

# The Anarcho-Syndicalist Platform for Indigenous Rights:

A Trans-National study of Settler-colonialism, White Labourism and the International Worker's of the World in Australia and South Africa.



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## **Abstract**

This thesis considers the legal stasis triggered by the 2007 'Northern Territory National Emergency Response' and suggests clarification can be found in the historical precedent of settler-colonialism. Through a trans-national exploration of Australia and South Africa, the success of European settlement on these continents is deemed to be directly attributed to colonialism's success in securing land resources from indigenous peoples and subsequently converting native lands and labour power into resources for Surplus-Capitalist production. Colonialism's cultural and political domination of Indigenous peoples was threatened by the global dissemination of Socialist ideas, where Libertarian Socialism canvassed by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) is argued above Marxism as providing a future society that would provide the ideological apparatus for the equal recognition of native rights.

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## Introduction

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of June, 2007, John Howard's federal government led an intervention of police, Army and Government overseers into seventy-three remote Aboriginal communities, termed the 'Northern Territory Emergency Response'. Following the release of the Northern Territory Government's report '*Little Children Are Sacred*', the stated aim of the "Emergency Response" was to 'stamp out sexual and other abuse of defenceless Aboriginal children'<sup>1</sup>. The Government employed exceptional constitutional powers to initiate complete control over Aboriginal communities, overriding the jurisdiction of the Northern Territory Government and the terms of the Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (RDA) in a move Howard described as 'radical, comprehensive and highly interventionist'<sup>2</sup>. Within a furore of intense media coverage, the intervention was presented as a watershed national emergency that required 'exceptional measures to deal with an exceptionally tragic situation'<sup>3</sup>. However the militaristic and punitive character of the intervention was in direct contrast to the recommendations proposed by the authors of '*Little Children Are Sacred*', Pat Anderson and Rex Wild QC, who advised consulting with Aboriginal Communities in a consensual manner respecting Indigenous sovereignty and obligations under international codes of human rights. The draconian measures implemented on Aboriginal communities during the Intervention were found, by United Nations special rapporteur on indigenous human rights, James Anaya, to be 'incompatible with Australia's international human rights obligations, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination'<sup>4</sup>.

Despite its dramatic manifestation of Governmental power, The Northern Territory Intervention was concurrent with the Howard Government's actions under his doctrine of "practical reconciliation", which dramatically reversed the Aboriginal self-determination policies initiated in the 1970's. In

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<sup>1</sup> Northern Territory National Emergency Response Bill 2007 ("NTNER Bill") Quoted in R. Stringer, 'A Nightmare of the Neocolonial Kind: Politics of Suffering in Howard's Northern Territory Intervention', in *Borderlands*, vol. 6, no.2 , 2007

<sup>2</sup> Howard, John (2007a) 'To Stabilise and Protect,' Address to the Sydney Institute, Four Seasons Hotel, Sydney, 25 June.

<sup>3</sup> J. Howard, *ibid*, 25 June, 2007

<sup>4</sup> NT Intervention Violates Human Rights: UN, *The West Australian*, 24 Feb, 2010

2004, Howard disbanded the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and replaced it with the National Indigenous Council (NIC), a government appointed body which announced a policy to ‘review, and as necessary, reform existing Aboriginal land rights policies and legislations’<sup>5</sup>. This body was central to the amendment Bill regarding the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976 (ALRA)*, and proposing to abolish communal land holdings to privatise areas of Aboriginal land<sup>6</sup>. A policy statement at the Minerals Council of Australia two weeks before the intervention regarding the amendment to the ALRA gives further evidence as to the underlying causal implications of Howard’s changes to Aboriginal land policy. ‘The principle objectives of the bill are to improve access to Aboriginal land for development, especially mining’<sup>7</sup>. Thus I suggest that the media sensationalist cloak of racial paternalism that surrounded the Northern Territory Intervention provided a ready cloak for an insidious land seizure by the Government and dramatically expand the Mining industry in the Northern Territory. Logically in 2007-2008, the number of grants for Mining exploration licences doubled and the number of Mining Leases tripled<sup>8</sup>.

This thesis argues that the theoretical apparatus that clarified the historical oppression of Indigenous peoples under settler-colonialism are contemporarily relevant for explaining the subservience of Aboriginal rights to economic concerns in modern Australia. It suggests modern Governmental obstruction to Aboriginal “land rights” and the martial forces used during the NT Intervention has its direct historical precedent in Australia’s white settlement and its annihilation of Aboriginal civilisation for control and use of the continent’s resources for surplus Capitalism. Modern depictions of Aboriginal bi-lingual education and customary law as pathologies of cultural separateness are analogous to colonialism’s cultural dominance of Aboriginality through “Social Darwinism” and white racialised nationalism. This thesis seeks to build on trans-national historical scholarship that looks to overcome “methodological nationalism” and follow international flows of people and ideas to

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<sup>5</sup> M. Dodson & D. McCarthy, *Communal Land and the Amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT)*, *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies*. p. 5

<sup>6</sup> M. Dodson & D. McCarthy, *Ibid*, p. 20

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Waratah, ‘Mining the Intervention’, p. 1

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p.2

understand how settler-colonial societies were mutually constructive. It lastly supports ground-breaking research by Lucien Van der Walt and Michael Schmidt in reclaiming the history of revolutionary class politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism, and provides a powerful episode of working-class politics that recognised the uniqueness of indigenous rights within its wider aspiration for a Socialist Revolution.

Chapter One proposes the success of settler-colonial projects in South Africa and Australia were premised on the capture of the continents land resources for use in surplus agricultural production. This desire was fuelled by the migration of free settlers to the colonies and often required military force to subdue and subsequently exploit the labour power of the continents first peoples. The oppressive administration and cultural domination of indigenous peoples under settler-colonialism is best described by the term ‘internal colonialism’, where the pattern of exploitation mimicked the oppression of colonised nations by European powers.

Chapter Two looks at the development of these two colonial societies into nation-states, premised on exclusive racial nationalisms. It investigates the inception of Socialist ideas into the working-classes, but argues that its primary character of Marxist- state socialism facilitated the societies national concerns over class consciousness. Intrinsic to working class identity in this period was the Imperial flow of ‘White Labourism’, advocating a working-class solidarity along racial lines and helping secure the dominance of European settlement in the Antipodes.

Chapter Three investigates the significant challenge to “White Labourism” generated by Revolutionary Industrial Unionism, whose platform of uniting workers across racial and national barriers was a pioneering ideological challenge to settler-colonialism’s hegemonic position in Australia and South Africa. I will explore the chief expression of this Socialist tradition in these contexts, The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and argue the IWW’s doctrine of championing the causes of the world’s most oppressed peoples forged a pioneering method for the expression of native rights in settler-colonial society.

# 1. Settler Colonialism in Australia and South Africa

Chapter one proposes that the existence of settler-colonialism in both Australia and South Africa was based on the utilisation of the continents resources for surplus capitalism. Thus the success of the project required firstly, the military conquest of the indigenous population's native to these continents and subsequently the exploitation of their labour power facilitated through emerging state structures. A body of knowledge known as "social Darwinism" developed from the experiences of European countries in dominant colonial arenas, and was mutually used to explain and legitimate colonialism in the antipodes. Lastly I will suggest that the structures of domination which cemented the subservience of indigenous peoples in settler-colonialism are analogous to the patterns of Imperial dominance that European nations used to dominate its non-European subjects, explained as the theory of internal colonialism.

The term "Settler –Colonialism" best describes the complex, on-going and unequal relationships between white settlers and Indigenous Australians since the arrival of Europeans in 1788. In essence the 'first settlement' was not merely a historical moment<sup>9</sup>, but a recurring alliance between the Imperial administration, free-settlers and speculative Capitalism to secure the continental resources of Australia against the unmistakable claims of sovereignty exhibited by its first peoples. So focused were the colonists on securing land for surplus agricultural production that a measure of the success of the

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<sup>9</sup> A. McGrath, *Contested Ground*, p. 1

project could be gauged by the completeness of Aboriginal dislocation, a zero-sum contest secured by Europeans through an over-zealous application of coercion and military force.

As the early colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land slowly transformed from penal colonies to free settler societies, Governmental land surveyors charted the continents interior drawing inspired migrants to seek rich pastoral lands and produce for the global market. As Aboriginal hunting lands were overrun and clans decimated by introduced diseases, frontier European populations were met with violent resistance from Aboriginal peoples, now realising the white intruders were permanent and their presence constituted an overwhelmingly threat to indigenous existence.

The colonial frontier as an arena of violence was central to the settler-colonial project; the powerful influence of graziers on colonial administrations enabled them to protect their pastoral interests and their intention of 'pacifying' Aboriginal clans over the concerns of metropolitan and urban humanitarians. In the 1840's, white settlers pushed into the central grasslands of Queensland having inherited the frontier ethos of violence from earlier episodes and were permanently armed in preparation of confrontation with native tribes. Unease at the widespread violence on indigenous peoples regarded as British subjects under Imperial law held little sway in distant Queensland, especially when the colony gained self Government in 1859. The geographical transfer of colonial control was the ultimate triumph for squatter-pastoralists, with 'each shift of power, from Downing Street to Sydney and from Sydney to Brisbane, brought governments closer to the frontier-politically, intellectually and morally'<sup>10</sup>. Thereafter, colonial discourse in Queensland was dominated by powerful settlers seeking the expansion of the colonies agricultural economy, over Imperial concerns regarding the just treating of native peoples.

They asserted there newly won power through the Native Police, a punitive force charged with guarding frontier farms, stock and settlers. This forces reprisal to Indigenous attacks on white communities and cattle was vicious, and they regarding their duty 'in the same light as inhabitants of a country under martial law, the natives knowing no law, nor entertaining any fears of but those of the

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<sup>10</sup> H. Reynolds and D. May, 'Queensland' in *Contested Ground*, (A. McGrath), ed., p. 173

carbine, there was no other means of ruling them'<sup>11</sup>. Unmistakably, the vicious actions of the native police and frontier settlers were not irrational or clandestine deeds in the expansion of the Queensland Colony; they were inevitable occurrences deriving from an insatiable settler appetite for land and material progress.

The violence that permeated the frontier and the aggressive settler competition for land is described by Raymond Evans as a form of "booty capitalism", a society that rewarded masculine behaviour that asserted its dominance in a hostile environment<sup>12</sup>. He suggests manifest within a glorified competitive struggle, men who achieved social advance and material success were celebrated as representations of typecast Australian male. Thus arose a colonial self ethnography that regarded 'physically proficient men, white and preferably British as the best colonisers whose forceful nature, competitiveness and even occasional resort to brutality against inferiors were regarded as virtues to be applauded'<sup>13</sup>. The association of race and force as colonial merits as Evans indicates, was important as the nineteenth century progressed, where the nationalisation push would draw upon these traits to collectivise the separate colonies into federation.

What Queensland's culture of violence and its aggressive pursuit of wealth reveals, is the central role played by free trade Capitalist endeavour in the colonisation of Australia. Surplus agriculture was to constitute a total societal annihilation for Australia's native population, where a hundred years following the first settlement of Europeans, the hunter-gatherer resources on which Aborigines depended were expunged by a comprehensive system of land use. Richard Broome poignantly explains this occurrence where 'the six million sheep in Port Phillip and the farmers who followed were cogs in the capitalist-industrial system that stretched to the woollen mills of Yorkshire and to the jumpers on the backs and the food on the tables of an expanding world population'<sup>14</sup>. The globalised world of the first industrial revolution dramatically altered the way of life of millions of native people

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<sup>11</sup> H. Reynolds and D. May, 'Queensland' in *Contested Ground*, (A. McGrath), ed., p. 173

<sup>12</sup> R. Evans, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in Colonial Queensland*, p. 8

<sup>13</sup> R. Evans, *ibid*, p. 10

<sup>14</sup> R. Broome, 'Victoria', in *Contested Ground* (A. McGrath, ed.), p. 129

around the world, and it is the parallel demonstration of British colonialism in South Africa that bestows credence on devastating history of Indigenous Australians under settler colonialism.

The choice of South Africa may appear to be an odd context to relate to Australian colonialism, with its long history of slavery and Dutch control preceding the British take-over of the Cape Colony in 1806. However the two themes prevalent in Australian colonialism, Capitalist enterprise following upon the destruction of native populations, are central to the British settler colonialism in South Africa. Furthermore, the Capital-colonial connection is greatly clarified through the exploration of South African history, because its overwhelming representation is demonstrated by how of such a small number of white settlers were able to impose themselves on a far greater number of Africans in order to achieve their present situation of dominance, exploitation and power<sup>15</sup>.

Whereas Indigenous Australians, although varied and disproportionate, were continually impacted by the forces of settler colonialism in the nineteenth century, for the great many African tribes within the present day state borders of South Africa, colonialism was a late, dramatic and until the mineral discoveries of the late nineteenth century, an almost peripheral occurrence to the explosive *Mfecane* tribal wars of the 1820's. While Indigenous Australian resistance to European settlers was often violent and organised when led by warriors like Windradyne and Pemulwuy, in comparison to Africa's centralised martial tribes, its character resembled decentralised skirmishes in contrast to the pitched battles that Imperial soldiers faced against African kingdoms. Thus while Australian colonialism relentlessly displaced native society, South African colonialism rather had to incorporate itself into a society that developed as;

the story of how increasingly powerful African and Colonial state systems incorporated their weaker neighbours into their social formations and appropriated their surplus, and of how in time the white and black groups came into conflict with one another, to the ultimate victory of the colonial states.<sup>16</sup>

Like early Australian historiography, much emphasis by South African historians was placed on the growth of settler-colonialism on the African continent to illuminate a national narrative. Chief

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<sup>15</sup> Marks and Atmore eds. *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, p. 33

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid* p. 6

importance in much Afrikaner literature is the “Great trek” migration to the Transvaal, while English speaking traditions tended to emphasise the Liberalism of the Cape Colony. This colonial focus obviously downplayed the many powerful African kingdoms that developed after *Mfecane* and would violently confront the encroaching efforts of colonialism. The growth of Indigenous states, like the Swazi, Pedi, Sotho and Zulu, would impact the cultural and productive relations of Africans far more than the forces of colonialism;

so cataclysmic an event was the *Mfecane*, that for many African peoples it quite over-shadowed the almost contemporaneous appearance of missionaries, hunters, traders and settlers from outside, and conditioned their responses to these new arrivals until well into the nineteenth century<sup>17</sup>.

Thus Nineteenth century colonialism interweaved rather than displaced pre-existing African structures because it was, in many ways, ineffective to displace traditional society as had occurred on the Australian continent. When the British took control of Natal in 1843, pastoralist’s were content with extracting a small tax from African peasant producers but did little to restructure society as it increasingly would later in the century<sup>18</sup>.

The significance for this thesis in emphasising the strength of these indigenous South African societies, assembled as centralised and agriculturally productive fiefdoms in comparison to Australia’s hunter-gatherer tribalism, emphasises the power of British colonialism to dominate and exploit native populations when settlers desire native lands for agricultural production. While slavery had been the pre-eminent labour relationship of the Dutch Cape Colony, the nature of the colonial project transformed when Britain took over the Cape Colony and tied continental production to the global economy. As with the Australian pattern of colonialism, free settlers drove pastoralist expansion into the interior of the colony and were backed by the Imperial military apparatus which proved devastating to the Eastern Cape’s Xhosa and Khoisan cultures. Unlike the Australian colonies however, where settlers desired indigenous land much more than indigenous labour power, Africa’s pre-existing history of slavery enabled the emerging settler elite gain land and cheap labour by

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid* p. 6

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid* p. 19

‘putting their full weight behind the processes of dispossession and military expansionism whereby indigenous land and labour were shaken free for settler speculation and settler use’<sup>19</sup>. The relationship between free trade and settler-colonialisms access to a perpetual native labour supply would be one of the lasting traditions of this era on the history of South Africa.

As the settler voice gained dominance in the colony, they demanded labour reforms from the Government to combat the severe labour shortage in the colony. The constricted labour situation is explored by Susan Newton-King in her chapter ‘The labour market of the Cape, 1807-28’, who perceives the abolishment of the slave trade in 1807 as triggering a worker shortage where ‘state intervention in the labour market became a necessity’<sup>20</sup>. Far from being the celebrated humanitarian triumphs of the Cape Liberalist tradition, Ordinances 49 and 50, are instead perceived by Newton-King as essential labour market regulations by a British administration obliged to free up labour for settler use following the abolishment of slavery in the British Empire.

