



Centre for  
Human Rights and  
Restorative Justice

# REFERENCES TO COLONIALISM, COLONIAL, AND IMPERIALISM

Canada Truth Commission

## Abstract

A list of references to colonialism, colonial, and imperialism in the Canada Truth Commission.

Chelsea Barranger

## Links to Data Visualization

This section contains links to all data visualization for the Canada report.

### Comparison Charts

- [References to Colonialism, Colonial, and Imperialism chart](#)
- [References to Colonialism, Colonial, and Imperialism excel list](#)

### Word Trees

- [Colonial](#)
- [Colonialism](#)
- [Imperialism](#)

## References to Colonialism, Colonial, and Imperial

This section contains all references to colonialism, colonial, and imperial from the Canada report.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Canada.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 61 references coded [0.67% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.02% Coverage

and Reconciliation Commission of Canada urged Canadians not to wait until our final report was issued before contributing to the reconciliation process. We have been encouraged to see that across the country, many people have been answering that call. The youth of this country are taking up the challenge of reconciliation. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth who attended trc National Events made powerful statements about why reconciliation matters to them. At the Alberta National Event in Edmonton in March 2014, an Indigenous youth spoke on behalf of a national Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration known as the “4Rs Youth Movement.” Jessica Bolduc said, We have re-examined our thoughts and beliefs around colonialism, and have made a commitment to unpack our own baggage, and to enter into a new relationship with each other, using this momentum, to move our country forward, in light of the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada in 2017.

Introduction • 11

Truth and Reconciliation

### Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

access and revitalize their spirituality, cultures, languages, laws, and governance systems, and as non-Aboriginal Canadians increasingly come to understand Indigenous history within Canada, and to recognize and respect Indigenous approaches to establishing and maintaining respectful relationships, Canadians can work together to forge a new covenant of reconciliation. Despite the ravages of colonialism, every Indigenous nation across the country, each with its own

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teachers prepare their students for the National Event Education Days and consider follow-up activities in the classroom. In addition, the Commission worked with universities, educators, and Traditional Knowledge Keepers to hold academic conferences and panel discussions at its National Events on a number of topics related to the legacy of colonialism and residential schools, and on healing and reconciliation. Cultural performances were also key elements of each National Event. Through concerts and talent shows, thousands

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so many children so unhappy.

The imperial context  
The whole part of the

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Archives Canada, NMC8207, e011076405-v8.

the schools can be best understood in the context of this relationship between the growth of global, European-based empires and the Christian churches. Starting in the sixteenth century, European states gained control of Indigenous peoples' lands throughout the world. It was an era of mass migration. Millions of Europeans arrived as colonial settlers in nearly every part of the world. Millions of Africans were transported in the European-led slave trade, in which coastal Africans collaborated. Traders from India and China spread throughout the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, bringing with them indentured servants whose lives were little different from those of slaves.<sup>44</sup>

The activities of explorers, farmers

#### Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

trade, conquest, and colonization.<sup>47</sup>

a European-dominated global economy. Although it was led initially by Spain and Portugal, this era of imperial expansion came to be directed by Holland, France, and, in the end, most stunningly by Britain.<sup>48</sup> Empires were established militarily. They engaged in extensive and violent wars with one another, maintained a

#### Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

put down nationalist uprisings.<sup>49</sup>

Colonies were

established to be exploited economically. The benefits of empire could come directly as taxes, as precious metals, or as raw materials for industries in the homeland. Colonies often were required to purchase their imports solely from the homeland, making them a captive market.<sup>50</sup> The mere presence of Indigenous people in these newly colonized lands blocked To gain control of the land of Indigenous people, colonists settler access to the land

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people, while the chief ben-

eficiaries of empire were the colonists and their descendants. Many of the colonies they settled grew to be among the most prosperous societies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century world.<sup>54</sup>

Settler colonies often went on to gain political

independence. In the case of Canada and the United States of America, these newly created nations spread across North America. As they expanded, they continued to incorporate Indigenous peoples and their lands into empires. Colonialism remains an ongoing process, shaping both the structure and the quality of the relationship between the settlers and Indigenous peoples.

