



The Colonial Present: The Rule of Ignorance and the Role of Law in British Columbia

Kerry Coast

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No treaties were made with the indigenous nations whose territories are now considered a Canadian province called British Columbia. Instead, a breathtaking policy of criminalization and assimilation has been vigorously carried out against them. Present day governments continue with processes that, although recently re-named and cosmetically improved, are unconstitutional and prohibited by the 1948 Genocide Convention: deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part. The indigenous nations have never joined Canada but had citizenship imposed on them while the province has never fulfilled Canada's constitutional requirements of purchasing their lands before settling. The people of BC seek the dissolution of some thirty distinct indigenous nations. BC's economy is 80% derived from extraction of natural resources from lands and waters that have never been ceded, sold or surrendered to them by their indigenous owners. Recognition of this fact has given rise to what is called "the uncertainty principle" currently impeding foreign investment, to the distress of the Canadian government, which is under great pressure to resolve the issue. The ongoing colonization of British Columbia relies on settler indifference to the indigenous. The Colonial Present documents the colonizer's manufacture of a new mythology to dehumanize the original peoples and strip them of their rightful places in the world. Throughout the mainstream media, the academic presses and the courts, industrial influences have corrupted and impoverished the non-native understanding. Accepting these standardized lies, new British Columbians coming from all over the world comply with the destruction of distinct nations with lands, languages, cultures and peoples, a fate which replicates that in many of their original homelands. The indigenous peoples have suffered excruciating losses at the hands of British Columbia's leaders. BE/Canada seek to resolve the issue by demanding that indigenous nations should release title to their homelands in exchange for a miniscule financial, land and program funding settlement, and management capacities barely distinguishable from those of BC municipalities. Their lands and rich resources are to be ceded to the Queen. This book is an exploration of how such a stunning string of events continues unchecked, and British Columbians' continuing attempts to rationalize them.

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