Towards Reconciliation?

An analysis of post-colonial structures within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

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Abstract

Canada has a long history of colonialism that ended in 1867. Before and after this the Indigenous peoples have been the target of several assimilation strategies, the most famous being the Indian Residential Schools system. To deal with its legacy, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was set up. Critique has been directed towards the commission for failing to deal with unequal power structures in society within its work but rather having a victim-centered work focusing on their stories. This has led to the goal of reconciliation being affected as well. This paper has looked for post-colonial structures within the final report of the commission by analyzing three aspects: how the commission name/label the Indigenous peoples, if an Indigenous or Western perspective is dominant in its work, and how the relationship between different Indigenous and non-Indigenous governmental bodies looks like. It has also looked at how this has affected the commission's work towards reconciliation, both from its own definition and from others. The findings of the research are that the work of the commission has been affected by the post-colonial structures in Canada within all three aspects and that this has negatively affected the work towards reconciliation.

Keywords: Post-colonialism, Reconciliation, Indigenous peoples, Power, Canada
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1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose and research question

Canada is a country with a long history of colonialism. The state was under both French and British rule before becoming an independent state in 1867 (Government of Canada, 2018). However, some of the colonial structures and their legacies are still present in society today. One example of a colonial structure is the Indian Residential Schools System, hereafter the residential schools, that were in action between the 1880s and 1996 (Stanton, 2011). The schools aimed to assimilate children into Canadian society. Thousands of children went through the system during this time and heavily damaged the languages and cultures of the Indigenous peoples (James, 2012, p. 184). The children were abused, and many died within the system (Park, 2015). To deal with the history of the residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada was set up in 2008 with the mandate to deal with its experiences, impacts, and consequences. One of its main goals was to reach reconciliation between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, n.d. 1). The final report of the commission was released in 2015 and was received with mixed reactions. One of the biggest critiques is that the commission has failed to deal with the structures in society that reinforces the unequal relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples of Canada. These ongoing structures have been left unchanged and are not debated by the commission. The power relations and colonial knowledge assumptions are still present today and this issue is not given any room for discussion within the report (James, 2012).

This thesis aims at investigating whether or not post-colonial structures have affected the work of the TRC and if the post-colonial structures that exist within the Canadian society are being reinforced with the commission's work and if this hinders reconciliation from happening. This will be done with a discourse analysis based on a post-colonial framework. The thesis also intends to contribute to the research regarding how TRCs are used in different settings. The Canadian case is a bit unique compared to others where TRCs has been used as a tool for peacebuilding. In Canada, there has been no regime shift or end to armed conflict but has been set up in the old structure that was present during the event being investigated. The question is how this has affected the work and goal of a TRC. Several countries have a similar history of colonialism in which the same model could be used in the future to deal with their legacies. My hypothesis is that the

post-colonial structure within Canadian society has affected the TRC of Canada and its intention to be a step towards reconciliation

The thesis will try to answer the following research question:

Are there any post-colonial structures visible in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada? If so, how and why did they impact the Commission and how, and why, are they obstacles to reconciliation?

To be able to answer the asked question, there will also be two guiding research questions:

Are there examples in the report of the Canadian governmental bodies trying to seize power via cultural, intellectual, economic or political processes?

Are there examples of the Indigenous perspective being colonized?

1.2 Background – The history of Canada and the Indian Residential School System

The colonial history of Canada goes back to the 1600s when the French settled the territory. Canada then became a British colony before becoming a state of its own in 1867. Before the settlers came to Canada, Indigenous peoples inhabited the lands on their own and they are still present in the state today. The number of people that identify as Indigenous today is around 1,4 million, which is 3,5% of the population (Government of Canada, 2018). The three groups that are acknowledged within the Canadian constitution are First Nations, Métis and Inuit. First Nations are made up of over 600 communities in Canada and include both status and non-status Indians. They also represent more than 50 different Nations and 50 Indigenous languages (Government of Canada, 2017:1). Inuit are the peoples that live in the arctic parts of Canada (Government of Canada, 2017:2), while Métis refers to people that descents from both Indigenous peoples and settlers (Vowel, 2016). The Indigenous peoples are therefore not a homogenous group, but a heterogeneous one where we can find some similarities among the different groups. The treatment of the Indigenous peoples by the Canadian state has been highly criticized from a human rights perspective. Since the time the settlers arrived, they have been the target for several assimilation strategies, many of them leading to bad living conditions for the groups (Nationalencyklopedin, n.d.).