It marked the beginning of

#### Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

universal world order.<sup>56</sup>

The

adoption of Christianity within the Roman Empire (which defined itself as ‘civilized’) reinforced the view that to be civilized was to be Christian. The Catholic papacy was already playing a role in directing and legitimizing colonialism prior to Christopher Columbus’s voyages to the Americas in the 1490s, largely by granting Catholic kingdoms the right to colonize lands they ‘discovered.’<sup>57</sup>

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI

#### Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

Indigenous peoples. In 1883, Britain’s

Lord Rosebery, a future British prime minister, told an Australian audience, “It is on the British race, whether in Great Britain, or the United States, or the Colonies, or wherever it may be, that rest the highest hopes of those who try to penetrate the dark future, or who seek to raise and better the patient masses of mankind.”<sup>65</sup>

Residential

schools were established in

#### Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

missionary work, not only in

Canada, but also around the world. Christian missionaries played a complex but central role in the European colonial

project. Their presence helped justify

#### Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

way for their destruction.<sup>68</sup>

Although missionaries often attempted to soften the impact of imperialism, they were also committed

#### Reference 13 - 0.05% Coverage

to both spiritual salvation and

the ongoing existence of Aboriginal people. They were determined to replace traditional economic pursuits with European-style peasant agriculture. They believed that cultural transformation required the imposition of social control and separation from both traditional communities and European settlements. In the light of these beliefs, it is not surprising that they were proponents of an educational world that separated children from the influences of their families and cultures, imposed a new set of values and beliefs, provided a basic elementary education, and created institutions whose daily life reflected Europe’s emerging work discipline. In short, they sought to impose the foreign and transforming world of the residential school. Colonization was undertaken to meet the perceived needs of the imperial powers. The justification offered for colonialism—the need to bring Christianity and civilization to the Indigenous peoples of the world—may have been a sincerely and firmly held belief, but as a justification for intervening in the lives of other peoples, it does not stand up to legal, moral, or even logical scrutiny. The papacy had no authority to give away lands that belonged to Indigenous people. The Doctrine of

Discovery cannot serve as the basis for a legitimate claim to the lands that were colonized, if for no other reason than that the so-called discovered lands were already well known to the Indigenous peoples who had inhabited them for thousands of years. The wars of conquest that took place to strip Indigenous peoples of their lands around the globe were not morally just wars; Indigenous peoples were not, as colonists often claimed, subhuman, and neither were they living in violation of any universally agreed-upon set of values. There was no moral imperative to impose Christianity on the Indigenous peoples of the world. They did not need to be ‘civilized’; indeed, there is no hierarchy of societies. Indigenous peoples had systems that were complete unto themselves and met their needs. Those systems were dynamic; they changed over time and were capable of continued change.<sup>74</sup>

Taken as a whole, the colonial process relied for its justification on the sheer presumption of taking a specific set of European beliefs and values and proclaiming them to be universal values that could be imposed upon the peoples of the world. This universalizing of European values—so central to the colonial

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project

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undermined. The Indian Act gave the federal government the authority to veto decisions made by band councils and to depose chiefs and councillors. The Act placed restrictions on First Nations farmers’ ability to sell their crops and take out loans. Over the years, the government also assumed greater authority as to how reserve land could be disposed of: in some cases, entire reserves were relocated against the will of the residents. The Indian Act was a piece of colonial legislation by which, in the name of ‘protection,’ one group of people ruled and controlled another.