While Labour reform was an essential component in the Cape Colonies development, like Australia, the broadening of the colonial frontier was vital to its growth. An insatiable appetite for land saw settler’s push the agenda for frontier wars with Nguni chiefdoms to the North and Xhosa to the East<sup>21</sup>. An economic analysis of the Cape in this period emphasises deep resonances with Evan’s depiction of ‘booty Capitalism’ in Queensland, as urban land speculators in Cape Town financed the burgeoning frontiers farms in feeding the booming market for wool in Britain. Like the Australian colonies, the Cape was drawn into the Imperial economy as British and continental production failed the supply needs of the manufacturing centres of Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool. Wool consequently became the Cape’s chief export and saw an annual cumulative growth rate of 24% between, 1833 to 1851<sup>22</sup>. The central role pastoralism played in the antipodes, involving new technologies, a *laissez faire* dogma attached to free trade fluctuations and unyielding competition on the frontier, ensured the Cape like the Australian colonies would thrust the concerns of indigenous peoples aside for the

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<sup>19</sup> Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, p. 68

<sup>20</sup> Newton-King, ‘The labour market of the Cape Colony, 1807-28’, in *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa* (S. Marks and A. Atmore, eds.), p. 171

<sup>21</sup> Keegan, *ibid*, p. 75

<sup>22</sup> Kirk, T ‘The Cape Economy and the expropriation of the Kat River Settlement, 1846-53, p. 229

pursuit of material wealth. That the coercive 'Master and Servants Act' of 1856, legislation which repealed many of the Khoisan 'freedoms' won in Ordinances 49 and 50, was enacted after the transfer of the colonies administration from London to Cape Town, delineates the role industrial Capitalism played in the formation of racial inequalities brought by settler-colonialism to indigenous peoples around the world.

A social examination of the Cape Colony in the nineteenth century demonstrates a linear continuum between the administrative social and labour controls of Cape native populations and the later compound systems that developed on the Kimberley and Transvaal mine fields. That this administrative control was harnessed through a much larger apparatus of industrialised mining does not curtail the centrality of Capitalism and race to its operation. While African societies were still shaped by their pre-colonial experiences, the variance brought by mining to the formation of native labour diametrically arose from the revenue objectives of the mining companies, much like pastoralists in the Cape Colony and Australia. The ruthless desire to secure workers 'at the lowest possible cost and in the greatest possible numbers'<sup>23</sup> was a condition generated in South Africa by British settler-colonialism.

### **The Impact of Social Darwinism in the Antipodes**

In the previous section I discussed the formation and growth of two British settler societies in Australia and South Africa which were predicated on the subjugation and exploitation of native peoples. These occurrences were not contained within colonial vacuums, but fed and were augmented by global bodies of knowledge which looked to explain the many unequal power relationships of colonialism. Key to this knowledge was a growing racial consciousness, where ethnological cultures were said to be extensively governed by biological characteristics. Within these parameters,

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<sup>23</sup> S. Marks and R. Rathbone eds. *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, p. 12

explanations and legitimacy for the experiences of native populations were found, and more significantly were shared by the settler-colonial cultures of South Africa and Australia.

Cultural interpretation of Charles Darwin's seminal text 'On the origin of species', published in 1869, built a body of knowledge that saw colonial struggles as an inevitable conflict of races, where Europeans, through superior knowledge, culture and breeding would inevitably conquer primeval populations across the globe. Through supposed "scientific realities", eugenics and race based anthropology facilitated colonial justifications for frontier violence, labour exploitation and land dispossession. This self serving ideology was so malleable and expedient that its fiction could be, and was, utilised by colonists right across varying Imperial arenas, a pre-destined formula of European superiority over varying manifestations of 'backward cultures'.

By placing human civilisations on a "Great chain of being", settler-colonialism would be fed by an Imperial discourse of white racial identity and triumphalism, a self-serving ubiquities exchange between frontier and conurbation. Colonial administrators and intellectuals proved to be some of the most ardent supporters of Social Darwinism, explaining anecdotes of horrific violence as natural patterns of behaviour. Henry Keylock Rusden, Secretary of the Royal Society of Victoria, legitimised the demise of Aboriginal culture within evolutionary parameters, remarking that 'we invoke and remorselessly fulfil the inexorable law of natural selection (or of demand and supply), when exterminating the inferior Australian and Maori races'<sup>24</sup>.

Settler-Colonialism drew upon bodies of Darwinist theory in Europe to explain their dominance over native populations, like the "human science" famously developed by Lombroso in his study of Sicilian facial characteristics and its relationship with criminality<sup>25</sup>. Colonial Anthropologists like Sir Baldwin Spenser, who became the Chief Protector of Aborigines in 1911 and later Professor of Biology at Melbourne University, remarked that the Aboriginal brain was so structurally simple that they are like 'an overgrown child in matters of character and emotional expression'<sup>26</sup>. Eugenics acted

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 399

<sup>25</sup> C. Lombroso, 'Anthropology and Physiognomy of 832 Criminals'

<sup>26</sup> B. Spenser, *Herald*, Jan. 1926

as a *deus ex machina*, in so far as provincial racial dominance was reinforced with racial stigmas from other parts of the Empire. The biological categorisation which denoted indigenous hunter gatherers as the lowest form of civilisation enabled theories regarding the Australian Aborigine to reinforce the primitive categorisation of the Southern African San peoples. As South Africa's pioneer historian G.M. Theal described in his eleven volume *History of South Africa*, the San 'were so primitive that one can hardly conceive of living beings entitled to be termed men in a lower condition than the Bushman'<sup>27</sup>. They possess a jaw that was 'only surpassed in feebleness by that of the Australian black'<sup>28</sup>. The absurdity of Theal's comment reveals, firstly the extent to which anthropology was believed to denote culture, and second the utility of disparate bodies of scientific knowledge to transferred from one colonial realm to another.

Colonial commentaries regarding the demise of native populations is strikingly similar and was mutually reinforcing, in both Australia and South Africa, where the arrival and dominance of Europeans is seen not for its injustice, but its inevitability. The notion that Australian colonialism was an inevitable occurrence between an advanced civilisation and a primitive one locked in ancient superstitions is delineated by Archibald Meston in his native report to the Queensland Government in 1889, the 'Australian Blacks' he claimed;

Are moving on into eternal darkness in which all savage and inferior races are surely destined to disappear. All efforts to preserve them, though credible to our humanity, is a poor compliment to our knowledge of those inexorable laws whose operations are as apparent as our own existence. Their epoch of time is near its termination, the shadows deepening towards everlasting night. It is a mournful picture, that of the old inhabitants who for unknown ages have roamed the primeval forests of this mighty continent, now moving off silent and swift-footed into oblivion before the presence of the white strangers.<sup>29</sup>

If ever there was a euphemistic passage for genocide, Meston surely achieved it in this hollow declaration. The significance of his false interpretation nonetheless, is that merely ten years later

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<sup>27</sup> G.M. Theal, *History of South Africa since 1795* p. 3

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3

<sup>29</sup> A. Meston, *Queensland V and P*, 1889, 5 p. 1213

Meston would be at the forefront of new “protective” legislations for Aboriginal people, controls that would engulf the liberties of Indigenous people. Meston’s disingenuous sentiment of indigenous decline is mirrored by Theal, who sees the terminal providence of the South Africa’s San as having little compunction for European settlers;

One may feel pity for savages such as these, destroyed in their creative wilds, though there is little reason for regretting their disappearance. They were of no benefit to any other section of the human family; they were incapable of improvement<sup>30</sup>

Theal’s patronising assertion highlights the transformation of racial thought that occurred as settler-colonialism established absolute control over South Africa. Whereas early nineteenth century commentary stressed European superiority through its paternal duty to teach ‘native savages’ European modes of land-use, Christianity and education, later Social Darwinist interpretations of race emphasised the futility of this endeavour and shunned native populations as scientifically ordained to extinction. While evidently false, Theal synthesises the colonial belief that native peoples had no place within the capitalist colonial project, a custom of linking race and nation that would become central to the emerging nation-states in both countries.

In his article ‘Evolutionary Theory in Australian Social Thought’, Crawford D. Goodwin delineates the centrality of social Darwinist theory to interpretations regarding the successful settlement of the Australian continent. As well as explaining settler dominance over native Australians, it was also employed by pastoral and business conservatives to promote free trade doctrinaires over working-class attempts for wage protection and universal suffrage. “Social welfarism” was explained by *laissez-faire* advocates as ‘attempts by less successful citizens to wrest wealth from prosperous capitalists through injudicious legislation impeding the evolutionary process and threatening the welfare of future generations’<sup>31</sup>. Here evolutionary theory is being used to reiterate the necessity of Capitalist endeavour to the success of colonialism and emphasises a direct link between Evans’ frontier “booty Capitalism” and the economic rationalisms of the city. Where the harsh outback

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<sup>30</sup> C. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, p. 28

<sup>31</sup> C.D. Goodwin ‘Evolution in Australian Social Thought’, *Journal of the History of ideas*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Jul. - Sep., 1964, pp. 393-416

landscape ensured the ‘destruction of the weak as the only way to assure success for the strong’<sup>32</sup>, colonial vitality required a ‘survival of the fittest’ economic contest to ensure it was not racially retarded like native populations.

However the authority *laissez faire* doctrinaires retained over “Social Darwinist” cultural capital would be greatly challenged by radical collectivists and socialists. Through the virulent pages of the *Bulletin* magazine, the triumph of individualist economic endeavour became superimposed on the nation, where the primary tenets of an emerging Australian labourism, including welfare protection and state arbitration, were now argued as vital national structures in a global geo-political contest. Racial competition through national struggle was a concern raised by Charles Pearson in his influential book *National Life and Character*, a book famously held by Prime-Minister Edmund Barton upon the first sitting of the new Federal Parliament. In a dramatic revision of white superiority upon evolutionary grounds, Pearson now saw the demise of the European race engendered through the vigorous reproduction of and powerful nation building of non-white peoples. Pearson observed:

Coloured races outside the temperate zone “though they may in parts accept the white man as a conqueror and organiser, will gradually become too strong and unwieldy for him to control, or if they retain him, will do it only with the condition that he assimilates himself to the inferior race.”<sup>33</sup>

Colonial fears of race deterioration and the alarming emergence of a Japanese militarism fed into discourses supporting Australian federation. Secured in 1901, commentators heralded the occasion as a triumph of democratic equality, a “social laboratory” of European progress and national vitality<sup>34</sup>. This equality however, was impinged on racial exclusion, were Australia’s new immigration policy would draw upon a model used in South Africa, a dictation test to ensure the white racial homogeneity of the nation would not be tainted by inferior races. While the White Australia Policy appeared to be directed outwards, it held serious ramifications for coloured populations inside the new nation, where many Chinese, Pacific Islander and other non-white families were torn apart through

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p. 398

<sup>33</sup> *National Life and Character: A Forecast* (second ed, London, 1894), 68

<sup>34</sup> *Immigration Nation*, SBS Television, viewed on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2011

invasive new legislation vehement on securing racial efficiency through a homogenous racial community.

Australia's theoretical union of race and nation carried serious implications for Aboriginal communities over the next century. Policies that segregated Aboriginal communities on outback reserves and the state appropriation of half-caste indigenous children, find their intellectual precursor in the racial divisions of Social Darwinism that attempted to explain their demise.

### **Indigenous life under the State**

I began by describing the overwhelming violence and destruction of indigenous societies that was intrinsic to the success of settler-colonialism to economically develop the continents of Australia and South Africa. Next I argued that the colonial project developed and was reciprocally augmented by a body of knowledge known as "Social Darwinism, which attempted to explain and legitimise the demise of colonised peoples in the face of European progress. In this next section I will argue, contrary to the predictions of previously discussed commentators like Theal and Meston, that indigenous populations in both South Africa and Australia did not "die off" as expected within Darwinist parameters, and their enduring presence represented a menace to the racial consciousness of each settler society. Finally I suggest that colonialism's exploitation of native labour power required composite and oppressive state legislations in order to maintain this utility and ensure the racial dominance of settler-colonialism was unthreatened by this labour force.

The overwhelming destruction of indigenous societies from cumulative wave's of settler violence, pastoralism, and cultural oppression rendered the continuance of traditional modes of life, such as hunting and gathering for Indigenous Australians or subsistence farming for the African Khoisan, near impossible. In Queensland, estimates on indigenous fatalities from settler and police violence are suggested at upwards of 10 000<sup>35</sup>. This trauma engendered a powerful form of psychological control over indigenous populations long after the shooting stopped. 'The local blacks', a settler noted in

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<sup>35</sup> H Reynolds and D. May, 'Queensland', in *Contested Ground* (A. McGrath, ed.), p. 177

1889, 'have learnt in their terror to submit to anything that the conquering race may choose to do'<sup>36</sup>. As many displaced and anguished clan survivors "came in" to the developing colonial towns, the terror and compliance described by the settler was greatly exploited by colonist in their quest to solve a chronic shortage of labour<sup>37</sup>. Aborigines demonstrated that they were proficient as stock-workers and shearers and became the dominant source of labour in the pastoral industry, enabling the survival of family members who often lived off the rations earned by pastoral workers. Nevertheless, despite their worth to colonial society, Indigenous workers faced the same hostility they experienced on the frontier, zealous townspeople adamant that "the niggers should be kept in their place"<sup>38</sup>.

The depression of the 1890's was to place great pressures on Aboriginal communities as many workers employed on casual terms were sacrificed when diminishing seasonal, un-skilled positions became scarce. Aboriginal workers from state welfare strained the limited resources of the Aborigines Protection Board led Indigenous groups to occupy an increasingly visible presence in colonial towns. Colonial stereotypes of Aboriginal women purporting an enhanced fertility and sexual immorality raised white fears of an increase in the Aboriginal population. An increased administrative control and surveillance of indigenous communities was demanded by settlers, with "Darwinist" assumptions suggesting fragmented Aboriginal communities would see its remnant population assimilated into white society<sup>39</sup>.

The fulcrum of administrative control rested with the Chief Protector, men whom 'possessed extreme powers, not only over his Aboriginal clients, but in relation to all sections of society'<sup>40</sup>. Given the role of Chief Protector of Aborigines in 1911, Baldwin Spencer brought his anthropological and scientific knowledge to his administrative role and utilised legislations like the new federal Aborigines Act of 1910 to conduct widespread social changes. Reacted to alleged Chinese sexual and labour exploitation of Aborigines, Spencer placed strict vagrancy laws on Indigenous people stipulating Aboriginal

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<sup>36</sup> *Queenslander*, 12 Jan. 1884

<sup>37</sup> H Reynolds and D. May, 'Queensland', in *Contested Ground* (A. McGrath, ed.), p. 179

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, p. 180

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, p. 185

<sup>40</sup> D. Mulvaney and J Calaby, *So Much that is new: Baldwin Spenser- A Biography 1860-1929*, p. 282

workers to reside with their white employers or in the Governments Kahlin compound<sup>41</sup>. Spencer's supercilious paternalism in dictating Aboriginal life is documented by his biographer's Mulvaney and Calaby, comparing him to 'the modern proponents of *apartheid* who feel a comparable sense of satisfaction in supervising the lives of people whom they consider to be intellectually inferior'<sup>42</sup>. Spencer's laws broke many established relationships between Aboriginal women and Chinese men and many Aborigines were employed in legitimate professions in Darwin's Chinatown, a matter pointed out to Spencer by Chinese businessman. These arguments drew little appraisal by Spencer who justifiably is counted as a distinguished cog within Australia's larger apparatus of oppressive state control of indigenous peoples.

Comparable indigenous control can be found in the Queensland Government's *The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sake of Opium Act of 1897*, which gave the Chief Protector the jurisdiction to control the movement, residence and employment of Aboriginal people. The legislation was fashioned as a response to humanitarian concerns over the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases among Aboriginal women and alcohol and drug addiction. It was however, as Stephenson remarks in *The Outsiders Within*, another manifestation of anti-Chinese racism designed to combat the increasing employment of Aborigines by Asian employers. Ostensibly resentful at Asian economic endeavour in northern Australia in the pearling industry and market-gardens, 'white colonists were opposed to Asian foreigners having any access to resources they felt rightfully belonged to them'<sup>43</sup>. Aboriginal men gained periodic employment on Japanese pearling luggers, enabling them importantly to remain within their traditional land and kinship circles and avoid the over-zealous scrutiny of Government and Missionary overseers. Short-term sexual liaisons between Asian men and Indigenous women was another trading relation between coastal Aborigine communities and Pearling boats, which provided food and commodities for Indigenous communities, mitigating the need for government rations and pastoral employment. It was the peripheral nature of these exchanges which disturbed colonists, drawing public criticism of the administration's inability

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<sup>41</sup> P. Read, 'Northern Territory', in *Contested Ground* (A. McGrath and A. Curthoys, eds.) p. 276

<sup>42</sup> D. Mulvaney and J. Calaby, *ibid*, p. 286

<sup>43</sup> P. Stephenson, *The Outsiders Within: telling Australia's Indigenous-Asian story*, p.75

to adhere to racial doctrines of The White Australia Policy and retain Aboriginal workers for settler service.

The value of the subjugated Aboriginal worker to the colonial economy, articulated through settler concerns of indigenous links with the Chinese community, was demonstrated by J.W. Beakley in 1929, whose Government report declared, 'that neither the pastoral industry nor Darwin family life would be able to continue with Aboriginal labour'<sup>44</sup>. Contrary to colonial (and modern) derision of the Aboriginal worker as incongruous to Capitalist labour, the book *Aboriginal Workers* charts the many industries where Indigenous workers have been intrinsic to the success of the colonial project.