When Canada became independent in 1867, a new governmental structure was built up. Canada became a federal state and is still today. The power is shared between one federal, ten provincial and three territorial governments. On the federal level, the government is a bicameral system with a House of Commons and a Senate

that oversees the work of the government (House of Commons Canada, n.d.). There is a big political tension between the two main linguistic groups in Canada; the Anglosaxians and the French. The province of Quebec is the only province that has French as their main language and there has been a big debate on how the federal-provincial relationship with Quebec should look like. They claim that they need a special status compared to other provinces due to the protection of their language and culture (Gagnon, 2013). There is also a tension between the Indigenous communities and the Candian state. The relationship between the two is uncertain and tentative, as the initial exclusion of the Indigenous communities still affects the relationship today. How much influence the communities have on the Canadian state policy's relies heavily on their geographical and resource status. There is no full self-determination for Indigenous communities at this point and the Canadian governments still have the majority of the powers (Papillon, 2012).

One of the most notable assimilation strategies carried out by the Canadian state was the residential school system, which is a strategy that has been seen in many countries. The first school was established in the mid-1880s (MacDonald & Hudson, 2012). The purpose of the schools was to assimilate Indigenous children into Canadian society by providing education that aimed at destroying Indigenous cultures. It was for example forbidden for children to speak their languages and practice their culture (Nagy, 2013). Conditions at the schools have been described as poor, characterized by widespread malnutrition, high rates of diseases and abuse (Park, 2015). The schools' closure in 1996 leads to discussions on how the legacy of the schools should be treated and how the country should reach reconciliation. As a result of this, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was created through the IRS Settlement Agreement in 2007 (Stanton, 2011). The TRC is set up as an official, temporary, non-judicial and fact-finding body with the intention to investigate the time of the residential schools (ibid.). Within its mandate, there are several goals set up for the commission. They include the acknowledgment of residential schools' experiences, impact, and consequences, and also at the end to reach reconciliation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, n.d. 1). With the commission's closure in 2015, it concluded by presenting a report including six volumes and several other documents, accompanied by a set of calls to action to guide the country's continuing work towards reconciliation

1.3   Previous research

The TRC of Canada and its work has created a lot of debate in and outside of Canada. Since the final report was released not too long ago, there is a limited amount of research that has been done on it. However, scholars have researched the commission's work while it was up and running, coming to some conclusion on how its work has been influenced by its construction and mandate.

One scholar who has researched the work of the commission is Matt James, a professor in Political Science at the University of Victoria in Canada. His research on the area has been focused on seeing how the victim-centered approach of the

commission has had a positive or negative impact on its work (James, 2012, p. 183). The power asymmetries present in the commission seems to work against appropriate responsibility-taking by the parties (ibid. p. 196). He also says that the commission is done under the same governmental system that the injustices were perpetrated, and it continues to shape Canadian society (James, 2010, pp. 28, 32). The victim-centered approach of the commission has led to these issues within the system being left untouched and focused more on the experience of victims, which has left routines and relationships being as they were before (James, 2012, pp. 202, 204). Another scholar that also focuses on the issues that come with the commission's approach is Francesca Dominello. She discusses how the focus on the emotional and physical harm of Indigenous, which is also important, takes the focus away from the long-term damages on the Indigenous communities. Their identities, languages, cultures and traditional governance have been negatively impacted by the residential schools and the commission helps to uphold this status quo (Dominello, 2017).

Other scholars have discussed the same problem with ongoing structures that have been left undiscussed. One of them is Ronald Niezen from McGill University in Canada. He says that the fact that the commission mostly hears victims, the knowledge of the perpetrators, their motives and institutions are left obscured. He means that this knowledge is crucial for knowing what went wrong and change the status quo (Niezen, 2016, p. 935). Avigail Eisenberg has a discussion on the same track. She means that the commission does not succeed in challenging the state bias and international order, but rather reaffirms the power of the state by calling for actions that will legitimate it. This allows the state to govern more securely and in a way it has done before (Eisenberg, 2018, p. 27). The problem of maintaining the status quo is also discussed by Augustine S.J Park, who argues that the ongoing structures legitimize the colonial settler state. She mostly discusses the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement that set up the TRC but means that these structures can be found within the TRC's early work as well, as the article was released before the final report was released (Park, 2015).