The industrial school initiative It

#### Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

of a broader Aboriginal health crisis that was set in motion by colonial policies that separated Aboriginal people from their land, thereby disrupting their economies and their food supplies. This crisis was particularly intense on the Canadian Prairies. Numerous federal government policies contributed to the undermining of Aboriginal health. During a period of starvation,

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Old

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access to the land; colonization disrupted that access and introduced new illnesses to North America. Colonial policies helped wipe out food sources and confined Aboriginal people to poorly located reserves, with inadequate sanitation and shelter. The schools could have served as institutions to help counter these problems. To do that, however, they would have had to have been properly constructed, maintained, staffed, and supplied. Government officials were aware of this. They were also aware that death rates among students at residential schools were disproportionately high. It would be wrong to say the government did nothing about this crisis: the 1910 contract did provide a substantial funding increase to the schools. But the federal government never made the type of sustained investment in Aboriginal health, in either the communities or the schools, that

could have addressed this crisis—which continues to the present. The non-Aboriginal tuberculosis death rate declined before the introduction of life-saving drugs. It was brought down by improvements in diet, housing, sanitation, and medical attention. Had such measures been taken by the federal government earlier, they would have reduced both the Aboriginal death rates and the residential school students' death rates. By failing to take adequate measures that had been recommended to it, the federal government blighted the health of generations of Aboriginal people.

Burial policy Many of the

#### Reference 17 - 0.01% Coverage

policies for nearly 200 years,

Aboriginal people have maintained their identity and their communities. They continue to assert their rights to self-governance. In this, they are not alone. Like the Settlement Agreement in Canada, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a milestone in a global campaign to recognize and respect the rights of Indigenous peoples. It is time to abandon the colonial policies of the past, to address the legacy of the schools, and to engage in a process of reconciliation with the Aboriginal people of Canada.

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The

#### Reference 18 - 0.02% Coverage

being of the children who

attended them. Many students succumbed to infectious disease, particularly tuberculosis. Sexual and physical abuse, as well as separation from families and communities, caused lasting trauma for many others. The effects of this trauma were often passed on to the children of the residential school Survivors and sometimes to their grandchildren. Residential schools also posed a threat to the mental health of students through the pervasive assumptions and assertions they made about the inferiority of Aboriginal peoples, cultures, and languages. This disregard for Aboriginal health and well-being was consistent with the long-established patterns of colonialism: the introduction of new diseases, the disruption of traditional food sources, and the concentration of people on unproductive land and the housing of them in cramped, unsanitary dwellings.

The legacy • 159 The schools

#### Reference 19 - 0.01% Coverage

imprisonment and victimization of Aboriginal

people continues to this day. The continued failure of the justice system denies Aboriginal people the safety and opportunities that most Canadians take for granted. Redress to the racist and colonial views that inspired the schools, and effective and long-term solutions to the crime problems that plague too many Aboriginal communities, call for increased use of Aboriginal justice, based on Aboriginal laws and healing practices. To understand the full legacy of the harms of the schools, it is important to examine how the Canadian legal system responded to residential school abuse. Relatively few

The legacy • 165

prosecutions for

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reconciliation Setting the context C

Canada has a long history of colonialism in relation to Aboriginal peoples. That history and its policies of cultural genocide and assimilation have left deep scars on the lives of many Aboriginal people, on Aboriginal communities, as well as on Canadian

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when it came to being treated harshly by colonial authorities and settler governments. Historical abuses of Aboriginal peoples and the taking of Indigenous lands and resources throughout the world have been the subject of United Nations' attention for many years. On September 13, 2007, after almost twenty-five years of debate and study, the United Nations (un) adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As a declaration, it calls upon member states to adopt and maintain its provisions as a set of "minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world."<sup>8</sup> The Commission concurs with the view of S. James Anaya, un Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, who observed, It is perhaps best to

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former day school student, political leader, and educator Sol Sanderson explained the importance of making the connection between the policies and practices of imperialism and colonization and the need for transformative change in Canadian society. What were the objectives of those empire policies? Assimilation, integration, civilization, Christianization and liquidation. Who did those policies target? They targeted the destruction of our Indigenous families worldwide. Why? Because that was the foundation of our governing systems. They were the foundations of our institutions, and of our societies of our nations. Now those policies still form the basis of Canadian law today, not just in the Indian Act [that] outlawed our traditions, our customs, our practices, our values, our language, our culture, our forms of government, our jurisdiction.... They say we have constitutionally protected rights in the form of inherent rights, Aboriginal rights and Treaty rights, but we find ourselves in courts daily defending those rights against the colonial laws of the provinces and the federal government. Now, we can't allow that to continue.<sup>18</sup> From 2010 to 2014, the