Revealing a common thread of exploitation, inequality, but more importantly necessity, the revised historiography presents fresh material and previously excluded modes of behaviour like childcare and domestic service to present a powerful denunciation of the lazy, unproductive indigenous worker dependent on welfare.

*Aboriginal Workers* editors Ann McGrath and Ann Curthoys emphasise indigenous labour was being utilised by colonial society when slavery was still legal in the British Empire and traditionally encompassed the widest parameters of unfree bondage. This theme is expanded by Peggy Brock in her chapter 'Pastoral Stations and Reserves', delineating the ability of white farmers to draw upon proximate Aboriginal communities as a cache labour force in times of need. In many cases 'Aboriginal reserves, missions and pastoral stations acted as holding points for this labour reserve'<sup>45</sup>, where pastoralists could request Aboriginal labourers for seasonal service from Government manager's who acted as quasi-recruitment agents. Due to the absence in many cases of a minimum wage for Aboriginal workers, workers were often poorly paid or merely given a recompense of flour, tobacco, tea and occasionally meat rations. Unlike white outback labourers who were invariably transitory, pastoralists did not fear dismissing Aboriginal workers because they 'had strong ties to

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<sup>44</sup> J. W. Bleakley, 'The Aborigines and Half-Castes of Central Australia and Northern Australia', *Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers*, No. 21, 1929, pp.7, 12

<sup>45</sup> Brock, Peggy 'Pastoral Stations and Reserves', in *Aboriginal Workers*(A. McGrath and A. Curthoys, eds.) p. 112

their own districts and therefore, did not move away when their employment was terminated. They could be re-employed whenever labour was needed<sup>46</sup>.

Strengthening governmental controls of Aboriginal life through the discussed legislation, and the concerns of settlers toward Aboriginal- Asian labour relations, portrays unease in colonial society regarding the Indigenous presence. The recognition of its inherent need for indigenous labour contradicted the racial parameters of its nationalised identity and its preserve of white labour. Furthermore it served as a potent reminder of the fallacy of the peaceful settlement of the Australian continent, the illogicality of “Social Darwinism” and the continual oppression of the nation’s first peoples. These issues would find their much larger contemporary across the Indian Ocean. In South Africa, the pattern of labour pressures faced by the burgeoning Cape Colony in the early nineteenth century would be vastly magnified upon the discovery of huge reserves of diamonds in Kimberley and Gold on the Witwatersrand. The historian De Kiewet spoke of a South African frontier not as a site of military conflict between settler and native, but ‘as gateways through which Africans were incorporated into European society, incorporated not as equals but as a migrant proletariat’<sup>47</sup>. South Africa’s mining economy would become the pre-eminent channel in the colonial incorporation and exploitation of the native worker in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. Drawing from histories of European- African military conflict, slavery and succeeding labour control and race-based social stratification, the African mining revolution would solidify the unequal power relationships between European and native through the forming Union of South Africa.

The destruction of the powerful Zulu Kingdom acts as an archetype for the transformation of pre-colonial African societies into British governed subordinate regions. Discussed by Jeff Guy in his chapter ‘The Destruction and reconstruction of Zulu Society’, the invasion of British military forces in 1879, while unable to defeat the powerful Zulu war machine, was successful in extinguishing the tributary links between the native producer and their Zulu Kings. The colonial state now known as British Zululand retained the pre-colonial Homestead as a self –sufficient means of production but

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<sup>46</sup> Brock, Peggy, *ibid*, p. 113

<sup>47</sup> Saunders, C. *The Making of the South African Past*, p. 87

usurped the labour power of single men by redirecting their production into the Capitalist economy. The colonial state propelled this shift by imposing a hut tax of 14 shillings on female living in every Homestead, which accounted for over 70 per cent of annual revenue of the colony<sup>48</sup>. By 1889 large scale labour migrations drained the colonies work-force, the hut tax obligation forcing workers onto state projects like the construction of the railway line between Natal and the Transvaal. The rivers of labour that would feed the Mining Centres of Kimberley and Witwatersrand into the next century would find their labour source in the Zulu kraals now fighting drought and cattle epidemics in an impossible pursuit of the yearly hut-tax. The intrusion of settler- colonial society into African society constituted a dramatic and permanent transformation of native culture, and subsequently indigenous populations would be chiefly dependent on selling their labour power in capitalist enterprise. This change is noted by a local magistrate who reported;

Since the loss of their cattle I notice a greater desire on the part of the Natives to proceed to work, in face kraal heads have informed me that they are now dependent, to a great extent, upon the earnings of young men.<sup>49</sup>

The extraction of gold from the Witwatersrand reefs was a unique and difficult process, functioning as an equal purveyor to colonial racism and widening labour legislation, in the coercive composition of the African working-class. The need for large start-up capital, overseas machinery and employees with previous mining expertise, drew powerful British consortiums and a skilled white workforce to the Rand to quarry the deep, low-grade ore<sup>50</sup>. The costs required to retain this skilled white work-force amounted to 28.39 per cent of the mines working costs in 1898, in comparison to 25.05 per cent for African labour costs. However, white workers only amounted to only 11.05 per cent of the total mine workforce of 92 806<sup>51</sup>. Hence the presence of expensive white employees, combined with a fixed “gold standard” selling price, led mine owners to perceive that their future profits depended on their

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<sup>48</sup> Guy, ‘The destruction and reconstruction of Zulu Society’ in *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa*, (S. Marks and R. Rathbone, eds.) p. 175

<sup>49</sup> Resident Commissioner., Circular, 19 Nov. 1897 in Guy, ‘The destruction and reconstruction of Zulu Society’ in *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa* p. 185

<sup>50</sup> Richardson, Van-Halden, ‘Labour in the South African gold mining industry’ in *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa*, (S. Marks and R. Rathbone, eds.) p. 79

<sup>51</sup> *Mines and General Quarries Report and Statistics, Pt. IV, Colonial and Foreign Statistics for 1889*, Table of Persons Employed on all Transvaal Gold Mines at 31 December in Each Year

ability 'to develop a production process which satisfactorily exploited the growing reservoirs of cheap unskilled African labour whilst restricting the scope and extent of white employment'<sup>52</sup>. This simple ratio of white to non-white labourers would greatly influence the social and economic environment native workers sold their labour power, heightened by the central role of Transvaal mining in the South African economy, where 'by the beginning of the twentieth century, the terms on which Africans entered the labour and commodity markets had inexorably altered, their bargaining position gravely impaired'<sup>53</sup>.

The natives vulnerable position was greatly exploited through the labour systems developed by the State-Industry apparatus to ensure the Mines were supplied with a perpetual flow of cheap labourers, generating profound consequences for the black South African. So ubiquitous were the effects, they penetrated all areas of social, economic and civil life. Using the words of historian Phillip Bonner;

'Without wishing to do violence to the essential integrity of the labour repressive system which governed the daily lives of virtually all Africans on the Rand, five main areas of control can be discerned- wages, passes, housing, constraints on upward mobility and capital accumulation, and education.'<sup>54</sup>

A maximum average wage system was installed by the Chamber of Mines Labour Association in 1896 which ensured different mines did not bid against each other in the recruitment of African labour. These wages were essentially fixed at this rate and did not rise until after the Second World War, despite a period of intense inflation of fifty per cent between 1917-1920<sup>55</sup>. Despite the often dangerous and oppressive conditions of mining work, 'except for work on farms, where there were generally better fringe benefits, this was probably the lowest cash work in the whole of Southern Africa'<sup>56</sup>. Secondly, the State was able to tie the African labourer to this paltry compensation through the binding and exploitative Master and Servants legislation, which combined with vagrancy Pass

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid* p. 81

<sup>53</sup> Marks and Rathbone, 'Introduction' in *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa* p. 22

<sup>54</sup> P. Bonner, 'The Transvaal Native Congress, 1917-1920', in *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa* p. 274

<sup>55</sup> F. Wilson, *Labour in the South African gold mines*, p. 8

<sup>56</sup> B. Kidd, 'Economic South Africa', *Christian Express XXII* (1903), 58

Laws, multi-functioned as social and employment constraints on the native worker from finding alternative and better paid work. These regulating passes enabled employers to view the natives previous pay rate, ensuring wage levels remained static and were commonly requested by police officers who often arrested and fined workers if not produced<sup>57</sup>. Finally the compound system of accommodation which came to dominate the housing options for urban labourers ensured the native was constantly under state surveillance. Arbitrary police raids intended to catch liquor brewing units was just one of the autocratic interferences amongst the squalid home-life environments of native locations, where disease epidemics were rife and infant mortality rates were a shocking 380: 1000<sup>58</sup>.

Marxist historians have viewed this omniscient control of the native mine worker as an inevitable consequence of the capitalism's unending quest for profit. While no doubt an essential component in these highly exploitative conditions, a more complex alliance of state, capital and white workers were essential to the formation and maintenance of these labour conditions which I will explore in Chapter Two. What needs to be underlined here is the continuity of native experience in South African mines with their previous experiences in the agricultural economy of the Cape Colony. Transvaal's mines were just another facet of the capitalist system essential to the success of the colonial project, and like Australian agricultural production, required the complete domination of native populations. This idea is greatly facilitated by exploring a concept known as 'internal colonialism'.

### **The Theory of Internal Colonialism**

The interlaced web of political, economic and cultural oppression settler- colonialism exerted on its possessed indigenous populations has been contended to be analogous to the external controls European states exercise on their subjugated colonies<sup>59</sup>. In both South Africa and Australia, indigenous peoples were ejected from the colonial body politic whilst remaining within the

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<sup>57</sup> P. Bonner, *The Transvaal Native Congress, 1917-1920*, in *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa* p.282

<sup>58</sup> N. Kagan, 'Settlements', in B. Bozzoli (ed.), *Labour, Townships and Protest*, p. 53

<sup>59</sup> H. Wolpe, 'The Theory of Internal Colonialism', in *Beyond the Sociology of Development* (I. Oxaal, T. Barnett, D. Booth, eds.)

boundaries of the forming colonial states. Hence tools settler-colonialism used to achieve this, such as the cultural domination sustained through “Social Darwinism”, controls on individual liberty like vagrancy laws, and economic domination by confining indigenous labour-power to exploitative modes, represent deep affiliation with colonised countries under Western rule.

The myth of an empty land, a ‘terra nullius’ waiting for European settlement, dominated cultural histories in South Africa and Australia in the late nineteenth century as both settler societies sought to legitimise their dominant position over indigenous populations. Pivoting their argument within a successful implementation of “Lockean” practices of land-use; colonists were scornful of indigenous modes of hunter-gathering and subsistence farming and perceived surplus production as dues *ex machina* for its colonial authority. Iconic cultural motifs asserted the intrinsic status of the white Australian bushman to a progressive nationalism, at once illegitimizing and appropriating the indigenous bush presence. Likewise in South Africa, the historian G.M. Theal endeavoured to find evidence for his assertion that the Bantu was a late northern migrant to Southern Africa, and had no more right to its resources than the European<sup>60</sup>. An idea which would later be employed by Afrikaner historians documenting ‘the great trek’ migration of Dutch farmers from the Cape to Transvaal, Theal argued that the *Mfecane* wars had left the land virtually unoccupied where;

It was into this vast stretch of land that the white men moved from the south and black men from the north almost as if quite simultaneously. Near its centre they met, and then a struggle began as to which should go further. Bear in mind that it was not an attempt of white men to take possession of land owned by black men, it was an effort on both sides to get as much unoccupied land as possible...<sup>61</sup>

Intrinsic to colonial dialogues of their dominance over native societies was the imperious notion of British “uplift”, an altruistic fortitude to educate “backward civilisations” in the lessons of Christianity and how to be “productive members of society”. Missionary and settler forces would combine to dramatically re-socialise native societies and re-direct their labour power from traditional to capital forms of production. Through legislation like the British Zululand hut-tax as described

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<sup>60</sup> C. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past*, p. 40

<sup>61</sup> G.M. Theal, *History of South Africa*, volume 3, (London, 1902) p. 464

previously, or the complete dispossession of native land as in the Queensland colony, the settler-colonial project was economically superior when native populations became regular sellers of their labour power.

The native reserve system as developed by an increasing state management of indigenous life enhanced the ability of colonists to channel native labour power into the expanding capitalist economy. Appearing incongruous to the colonial project, the conservation of the traditional mode of production effectively harnessed the exploitation of the indigenous worker by providing the basis by which the “means of subsistence” could be retracted from the native labourer’s wage<sup>62</sup>. Featuring in Marxist revisionist studies of colonialism, the theory of “conservation/ dissolution” has been employed to classify a pattern where ‘the agricultural self-sustaining communities form an organic component of capitalist production’ by ‘performing the functions of social security’ that capitalism avoids in the colonial situation<sup>63</sup>. Thus segregated native reserves in South Africa which continued agricultural production and periods of unemployment where Aboriginal Australians continued traditional forms of hunting and gathering provided Capitalism with a “safety net”, where they could avoid paying wages which they would normally provide to the urban proletariat.

Mining companies thus employed this migrant workforce on short-term contracts and housed them in single-sex compounds, thus avoiding the payment of “indirect wages” which enabled a worker to provide for his family or when he was sick. This pattern was similar to the terms Indigenous Australian workers were employed on, the casual, periodic nature of their pastoral work ensured employers provided only the barest ‘means of subsistence’ for a worker unlike the social security awards won by white workers in the 1890’s. They were able to achieve this as Aboriginal employees were often reluctant to leave poor working conditions if it enabled them to be near family and their

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<sup>62</sup> P. Fitzpatrick, “Really Rather Like Slavery”, *Political Economy of Australian Capitalism*, (E. Wheelwright and K. Buckley, eds.) vol. 3, 1978

<sup>63</sup> C. Meillassoux, ‘From Reproduction to Production’: A Marxist Approach to Economic Anthropology’, *Economy and Society* 1, 1 (February 1972), p.102

traditional lands, and in many cases a worker would be sufficient with rations for himself and his family camped nearby on the pastoral property<sup>64</sup>.

The concept of internal colonialism is a dominant theory for understanding this character of indigenous labour exploitation in settler colonialism. In so far as the indigenous experience of the colonial relationship is characterised by a system of domination, oppression and exploitation, the administrative control of native subjects mirrors the geo-political control of European nation-states over non-European subjects<sup>65</sup>. Mervyn Hartwig, in his article 'Capitalism and Aborigines: The Theory of Internal Colonialism and its Rivals', perceives a clear link between Harold Wolpe's discussion of internal colonialism in South Africa and its parallel manifestation in Australia. Exploring how race and class are intimately bound in settler-colonial society, internal colonialism explains 'the specific terms in which ideological and political domination over Aborigines have been expressed, by relating them to specific modes of exploitation of Aboriginal societies'<sup>66</sup>.

While the scale and variation of Aboriginal labour experience under colonialism does render it slightly more problematic to conceptualisation as regards to the homogeneity of labour controls composed in the mining centres of South Africa, a study of Australian colonial rule through the prism of Papua New Guinea buttresses the internal colonial approach. Imbued with the liberal rhetoric from its League of Nations participation, Australia's entry to Papua New Guinea evoked similar discourses with the 1830's British humanitarianism towards Australian Aborigines where 'the well being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation'<sup>67</sup>. However the domination of the plantation owners on the colonial administration, much like the Queensland pastoralists, would render labour courts under their dictation, and see 'the long illegal use of violence as the basic labour

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<sup>64</sup> A. McGrath and A. Curthoys (eds.), *Aboriginal Workers*, p. 57

<sup>65</sup> H. Wolpe, 'The Theory of Internal Colonialism', in *Beyond the Sociology of Development* (I. Oxaal, T. Barnett, D. Booth, eds.), p. 230

<sup>66</sup> M. Hertwig, 'Capitalism and Aborigines: The Theory of Internal Colonialism and its rivals' in *Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Capitalism*, (E. Wheelwright and Ken Buckley), vol. 3, July 1978 p. 137

<sup>67</sup> P. Fitzpatrick, "Really Rather Like Slavery", *Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Capitalism*, (E. Wheelwright and K. Buckley, eds.) vol. 3, July 1978, p. 103

incentive<sup>68</sup>. As in South Africa, a native tax was used to coerce the native into paid employment and employers used traditional leaders as channels to recruit indentured labourers<sup>69</sup>. This pattern of migratory labour emphasises the ideological link internal colonialism provides in diverse colonial societies.

As the individual colonial states formed into the federated nations of Australia and the Union of South Africa in 1901 and 1910 respectively, the overwhelming triumph of settler colonialism in both countries was proclaimed amid a tumult white racial self-consciousness. The administrative apparatus required to secure the economic, political and cultural domination over their respective native populations was now secured and the colonists exerted their ascendancy through intensifying and exploitative modes. In less than a century, both settler societies had transformed their tenuous, peripheral grasp on vast continents into modern states tied inextricably to the globalised world of the British Empire. Evidently as the pastoral expansions of the Queensland and Cape Colonies and the mining centre of the Witwatersrand portray, the vigour of the settler colonial project greatly intensified when the desire to exploit the vast natural resources was tied to the expanding world economy. So intrinsic was surplus production to colonial expansion that in essence it became the *raison d'être* for the destruction and exploitation of indigenous peoples, readily complimented by ideologies such as Social Darwinism and liberalism, but enduring as the fulcrum for the innate domination of European over native, enlightened over savage.