One scholar that has looked at how the discourse within transitional justice is Mickey Vallee. He sees how the structures found in Canadian society goes again in the TRC. One example is how the discourse protects the perpetrators by allowing innocent and ineffective witnessing. This leads to the responsible actors not being revealed and the structures remains (Vallee, 2019).

My research intends to build on the findings of the previous research on how the commission works within a set of structures.

2   Theory

Since the post-colonial theory is broad and can be applied to many contexts, this chapter will explain what implication is used for this research. I will start by explaining more broadly before going in more narrowly on the specific framework I have chosen to apply. The chapter will explain how post-colonialism can be seen from a power structure-perspective. The residential schools are an important example of assimilation and a major site where power has been exercised. I will conclude by explaining the three parameters that represent the post-colonial discourse I have chosen to look at in my analysis: Western vs Indigenous perspective, institutions within the Canadian state and naming/labeling of Indigenous groups. The chapter will also define what will be meant by reconciliation within this thesis to be able to see if the commission has reached it or not.

2.1   Post-colonialism

Colonialism and post-colonialism are highly debated subjects that can be defined in many different ways. The type of colonialism exercised in Canada is called settler colonialism, which means that there is no separation between the colony and the imperial state. Settler colonialism comes intending to destroy what is there and build a new home (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). In this, processes of dispossession, domination, and assimilation are used as methods for achieving this goal (Alfred, 2010). One scholar famous in the area is Edward Said, who in his book *Orientalism* (1978) describes the domination of the Orient, has he calls the non-Western world, as the main characteristic of post-colonialism. This domination is based on European material civilization and culture, which is expressed in the discourse supported by for example institutions, doctrines and vocabulary (Said, 1978, pp. 10-11).

What type of colonialism a country has been under also affects how the post-colonial setting is characterized. The descendants of settlers that came to Canada also want to be included as post-colonial subjects, but there is a significant difference between them and descendants from the Indigenous peoples. To be able to explore post-colonialism in a representative way, we need to highlight these internal differences (Loomba, 2015, p. 30). In broad terms, post-colonialism is defined as the critique of colonialism and the ongoing struggle with legacies from the colonial time (Kohn & McBride, 2011). In this, what structures that still remain

within society is also being discussed and can be understood as post-colonial structures.

What structures within the Canadian society can then be traced to the colonial legacy and be characterized as a post-colonial structure? If we look at the political apparatus, the federal government is the main power performer in Canada and the Indigenous government has less power (Butler, et al., 2015, p. 48). Within some of the basic community services, there is also a visible power structure. Not all Indigenous reserves have safe access to clean water comparable to the standard found outside of the reserves (White, et al., 2012). Within the economic sphere, Indigenous peoples generally have a lower income and the unemployment rate is higher (Mitrou, et al., 2014). These are only a few examples of structures in Canadian society. The structures I have chosen to look at in my research will be explained more in detail further down.

The struggles with post-colonial structures look different in different contexts. As mentioned above, there is a significant difference between the descendants of settlers and Indigenous peoples. Non-Indigenous peoples, that are the descendants of settlers, have been the agents of colonialism and have not been the target of economic exploitation, cultural or political exclusion as the Indigenous peoples have been. For example, they generally have a higher income and lower unemployment rate (Mitrou, et al., 2014). These differences and divisions between peoples are important if we want to understand post-colonialism as more than a technical transfer of governance from the imperial state to the settler state (Loomba, 2015, pp. 30-31). These differences have created relationships of inequality and domination within settler states, which has generated hierarchal structures (ibid. p. 36). From this, you can discern a relationship of power. There is political and cultural domination based on European norms, and these are being reinforced in contemporary practices (Tiffin, 1988, p. 171) The type of power exercised can be explained by Lukes' theory of three-dimensional power, that he writes about in his book *Power: A Radical View* (2005). He writes about how there are three dimensions of power, where the third dimension sees how a system can be mobilized and uphold in ways that are not conscious or intentional of an individual's choice. Instead, the power is upheld by socially structured and culturally patterned behavior that can be seen in groups and practices of institutions. That is the biggest difference to the other two dimensions of power, where individual behavior is more at the centre (Lukes, 2005, pp. 25-26). To see the post-colonial structures within society, Lukes's third dimension of power can be a useful tool to uncover how political and cultural practices upholds the system. The goal of post-colonialism is to dismantle these power structures and the goal of creating an independent identity separated from colonial times (Tiffin, 1988, p. 171)