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have dealt with sovereignty issues. The highest court of Canada has recognized the need for reconciliation of "preexisting aboriginal sovereignty with assumed Crown sovereignty." The Supreme Court has taken judicial notice of "such matters as colonialism, displacement and residential schools," which demonstrate how "assumed" sovereign powers were abused throughout history. The root cause of such abuse leads back to the Doctrine of Discovery and other related fictitious constructs which must therefore be addressed.<sup>30</sup> At the thirteenth session of

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the story of the Royal

Proclamation of 1763 and its relationship to the Treaty of Niagara of 1764. The Royal Proclamation, which was issued by colonial officials, tells only half this story. On October 7, 1763, King George III issued a Royal Proclamation by which the British Crown first recognized the legal and constitutional rights of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. In the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the British declared that all lands west of the established colonies belonged to Aboriginal peoples and that only the Crown could legally acquire these lands by negotiating Treaties. At a time when Aboriginal peoples still held considerable power and conflicts with settlers were increasing, British officials

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Treaty negotiations not only used

wampum belts to recount the Treaty of Niagara, but also presented original copies of the Royal Proclamation to government officials. In 1847, a colonial official reported, The subsequent proclamation of His Majesty George Third, issued in 1763, furnished them with a fresh guarantee for the possession of their hunting grounds and the protection of the crown. This document the Indians look upon as their charter. They have preserved a copy of it to the present time, and have referred to it on several occasions in the representations to government.<sup>38</sup>

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On

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that October, Idle No More

supporters gathered in Gatineau, Québec, at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, to commemorate the Royal Proclamation as part of a national and international day of action. One of the organizers, Clayton Thomas-Muller, said, “We are using this founding document of this country and its anniversary to usher in a new era of reconciliation of Canada’s shameful colonial history, to turn around centuries of neglect and abuse of our sacred and diverse nations.”<sup>41</sup>

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or Two-Row Wampum Treaty

belt, used by the Mohawk in Treaty negotiations with colonial European officials.<sup>42</sup> As Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people gathered to mark the historic day, speaker Davyn Calfchild said, “Everyone needs to learn about the Two-Row and the nation-to-nation relationships it represents. It’s not just for Native people; it’s for non-Native people too.” The gathering ended with a march as people carried a replica of the Two-Row Wampum through the streets of the city.<sup>43</sup>

Those who commemorated the Royal

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We believe there is much hope that even the process of intentionally and seriously continuing ... [this work] will contribute to a truly robust reconciliation in Canada.... This work is vital for the future health and strength of Indigenous societies and has much to offer Canada as a whole.... Legal traditions are not only prescriptive, they are descriptive. They ascribe meaning to human events, challenges and aspirations. They are intellectual resources that we use to frame and interpret information, to reason through and act upon current problems and projects, to work toward our greatest societal aspirations. Finding ways to support Indigenous communities to access, understand and apply their own legal principles today is not just about repairing the immense damages from colonialism. As Chief Doug S. White III (Kwulasultun) puts it ... "Indigenous law is the great project of Canada and it is the essential work of our time. It is not for the faint of heart, it is hard work. We need to create meaningful opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to critically engage in this work because all our futures depend on it."51

Call to Action:

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that further work be done,

and a follow-up report, "Reviewing Partnership in the Context of Empire," was issued in 2009. The report's theological reflection noted: Our development of the partnership model was an attempt to move beyond the paternalism and colonialism of 19th century missions. The current work to develop right relations with Aboriginal peoples is an attempt to move beyond a history of colonization and racism. This ongoing struggle to move beyond empire involves the recognition that our theology and biblical interpretation have often supported sexism, racism, colonialism, and the exploitation of creation....