Chapter Two explores the introduction of Socialism into settler-colonial society and how it played a significant role in the growing consciousness of the working class. Despite its egalitarian principles however, its evolution in the highly racialised contexts of South Africa and Australia advanced the domination of colonial society over its indigenous populations. Through a synthesis of racial consciousness and national identity, the colonial working-class preserved its tenuous place in the stratified colonial order by heightening the divide between itself and the non-white proletariat, expressed in the racially exclusive terms “white labourism”. Contrary to historiography that sees turn

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<sup>68</sup> C.D. Rowley, ‘The Occupation of German New Guinea’, in W.J Hudson (ed.) *Australia and Papua New Guinea* (Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1971)

<sup>69</sup> P. Fitzpatrick, *op cit*, p.107

of the century racism as a legitimate scheme to protect the economic standards of colonial workers, I will argue rather that it was another symptom of ingrained racism present in settler-colonialism and was greatly facilitated by the erroneous belief that a socialist revolution can occur through the structures of the state.

## **2. Parliamentary Socialism and Racial Nationalism**

In Chapter One, I explored how the success of British settlements in South Africa and Australia were dependent on the development of the continents resources for surplus capitalism. This goal required subjugating the continents native populations and subsequently channelling their labour power into the colonial project, achieved through a multi-faceted political, social and cultural supremacy. In Chapter Two, I will analyse the growth of socialism in Australia and South Africa, with each context studied independently for thematic clarity. Socialism's prevailing representations in the antipodes revealed a tendency toward a Marxist parliamentary strategy, which rendered many working-class struggles entwined or subservient to national concerns. I argue that the growth of the Australian Labor Party provides an example of how class issues were redirected toward a national collectiveness that argued racial exclusion as the best means to safeguard colonial labour conditions. This shift is a potent reminder of colonial society's endemic racism, where white working-classes would share and profit from an Imperial notion of "white labourism", trading a class-wide proletarian struggle for an exclusive status that separated white proletarians from their non-white contemporaries. I feel it is essential to note in Chapter Two, the close link between parliamentary socialism and white labourism that formed many of the highly discriminatory colonial edifices like the White Australia Policy and the industrial colour-bar. Significantly it provides a clear point of reference which I will compare with a competing form of socialism known as libertarian socialism, arguing in Chapter Three that this

ideology provides the greatest platform for transforming the unequal racial relationships created and sustained by settler colonialism.

### **Socialism as a contested concept**

A firm grasp of the genealogy and contested nature of International Socialism is needed to lay a foundation before the exploration of its inception into the settler colonial societies of Australia and South Africa can take place. Competing socialist doctrines of organisation, theory and practice were evident from the first debates of the First International of the International Working Men's Association in 1864. While this association greatly advanced the influence and organisation of socialist ideas, the union was split in 1871 between two opposing federalist and centralist blocs, both claiming to be the rightful legatees of the foundation<sup>70</sup>. The centralist faction, based around the indomitable figure of Karl Marx, made political action the central weapon in its struggle with the capitalist class. It argued a dominant vanguard was needed to teach and guide the masses, a theory that became known as the "dictatorship of the proletariat". It was from this ideology that the many forming social-democratic political parties of the late nineteenth century took as their strategic plank. On the other hand, the federalist or libertarian wing, 'rejected political parties, parliamentary action and a reliance on state power, as counter-revolutionary'<sup>71</sup>, as the state was argued to be the mere vassal of the owning classes. They would take Marx's edict, "The emancipation of the worker' must be the work of the workers themselves", in its most literal sense and believed workers must be organised as the primary point of production, the workplace<sup>72</sup>. The schism would become greatly

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<sup>70</sup> W. Thorpe, *The Workers Themselves- Revolutionary Syndicalism and International Labour, 1913-1923*, p. 2

<sup>71</sup> W. Thorpe, *ibid*, p. 2

<sup>72</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *Black Flame- The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism*, p. 56

intensified when the federalist wing solidified its theories around the Russian Mikhail Bakunin, who saw Marx's vanguardism as a mere transfer of power from elite one group to another.

From whatever angle we consider this question, we arrive at the same abominable result: the rule of the immense majority of the common masses by a small privileged minority. But this minority, the Marxists say will be made up of workers. Yes, certainly, of *former* workers, who once they become rulers or representatives, will cease to be workers, and begin to view the toiling people from the heights of the State, no longer representing the people, but themselves and their claims to govern the people. Those who doubt this do not understand human nature.<sup>73</sup>

The federalist alternative to Marx's political approach drew upon "mutualist" ideas espoused by the French autodidact Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, who 'rejected the principle of authority within both economic and political systems as antithetical to genuine order, thwarting the goal of realizing the the highest degree of liberty compatible with social justice'<sup>74</sup>. Tempered in comparison to the revolutionary rhetoric of the First International, the state in essence becomes futile within Proudhon's idea of mutual credit. His idea that individual liberty can be achieved through economic emancipation from surplus capitalism draws manifest parallels with the "Owenite" Co-operatives developing in Britain in the same period, where 'co-operation was the one true redemption for the social evils of human life, because it declared that the profits made by every kind of industry belonged to the people who made them'<sup>75</sup>.

The Libertarian platform of democratic and de-centralisation was in essence the antithesis of Marx's pogrom, and in 1871 Marx endeavoured to break the widening appeal of federalist socialism and Bakunin's ideology. Stacking the General Council of the London conference with a histrionic centralist bias, Marx's resolution that the proletariat could only engender a socialist revolution through a political workers party was endorsed by the International<sup>76</sup>. This usurping of authority left the bitter federalist faction, of whom a much larger of the aligned Socialist groups supported, to

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<sup>73</sup> W. Thorpe, *ibid*, p. 4

<sup>74</sup> W. Thorpe, *ibid*, p. 3

<sup>75</sup> *Co-Operative News*, 20 September 1884, p. 834 in P. Gurney, 'A Higher State of Civilisation and Happiness', in *Internationalism in Labour Movements 1830- 1940*, F. Van Holthoon and M. Van der Linden eds.

<sup>76</sup> W. Thorpe, *ibid*, p. 10

eschew the International and its authoritarian organisation. Marx duly expelled Bakunin and transferred the Council to New York in order to buttress his theoretical organisation and legacy.

It is poignant that the practical application of Marx's organisational doctrine upon the First International, a principle based on strict centralised control, was to remain the dominant apparatus for the second and third internationals in subsequent decades. Significant historically, is that the nature of the socialist regimes that developed in Russia and China and central to the geo-political contest of the Cold War, enabled Marx's doctrine of State-Socialism to assume the chief embodiment of socialist theory to the detriment of its rival federalist idea. Importantly parliamentary socialism was to find a receptive audience in the settler-colonial society of Australia, and working-class advocates mimicked global anticipations for a transformed and equal society.

### **Australia experiments with State Socialism**

This section is concerned with Australian labourism and how it reacted to the failed Union strikes of the early 1890's. Parliamentary action, rather than strike action, was considered a superior means to safeguard labour conditions and transform colonial society along socialist lines. Their desires however, as predicted by Bakunin, were thwarted when Australian Labor Party members chose a nationalised agenda in alliance with elite merchants and land owners instead of an exclusive labourist agenda.

In 1880 the Bulletin magazine claimed Marx's *Capital* as the greatest work on social and political economy. It was into an Australian labour milieu, displaying a healthy proclivity toward ideas of a collectivist nature, that Marx's state-socialism would find a receptive audience. An acceptance of a dominant role of the state in Colonial Australia had pre-dated Marx's introduction into colonial literature, laying, paradoxically, the platform in which capitalist expansion could develop on the Australian continent. Contrary to free-trade doctrinaire that argues state interference dulled private enterprise, on the contrary, the Australian experience identifies a collaboration of Government and Capital that guaranteed 'the relations of private ownership on which the labour market and capitalist

production would rest<sup>77</sup>. Thus State sponsored nationalised railways and large irrigation schemes were intrinsic to the success of Australian monopoly Capitalism.

Progressive labour stipulations built during the campaigns in the nineteenth century were attacked by industry during the depression of the early 1890's. Labour defeats in both the maritime strike of 1890 and the Broken Hill miner's strike of 1892 highlighted the ability of capital to call upon the state to violently assert its desires over working-class action. Historian Manning Clark, in *A Short History of Australia*, suggests that the strike experience converted the worker's leaders to a belief in political action, in the expectation that the state could, and should, be the protector of the material well-being of all its citizens<sup>78</sup>. The patent failure of unions to protect employee awards during the depression laid the foundations for the establishment of the Australian Labor Party, where statutory protections like the arbitration court were considered better options over strikes as a means for preserving workers rights.

However contrary to labours aspirations, it was rather the proficient organisation of the party rather than an advocacy of socialist doctrine that the ALP would garner from its union roots. The successful electioneering of Labor party candidates saw them assume a powerful position within colonial legislatures, where in New South Wales, upon their first parliamentary campaign in 1891, 35 Labor-endorsed candidates were elected to office<sup>79</sup>. Many rank-and-file organisations, including the Australian Socialist League and Australian Worker's Union, canvassed on behalf of the Labor Party and hoped to infuse their socialist ideas into this wide network. Goals such as land nationalisation and state controlled industry were considered as achievable goals that could be realised through piecemeal reform and legislation, an aspiration influenced by ideas of "Fabian reformism" in the longer goal of overthrowing the Capitalist order.

The corruptive propensity of power, as forewarned by Mikhail Bakunin in the First International, induced many Labor parliamentarians however, into a state of indifference toward socialist principles

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<sup>77</sup> B. Fitzpatrick, *Class Structure in Australian History*, pp. 63-4

<sup>78</sup> M. Clark, *A Short History of Australia*, p. 167

<sup>79</sup> J. Smith *The rise and fall of Australian socialism'*

upon election to parliament. Labor M.P.'s rather 'tried to govern in the interests of all classes instead of standing up boldly in defence of the one class which put them in power'<sup>80</sup>. Attempting to cement their burgeoning parliamentary position, Labor Party candidates were partial to national rather than class issues which predominately made them prejudiced to the middle class concerns of merchants and salaried workers. This theme is illuminated by two Australian Socialist League members J.D. Fitzgerald and A.J. Kelly. Elected to the seat of West Sydney in 1891, they proclaimed in their joint manifesto that 'it is our intention to fight only for labour, our cause is yours. Be true to us and you must be true to yourselves'<sup>81</sup>. However, contrary to their labour roots both members had rejected their ASL membership within a year and began duplicated the ideas of other right-wing parliamentarians. Fitzgerald confessed to enjoying politics 'for the excitement which yields itself to the player of the greatest of all games', embracing liberalism and utilising his new found stature to become a wealthy entrepreneur<sup>82</sup>. Fitzgerald and Kelly's betrayal would be a pattern repeated by numerous ASL members upon election to parliament, forcing the exasperated ASL to attempt to combat this ministerial autonomy and fix state socialism as the central plank of the ALP program.

Campaigning for a complete nationalisation of all means of production, distribution and exchange, the ASL hoped it could ensure a greater commitment of future party members to an ALP that when in power would transform society along socialist lines. At the 1897 Political Labour League, the nationalisation motion was passed and ten candidates were nominated for election to the Federal Convention<sup>83</sup>. However all ten candidates were unsuccessful in their election bids which the parties right-wing caucus blamed on the parties nationalisation plank. The ALP subsequently dropped this platform which left the ASL with no option to renounce its endorsement of the ALP a year later.

This bitter episode however did not enamour the ASL to reconsider its strategy of political socialism via the conquering of the state apparatus, whereupon it change its name to the Australian Socialist Labor Party (SLP), 'having announced that the Labor Party was beyond redemption , the ASL really

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<sup>80</sup> Childe, *How Labour Governs*, pp.72-73

<sup>81</sup> V. Burgmann, *In Our Time*, p. 82

<sup>82</sup> V. Burgmann, *ibid*, p. 82

<sup>83</sup> *ibid*, p. 88

had no other than to aim at replacing the Labor Party'<sup>84</sup>. This episode acts as a microcosm signifying more than the mere corruptive influence of parliamentary power on working class consciousness, the burgeoning Australian Labor Party would champion national over class concerns. Much to dismay of socialists in the ASL, the party's objective of "The cultivation of an Australian Sentiment based on the maintenance of racial purity" would ensure proletarian hopes of using the Labor Party for Socialist revolution were no closer than before the party began.

### **Labour and Unions as Nationalising agents**

I commenced this chapter by looking at the contested ideologies of socialism and how the Marxist parliamentary creed took precedent over liberalist socialism espoused by Proudhon and Bakunin. Next I explored the inception of socialist ideas into Australia as workers looked to the state to protect their interest versus capitalism. However its main agent in this plan, the Australian Labor Party, sought to buttress its new electoral power by campaigning on national concerns over class issues. Thus nationalism was to play a major role in the course of working class struggles in this period, where it coalesced around white race privilege and the maintenance of labour standards through the exclusion of non-white workers. I will demonstrate how labour channels articulated some of the most virulent expressions of this discrimination, particularly vis-a-vis Chinese workers, and embed its worldview with the racial terms of the settler-colonial project through its advocacy of the 'White Australia Policy'.

The self-serving colonial ideologies discussed in chapter one, such as social Darwinism, were so pervasive in the late nineteenth century that its working-class representation was clearly a mere symptom of a wide and systemic racist society. Colonial discrimination of coloured immigration preceding the White Australia Policy parallels frontier racism concentrated on Aborigines during the agricultural development of the Australian continent, in that it was a coalesces of employer and labour

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90

antagonism toward non-white peoples<sup>85</sup>. The success of Chinese cabinet-makers in Victoria is one such example. Capitalist desires for a cheap and acquiescent workforce in the nineteenth century led to many Chinese being imported as indentured servants. However when larger numbers arrived in the Gold Rush, many were employed under indenture by merchants from their own country. This usurping of colonial power was enhanced by anti-Chinese racism as their cheap labour power, industrious work ethic and entrepreneurship made them a direct competitor for local industry. Thus Anti-Chinese laws that developed in the late nineteenth century were designed to restrict their immigration, working hours and individual workplace settings to safeguard Australian trade in addition to the more documented protection for Australian labour.

Likewise historical arguments that have attributed Australian antagonism toward coloured immigration at the feet of working-class remonstrance, such as Keith Windshuttle's book *White Australia Policy*, consign the compliance of Australian employers in the virulent racial diatribes of the Australian press. As the opportunities for exploiting Chinese labour diminished, coloured immigration was now shaped as an inherent threat to the economic standards of the colonies, workers who "scabbed" on white labourers and accepted meagre wages because their general living standards were not yet advanced to the level of the European.

The irony to these arguments is that alternative schemes which drew British immigrants on assisted passages to Australia in the 1880's in fact worked directly against Australian workers. Many British engineering workers were contracted by recruiters in London on wages lower than prevailing rates in Australia and were widely known in Victoria to undercut and supplant local workers. Thus 'the labour movement regarded opposition to coloured immigration as a matter of principle, it considered opposition to assisted British immigration as an appropriate tactic only if the economic circumstances warranted such action'<sup>86</sup>. In contrast to the Chinese, employer exploitation rather than the employee was blamed for the presence of cheap British labour and did not prevent them from being racially accepted in settler-society.

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<sup>85</sup> V. Burgmann, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*, p. 13

<sup>86</sup> V. Burgmann, *ibid*, p. 23

The unity of capital and labour as evident in anti-Chinese crusade left socialist ideas that espoused the unity of international labour against capital neglected. That these sentiments worked in many ways to the advantage of capital highlights the miss-guided and immature consciousness of Australian labourism, a sliding paradigm where ‘the strength of racism and the weakness of socialism were mutually reinforcing’<sup>87</sup>. It is through the prism of racism where an enhanced Australian nationalism comes to the fore, unifying a capitalist and class-divided society.

Antipodean resistance to proletariat internationalism was a central theme raised by the French bureaucrat Albert Metin during his study of the Australian social-democratic project in his 1901 work, *Le Socialisme sans Doctrines*, ‘Socialism without doctrine’<sup>88</sup>. Evaluating what he considered a unique brand of working-class culture, Metin argued Australian labourism was highly defensive, inert and did little to question the overwhelming tenets of its racist practises. Regarding Socialist ideas of labour internationalism that challenged racialised immigration, the proletariat reasoned Metin;

Seemed quite determined to run no risks with an experiment which might adversely affect their interests’<sup>89</sup>. ‘Even the word’, Metin remarked, ‘holds for them the pejorative meaning it has for its political adversaries. “We have some socialists here”, the secretary of the Melbourne Trades Hall observed, “but we don’t agree with them. They are extremists and we are above all practical men’<sup>90</sup>.

Metin’s comment identifies overwhelming support for protectionism and pragmatism in Australian labour, emphasising its imperial affiliation with the dominant reformism of British trade-unions and its comparable aversion to radical strands of Socialism. Labourism’s proclivity to conciliate capital led Metin to conclude Australian workers ‘were not interested in supplanting the professional and employing class, but in demanding the best possible conditions compatible with the capitalist system’<sup>91</sup>. It is the value of Metin’s foreign view that enables us to understand how Australia could enact such progressive edicts like universal suffrage, while at the same time spouting such rampant racism.