The unequal power-relationship described above can be recognized when looking at the discourse used within society. Within the post-colonial theory, discourse can be understood as an instrument of power, and language can be a huge source of power (Kohn & McBride, 2011). While reading documents that describe historic events, the narrative is drawing on a non-Indigenous perspective. This operates as a means of cultural control (Tiffin, 1988, p. 173). In literary studies, post-colonialism has often emphasized the relationship between perspective and

power (Kohn & McBride, 2011). Mainstream scholars and our common sense are largely based on a Western perspective and epistemology. This way of expressing perspectives forms a dominant way of understanding social reality and also gives the group that controls it the power (Abrahamsen, 2007, p. 112). All the discursive practices described above make it hard for the individual to think outside of the structures of society, and therefore they are an exercise of power and control (Loomba, 2015, p. 56). These practices affect many parts of society, including institutions of economic, administrative and judicial control. In this way, post-colonial structures have an effect on how economic and political institutions within states work today (ibid. p. 69-70) The analysis in this thesis will be based on this relationship of power described in this section that comes with a post-colonial discourse, and how this will be measured will be explained below.

2.1.1 Theoretical framework for analysis

This section will be explaining the three parameters I have chosen to measure the power-relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. They will be based on the post-colonial discursive practice that has been explained above. The first parameter can be connected to the use of language to name/label the Indigenous peoples (Kohn & McBride, 2011), the second to the relationship between power and perspectives (Abrahamsen, 2007), and the third how the relationship between different Indigenous and non-Indigenous governmental bodies looks like (Loomba, 2015, pp. 67-69). These parameters have been chosen since they all fit well to detect a post-colonial discourse. I am aware that other factors could have been used as well, but the chosen aspects go well with the definition of post-colonialism that I will base my analysis on.

Naming/labeling of Indigenous peoples

A highly debated subject in Canada is what names to use when describing the Indigenous groups. Is it okay to use Indigenous or is Aboriginal more appropriate? There seems to be no right answer in this debate. Most of the time this is something that is done without the intention to offend anyone (Vowel, 2016). What is important is to recognize that the labeling of groups is a discursive process, and also a political act since labels include and exclude groups (Retzlaff, 2005, pp. 609-610). It can be understood as a post-colonial structure since the labeling has led to political control of the Indigenous groups. One scholar who has been noticed for her engagement in the debate is Chelsea Vowel, an Indigenous Canadian lawyer. In her book *Indigenous Writes* (2016), she tries to sort out among the many terms that exist in the world.

The first thing she discusses is what term you should use if you talk about all the different groups as one, Aboriginal or Indigenous. Aboriginal is a term that originated with the 1982 Constitution Act and is the most commonly used in Canada (Vowel, 2016). Indigenous comes from an international context and is establish in

international documents such as the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* from 2007. Vowel prefers to use the word Indigenous as it speaks both to legal and colloquial contexts (Vowel, 2016). In Canada, the term Indigenous is becoming a more used term within many contexts with reference to keeping the discussion in line with international agreements (Government of Canada, 2017:3). I have also chosen to use the term Indigenous within this thesis due to its international recognition.

The second thing is how to categorize different groups within the Indigenous peoples of Canada. The groups that have been recognized within the 1982 Constitution Act are Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples. To use the term Indian is, however, politically sensitive and contentious. In a Canadian context, the term Indian has legal connotations and there is still a legal act called the Indian Act from 1985. The act determines who has the right to be of Indian status and with that for example who has the right to live and use the reserves (Indian Act, 1985). There is also a history of using the term in a derogatory way (Vowel, 2016). Instead, the use of First Nation peoples on the ones who are given status under the Indian Act is seen as more appropriate. Inuit mainly refers to people living in the Arctic parts of Canada and Métis are a term that came up after the arrival of Europeans and refers to the people that are descents from both Indigenous peoples and settlers (ibid.).

