Kelm 2004; Harris 2002, 2004; Blomley 2004, Edmonds 2010). The intricate linkage of time and space points to a continuation and legitimization of the indigenous peoples’ claims to the land, even though countless British colonial spatial alterations, such as roads, ports, bridges, parliaments, and institutions have come to occupy the landscape. In the 1930s, Vancouver’s first archivists created a map of Indian sites “based on conversations with elderly indigenous and non-indigenous residents about a

time still in living memory” (Barman 2007:3). The archivist recorded “thee dozen ‘Indian Names for Familiar Places’” (ibid), which highlight the colonial interactions with the land and the construction of aboriginal connections with land as secondary and fleeting. Indeed, many sites of aboriginal importance have remained in the minds of elders and continue to circulate in Musqueam, Stó:lō, and Squamish communities. These alternative imaginings of the land offer insights into the tenacity of aboriginal people, who after experiencing massive population loss and various social and institutional marginalization continue to retain knowledge of—and loyalty to—their traditional territories (Masco 1995; Kelm 1998).

The larger question about the possession and control of aboriginal land by settlers in absence of treaties complicates post-colonial lands. The Canadian and Australian governments, as extensions of British colonies, not only dealt with aboriginal land titles in dismissive ways, but, in many cases, worked around aboriginal claims by continuing to build cities, and sell and transfer unceded aboriginal lands without addressing the interests and rights of the aboriginal people whose traditional territories were appropriated (Harris 2002; Dyck 1991; Walkem and Bruce 2003). Although colonial transference of land to immigrant population has been challenged by contemporary court cases, such as *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* in late 1997 (McCue 2003), the rights won by aboriginal people in Canadian and Australian courts have been marginal. The complexity of aboriginal people’s manoeuvrings through legal channels in Canada and Australia can be better understood through Audre Lorde’s (1984) words: ‘the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house’. Canadian aboriginal people’s limited access to legal channels adds to their relative invisibility in these post-colonial cities. In Canada, Aboriginal people face the structural violence where Canadian institutions are informed by legacy of ill-treatment of aboriginal people. British-informed cultural, ethnic and political views continue to create “deep vertical fraternity” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001: 241) in Canada where some

'Canadian' citizens and governmental institutions perpetuate political and social asymmetries denying their equal treatment of aboriginal populations.

For Canada, post-coloniality is better understood as an intersection at which social amnesia and liberalism meet colonial legacy and aboriginal exclusion. The colourful and contentious colonial histories in these British colonies have come to be known by post-colonial citizens in fractured and incomplete ways (Braun 1997; Smith 1999; Harris 2004). I argue that the past cannot be safely bound, sealed, and catalogued away, even though powerful visual and literary media (such as history books, websites, photographs, and public lectures) celebrate 'frontier' and settler stories. The present social reality of Canada cannot be depicted as resolved and freed of its colonial injustice (Bannerji 1997; Blomley 2004; Edmonds 2010). In order to address the continuing negative effects of the colonial resettling of British Columbia, we need to bypass the post-colonial veneer of liberalism and good intentions of the Canadian state. Scholarship on polycentrism emphasizes "cultural plurality" (Baviskar 2003: 307), the possibility to acknowledge a diversity of social actors' political and social leanings, which offers more concrete means to address the continued injustice experienced by aboriginal people in the post-colonial Canada.

Polycentrism scholarship appeared after the Second World War, when "the question [arose] in all democracies of whether to include in the history of the nation histories of previously excluded groups" (Chakrabarty, 2000: 97). Starting in the 1960s, as part of larger movements to decentre Euro-centrism, former colonial governments enacted polycentrism to include a more diverse set of voices and bring such peripheral individuals within the bounds of liberal democratic processes (Palys 2003). The shortcoming of polycentrism has been its inability to ensure the equal participation of all actors within already established, unequal power-

relations of nation-states, where central actors are heard and receive greater institutional voice (Anderson 2000; Breton 1984; Stratton 1998). As evident by my interview data and observations in the field, polycentrism only amounts to an “innocuous pluralism” (Shohat and Stam 1994: 46), whereby the inclusion of a diverse array of voices often amounts to “extreme forms of cultural relativism”, which “see all knowledge claims as equally valid” (Forsyth and Walker 2008: 22). Canada’s multicultural policies represent the failings of polycentrism, which, while it welcomes the world and its people to Canada, refuses to include aboriginal populations in such policies or acknowledge their contributions to the establishment of the Canadian state.

Decolonization scholars work to peel away the layers of Euro-centrism and include unheard knowledges and histories of marginalized and colonized groups. Such scholarship is pertinent in British Columbia where colonization is ongoing and aboriginal peoples’ demands for the recognition of their knowledge systems and their “sovereignty” and “self-determination” are not realized (Harris 2002; Kelm 2004; Carlson 2003; Braun 1997; Anderson 2000). According to Peter Pels, we need “more ethnographies of decolonization, focusing on the continuity between present and past practices of development, welfare and good governance, and the way they were constituted by anthropology, economics, and political science” (1997: 178). This research project adds to decolonization scholarship and chips away at the imagined finality of the colonial process inviting a richer examination of post-colonial reality.