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, p. 33

<sup>88</sup> A. Metin, *Socialism without Doctrine*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, p. 53

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, p. 54

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, p. 73

As Metin recorded, Labourite racism was an essential part of a growing nationalism that characterised Asia as a spurious and omniscient threat to settler colonialism exclusive domination of Australia. Matthew Jordan in his article ‘Rewriting Australia’s Past’, sees the upsurge in anti-Chinese antagonism in the 1880’s as an essential part of the push to Federation, a national self- deliberation that ostracised the visible Chinese population from a ‘strident collectivism, that made “British race patriotism” the core of its national mythology’<sup>92</sup>. Charles Pearson was also to comment on the link between Australia’s racially bound nationalism and Labourite pushes toward collective state enterprise. In *National Life and Character* he proclaimed that collectivism would be inspired by ‘the growth of what we may call patriotism, as each man identifies himself more and more with the needs of his fellow countrymen’<sup>93</sup>. Australian labour was to produce some of the most virulent examples of Pearson’s race patriotism, and I suggest, that it was cased in the same civilised, uncivilised binary which legitimated the destruction of Australia’s indigenous population.

Geo-political fears fed Australia’s burgeoning nationalism as it considered how to defend its thinly populated European outpost from a rampant and over-populating Asia. Colonial fears regarding border protection often portrayed licentious Asian men as sexual predators, a constant menace to white women that tied Australian masculinity to immigration controls. Fears of miscegenation and the dilution of the white race preceded many of the labourite issues with “coolie” workers, delineating the importance race played over economic concerns. This fear is vividly represented in the *Queensland Worker* on May 15 1897 as it supported the growing colonial legislation banning coloured immigration;

‘Are the white men of Australia willing to permit their women and children to be inoculated with loathsome diseases and polluted by the presence of the swarming hordes of Asia? Will the white people who are engaged in business pursuits suffer themselves to be ousted by the Javanese, Syrians, Chinese

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<sup>92</sup> M. Jordan, ‘Rewriting Australia’s

<sup>93</sup> C. Pearson, *National Life and Character*

or Japanese? Should not all white people unite to save their race and civilisation from going down before the black, brown and yellow invaders?<sup>94</sup>

Even when socialists groups like the Australian Socialist League suggested nationalism was a distraction to working-class concerns, they still depicted the Asian worker as a sexualised social evil, common populist concerns with immigration. This superiority was corroborated by drawing on the eugenical arguments common in much colonial literature. Attempting to downplay the validity of the Anti-Chinese League, the *Australian Radical* claims ‘in industry, given an equal contest, the inferiority of the Chinese *vis-a-vis* the Britisher would be as assured as the white man’s defeat over the indigene’<sup>95</sup>. Darwinist assumptions were clearly established within Socialist circles, this passage depicts Aboriginal workers, unlike Asian labour, was subject to colonial domination and thus not a threat to white workers<sup>96</sup>. Indigenous society thus continued to represent the bulwark of cultural deficiency as an editorial in the *Age* on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1908 emphasises. The author lamenting Australia’s reliance on the British navy considers an Australian force necessary to counter the rise of Japanese militarism, ‘without a navy we should be as helpless to drive off invaders as a race of untutored aboriginals armed with spears’<sup>97</sup>.

The contrast in the exclusionary racism necessary for the non-subjected Asian worker in contrast to the paternalistic racism bestowed upon Aborigines does not detract the parallel between the two streams. Just as the economic development of the North of Australia required the removal Aboriginal tribes from the land, national economic vitality was framed as necessitating the exclusion and removal of Asians. As Ann Curthoys explained in her study of the colonial relationships of Aborigines and Chinese between 1856-1881, though little colonial discourse connected the two groups;

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<sup>94</sup> Quoted in A. Markus, ‘The Burden of Hate’, p. 136

<sup>95</sup> *Australian Radical*, 14 April, 1888

<sup>96</sup> G. Osborne, ‘A Socialist Dilemma’ in A. Curthoys and A. Markus, *Who are our enemies: Racism and the Australian Working Class*, p. 122

<sup>97</sup> Quoted in V. Burgmann, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*, p. 194

Each colonial situation, and each situation of contact with a people vastly different from the colonisers, contributed to the development of an approach in which assumed British superiority, and the assumed right of colonisation itself, were explained and defended in racial terms.<sup>98</sup>

The practical application of Curthoys' idea is found in the exemption of Aborigines, in comparison to Asians and Kanakas, from exclusion from the Shearers Union. Grouped with American Negroes and Maoris however, this facade of class solidarity demonstrates the arrogance of white labourers as the Aboriginal worker is given little hope of being a threat to white jobs. A resolution passed by the union to waive the annual fee for Aborigines is indicative of its knowledge and acceptance of the serf like conditions Aborigines worked under on white pastoral stations<sup>99</sup>. This policy suggests the Shearers Union, like the wider culture of Australian labourism, rejected the place of the Aboriginal worker in colonial society. This idea is validated by *The Socialist*, the organ of the Victorian Socialist Party. Commenting on the work of Chief Protector of Aborigines Baldwin Spencer, discussed in Chapter One, the paper condemned the labour exploitation of Aborigines in Northern Territory. However, their solution to this occurrence was not to call for indigenous workers to be included national labour awards but rather aped generic colonial motifs of the need for colonial society to 'protect' indigenous populations on segregated reserves. It claims 'we must keep the Northern Territory and the Aborigines for ourselves. We must civilise the aborigines. A reserve would be grand for them to live on'<sup>100</sup>. Thus, whether labour racism was 'paternal', in its rejection of Indigenous workers, or exclusionary of non-white labour, it's clear schema was tied to settler- colonialism's racialised nationalism.

Ostensibly for Australian labourism, inclusion within an exclusive race membership was considered the best method of achieving a high standardised wage for Australian workers. As Justice Higgins, President of the Arbitration Court interpreted, a 'fair and reasonable' wage was 'the normalised needs of an average employee regarded as a human being in a civilised country'<sup>101</sup>. Labour groups constituted the vanguard of campaigns tying civilisation to race and unequivocally supported the

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<sup>98</sup> A. Curthoys, 'Race and Ethnicity', p. 654

<sup>99</sup> A. Markus, *Burden of Hate*

<sup>101</sup> Franklin, *Black and White Australians* p. 86

White Australia policy when it became national legislation in 1901 following bi-partisan support in parliament. One of the first acts ever passed in the new federal parliament, Australia was mandated as purged of uncivilised races that were ostensibly unfit to build the great social democratic experiment so triumphantly proclaimed. Prime Minister Alfred Deakin explained it as;

Our civilisation belongs to us, and we belong to it; we are bred in it, and it is bred in us. It fits and is our means of progress and advancement. These people [non-Europeans] have their own independent development, their own qualities, and also the civilisation, forms of life and government, which naturally attach to them. They are separated from us by a gulf which we cannot bridge to the advantage of either.<sup>44</sup>

### **South African Socialism is for whites only**

The growth of an Australian nationalism that led to federation in 1901, I argued, was enhanced by working-class campaigns that adopted a parliamentary or Marxist socialist model. The introduction of Socialist ideas into South Africa was facilitated through the large migration of skilled white artisans into the Mining centres of Kimberley and the Witwatersrand, many of whom were Australian.

Mining's large demands for cheap labour as I discussed in Chapter One, saw it attempt to utilise the large and dominated native labour force that settler-colonialism created. I will explore how white workers preserved their jobs by creating an "aristocracy of labour"; by using collective socialist action they enshrined their white racial status as a separate entity to the colonies non-white labour force.

Thus I argue that the job colour-bar was South Africa's parallel contemporary to the White Australia Policy.

The notion that civilised society was racially predicated underpinned the enactment of a job colour-bar in the South African mining centre of Transvaal. Sanctioned by the British Imperial Government in South Africa, the importation of indentured Chinese labourers to the mining industry in 1904 was organized on the provision, under the Labour Importation Ordinance of 1904, that the Chinese would

be limited to lowly paid, unskilled roles. White labourers were at the forefront of the campaign to limit Chinese work and based their argument on their alleged lower development of civilisation;

The coloured man's life is low, his food is simple and inexpensive, and his clothing so scanty as to be financially negligible. He costs the Capitalist a mere fraction compared with the white man. He is squeezing the white man out. That is the real yellow peril. The standard of life is in danger, and the white man must either fight the evil influence or go under and carry white civilisation with him.<sup>102</sup>

These racial diatribes were common on the Rand leading to the development of the 1904 Importation Ordinance, solidifying the place of the skilled white artisan within an "aristocracy of labour". The charter thus became a litmus-test for white labourism who desired the comprehensive security of white "civilised" jobs at wages nine and ten times higher than that earned by Chinese and indigenous African workers<sup>103</sup>. White labourers, backed by white only unions, understood that appeals to racial status were profoundly more beneficial than class-wide organisation, and the industrial colour-bar would become South Africa's analogous White Australia Policy<sup>104</sup>.

The inception of socialist ideas into South Africa, like Christianity, followed migrations of European settler's into expanding colonial frontier areas. Driven by reports of high wages between two to five times the amounts earned internationally, skilled white artisans arrived at the burgeoning mining centres of Kimberley and Transvaal imbued with craft unionist ideas developing in mining centres as diverse as Cornwall, Broken Hill and California. Some of the first unions to emerge in South Africa were sections of parent bodies in Europe, such as the Amalgamated Engineering Union<sup>105</sup> based in London. White miners had learnt to collectivise and defend their craft in the face of the overwhelming power of the mining magnates and looked to increase their relative power through recognition by emerging state legislatures and democratic franchise. Establishing membership and skill qualifications to defend their profession, craft unionists in Johannesburg emanated Victorian notions of self-help

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<sup>102</sup> J. O'Conner Kessack, *Forward*, 11 April, 1914 quoted in J. Hyslop, 'White Labourism Before World War One', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol 12, 4, 4, December 1999

<sup>103</sup> J & R. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950*, p. 94

<sup>104</sup> J. Hyslop, 'The Imperial Working Class Makes itself 'White'', pp- 398-414

<sup>105</sup> E, Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, p. 130

and respectability that segued smoothly into a culturally hegemonic position in South Africa's racially categorised workforce<sup>106</sup>.

The collective impulses which transpired in other labour environments rarely crossed racial bounds and in such, white workers posited an uneasy alliance with state and capital to exploit the rivers of non-white migrant labour on niggardly wages. Whilst this alliance fractured, often violently during the strikes of 1902, 1913 and 1922, the reiterating crux is that European labour would fight as a racial block and demanded employers treat them as a separate entity to the 50 000 indentured Chinese<sup>107</sup> and the over 75 000<sup>108</sup> native Africans employed on the Rand. While unionist discourse often exuded the international egalitarianism of global socialism, it was evidently meaningless to the vast proletariat majority, a theoretical facade that;

‘fought the characteristic vanguard action of labour in the Western world against capital. It differed from other labour movements by fighting a rearguard action against a group of a different race and a lower order of skill, without organisation or political support, but which belonged nevertheless to the labouring population. In that population the trade unions were an elite, a self-conscious and self regarding group’<sup>109</sup>.

Jonathan Hyslop remarks that South African labour leaders underwent huge ideological contortions to reconcile their devotion to class loyalty in racially defined societies like South Africa<sup>110</sup>. Where the mere presence of colonised people's elicited resolute claims for white workers to be protected in the labour sphere, union leaders met capital in an awkward and paradoxical position where ‘from the beginning they sought to have their universalist cake and yet to eat it at racially segregated tables’<sup>111</sup>. Settler colonialism in South Africa, like Australia, would appropriate cooperative Socialist ideas but use them for self-serving goals, to the expense of their non-racial proletariat brethren.

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<sup>106</sup> B. Kennedy, *A Tale of two Mining Towns*, p. 15

<sup>107</sup> F. Wilson, *Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911- 1969*, p. 5

<sup>108</sup> B. Kennedy, *ibid*, p. 8

<sup>109</sup> De Kiewiet, *A History of South Africa*, p. 167

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, p. 402

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, p. 402

Previously neglected by nationalist labour historiography, white labourism, whether defined in nationalised racial exclusivity in Australia or racialised industrial segregation in South Africa, was integral to a sense of imperial fraternity exhibited by British settler societies at the turn of the century. As the British Empire reached the zenith of its global influence before the First World War, ideas of racial consciousness and common destiny were harnessed through its web of communication and migration during the first truly globalised world. For South Africa, an important labour vector was the migration of Australians to the Rand, where a depression in the 1890's saw unemployment contribute to a population of one thousand Australian's employed in Johannesburg in 1896, a larger city total than the resident Afrikaans population. This base was to significantly increase during the Anglo-Boer war, where 16 738 Australians strongly supported their *Uitlander* brethren in the 1899-1902 war with the Transvaal republic. As many as five thousand former soldiers were to remain after their service, and as conveyors of cultural ideas, their unionist partialities and lauding of Australia's successful White Australia policy were significant contributions to Transvaal's emerging labour fabric.

Brian Kennedy suggests that owing to the disproportionate influence of Australians in positions of leadership in unions and the fledgling Labour Party, British speaking South Africans looked to the Australian social-democratic project as a template for the Union of South Africa in 1910<sup>112</sup>. Peter Whiteside, described as a 'fervent racist' in *Class and Colour*, was a Ballarat born engine driver who after enlisting and serving with the British army in the Boer War became President of the Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council and led agitation for the deportation of Chinese mine workers<sup>113</sup>. Although future leader of the South African Labour Party F. H. P. Creswell was born in Gibraltar and did not visit Australia until relatively late in his life, he espoused a deep affinity for Australia's social project and kept abreast of its growth through the widely circulating Australian newspapers in South Africa<sup>114</sup>. He, like Whiteside was an important influence in the labour backlash toward the importation of Chinese miners, advocating an all-white franchise in their 1904 programme

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<sup>112</sup> B. Kennedy, *ibid*, p. 19

<sup>113</sup> F & R. Simons, *ibid*, p. 80

<sup>114</sup> B. Kennedy, *ibid*, p. 23

seeking ‘Anglo-Afrikaner unity at the expense of Africans, Coloured and Asians’<sup>115</sup>. Positing a racial alliance with the Transvaal’s Dutch speaking population so quickly after the Boer War, Creswell clearly portrays the bitter class conflict augmented by the Mines decision to introduce Chinese labour and the significance accorded to skin pigmentation over culture in nation building.

The Anglo-Boer alliance assumed the dominant role in the push for national self government in South Africa, and like its Australian counterpart, the South African Labour Party would conciliated all classes within a nationalist agenda. Reformist Labour leaders like Creswell had electoral agreements with *Het Volk*, the Afrikaner Party under the former Boer General Louis Botha, who reciprocated their support by bestowing wage concessions to white labour, deporting the Chinese from the Transvaal and ‘would press for a law fixing ratio’s between whites and Africans in all industries’<sup>116</sup>. While the Socialist Labour Party under Jock Campbell possessed a class-consciousness that saw it develop unions amongst workers of colour<sup>117</sup>, prevalent white labourism saw the assent of the often antagonistic co-operation of Briton and Afrikaans as its pre-eminent struggle to buttress their hegemonic position within a black man’s country.

### **The Global transmission of White Consciousness**

This last section is concerned with showing how the racial binaries fundamental to white labourism in South Africa and Australia were key components in settler colonialism asserting its national sovereignty versus the Imperial concerns of Britain. However, racism’s expediency in facilitating the aspirations of Imperial working classes is corroborated by practise not just in Britain’s settler societies, but its evidence and utilisation by workers in the metropolitan centre.

The constitutional rights of non-white subjects in the British Empire was a significant issue for the emerging statehoods of South Africa and Australia owing to the Imperial tradition equal rights for all subjects under Imperial rule. In *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds

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<sup>115</sup> J & R. Simons. *Ibid*, p. 103

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*, p. 107

<sup>117</sup> L. Van Der Walt & M. Schmidt, *Black Flame*, p. 163

chart the overt expression of whiteness that dominated and linked political and cultural discourses of Western nations in the early twentieth century. Key to their trans-national study of self-conscious racial exclusivity is how politicians in Australia and South Africa, much like their countries' labour leaders, linked notions of civilisation and race to deepen the 'divide between white and non-white subjects of the British Empire'<sup>118</sup>. Both nations saw their national projects enhanced by the ability to exclude races they considered unfit for democracy, and resisted the political concerns of the British Colonial office. W.M. Hughes, future Labor Prime Minister of Australia, embodied this racial mandate when the White Australia Policy was challenged by Britain over its affront to Japanese civilisation;

We object to these people because of their vices, and their immorality, and because of a hundred things which we can only hint at, and our objections are not to be met by a declaration that the Imperial Government will be embarrassed by them.<sup>119</sup>

The mutual use of the literacy test as a means of excluding non-white immigrants was a working model employed by both South African and Australian governments. Its racial utility was employed globally where it was first constructed in Mississippi as a means to disenfranchise Black voters, emerging to become an essential part of the America's Immigration laws endorsed by Anglophiles within the Boston based Immigration Restriction League<sup>120</sup>. A similar dictation test would provide the framework for Natal's exclusive immigration policy, and ultimately find its greatest expression in the White Australia Policy, a nationalised, steadfast and enduring dogma that would preside over migration in-takes in this country for over two-thirds of the twentieth century.