The third and last aspect that Vowel discusses is how to use the term Canadian. Many Indigenous peoples do not identify as Canadian, with reference to that their ancestors never gave their consent to becoming Canadian. This is not the general opinion of Indigenous peoples, but this can be a sensitive term for some and could be understood as inappropriate (Vowel, 2016).

If we look at the broader theory of post-colonialism, the labeling of groups might be seen as an act of power. If we use terms that have been set within a norm of Western knowledge, this could be interpreted as a discursive act of power (Abrahamsen, 2007, p. 112). In this case, the Canadian government has the power of determining within legal terms what names should be used, and this becomes the norm in the society which makes it hard for peoples to see other ways around it (Loomba, 2015, p. 56). This is the way that the labeling of Indigenous peoples will be interpreted as within the analysis.

Indigenous vs. Western Perspective

One significant difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples is what perspective we have on the world. The non-Indigenous perspective is usually called the Western perspective and is based on a Eurocentric way of thinking (Hart, 2010, p. 4). The perspective creates the base for a worldview and in every society, there is a dominating one that is held by a majority of the population (ibid. p. 2). The worldviews that are held by a minority is usually put into the periphery if it is acknowledged at all (ibid. p. 4). Systems of perspectives also contribute to formulating culture and relationships of power (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 50), which goes in line with Lukes's theory on the third dimension of power (Lukes, 2005, pp. 25-26).

If we start by defining what the Western perspective is, it is very much a way of thinking based on mathematics (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 53). The view on land is that it is something that can be owned by humans and should be used for extracting resources. It is very much based on a hierarchal view of nature, with humans being on top of the ranking (ibid.). This is a view that came with the enlightenment, when the goal became a fast economic development (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, pp. 53, 57). In that way, it is a way of thinking that is capital accumulative (Coulthard, 2010, p. 81).

The Indigenous perspective is different in many aspects. It is explained as a way of thinking from an Indigenous way of life that responds to Indigenous needs and inquiries (McGregor, 2018, p. 819). For the Indigenous perspective, the importance of land is central (Coulthard, 2010, p. 79). It is not seen as something that you can own or be put under exploitation (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 53). There is also an equal relationship between nature and humans, and overall the perspective is a relational worldview (Hart, 2010, p. 3). Due to that, there is an ethical obligation to treat nature much in the same way as you treat other humans (Coulthard, 2010, p. 80).

The dominating worldview in Canada is based on the Western perspective and this characterizes the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Coulthard, 2010, p. 81). This has also led to the Indigenous perspective being colonized, as they had to adapt to the Western knowledge paradigm. For example, in making deals with the Canadian government Indigenous groups have described the land as something that can be owned. That shows that the Western approach is the only one that can explain and make sense of the world in today's society (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, pp. 57-58).

The relationship between different governmental bodies

One important factor for colonial rule is to seize power via its governments (Loomba, 2015, p. 69). The state seizes power within its institutions via cultural, intellectual, economic and political processes (ibid.). Due to this, the colonial relationships have been characterized by domination and dispossession of land and self-determination from the Indigenous communities. This has continued to characterize the relationship to this day (Coulthard, 2014, pp. 56-57). Many factors show this domination. The difference in perspectives as explained above is one that can be seen within the governments of the Canadian state. One of the main goals of the Canadian governments is to uphold the economic institutions characterized by market principles and based on a Western understanding of land (ibid. p. 62). This has then forced the Indigenous communities to adapt to the governments understanding to be able to fight for their rights of self-determination (ibid. p. 86).

Looking more specifically at how the Canadian federal government has acted over the last decades in relation to Indigenous communities, you could point out a behavior connected to an intersection between a post-colonial discourse and institutions. Before establishing the TRC, the government has favored more symbolic policies to address the Indigenous questions (Corntassel & Holder, 2008,

p. 474). They have been targeted at limiting political culpability rather than attacking the root of the problem in the state-Indigenous relations (ibid. p. 486). Instead of trying to establish an equal relationship, they tend to construct Indigenous identities as individual state citizens of Canada rather than seeing them as Indigenous nations within the Canadian state (ibid. p. 487).