I argue that settlers’ claim to the land cannot be seen as equal or comparable to aboriginal people’s claim to land and its occupation since time immemorial. To decolonize Canadian histories, the inequitable treatment of aboriginal people by the Canadian state and interrogate non-aboriginal populations’ continuous denial of aboriginal people’s claim to land and their understandings of rights needs to be addressed. As discussed in earlier chapters,

'heritage' movements in Canada and Australia often bypass the displacement and dispossession of indigenous populations and perpetuate settler populations' understandings of land. The settlers' version of history, while contentious, is pregnant with socially-assigned meaning about sites worthy of preservation for the future generations (Proudfoot and Roche 2005), which reassigns ownership and disadvantages aboriginal people. In 1989, the Musqueam Band challenged "the transfer of the University of Endowment Lands from provincial jurisdiction to the Greater Vancouver Regional District" (Roy 2002: 88). The band members protested the opening of the Pacific Spirit Park on their traditional territory by announcing that "Musqueam Title is Alive and Well in UEL [University Endowment Lands]", which challenged the mainstream Canadian understanding of the traditional territory of Musqueam as belonging to the Crown (ibid). The Musqueam Band has continually challenged the settler histories of land in Vancouver as evident by the 2007 provincial court rulings outlined below, which paints Musqueam's legal battle in negative light:

Thanks to the province, the Musqueam Indian Band recently gained the land under the River Rock Casino in Richmond, the University of BC Golf Course, Pacific Spirit Park land, and over \$20 million. That handover of BC assets has far-reaching effects, mainly because it was outside the BC treaty process ... Here's a summary of the UBC golf course aspect. After BC transferred the golf course to UBC in 2004, the Musqueam took the province to court, asking that the lands be restored to the province. The BC Court of Appeal suspended the transfer because the province had made the lands less available for treaty settlement without sufficient consultation and accommodation. Essentially the province's options were to take back the golf course or negotiate something else with the Musqueam [...] During agreement talks, word about the golf course leaked out, and Point Grey golfers fought hand and foot to save what they valued. To calm the public outrage, the agreement requires that 'the lands be used for golf course purposes until 2083.' The golfers won (Garden City Lands 2007).

The court's decisions and the 'Canadian' public response to such decisions are evocative of settlers' unsettling of aboriginal reserves in late 19th to early 20th century Vancouver (Barman 2007). In the colonial and the contemporary cases, the immigrant populations trivialize aboriginal land titles and frame the dispossession of aboriginal people as provincial victories.

Musqueam Band's demands for their land are portrayed as a political inconvenience and a source of provincial and national embarrassment that complicates and weakens British Columbia's ability to forge ahead with an untainted post-colonial present. Similarly, immigrant populations' sentiments are evocative of the larger governmental unwillingness to address colonially-rooted inequity, which stymies reconciliation between aboriginal and non-aboriginal citizens.

Decolonization of Vancouver and surrounding cities in southwest British Columbia is unrealistic given that these cities hold upwards one million citizens of non-aboriginal descent whose displacement would cause untold chaos and instability. Rather, I argue for a more conscious effort on the parts of the British Columbian government and courts not to reward settlers by extending leases and create more equitable sharing of the revenues that the province of British Columbia receives from possession of prime Musqueam and Squamish territories, such as Vancouver and Whistler, with the aboriginal populations. What can decolonization bring about in British Columbia and what could it mean for aboriginal people? L. June McCue argues that "to bring about decolonization that blasts the foundation of Canadian colonialism, we must uproot such continuing colonization that unlawfully controls Indigenous land and resources and rights (2003: 372-373). Such decolonization would require reconciliation in which both 'Canadian' and aboriginal people work together to remedy the past and ongoing colonialist practices. Given the overwhelmingly negative institutional experiences of aboriginals in their dealings with the Canadian state (Blomley 2004; Dyck 1991; Kelm 1998; Smith 1999) so far, I wonder if aboriginal people would trust the state enough or even care for inclusion in Canada or its institutions. Sites such as the First Nations Longhouse at the University of British Columbia, on Musqueam land, can serve as a model for decolonizing the post-colonial present. The Longhouse "enables Aboriginal peoples to share their knowledge and culture with one

another, with the University community, and with the wider community as a whole” (The UBC First Nations Longhouse 2010). The Longhouse not only offers diverse forms of inclusion, but also the possibility for a diverse set of aboriginal people of British Columbia to be heard. The decolonization I envision shares elements with ‘Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’ that “is a sincere indication and acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by Aboriginal people and the need for continued healing [...and] a profound commitment to establishing new relationships embedded in mutual recognition and respect” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2010).

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