Britain's Southern dominions encountered the twentieth century aggressively asserting their racially bound franchise, strict labour laws and their colonial dominance of large continents. Their swift assent to nation-hood subsequently brought strategic benefits to the mother country as it entered an increasingly volatile epoch in European geo-politics. While metropolitan officials rarely condoned the

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<sup>118</sup> M. Lake & H. Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p. 164

<sup>119</sup> W.M. Hughes, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives (12 September 1901) p. 4822

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, p. 64

racialised belligerence of its former colonies, its acquiescence to the White Australia Policy when it was so blatantly discriminatory to its Japanese allies and its flaccid response to Ghandi's appeals for Imperial equality in Natal, emphasise its culpability within turn of the century racism. 'It is wrong to regard exclusion' wrote Anwar Offer on Canada and Australia, 'as a dark side of colonial societies. Rather racism arose directly out of their virtues of democracy, civic equality and solidarity'<sup>121</sup>. In many ways racial exclusion was the triumph of settler-colonialism, Offer's comment delineates how racism was to not a conceal ploy to gain a small political or economic advantage, it was a unique achievement in the history of Western democracy.

Britain, like the antipodes, shared in the Imperial discourse of "whiteness" which fed these highly unequal societies. One of the largest expressions of trans-national white labourism occurred in London's Hyde Park in 1914, where a mass-demonstration of labour and socialist groups gathered in support of South Africa's exiled union leaders. It is the explicit racial character of the protesters, with some estimates suggesting a half a million attendees, which has seen it neglected by generations of British labour historians<sup>122</sup>. The labour leaders were from white-only unions which had been demanding a complete exclusion of African and Asian workers from skilled employment in South Africa. The expression of racial solidarity suggests a deep kinship was felt between British workers and their imperial labour diaspora, based on an exclusive white labourism. Further, it was an attack on unconstitutional acts of Government violence, where it was callousness was considered far too heavy-handed for white civilised workers. Finally, veiled within the protests, one can sense the reflective unease of the working-class as it links its concerns with Imperial labour at how easily state and capital can unite to crush their common racial status. Like the emerging state-hoods of Australia and South Africa, the British proletariat recognised the power of international white identity, in that 'the project of whiteness was thus a paradoxical politics, at once transnational in its inspiration and identifications but nationalist in its methods and goals'<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> A. Offer, 'Pacific Rim Societies: Asian Labour and White Nationalism' in J. Eddy and D. Schrueder, eds. *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism*. p. 235

<sup>122</sup> J. Hyslop, *ibid*, p. 405

<sup>123</sup> *ibid*, p. 4

The synthesis of Chapter Two suggests the form of Marxist State- Socialism developed in settler-colonialism, was like later contexts in the twentieth century, embedded within the restricted concerns of state, capital and white skilled workers. More than highlighting the innate racism central to these societies, it suggests a theoretical deficiency that cannot overcome how such an egalitarian concept could be used so exclusively by one set of people over another. That history has made Marxism so intrinsic to populist perceptions of Socialism does not discount from the palpable evidence that argues as a theory, it is equally constructive to inequitable civilisations as surplus Capitalism. However, as demonstrated in the genealogy of the First International, a true Socialist alternative to Marxism and Capitalism was embraced by workers around the world to form a social movement known as anarcho-syndicalism. It is within this revolutionary social movement that I feel the most powerful method lies for the creation of a more just and equal society, and provides the theoretical apparatus for overturning centuries of cultural, political and economic oppression of indigenous peoples under settler-colonialism.

### 3. Syndicalism's Challenge to Settler-Colonial Society

Australia's tradition of parliamentary socialism faced a severe trial during the 1908 Broken Hill strike, where labour's protective safeguards including arbitration and the Australian Labor Party, revealed their futility to Unions defending the robust belligerence of Mining Capital. This episode exposed the intimate alliance between state and capital to labour activists, and compelled the adoption of an alternative form of working-class organisation known as Revolutionary Industrial Unionism. In this chapter, I will explore its place within the libertarian Socialist tradition of anarcho-syndicalism and argue that its chief proponents in settler-colonial society, the International Workers of the World (IWW), pioneered the first substantial means for the emancipation of colonised indigenous peoples. The IWW argued the only method to Socialist revolution occurred through the organisation of workers into a "One Big Union" across national boundaries that necessitated the opposition to all forms of Capitalist oppression, including colonialism and racial nationalism. Contrary to Verity Burgmann's perception that the IWW 'ignored the Aboriginal issue'<sup>124</sup>, I will suggest rather the

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<sup>124</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism, The Industrial Workers of the World in Australia*

unique character of Aboriginal oppression in Australia countered the ability of the IWW to reproduce the efforts of the South African IWW enhancement of anti-colonial struggles in that country. Lastly, contrary to teleological Communist historiography, I will suggest that the IWW's rich history of uniting the international working-class and peasantry were expressed in later episodes of left wing support for Aboriginal rights.

### **Marxism is not the Solution**

In late 1908, the Broken Hill Propriety Company (BHP), the chief employer of miners in Broken Hill, announced it would be decreasing wages upon the expiration of a two year fixed wage contract. The methods employed by the Amalgamated Miners Association (AMA) to counter this action, and the Unions subsequent defeat, acts as a microcosm I believe, for the wider disenchantment of the Australian working-class toward these generic methods of labour action and thus supported labour activists who pushed toward the new method of worker solidarity embodied by the International Workers of the World.

Tom Mann, the nationally renowned orator and organiser for the Victorian Socialist Party was requested by the Amalgamated Miner's Association (AMA) to organise the Unions defence against BHP wage reduction<sup>125</sup>. On January 1, 1909, BHP began a lock-out of workers who rejected the 12.5%<sup>126</sup> wage cuts but was able to maintain production through the use of non-unionised labourers on their Port Pirie smelting works. The AMA took their case to the Arbitration Court who ruled that BHP was transgressing the employer-worker contract by closing the mines. This verdict however was disregarded by BHP who appealed to the High Court and retained their wage-cut tender. The companies called for state protection of its "scab" labourers and over 350 police were transported to Broken Hill and Port Pirie who employed unprecedented brutality toward striking workers. It especially targeted Union leaders and Tom Mann, whom along with 27 other protesters, was arrested and forbidden to preach publically in New South Wales. BHP's malevolence even included a refusal

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<sup>125</sup> J. Laurent, *Tom Mann's Social and Economic Writings*, p. 33

<sup>126</sup> J. Laurent, *Tom Mann's Social and Economic Writings*, p. 32

to re-open the mines for two years when the unions prepared to return to work at the reduced wage level; leaving starving workers no option but to leave the city in search of other work<sup>127</sup>.

This event crystallised the transforming ideology of Tom Mann from parliamentary methods of socialism to industrial unionism. The overwhelming defeat of labour during the Broken Hill strike framed his growing contempt of the arbitration court and its utility to labour when faced by profit-seeking mandates of big business<sup>128</sup>. Ian Turner deduced that;

‘For the unions, it was a major battle and a total defeat. The mine-owners had been the aggressors, but forces of the state were aligned with them and against the miners, while arbitration, the instrument which labour had created to ameliorate its conditions and secure its strength, was found to operate as a bludgeon against the unions when they aggressed but to be ineffective against the employers when they were the offenders.’<sup>129</sup>

It was a symbolic affirmation that industrial arbitration, hitherto considered with universal suffrage as foundation of Australian labour protection had ultimately failed as a strategy for securing labour awards and conditions. Mann was particularly concerned that unionised railway workers, whilst supporting the Broken Hill miners in theory, had not supported them practically by prohibiting the transportation of police and arms to Broken Hill. He addressed these concerns in 1909 in ‘The Way to Win: An open letter to Trades Unionists on Methods on Industrial Organisation’<sup>130</sup>. Deprecated the undue importance Australian Unions had attached to parliamentary industrial protection, Mann instead advocated that the contemporary arrangement of sectional or craft unions needed to be replaced with a united and industrial-wide organisation that could match the power of capitalist tyranny. Struggling to censor his contempt for the ALP’s failure to back labour concerns he argues, ‘entirely irrespective as to which school of politicians is in power, capable and courageous industrial activity forces from the politician’s proportionate concessions’<sup>131</sup>. Mann’s focus on industrial organisation in 1909 was to coalesce with the inception of a radical new form of labour ideology into

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<sup>127</sup> K. Buckley & T. Wheelwright, *No Paradise for Workers*, p. 241

<sup>128</sup> G. Brown, *The industrial Syndicalist* p. 7

<sup>129</sup> I. Turner, *Industrial Labour and Politics*, p. 42

<sup>130</sup> T. Mann, *Barrier Daily Truth*, Broken Hill, May 1909

<sup>131</sup> T. Mann, ‘The Way to Win’, *Barrier Daily Truth*, p.4

Australia, the revolutionary syndicalist strategy of anarchism driven by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

The IWW's platform of socialist revolution drew its philosophy from the libertarian wing of the First International; the broad anarchist tradition that stresses the emancipation of the workers "must be the work of the workers themselves". The IWW preamble adopted in 1905 argued;

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace as long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things in life<sup>132</sup>.

Thus the IWW believed the highly unequal distribution of wealth central to Capitalism and Landlordism could only be changed by the international working class recognising their common exploitation across nationalised boundaries. Where Capitalism benefitted from trans-national flows of finance and labour, so too must the working class be globally connected and eschew artificial boundaries of race and patriotism and understand their common oppressors, the owning class. The IWW believed that workers must be educated and organised workers at their most exploited milieu, the workplace. Thus the labour rank and file would be organised into federated sections of the "One Big Union" umbrella, ready to throw off Capitalist wage slavery through a general strike.

The IWW's ideology of democratic organisation and internationalist working-class unity was inherently opposed by mainstream Australian labour, built on ideals of racial exclusiveness and the dominance of vanguard unions like the Australian Workers Union who dictated working-class policy through its centralised leadership. Following the Broken Hill Strike however, worker disenchantment with this type of Unionism was extensive and it's no surprise that Broken Hill would flower one of the first IWW branches in Australia in 1914<sup>133</sup>.

### **The Universal ideologies of the International Workers of the World**

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<sup>132</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 11

<sup>133</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 123

Whilst the IWW believed the workplace the most expedient organising arena, their theories should not be deduced to mere econometrics, their revolutionary method required championing all cases of injustice and exploitation the world, and avidly spoke for landless peasantry, colonised peoples and women. The IWW believed Capitalist oppression wrought by European Imperialist ventures created environments of tremendous human misery and pioneered a social justice which demanded ‘it is the business of workers everywhere to raise their voice against all such outrages and demonstrate their solidarity in the common cause of the despoiled and disinherited throughout the world’<sup>134</sup>. The IWW’s celebrated creed, ‘an injury to one is an injury to all’, would push the working class to reconsider the racial and national prejudices so endemic to the pre- First World War era, and provide a pioneering channel for the cultural reconsideration of Australia’s oppression of Aborigines through settler-colonialism. I will show how this anti-racism is intimately tied to the IWW’s revolutionary strategy and led its theoreticians to reconsider the intellectual justifications for colonialism, including the malicious use of “Social Darwinism” that I explored in Chapter One.

The IWW and the wider syndicalist network credited and employed Marx’s manifesto of Capitalist oppression, they differed greatly in their revolutionary strategy to achieve a socialist world. In Chapter Two, I catalogued the dominant stream of Parliamentary Socialism that developed in Australia and rank-and-file aspirations that the Labor Party could achieve parliamentary control and usher in a new socialist order. Conversely, the IWW believed the Marxist state method is futile, the state apparatus being the mere vassal of the bourgeoisie. As American IWW founder Daniel De Leon described in 1905, the working class could not use a state ‘built up in the course of centuries of class rule for the purpose of protecting and maintaining the domination of the particular class which happens to be on top’<sup>135</sup> to over throw class society.

The character of IWW organisations thus embodied its “bottom up” revolutionary doctrine, not an advanced vanguard of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” but a democratic and egalitarian association of workers ready to sustain industrial production after revolution, not for surplus accumulation, but

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<sup>134</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt

<sup>135</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *ibid*, p. 161

judged according to collective need. IWW branches placed strict limits on the power and income of paid officials, decision making was democratic within “workers assemblies” and they rejected the powerful centralised bureaucracies of craft unions<sup>136</sup>.

No doubt the IWW’s collective organisational platform drew Tom Mann toward syndicalist ideas in the years following the Broken Hill strike. The IWW’s practical egalitarianism corresponded with Mann’s Christian faith and his belief that altruistic communism was the next stage of evolution after the individual greed of surplus capitalism. His disdain for free trade doctrinaires which legitimated societal inequality through a “survival of the fittest” paradigm was powerful current of critique he shared with anarchist theorists. He argued a significant misreading of Darwin’s theories had occurred, especially by *laissez-faire* proponents Herbert Spenser and T. H. Huxley, which erased the collective endeavour of successful evolution to service their theories of natural selection. The individual greed of Victorian society would be replaced by ‘The kindly side of human nature is being rapidly developed; and we shall eventually learn to regard poverty as a blot upon our civilisation- as a social disease which must be eradicated in order that the higher development of the race may be secured’<sup>137</sup>. Countering claims that socialism and social welfare were retards on racial progress, as suggested by Charles Pearson<sup>138</sup>, Mann in his 1905 letter ‘Socialism’, insists collective endeavour, even across national boundaries is a human trait recognised by Darwin. He included a passage by Darwin’s in the chapter ‘The Moral Sense’, which states;

As man advances in civilisation, and small tribes are united into larger communities, the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instincts and sympathies to all members of the same nation, though personally unknown to him. This point being reached, there is only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathies extended to the men of all nation and all races.<sup>139</sup>

Darwin’s reference to the “artificial barrier” of the nation-state is poignant when equated with syndicalism’s proletariat internationalism; for the worker, the IWW claimed, owes no loyalty to a

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<sup>136</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schimdt, *ibid*, p. 188

<sup>137</sup> T. Mann, ‘The Attitudes of the Workers in Europe and America’, *Forum*, Nov. 1899, p. 332

<sup>138</sup> C. Pearson, *National Life and Character: A Forecast*,

<sup>139</sup> Quoted in J. Laurent, ‘Tom Mann’s Social and Economic Writings’, p. 45

nationalism which so evidently serves the purposes of the elite who oppress him. For Praxedis Guerrero, a Mexican who was a leader of a peasant revolt against the State of Baja California, claimed ‘racial prejudice and nationalism, clearly managed by the capitalists and tyrants, prevent people living side by side in a fraternal manner..... they feed the proletariat with the belief of stupid superiority and pride and make impossible the union of all nations who are separately fighting to free themselves from Capital’<sup>140</sup>. Anti-patriotism as a founding principle amplified the notoriety of the IWW in the western and non-western world, their wholesale denouncement of the First World War as European Imperialisms struggle for global resources would see them heavily persecuted by governments across the globe<sup>141</sup>.

Theories of International fraternity and collective mutual aid emphasise anarchism’s clear understanding of intensifying racialised nationalisms present at the onset of the twentieth century, conceived as a racially demarcated “global colour line”. The collectiveness espoused by Tom Mann clearly had an effect on the Russian emigrate Pyotr Kropotkin, during his time in London. In his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution*, he sheds the supposed scientific foundations of social Darwinism declaring claiming there exists ‘no infamy in civilised society, or in the relations of the whites towards the so-called lower races, or of the strong toward the weak, which would not have found its excuse in this formula’<sup>142</sup>. Anarchism’s belief in the equality of races, cultures and civilisations enabled them to clearly identify the self-serving contexts eugenics were used to justify Capitalist exploitation of indigenous peoples.

Australian colonialism’s use of evolutionary parameters to legitimise settler domination over native Australian’s is clearly evident in Elisee Reclus’ 1883 work ‘Inhabitants of Australia’<sup>143</sup>. World renowned as a French geographer and anarchist, Reclus condemned the barbaric representations of the Australian native customary to colonial mores and argued the settlement of Europeans as the chief motive for the destruction of Aboriginal civilisation. He claims the natives ‘not yet debased by a

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<sup>140</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *ibid*, p. 284

<sup>141</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *ibid*, p.