This can also be seen in how Indigenous governments are being portraited in Canadian society. When explaining how the political branches of the state look like, the Indigenous are not being put equal with the federal government. Instead, they are ranked below the federal and provincial governments, together with the municipal governments. That structure is not the nation-to-nation relationship that was established in the treaties between the Indigenous groups and the Canadian government (Butler, et al., 2015, p. 48). Both these examples show how the Indigenous communities are still being dominated and that those structures are being upheld by the Canadian government. How the relationship between the Indigenous communities and the Canadian governments are being described as in discursive practices affects the power-relationship between the two (Coulthard, 2014, p. 57). This can be connected to the third dimension of power described by Lukes. The relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments is upheld by socially structured patterns and is not consciously made decisions (Lukes, 2005, pp. 25-26).

2.2   Reconciliation

To be able to see whether the commission's intention to be a step towards reconciliation or not has been affected by post-colonial structures, I have to define what is meant by reconciliation within my research. Starting off, I will look at the commission's own definition of reconciliation. The commission defines reconciliation as an "ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 11). To reach that several actions need to be taken into account. First, there need to be steps towards repairing damaged trust, both on the individual and collective level. There also needs to be concrete actions toward making societal change (ibid.). The report also states that Canada as a whole needs to recognize and respect Indigenous approaches to maintaining respectful relationships, where one step is to reconcile with the natural world that is so important to Indigenous peoples (ibid. pp. 12-13).

Beyond the definitions given in the report, the principles for reconciliation is to be influenced as a whole by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. The declaration itself does not mention the term reconciliation, but several points can be connected to it. One example is what is stated in Article 3, where it says that Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination and freely determine their political status. They also have the right to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. If these principles are to influence the commission's work towards reconciliation, the definition should be broader than how it is defined in their report.

If we look at other definitions of reconciliation, their scope seems to be broader and include more parameters. One example is how Ramsbotham et al defines reconciliation in their book *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (2016). They give four main understandings of reconciliation: as a voluntary acceptance of non-ideal outcomes, as reconciling financial or other accounts, as reconciling opposites and bridging differences, and lastly as reconciliation between former enemies (Ramsbotham, et al., 2016, p. 287). They also state how reconciliation should be a way of clearing the ground by dealing with the past to be able to build a shared future (ibid. p. 289). Some of the parameters can be found in the definition from the commission, such as the building of a shared future, dealing with the past and bridging differences (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, pp. 11-13). One point that is not brought up in the report but that Ramsbotham et al take into account is the concept of distributive justice. It means that within reconciliation you should address the structural and systemic injustices that exist in society, such as political and economic discrimination and also inequalities in economic distribution (Ramsbotham, et al., 2016, p. 291).

How do the Indigenous peoples of Canada look at the concept of reconciliation? This is a bit tricky since there is no word for reconciliation within the Indigenous languages (Corntassel, et al., 2009, p. 145). The people interviewed by the commission have expressed aspects that they see as important aspects connected to reconciliation. They express things such as the importance of dialogue, listening and mutual adjustment. They also raise the importance of reconciling between the human and natural world (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 13). Looking beyond the report, there are mixed understandings of reconciliation. One that is more in line with the distributive justice-approach given by Ramsbotham et al is the definition from Taiaiake Alfred. He brings up the importance of dealing with continuing injustices and compensation for past crimes (Alfred, 2005, p. 152).

For my analysis, I will use the definitions from the commission and Ramsbotham et al, but also take into account the principles found in Article 4 of the UN declaration and the discussion regarding the Indigenous view. I will analyze how well the commission reaches its definition of reconciliation, but also see if it reaches a broader definition that also takes in structural and systemic differences as an important factor to reconcile.

3 Method

This chapter intends to explain how I am going to use the theoretical framework, based on post-colonialism, explained above to conduct my research. I will start by explaining why I have chosen to use a discourse analysis and why this is fitting for my research. The chosen material for the research, volume six of the final report from the commission called *Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation*, will thereafter be motivated. An operationalization will also be done on the theoretical framework laid out in the theory section to specify more what I will look at. The operationalization will be made on each of the three chosen parameters for the theoretical framework: naming/labeling of Indigenous peoples, Indigenous vs. Western perspective and the relationship between the different governmental bodies.