Theologies of empire have understood God and men as separate from and superior to women, Indigenous peoples, and nature.<sup>89</sup>

In 2012, the Executive of

#### Reference 30 - 0.01% Coverage

other things, the church said:

In humility, the Church acknowledges its complicity in the degradation of Aboriginal wisdom and spirituality, and offers the following statements from its recent history. In doing so, the Church recognizes with pain that this is a complex and sensitive issue for some within Aboriginal communities of faith, who as a result of our Christianizing work, and the legacy of colonialism, are on a journey to restore harmony and spiritual balance....

We have learned that 'good

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effective force for reconciliation, curricu-

lum about residential schools must be part of a broader history education that integrates First Nations, Inuit, and Métis voices, perspectives, and experiences; and builds common ground between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. The education system itself must be transformed into one that rejects the racism embedded in colonial systems of education and treats Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian knowledge systems with equal respect.<sup>112</sup> This is consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

Peoples, which articulates the state's

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national history, have a key role to play in national reconciliation. As publicly funded institutions, museums and archives in settler colonial states such as Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the United States have interpreted the past in ways that have excluded or marginalized Aboriginal peoples' cultural perspectives and historical experience. Museums have traditionally been thought of as places where a nation's history is presented in neutral, objective terms. Yet, as history that had formerly been silenced was revealed, it became evident that Canada's museums had told only part of the story.<sup>130</sup>

In a similar vein, archives

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story.<sup>130</sup>

In a similar

vein, archives have been part of the "architecture of imperialism"—institutions that held the historical documents of the state.<sup>131</sup>

As Canada confronts its settler colonial

past, museums and archives have been gradually transforming from institutions of colony and empire into more inclusive institutions that better reflect the full richness of Canadian history. Political and legal developments on international and national fronts have contributed to this change. Around

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Jessica Bolduc, an Indigenous youth

representing the 4Rs Youth Movement, a national consortium of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth-representing organizations, said: We have re-examined our thoughts and beliefs around colonialism, and have made a commitment to unpack our own baggage, and to enter into a new relationship with each other, using this momentum, to move our country forward, in light of the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada in 2017. At this point in time, we ask ourselves, "What does that anniversary mean for us, as Indigenous youth and non-Indigenous youth, and how do we arrive at that day with something we can celebrate together?"... Our hope is that, one day, we will live together, as recognized nations, within a country we can all be proud of.<sup>181</sup>

Reshaping national history is a

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The challenge of reconciliation • 269

the colonial story of how Canada began with European settlement and became a nation, the process of remembering the past together also invites people to question this limited version of history. Unlike some truth and reconciliation commissions that have focused on individual victims of human rights violations committed over a short period of time, this Commission has examined both the individual and collective harms perpetrated against Aboriginal families, communities, and nations for well over a century, as well as the preconditions that enabled such violence and oppression to occur. Of course, previously inaccessible archival documents are critically important to correcting the historical record, but we have

given equal weight and greater voice to Indigenous oral-based history, legal traditions, and memory practices in our work and in this final report, since these represent the previously unheard and unrecorded versions of history, knowledge, and wisdom.<sup>184</sup>  
This has significantly informed our

#### Reference 36 - 0.01% Coverage

which have tended to reinforce Canada's story as told through colonial eyes, residential school commemorative projects challenged and recast public memory and national history. Many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities partnered with regional or national Aboriginal organizations, and involved local churches, governments, and their non-Aboriginal  
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neighbours

#### Reference 37 - 0.01% Coverage

at a national level.<sup>295</sup>  
Newcomers to Canada For new Canadians, many of whom carry their own traumatic memories of colonial violence, racism, and oppression, finding