<sup>142</sup> P. Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution*

<sup>143</sup> E. Reclus, ‘Inhabitants of Australia’, *La Nouvelle Geographie Universelle*, 1883

depredated existence amongst the colonists is much finer than is usually supposed'<sup>144</sup>. Like Mann and Kropotkin, Reclus challenged the miss-appropriation of Darwinism. Reclus deemed anthropological research, on the contrary, suggested Aborigines were genetically sound, they were generally free from physical defects, possess a 'well-developed muscular system'<sup>145</sup> and 'amongst those of West Australia Bishop Rudesindo Salvado noticed only four blind, but not one either deaf, dumb or insane'<sup>146</sup>. Reclus described how Aborigines had developed use of the Boomerang for hunting, an 'inventive genius which devised this remarkable implement'<sup>147</sup>, and many tribes used the constellations for navigation. He concluded that Aborigines had mastered their survival on the harsh southern continent and their physical and cultural attributes were thus appropriate and produced by the Australian environment. This synopsis accorded with Reclus belief that disparate cultures were developed according to their social and geographic environment, not by the inherent biological traits. Thus Reclus denunciation of the colonial project by showing a clear relationship between the introduction in pastoralism and its annihilation of Aboriginal society must be regarded as one of the pioneering works of critique of Australian settler-colonialism'<sup>148</sup>.

Reclus was an important feature the anarchist tradition that denounced Imperial exploitation of indigenous peoples and subsequently featured heavily in the IWW's strategy in uniting all oppressed workers across national boundaries in the one big union movement. Its racial tolerance was direct product of its non-state revolutionary strategy which separated the IWW from mainstream labourism, in that 'those who preferred to parliamentary strategies remained trapped within the racial world vision of the Labor Party, for racism did not endanger such a tactic'<sup>149</sup>. Thus the project of uniting all the popular classes impelled the IWW to denounce all forms of global exploitation, for its aspirations could not be successful without helping the most oppressed populations in society. This idea was so important to syndicalist bodies that they considered that a 'revolutionary mass movement of the popular classes will succeed only to the extent that it combats racial prejudices and fights against

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<sup>144</sup> E. Reclus

<sup>145</sup> *ibid*

<sup>146</sup> *ibid*

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid*, p. 380

<sup>148</sup> E. Reclus, *ibid*

<sup>149</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 85

racial discrimination'.<sup>150</sup> Thus the importance of internationalism explains why the IWW embodied the anti-imperialist stance of anarchists like Reclus and Kropotkin, and campaigned against arenas of settler-colonialism exploitation.

### **The IWW attacks settler-colonialism**

The internationalism central of the anarchist tradition was formative to the IWW's criticism of settler colonialism in Australia and South Africa. Like the global transmission of "White Labourism" that I explored in Chapter Two, the ideas of the IWW were likewise conveyed through the physical migration and movement of workers employed within the International labour market of the First Globalised world. The IWW would brand some of the most virulent criticism's of colonial society in this period, and in South Africa would infuse and assist native anti-colonial movements.

*Direct Action*, the organ of the IWW in Australia, claimed Aborigines were 'the original possessors of the soil', who had been 'driven off, exterminated by war and decimated by famine, disease and enslaved for purposes of exploitation'<sup>151</sup> by colonists. Similarly in *The Socialist*, the organ of the Victorian Socialist Party denounced the actions of settler-colonial societies and correctly linked their analogous contexts of dominance over indigenous Australians, New Zealand Maoris and American Indians; 'The white man's civilisation- spread among the aboriginal races per medium of rum, bibles, bullets physical and moral iniquities of every kind- to wipe the coloured man off the face the earth and enable the pale-face to annex his happy hunting grounds'<sup>152</sup>. This comprehension of the cumulative effects of colonialism shows the IWW and syndicalists in Australia clearly rejecting the popular narrative of a just and peaceful white settlement in Australia. It also emphasises a more sincere advocacy of racial equality against the paternal contempt displayed by the Shearers Union in waiving the joining fee for Aboriginal agricultural workers but concurring with their slave-like exploitation by pastoralists.

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<sup>150</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *ibid*, p. 305

<sup>151</sup> *Direct Action*, 25/ 12/ 1915

<sup>152</sup> *Socialist*, 20/ 7/ 1917 quoted in V. Burgmann, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*, p. 274

Like its accurate portrayal of colonialism in Australia, the IWW in South Africa understood the hegemony of the capitalist system in this context was dependent on the state/ white working class alliance to maintain its dominance over the native proletariat. Reacting to 1912 defence bill which called for recruits to South Africa's racially exclusive white police-force, the party declared it derived from a settler-colonial fear of another native uprising like the 1906 "Bambatha rebellion". It claimed, on the contrary, that a native revolt would be a "wholly justified" response to "the cruel exploitation of South African natives by farmers, mining magnates and factory owners" and should receive the "sympathy and support of every white wage slave"<sup>153</sup>. Firstly by referring to white South Africans as "wage-slaves" it rebuffed the white labourism's self-made consciousness that they constituted an "aristocracy of labour" within colonial Africa and second, that legislations such as the calculating poll tax, the central aggravation of rebels in Natal in 1906, were malicious cogs within settler-colonialism's oppressive system of indigenous domination.

South Africa's racially segregated industry and society surely provided the litmus test for IWW's internationalist revolutionary doctrine. For white workers to discount the tangible benefits of "white labourism" and unite with the majority of the unfree proletariat across racial lines clearly demonstrates the vigour of syndicalist ideology in the pre First World War period. The illiberal and parsimonious nature of South African capitalism in South Africa made it clear to syndicalists that racial unity had to be achieved because 'if the natives are crushed the whites will go down with them' since the stress 'of industrial competition' compels white workers to 'accept the same condition of labour as their black brethren'<sup>154</sup>. Like the rejection of the 'White Australia Policy' advanced by the Australian IWW, South African syndicalism's denigration of the industrial colour bar could not have occurred without the introduction of foreign ideas into the highly racialised settler-colonies. The inception of syndicalist ideas into South Africa followed the same globalised vectors of movement that facilitated the international spread of "white labourism" and "white consciousness" that I discussed in Chapter two. Henry Dunbar, a Scottish blacksmith who immigrated to South Africa in 1906, disseminated the syndicalist ideas he had absorbed in Glasgow and was active in the formation

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<sup>153</sup> *Voice of Labour*, Oct 12, 1912, quoted in L. Van der Walt & M. Schidt, *ibid*, p. 183

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid* 303

of the South African IWW and the Industrial Workers of Africa, the first trade union for native workers<sup>155</sup>. Tom Mann, on route to Europe after leaving Australia in 1910 following his bitter experience in Broken Hill, widely disseminated his growing disenchantment with labourism during his visit to South Africa and promoted the internationalist ideals of industrial Unionism in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria<sup>156</sup>.

It was Mann's convergence with Dunbar and an Irishman named Tom Glynn in Transvaal which provided the impetus for the formation of the South African IWW in the in 1910. Glynn who had fought with the Victorian Bushmen in the Anglo-Boer War had been expelled from the Transvaal Police in 1907 for refusing to shoot a Zulu boy and had learnt syndicalism during his time in New Zealand<sup>157</sup>. Back in South Africa, he worked as a Tramway driver in Johannesburg, led and was jailed for the Tramway strike in 1911 and ended up in Australia as editor for *Direct Action*. Physical journeys like Glynn's symbolise how disparate labour contexts imbibed IWW activists with the practical struggles that revolutionary unionism had to address. It also delineates how syndicalist ideology was an enduring and universal ideology that stood as a powerful framework to confront and vilify the injustices of global Capitalism.

### **A Critique of Burgmann**

In her landmark study of the Australian section of the IWW, Verity Burgmann argues 'because it shared the popular assumption at the time that the Aboriginal race was dying out and because its principle point of reference was the male worker in paid employment', the IWW 'otherwise ignored the aboriginal issue; and 'wrongly judged it as lacking industrial significance'<sup>158</sup>. I believe Burgmann's claim to be unduly historically deterministic, disregarding the unique position of the Aboriginal worker in Australian society and neglecting the worthy evidence of the IWW in other

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<sup>155</sup> L. Van der Walt, 'The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour Activism in Southern Africa', *African Studies*, vol. 66, Dec 2007, pp. 223-251

<sup>156</sup> L. Van der Walt, *ibid*, p. 233

<sup>157</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 77

<sup>158</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 83

settler-colonial arenas that accomplished the organisation of indigenous workers and championed their unique causes. As a study of the trans-national connection between two settler-colonial societies, I believe the evidence of the IWW's influence and activities in advancing native rights in South Africa functions as a prism facilitating a superior understanding of the Australian IWW's deeds regarding indigenous rights.

As I argued previously, the IWW judged the illegal dispossession and exploitation of indigenous peoples within its critique of European Imperialism and saw idiosyncratic colonial contexts within a wider globalised story of Capitalist oppression. During the 1913 maritime and miner's strike in New Zealand, the IWW published material in Maori and hoped to promote inter-racial solidarity between the native and white working class. They implored the support of Maori workers by claiming the 'bosses confiscated your land and shot your ancestors, do not help our mutual enemies for we are ever one tribe-the tribe of workers'<sup>159</sup>. The translation of IWW literature into native languages enabled separate IWW branches to specifically target oppressed groups, by educating native workers that their specific oppression was a function of international monopoly Capitalism and by linking their specific concerns with the global revolutionary movement.

Likewise the American IWW was vigorous in reaching the workers who were shunned by the craft based American Federation of Labour 'AFL', generally unskilled coloured workers increasingly exploited by industries with production processes along "Taylorist scientific management" approaches. The IWW's organisation of workers into non-racial unions in Southern maritime industries led W. E. Debois, the pioneer academic on African-American oppression and whom famously coined the phrase 'the global colour line', stated that 'we respect the Industrial Workers of the World as one of the social and political movements in modern times that draws no colour line'<sup>160</sup>.

The success of the South African IWW in its organisation of native workers is, for the purpose of this thesis, highly significant because it portrays how syndicalist ideas were seen by native workers as a means to end their oppression under settler-colonialism. Furthermore the IWW did not seek to

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<sup>159</sup> Quoted in L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *ibid*, p. 307

<sup>160</sup> Foner, *The Industrial Workers of the World*, p. 159

domineer native activism by subjugation all other methods of revolution under its internationalist doctrine. It rather, unlike much of the experience of anti-colonial movements with subsequent Communist Parties, worked with anti-colonial, Pan-African and Christian movements which were also successful in rousing African workers. Contrary to Burgmann's caricature of the IWW being solely focused on the industrial wage-earner, syndicalists in South Africa sought workers in non urban areas like the oppressed Indian workers in Natal sugar plantations. In Cape Town, the IWW reached out to native manufacturing workers through the Sweet and Jam Workers Industrial Union and the Industrial Workers of Africa<sup>161</sup>.

Native activists, such as Ruben Cetiwe, Johnny Gomas and TW Thebedi were able to bridge the gap between the syndicalist unions and the South African Native National Congress SANNC (changed to African National Congress, ANC in 1923) and pushed for it to take on a more revolutionary stance. Through the work of syndicalist's a radical militancy developed in the Native Congress which deeply concerned the traditional leadership, who feared a greater harassment by police and condemned its audacity in contrast to the piecemeal reform they hoped they could attain from the Government<sup>162</sup>. This friction came to a head in June 1918, were mass meetings were held to denounce the arrest of striking African Municipal workers between the Industrial Workers of Africa, the International Socialist League and the Transvaal Native Congress, a section of the SANNC. The groups called for a general strike against the enslaving pass laws which tied the native worker to jobs with low pay and severely restricted their individual liberties. Whilst the leadership of the Transvaal National Congress, many whom were missionary education administrative workers, denounced the strike, the fervour of the alliance grew and several thousand African miners clashed violently with police<sup>163</sup>. In the resulting crackdown by authorities five Africans and three whites were arrested, an exceptional and symbolic occurrence noted by Skota who claimed 'for the first time in South Africa, members of the European

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<sup>161</sup> L. Van der Walt, 'The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour Activism in Southern Africa', *African Studies*, vol. 66, Dec 2007, p. 234

<sup>162</sup> P. Bonner, 'The Transvaal Native Congress, 1917-1920', in *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa* p.282

<sup>163</sup> L. Van der Walt, 'The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour Activism in Southern Africa', *African Studies*, vol. 66, Dec 2007, p. 235

and Native races, in common cause united, were arrested and charged together for their political activities'<sup>164</sup>.

It is the popularity of Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) amongst African workers which serves as the paramount evidence that syndicalist ideas were considered by native workers as expedient in their aspirations for a better life. The ICU formed in Cape Town in 1919, drew upon a wide range of ideas including liberalism, Millenarian African Christianity but it was primarily a synthesis of two main philosophies. The Universal Negro improvement Association (UNIA), whose Pan-Africanism movement of Marcus Garvey was conveyed to South Africa by Afro-Caribbean sailor's, was alongside syndicalism of the IWW, fundamental to the ICU's ideological platform. Under the leadership of the charismatic Clements Kadalie, it was extremely popular throughout Southern Africa and increasingly drew support from farm labourers and tenant farmers. In 1927, it claimed over one hundred thousand members and aimed to 'form one great union of skilled and unskilled workers of South Africa, south of the Zambezi... to bring together all classes of labour, skilled and unskilled, in every sphere of life whatsoever'<sup>165</sup>. This strategy unambiguously derives from the revolutionary platform of the IWW and provides a clear indication that the syndicalist ideas transmitted to South African indigenous peoples by Imperial migrants at the start of the twentieth century were now being utilised by wholly organised native associations as a strategy for their settler-colonial emancipation.

Burgmann's argument that the IWW ignored the Aboriginal issue due to their 'principle point of reference being the male wage-earner' is analogous to her stipulation that the masculinised character of the association and the wage-earner proviso in the constitution prevented the incorporation of women into the IWW fold. Here again I see evidence of Burgmann's determinism, because while she acknowledges the IWW's manifest sexual equality she disparages the discrepancy between the IWW's overt commitment to sexual egalitarianism and its mode and manner of operation that made

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<sup>164</sup> T. D. M. Skota, *The African Yearly Register: Being an Illustrated Biographical Dictionary (Who's Who) of Black Folks in Africa*, p. 171

<sup>165</sup> 'Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa' in *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, vol. 1, eds. G.M. Carter & T. Karis p. 325-26

women feel decidedly out of place'<sup>166</sup>. Rather I view this persona as a vital tool in seceding industrial unionism from the orthodox labour culture and distinguishing itself as the one true platform for societal change. '*Direct Action* brought to the working class a message of virility, strength, and unconquerable optimism'<sup>167</sup>. Thus by portraying the expectation that arbitration and politicians would secure the rights of workers as anaemic, the IWW could implore the proletariat to actively seek his own emancipation and was thus a necessary tool to rouse the rank-and-file to action.

Colonial society often parading competing discourses of masculinity and I feel the IWW's self-image of virility is another example of this gendered culture. As I discussed in Chapter Two, male honour was a tool exploited by proponents of the White Australia Policy to rouse the racial consciousness of white men. By suggesting coloured men were sexually depraved and thus an immoral threat to white women, Australian men were thus failing in their manly duties by not protecting the purity and honour of white females, the possessors of the white race. Thus, contrary to Burgmann's view, the IWW's masculine voice should not be seen as an exclusionary gendered persona but rather as a tool to emphasise the movement's strength and reaffirm to workers that socialist revolution was possible.

Not discounting the fact that syndicalist unions had predominately male members, many important leaders in the Australian IWW were females including Annie Westbrook, May Ewart Wilson and Violet Wilkins and it had a specific union for women called the Women's Committee<sup>168</sup>. Syndicalists understood the uniqueness of female oppression and regarded labourism's misogynistic call for 'the family wage' as essential to the economic oppression of men over women, essentially through marriage. Kropotkin observed;

Only let us fully understand that a revolution, intoxicated with the beautiful words, Liberty, Equality, Solidarity, would not be a revolution if it maintained slavery at home. Home humanity subjected to the slavery of the hearth would still have to rebel against the other half'<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> V. Burgmann, *ibid*, p. 94

<sup>167</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 95

<sup>168</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *ibid*, p. 331

<sup>169</sup> P. Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread*, p. 124

Thus I perceive the IWW's approach to female liberation analogous to its understanding of the uniqueness of colonised peoples; their emancipation was foremost and intrinsic to a socialist revolution.

### **The uniqueness of Aboriginal Oppression**

The serf like nature of Aboriginal employment and the comprehensive Governmental controls of Indigenous people in colonial society that I revealed in Chapter One I deem to have a significant bearing on why Aborigines were unable to be organised into syndicalist unions like their native South African counterparts. This issue is not taken in account by Burgmann in her judgement of the IWW's approach to Aborigines which I feel calls for a re-consideration of her judgement in respect of the totalitarian control of the native reserve system. Segregated reserves for Aborigines were developed after federation and were major factors in excising Aboriginal people from colonial society, curbing black/white interactions and greatly facilitating the popular belief that Aboriginal people were a doomed race on the path to extinction. Andrew Markus claims 'under penalty of a heavy fine, entry to Aboriginal reserves was prohibited'<sup>170</sup>. This rule combined with the fact that it was unlawful to 'cause or induce or attempt to cause or induce, an aboriginal to leave any lawful employment'<sup>171</sup>, made potential union activity in Aboriginal communities a considerable risk to organisations. More importantly it was extremely hazardous for Aboriginal workers to seek Union help to campaign for better social and economic conditions considering Aboriginal Administrators retained vast control over their lives including the right to marriage, custody of their children and income<sup>172</sup>.