3.1 Discourse analysis

To be able to analyze whether or not there exist post-colonial structures within the commission's work, I have chosen to conduct a discourse analysis on a report from the commission. It can be explained as a study of social phenomenon where the language is the main focus, as it helps to shape our world (Bergström & Boréus, 2015, p. 305). A discourse analysis is an interpretive type of study which means that the study is made with the belief that we cannot see the world objectively, but it is subjectively created. The understanding of the social world is influenced through our interpretation of meanings, beliefs, and ideas (Halperin & Heath, 2012, pp. 39-40). A discourse analysis reveals these meanings and beliefs through an examination of the language and discourse in different types of written material. It also helps to uncover discursive practices that construct meanings (ibid. pp. 310-311).

There are different types of discourse analysis that you can choose to conduct. The one I have chosen to use is a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It criticizes other approaches for not seeing how pre-existing social structures and power relationships affect the discourse. A CDA seeks to expose that there are connections between language, power, and ideology. It sees discursive power as a crucial tool for social power and reproduction of dominance and hegemony. (Halperin & Heath, 2012, pp. 312-313). Since I want to uncover how post-colonial structures affect the power relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, a CDA appears as the most fitting choice for analyzing the material. The chosen method will allow me to see the connection between the language used in the report, the

power relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and post-colonial structures within the commission's work.

3.2   Scope & Material

The final report from the TRC is made of several documents that count up to over a thousand pages. The documents discuss different aspects of the commission's work, with the main material being split up into six volumes. For the purpose of this thesis, one of these volumes will be analyzed due to the limit of space. Therefore, I have delimited my analysis to process the sixth volume of the report, called *Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation*. Since I want to see within my thesis if the work towards reconciliation has been affected by post-colonial structures, this is the document that is the most interesting and fitting for my research. This limitation gives me space to go into depth in my analysis. Within the chosen report, there is also a part in the end with the calls to action set up by the commission. Out of the 94 calls, 52 of them are concerned with the work towards reconciliation. Due to this, these calls to action will also be analyzed within the chosen framework. There are other documents from the commission that I could have analyzed as well through my theoretical framework, for example on one of the other volumes of the final report that discusses the historical legacy of the residential schools. Since my main interest is to see whether post-colonial structures have been an obstacle for reconciliation, it seems more fitting to analyze the document that also discusses the subject. Analyzing the commission's work towards reconciliation will give me a better understanding of how post-colonial structures have affected it.

3.3   Operationalization of post-colonialism

To be able to measure and recognize post-colonial structures when I see them, it is important to operationalize the three parameters I want to look at. This will also specify how I have conducted my research and how I reached my conclusions. This is important in order for my research to be possible for others to repeat (Halperin & Heath, 2012, p. 148). The operationalization will be based on the theoretical framework defined above. I have formulated questions based on the three criteria explained to specify what I am looking at under each parameter.

3.3.1 Naming/branding of Indigenous peoples

The first parameter I am looking at is connected to what names the commission has chosen to use when describing the Indigenous peoples. As Vowel explains, there

are many different terms used for naming Indigenous peoples and it is not always easy to sort out between them (Vowel, 2016). It is important to recognize that it is a discursive process and a political act and that it leads to one group controlling the other (Retzlaff, 2005, pp. 609-610). I have chosen to mainly look at three aspects within this section of the theoretical framework: how the group as a whole is labeled, what terms are used to categorize the different groups and how the term Canadian is used within the report. Based on these three aspects, the three following questions will guide my analysis:

Which term, Indigenous or Aboriginal, is most frequently used within the report?

What terms are used to categorize the different Indigenous groups?

How is the term Canadian used within the report?

3.3.2 Indigenous vs Western perspective

The dominating worldview in society affects how the power-relationship between different groups is characterized. Two of the worldviews that exist in Canada are the Indigenous perspective and the Western perspective, where the dominating one is the Western perspective. The way we can define the difference between the two is mainly to look at the views of land, economy and the relationship to nature in the two perspectives. Due to the domination of the Western perspective, we can also see how the Indigenous perspective has been affected by the Western and in a way been colonized (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, pp. 57-58). To see these post-colonial structures, the analysis in this section will be guided by the following questions:

Which views on land can be found within the report?

How is the relationship between land and economy portrayed?