#### Reference 38 - 0.02% Coverage

I fit into this landscape?  
Many Canadians feel that Canadian identity and cultural identity is somehow defined by this universal humanism. On the flip side, we have Prime Minister Harper who says Canada has no history of colonialism. They do the same thing. They deny colonialism and racism and [attitudes of] white superiority ... whose legacy we continue to see today.... It's a very toxic legacy.... One of the truths about Canada is that it was created as a white man's country and this term was used over and over again.... Twenty years ago, I became a Canadian citizen and one of the things that wasn't made clear to me ... was that when we took that oath [of allegiance] we would become party to the Treaties that were signed.... We were given this very uplifting lecture on the rights of Canadian citizenship but what was excluded was [information] on our responsibility and obligations ... as now being parties to these Treaties.<sup>297</sup>  
Winnie Ng said,  
I was

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acknowledge  
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that the roots of the harm we have done are found in the attitudes and values of western European colonialism, and the assumption that what was not yet moulded in our image was to be discovered and exploited. As part of that policy we, with other churches, encouraged the government to ban some important spiritual practices through which Aboriginal peoples experienced the presence of the creator God. For the Church's complicity in this policy we ask forgiveness.

3) We recognize that there

#### Reference 40 - 0.02% Coverage

cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious imperialism that was part of the mentality with which the peoples of Europe first met the Aboriginal peoples and which consistently has lurked behind the way the Native peoples of Canada have been treated by civil governments and by the churches. We were, naively, part of this mentality and were, in fact, often a key player in its implementation. We recognize that this mentality has, from the beginning, and ever since, continually threatened the cultural, linguistic, and religious traditions of the Native peoples. We recognize that many of the problems that beset Native communities today—high unemployment, alcoholism, family breakdown, domestic violence, spiraling suicide rates, lack of healthy self-esteem—are not so much the result of personal failure as they are the result of centuries of systemic imperialism. Any people stripped of its traditions as well as of its pride falls victim to precisely these social ills. For the part that we played, however inadvertent and naïve that participation might have been, in the setting up and maintaining of a system that stripped others of not only their lands but also of their cultural, linguistic, and religious traditions we sincerely apologize. Beyond this regret for having been part of a system which, because of its historical privilege and assumed superiority did

#### Reference 41 - 0.01% Coverage

of many of the riches of Native religious tradition. We broke some of your peace pipes and we considered some of your sacred practices as pagan and superstitious. This, too, had its origins in the colonial mentality, our European superiority complex which was grounded in a particular view of history. We apologize for this blindness and disrespect. One qualification is, however, in order. As we publicly acknowledge a certain blindness in our past, we

#### Reference 42 - 0.01% Coverage

from them by other authorities.

- We want to denounce imperialism in all its forms and, concomitantly, pledge ourselves to work with Native peoples in their efforts to recover their lands, their languages, their sacred traditions, and their rightful pride.
- We want, as Oblates, to

#### Reference 43 - 0.01% Coverage

non-native to First Nations

People was deeply wounded by the settlers' attitude of cultural and religious superiority and the imposition of colonial power. For the last many decades the Indian Residential Schools have come to epitomize the harm of that colonial relationship. The good that came out of the Schools came at an unbearable cost to the First Nations. The primal bond inherent within families was to support an effective process

#### Reference 44 - 0.01% Coverage

and redress past harms.

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Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.

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Reconciliation must create a

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so many children so unhappy.

The imperial context

The whole part of the

#### Reference 46 - 0.02% Coverage

of Canada requires it to

report on "the history, purpose, operation and supervision" of Canada's residential schools. These schools were part of a process that brought European states and Christian churches together in a complex and powerful manner. The history of the schools can be best understood in the context of this relationship between the growth of global, European-based empires and the Christian churches. Starting in the sixteenth century, European states gained control of Indigenous peoples' lands throughout the world. It was an era of mass migration. Millions of Europeans arrived as colonial settlers in nearly every part of the world. Millions of Africans were transported in the European-led slave trade, in which coastal Africans collaborated. Traders from India and China spread throughout the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, bringing with them indentured servants whose lives were little different from those of slaves.<sup>44</sup>