Significantly the IWW was active in organising workers of colour in Darwin where it arranged through its East Asian branches, IWW literature in Asian languages to be distributed to non-white workers and publically denounced the AWU's racially exclusive membership<sup>173</sup>. However despite the IWW's proximity to Aboriginal workers there is no evidence of Indigenous industrial organisation.

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<sup>170</sup> A. Markus, 'Talka Longa Mouth', *Who are our enemies*, p. 142

<sup>171</sup> A. Markus, *ibid*, p. 142

<sup>172</sup> A. Markus, *ibid*, p. 147

<sup>173</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 132

Remembering this was the era when Baldwin Spenser, Chief Protector of Aborigines, was separating Aboriginal workers from their Chinese employers in Darwin and aligning Aboriginal service with white employers. The intimacy of this labour relationship I consider to be an important counter to Burgmann and emphasises the difference between the IWW's native experience in South Africa and Australia. While the white and native working-classes were no doubt separated through the job colour-bar and wages in South Africa, ideologically there existed an aperture to unite cross-racially against their analogous Capitalist oppressors, such as the Witwatersrand's Chamber of Mines. In many Australian contexts however, the colonists were the direct employer of indigenous peoples and thus, as their indignation highlighted when Aboriginal workers chose Chinese employers over Europeans, had a direct economic interest in their exploitation. This economic agenda could also suggest why the AWU, despite allowing Aboriginal workers to join the Union, did nothing to change the slave conditions of their employment in many areas. Thus I consider the extreme difficulty in reaching as Aboriginal audience renders Burgmanns analogy between the IWW's 'wage-worker' focus and its inability to campaign for Aboriginal issues as unreasonable.

For the IWW worker organisation and social activism were mutually constructing and occurred in concert, ideologically each should not occur separately as 'education about the system and the consequent need for the organisation had to precede, or at least accompany, actual organising activity'<sup>174</sup>. In combating the endemic racism of Australian settler colonialism, the inability to organise Aboriginal workers would have made other contexts of colonial racism more advantageous to the IWW, especially when they were so well received by coloured workers in the Northern Territory. As Aborigines were not recorded in the census the IWW would have had little evidence to critique the widespread doctrine that Aborigines were dying out, considering the 1910's has the lowest population estimates for Indigenous people.

If there is little evidence of syndicalist activity in remote Australia, Aborigines who were proletarianised like South African natives were influenced by the ideas of working-class radicalism. An Aborigine from Adelaide, Ted o' Reilly was an influential orator for the IWW and organised

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<sup>174</sup> V. Burgmann, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*, p. 302

unemployment demonstrations for many years. He joined the Adelaide branch of the Australian Communist Party (CPA) along with other former IWW members and his influence was still strong where in 1933, the Adelaide branch of the CPA was labelled ‘anarcho-syndicalist’ by the party’s central committee. Similar to Cape Town, native dock-workers in Sydney came into contact with black sailors from across the globe and who were imbued with the Black Nationalist ideology Marcus Garvey. Many of these sailors had experienced the racial equality of the IWW’s Marine Transport Workers Industrial Union, and their language was to have a profound impact on Fred Maynard, an Aboriginal wharf labourer. He was also known to visit the Domain to listen to labour speakers and went on to form the Australian Aboriginal Progressives Association (AAPA) in 1925.

The AAPA was the pioneer Indigenous rights association in Australia and was heavily influenced by Maynard’s experience with Black Nationalist ideology. In fighting the controlling paternalism of the Aborigines Protection Board the AAPA advanced an overtly nationalistic platform and called for aborigines to ‘work together in the interests of your own race’<sup>175</sup>. Land rights was a significant desire of the AAPA where Maynard referred ‘to the unjust procedure of late years, when many of them after years of occupancy of certain portions of land, and after clearing it, and cultivating it, had been turned adrift to begin all over again in some unwanted portion of the country’<sup>176</sup>. The IWW member Michael Sawtell campaigned for the AAPA but the native leadership felt he was using the organisation for his own ends and cut their links with him<sup>177</sup>. JJ Moloney who edited the Newcastle Newspaper *Voice of the North*, and supported the AAPA’s cause, wrote an article in 1926 called a ‘Model Aboriginal State’ which bears distinct resemblance to Garvey’s “back to Africa” movement. Moloney writes on Aborigines;

If we return to them areas of the country on which they may work out their own salvation safeguarded from the envious eyes of encroaching white population, we shall at least have the satisfaction of

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<sup>175</sup> *Macleay Argus*, 7 April, 1925, in J. Maynard, *Fight for Liberty and Freedom- The Origins of Australian Aboriginal Activism*, p.56

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid*, p. 56

<sup>177</sup> J. Maynard, *Fight for Liberty and Freedom- The Origins of Australian Aboriginal Activism*, p.187

knowing that even at the eleventh hour we have endeavoured to redeem any neglect, indifference or maladministration in the past, and to do substantial justice'<sup>178</sup>

While not discounting the overwhelming oppression Aboriginal people have faced under settler-colonialism, especially in the first half of the twentieth century, such an overt nationalist pogrom was hostile to Syndicalism's internationalist tradition and the creation of new society within the old.

Whilst I showed how the IWW could work with anti-colonial struggles in South Africa, for Bakunin, 'the redemption of nationality through the establishment of a state was not a valid emancipatory goal'<sup>179</sup>. Thus the overt patriotism of the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland was a concern for the IWW despite the legality of the revolt, and, disregarding the fact the IWW influence in 1926 was minimal compared to the 1910's, it is ideologically difficult to see how the AAPA's concentrated national strategy could be incorporated within wider revolutionary struggle of syndicalism.

### **Telling the story of Communist Progression**

In this last section I will argue that the historiography of the IWW has been distorted by the dominance of Communist writers who have been guilty of deriding the history of the IWW and downplaying its sophisticated rebuttal of global Capitalism. The story of Syndicalism's platform for a Socialist revolution, its links with anti-colonial struggles and its embrace of racial and cultural diversity has been greatly controlled by Communist historiography which has presented movements like the IWW within a teleological passage from crude philosophy to the superior socialism of global Communism. Members of the South African Communist Party (SACP) like Eddie Roux and Brian Bunting, and of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), such as Lance Sharkey and Edgar Ross, have presented the IWW as product of a radical and militant era and argue that the absorption of IWW members into the Communist Parties in 1921 and 1920 respectively, represents the education of the imprudent left to sophisticated Marxism<sup>180</sup>. Thus the broad syndicalist critique of colonialism and

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<sup>178</sup> *Voice of the North*, 10 march 1926, quoted in J. Maynard, *ibid*, p. 53

<sup>179</sup> Quoted in L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *Black Flame*, p. 310

<sup>180</sup> L. Van der Walt, 'The Industrial Union is the embryo of the Socialist Commonwealth'

racialised nationalism has been concealed under a triumphant Communist historiography which locates the instigation of socialist activism in anti-colonial struggles from the Comintern's 1928 'National Program' and the links between Australian Communists and the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat<sup>181</sup>. Bob Boughton argues that it was the link to Moscow which impelled Australian Communist's to examine Aboriginal oppression, a pioneering episode 'that pre-dated the discovery by liberal academia of this issue by several decades, and the subsequent community mobilisation of this issue we now call reconciliation'<sup>182</sup>. He subsequently sees the CPA's 1931, *Fight for Aborigines: Draft Programme of Struggle Against Slavery* as a result of Comintern guidance and urge for the CPA to reconsider colonialism's effect on Indigenous peoples.

While acknowledging that the CPA derived much guidance on its policies from its senior body in Moscow I would suggest however that Boughton downplays the persistent legacy of IWW internationalism within the CPA, a legacy that saw anti-colonial struggles as intrinsic to a Socialist Revolution. The CPA's central champion of Aboriginal rights Tom Wright was active in the Unemployed Worker's Movement, a grass-roots organisation that during the depression fought with police during Sydney's 1931 anti-eviction movement and included the former IWW member and Aborigine, Lucy Eatock. Nadia Wheatley argues that 'the anti-eviction campaign was successful in pressuring for legislative change because it was an expression of wide community feeling'<sup>183</sup>, which points to the influence of IWW direct action ideology as opposed to the highly disciplined and dogmatically doctrinaire CPA<sup>184</sup>. Burgmann claims that it was only in the late 1930's that the CPA 'succeeded in laying to rest the ghost of the IWW that had haunted it in its formative era'<sup>185</sup>, and has thus been historically portrayed by the Communist school as a necessary struggle to attain the correct method of socialist revolution and the best way to address anti-colonial struggles. I suggest rather that the IWW's broad revolutionary tradition was as important to left wing support of Aboriginal struggles

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<sup>181</sup> A. Markus, 'Talka Longa Mouth', in *Who Are Our Enemies*, A. Curthoys & A. Markus, eds. p. 148

<sup>182</sup> B. Boughton, 'The Communist Party of Australia's struggle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Rights, 1920-1970', pp- 263- 283, in *Labour and Community- Historical Essays*, eds. Raymond Markey

<sup>183</sup> N. Wheatley & D. Cottle, 'Sydney's Anti- Eviction Movement: Community or Conspiracy?', in *Labour and Community- Historical Essays*, eds. Raymond Markey, pp. 146- 171

<sup>184</sup> N. Wheatley & D. Cottle, *ibid*, p. 158

<sup>185</sup> V. Burgmann, *Revolutionary Industrial Unionism*, p. 266

in the twentieth century as the pulse of the Comintern. ‘We got no boss here, were all the same’<sup>186</sup>, replied detained Aboriginal workers to Police during the famous 1946 Pilbara Pastoral Strike, the first time Aborigines ever initiated strike action and suggesting that they too realised the benefits revolutionary unionism’s doctrine of mass organisation and direct action.

The Ideology of the broad anarchist tradition of which the IWW was an integral part, has reappeared in some the most potent expressions of human solidarity in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. From the collective worker control of 1936 Barcelona, immortalised in George Orwell’s novel *Homage to Cataluña*, to modern episodes of mass union demonstrations recently in London, we can see that the socialist dream of ‘forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old’<sup>187</sup> still resonates now as it did a century ago. The IWW is most remembered in Australia for the arrest of twelve of its leaders during anti-conscription campaigns in 1916, charged with an alleged plot to burn down Sydney. The Government introduced the Unlawful Associations Act, which provided six month jail sentences for anyone advocating anti-militarism, direct action, or a change to the social order and suppressed the IWW newspaper *Direct Action*. In essence the ‘ideas of the IWW were on trial, it was judged, not for what its members had done but for what the IWW had said or written’<sup>188</sup>. This ruling class in Australia clearly understood the IWW’s overt challenge to its dominance of the settler-colonial order, and backed by right-wing henchmen like the New Guard and the Returned Service and Services League of Australia (RSL), hounded the IWW and its members from Australia’s cultural fabric.

In Chapter Three, I demonstrated the appeal of IWW’s revolutionary ideology to a dissatisfied Australian working-class trying to comprehend the variance between the so called “worker’s

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<sup>186</sup> D. Noakes, director, ‘How the West was lost’, 1987, Ronnin Film

<sup>187</sup> T. Glynn, South African IWW Preamble 1910, quoted in L. Van der Walt, ‘Bakunin's heirs in South Africa: race and revolutionary syndicalism from the IWW to the International Socialist League, 1910-21’ *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies*, vol. 31. 1, 2004 pp. 67-88

<sup>188</sup> V. Burgmann, *ibid*, p.220

paradise” and their own personal struggles. I suggested that the strategy of uniting peoples across racial and national boundaries provided the pioneering apparatus for the recognition of distinct contexts of oppression endemic to Capitalism and settler colonialism. Lastly I viewed the unity of white and native syndicalist’s in South Africa as demonstrative of the valid platform the IWW held for native rights and suggested that the unique context of Aboriginal oppression prevented a more constructive relationship between Aborigines and the IWW, which may have been greater if the IWW’s influence in Australia was not so dramatically tyrannised by the ruling class.

## Conclusion

The Australian Labor Parties victory in the November 2007, Federal Election brought hope to Northern Territory Aborigines that the oppressive measures of the Northern Territory Intervention would be repealed under the new Government of Kevin Rudd. Mobile polling booths across 270 Indigenous communities’s recorded overwhelming support for the ALP, with estimates of between 88% to 95% of votes going against John Howards Liberal Party. Likewise Kevin Rudd’s historic apology to the Stolen Generations in February 2008, where he remarked ‘for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry’<sup>189</sup>, was heralded as a new chapter for Indigenous peoples and a significant break from Howard ‘practical reconciliation’. Despite a softening of rhetoric emphasised through a policy designated as ‘closing the gap’, Labor has retained the central doctrine of the NT Intervention including the highly unpopular “Income Management Scheme”. Income management through the Basics card bears a disturbing resemblance to the Indigenous labour conditions of the early twentieth century, and remains a virulent source of Aboriginal resentment.

The historical precedents that resurfaced during the Northern Territory pose serious questions about multi-culturalism in Australia and its acceptance of Aboriginal self-determination. At the time of the

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<sup>189</sup> D. Welsh ‘Rudd says sorry’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 February 2008.

intervention, John Howard's Liberal Party held power in both houses of parliament, enabling the Northern Territory Emergency Response bill to be legislated without censure or review. This unchecked parliamentary power was combined with his ability to override the constitutional authority of the Northern Territory Government, an episode of dramatic centralised power. By disregarding the numerous binding International Human Rights obligations to which Australia was a signatory, the Northern Territory Intervention demonstrated the superlative command held by Government and its ability to victimise certain segments of the community to advance its strategic economic aims. This focussed power bears an uncanny resemblance to the influence of pastoralists in nineteenth century Queensland and their ability to obtain sovereignty over native affairs against the Imperial authority of the Colonial Office in London, crucially benefitting their economic interests through the expansion of the agricultural frontier. It is poignant that just five days after the Intervention began, Australia was not one of the 143 countries to vote in favour of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on 29 June, a sinister indication of what Howard had in mind.

Many commentators considered the Intervention as a cynical exercise of "wedge" politics directed against the opposition Labor Party at a time when Howard was dramatically behind the Kevin Rudd in polling. Where advocates of the White Australia Policy appealed to white racial prejudice of the non-white foreigner, Howard's appeal to populist sentiments of racism is no surprise considering his use of 9/11, the Tampa crises and middle Australia's penchant for stability in times of uncertainty, to boost his election campaign in 2001. In 2007, however, the election was narrowed to a fight over industrial relations following the Liberal Party's unpopular 'WorkChoices' legislation, a policy highly significant to working-class families and where even the racist tumult of the NT Intervention could not distract the voter dissatisfaction with the Liberal Party.

This thesis looked at two contexts of settler-colonialism, highlighted the overwhelming settler desire to initiate surplus production and tie these colonial outposts to the global Capitalist market. More importantly however, was the formation of white racial consciousness in these arenas and its employment in safeguarding settler dominance of the colonial project over non-white and indigenous inhabitants. Examining the administration and discourses of these epochs, I believe, sets a historical

precedent for understanding relationships between Indigenous peoples and the nation-state in the twenty-first century. As Angela Woollacott argues in ‘Whiteness and the Imperial Turn’, ‘exploring whiteness as a constructed racial category, and the specificities of its historical links to settler colonialism, can perhaps further the work of disrupting the “innocence” of racial hierarchies, their legacies, and the continuing effects of colonialism’<sup>190</sup>. I suggest that the underlying economic subtext of the Northern Territory Intervention ties it intimately with the central aim of settler-colonialism, suggest that modern day state/ indigenous relationships have not passed into a “post” or “neo” era, they remain colonial.

The persistence of colonial oppression in the modern era engenders the story of the IWW’s advocacy of indigenous rights a useful paradigm to explore. The decline of the Soviet bloc of Communist countries in the late twentieth century has produced an ideological vacuum on the Left in comparison to the ever expanding and increasingly oppressive forms of Capitalist systems, including neo-liberalism, Reaganomics and structural adjustment<sup>191</sup>. The twenty-first century is a world of extremes where the top one percent of American’s have an income equal to the bottom forty percent<sup>192</sup>; ‘America has a higher per capita income than other advanced countries mainly because our rich are much richer’<sup>193</sup>. Considering the size of the working class in 1848, the time when Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote *The Communist Manifesto*, is akin to the amount of industrial workers in Korea today alone, suggests that solutions to abject poverty will need to be sourced outside the Capitalist tradition. Thus the broad anarchist tradition of which the revolutionary industrial unionism of the IWW was a chief proponent stands as legitimate and working model for a new society where one is;

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<sup>190</sup> Angela, Woollacott, ‘Whiteness and ‘the Imperial Turn’’, in Leigh Boucher, Jane Carey and Katherine Ellinghaus (eds.), *Re-Orientating Whiteness: Transnational Perspectives on the History of an Identity* (Basingstoke, 2009)

<sup>191</sup> L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *Black Flame*, p. 11

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10

<sup>193</sup> P. Krugmann, ‘For Richer’, *New York Times Magazine*, Oct, 20, 2002

Truly free only when all human beings, men and women, are equally free, and the freedom of other men, far from negating or limiting my freedom, is, on the contrary, its necessary premise and confirmation.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> M. Bakunin, 'God and the State', quoted in L. Van der Walt & M. Schmidt, *ibid*, p. 47

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