The activities of explorers, farmers

#### Reference 47 - 0.01% Coverage

the creation of a European-

dominated global economy. Although it was led initially by Spain and Portugal, this era of imperial expansion came to be directed by Holland, France, and, in the end, most stunningly by Britain.<sup>48</sup> Empires were established militarily. They engaged in extensive and violent wars with one another, maintained a military presence on their frontiers, and conducted innumerable military campaigns to put down nationalist uprisings.<sup>49</sup>

Colonies were established to

The history • 17

be exploited

#### Reference 48 - 0.01% Coverage

established to

The history • 17

be exploited economically. The benefits of empire could come directly as taxes, as precious metals, or as raw materials for industries in the homeland. Colonies often were required to purchase their imports solely from the homeland, making them a captive market.<sup>50</sup> The mere presence of Indigenous people in these newly colonized lands blocked settler access to the land.<sup>51</sup>

To gain control of the

#### Reference 49 - 0.01% Coverage

people, while the chief beneficiaries of empire were the colonists and their descendants. Many of the colonies they settled grew to be among the most prosperous societies in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century world.<sup>54</sup> Settler colonies often went on to gain political independence. In the case of Canada and the United States of America, these newly created nations spread across North America. As they expanded, they continued to incorporate Indigenous peoples and their lands into empires. Colonialism remains an ongoing process, shaping both the structure and the quality of the relationship between the settlers and Indigenous peoples. At their height, the European empires laid claim to most of the earth's surface and controlled the seas.<sup>55</sup> Numerous arguments were advanced to justify such extravagant interventions into the lands and

#### Reference 50 - 0.01% Coverage

world order.<sup>56</sup>

The adoption of Christianity within the Roman Empire (which defined itself as 'civilized') reinforced the view that to be civilized was to be Christian. The Catholic papacy was already playing a role in directing and legitimizing colonialism prior to Christopher Columbus's voyages

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to

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Mary Evans Picture Library, 10825826.

race, whether in Great Britain, or the United States, or the Colonies, or wherever it may be, that rest the highest hopes of those who try to penetrate the dark future, or who seek to raise and better the patient masses of mankind."<sup>65</sup>

Residential schools were established in

#### Reference 52 - 0.01% Coverage

different cultures.<sup>67</sup>

Residential schools

figured prominently in missionary work, not only in Canada, but also around the world. Christian missionaries played a complex but central role in the European colonial project. Their presence helped justify the extension of empires, since they were visibly spreading the word of God to the heathen. If their efforts were unsuccessful, the missionaries might conclude that those who refused to accept the Christian message could not expect the protection of the church or the law, thus

clearing the way for their destruction.<sup>68</sup> Although missionaries often attempted to soften the impact of imperialism, they were also

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committed

#### Reference 53 - 0.02% Coverage

provided a

The history • 21

basic elementary education, and created institutions whose daily life reflected Europe's emerging work discipline. In short, they sought to impose the foreign and transforming world of the residential school. Colonization was undertaken to meet the perceived needs of the imperial powers. The justification offered for colonialism—the need to bring Christianity and civilization to the Indigenous peoples of the world—may have been a sincerely and firmly held belief, but as a justification for intervening in the lives of other peoples, it does not stand up to legal, moral, or even logical scrutiny. The papacy had no authority to give away lands that belonged to Indigenous people. The Doctrine of Discovery cannot serve as the basis for a legitimate claim to the lands that were colonized, if for no other reason than that the so-called discovered lands were already well known to the Indigenous peoples who had inhabited them for thousands of years. The wars of conquest that took place to strip Indigenous peoples of their lands around the globe were not morally just wars; Indigenous peoples were not, as colonists often claimed, subhuman, and neither were they living in violation of any universally agreed-upon set of values. There was no moral imperative to impose Christianity on the

#### Reference 54 - 0.01% Coverage

as a whole, the colo-

nial process relied for its justification on the sheer presumption of taking a specific set of European beliefs and values and proclaiming them to be universal values that could be imposed upon the peoples of the world. This universalizing of European values—so central to the colonial project—that was extended to North America served as the prime justification and rationale for the imposition of a residential school system on the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Residential schools in pre-Confederation

#### Reference 55 - 0.01% Coverage

The Indian Act gave the

federal government the authority to veto decisions made by band councils and to depose chiefs and councillors. The Act placed restrictions on First Nations farmers' ability to sell their crops and take out loans. Over the years, the government also assumed greater authority as to how reserve land could be disposed of: in some cases, entire reserves were relocated against the will of the residents. The Indian Act was a piece of colonial legislation by which, in the name of 'protection,' one group of people ruled and controlled another.

The industrial school initiative It

#### Reference 56 - 0.01% Coverage



of a broader Aboriginal health

crisis that was set in motion by colonial policies that separated Aboriginal people from their land, thereby disrupting their economies and their food supplies. This crisis was particularly intense on the Canadian Prairies. Numerous federal government policies contributed to the undermining of Aboriginal health. During a period of starvation, rations were withheld from bands in an effort to force them to abandon the lands that they had

1929 1944 1959

The history

#### Reference 57 - 0.03% Coverage

of the high death rates

among the Aboriginal community in general. Indian Affairs officials often tried to portray these rates as simply the price that Aboriginal people had to pay as part of the process of becoming civilized. In reality, these rates were the price they paid for being colonized.<sup>387</sup> Aboriginal livelihoods were based on access to the land; colonization disrupted that access and introduced new illnesses to North America. Colonial policies helped wipe out food sources and confined Aboriginal people to poorly located reserves, with inadequate sanitation and shelter. The schools could have served as institutions to help counter these problems. To do that, however, they would have had to have been properly constructed, maintained, staffed, and supplied. Government officials were aware of this. They were also aware that death rates among students at residential schools were disproportionately high. It would be wrong to say the government did nothing about this crisis: the 1910 contract did provide a substantial funding increase to the schools. But the federal government never made the type of sustained investment in Aboriginal health, in either the communities or the schools, that could have addressed this crisis—which continues to the present. The non-Aboriginal tuberculosis death rate declined before the introduction of life-saving drugs. It was brought down by improvements in diet, housing, sanitation, and medical attention. Had such measures been taken by the federal government earlier, they would have reduced both the Aboriginal death rates and the residential school students' death rates. By failing to take adequate measures that had been recommended to it, the federal government blighted the health of generations of Aboriginal people. Burial policy Many of the

#### Reference 58 - 0.01% Coverage

policies for nearly 200 years,

Aboriginal people have maintained their identity and their communities. They continue to assert their rights to self-governance. In this, they are not alone. Like the Settlement Agreement in Canada, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a milestone in a global campaign to recognize and respect the rights of Indigenous peoples. It is time to abandon the colonial policies of the past, to address the legacy of the schools, and to engage in a process of reconciliation with the Aboriginal people of Canada.

The legacy T

he closing

#### Reference 59 - 0.01% Coverage

Youth Movement.” Jessica Bolduc said,

We have re-examined our thoughts and beliefs around colonialism, and have made a commitment to unpack our own baggage, and to enter into a new relationship with each other, using this momentum, to move our country forward, in light of the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada in 2017.  
At this point in time

#### Reference 60 - 0.01% Coverage

access and revitalize their spirituality,  
cultures, languages, laws, and governance systems, and as non-Aboriginal Canadians increasingly come to understand Indigenous history within Canada, and to recognize and respect Indigenous approaches to establishing and maintaining respectful relationships, Canadians can work together to forge a new covenant of reconciliation. Despite the ravages of colonialism, every Indigenous nation across the country, each  
with its own distinctive culture

#### Reference 61 - 0.01% Coverage

acknowledge and redress past harms.

4) Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.

5) Reconciliation must create a