3.3.3 The relationship between the different governmental bodies

Governmental bodies are important as a source of power in all societies. How the different bodies are ranked leads to a hierarchal structure and determine which one that has the most power. In Canada, the federal government and other bodies within the Canadian state are usually ranked above the Indigenous ones, leading to the Canadian governments to have more power. How the right to self-determination for Indigenous peoples are described also helps determine the power relationship between them. There are several ways we can determine whether or not the Canadian governmental bodies are portrayed as more powerful, for example how they are trying to act in a way that upholds their power, how they are ranked, if Indigenous peoples are seen as nations or individuals. The analysis if this aspect will therefore be guided by the following questions:

How is the relationship with Indigenous peoples portrayed, as nations within the state or individual state citizens?

How is the relationship between the Indigenous governments and the Canadian governments formulated?

4 Analysis

In the following sections, the theoretical framework outlined in the theory section of this thesis will be applied to the material. The material that will be used is volume 6 of the final report from the TRC, called *Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation* (2015). When referring to the report in the following chapter, this is the document I have used. The analysis is split up into four sections. The first section applies the framework of Indigenous vs. Western perspectives, the second one analyses institutions within the Canadian state and the third the debate regarding the naming/labeling of Indigenous peoples. In the final section, the concept of reconciliation will also be applied to all three aspects.

4.1 Naming/labeling of Indigenous peoples

The naming and labeling of Indigenous groups in Canada are a discursive practice that has been highly debated over the years. The practice can be seen as an act of power, as the choice of name on a group categorizes peoples into political entities (Retzlaff, 2005, pp. 609-610). This can be seen within the Canadian society in many ways, one example is how the Indian Act has categorized peoples into Indians with status and non-Indians without status (Indian Act, 1985). Can these types of structures be seen within the report from the Commission as well?

Aboriginal or Indigenous

If we look at the first example explained in the theoretical framework on the terms Aboriginal or Indigenous, there is room for discussion on the commission's term of choice. The most commonly used term within the report is Aboriginal. This can be found on almost all pages of the report, starting on the first page of the introduction (p. 3). The term was established in Canada with the 1982 Constitution Act and is therefore mostly seen as a legal term. It is broadly used within Canada, but the use of this term can be seen as a discursive act of power. With this, they have politically labeled the group after a name they find fitting. Since this is used within the report, the same is applied to the commission's active choice. However, the term Indigenous is used at some places within the report as well. One example is on p. 27, where the phrase "Indigenous leaders" is being used. In this case, the term is being used for a discussion regarding the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and refers not to peoples within Canada, but as an international group. It is a quote taken from a formal statement issued from Canada at the World

Conference of Indigenous Peoples in 2014. The report presents it in this way: "Canada issued a formal statement at the WCIP, objecting to certain paragraphs of the document related to the principle of obtaining the 'free, prior and informed consent' (FPIC) of Indigenous peoples when states are making decisions that will affect their rights or interest, including economic development on their lands" (p. 27). Here the Canadian state refers to an international context, and therefore, does not use the term Aboriginal.

It gets a bit more unclear if you look at p. 34, where both terms are seemed to be used simultaneously. First, they use the term Aboriginal peoples while explaining different interpretations of the Treaty of Niagara, which is a treaty that establishes the relationship between the Crown and the Indigenous peoples. A few rows down, they use Indigenous peoples instead but are still referring to the peoples within Canada. The sentence is as follows: "Indigenous peoples have kept the history and ongoing relevance of the Treaties alive in their oral histories and legal traditions" (p. 34). They are still referring to the Treaty of Niagara, which I read as they are talking about the Indigenous peoples of Canada. This interpretation for the term Indigenous can also be found on p. 6, 7 and 12. The term seems to be used to explain Indigenous subjects, rather than describing the people in most places in the report. Terms like Indigenous law, Indigenous approaches, and Indigenous nations are used (p. 12).

Categorizing of groups

If we go on to look after the terms First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, this can also be found in several places in the report, examples being on p. 4, 49 and 93. The use of these terms can be interpreted as an attempt to see more to the different groups and not in a general way as they use Aboriginal or Indigenous. In some places they are even more specific, using names of groups and not categorizing names. For example, they use the terms Anishinaabe (p. 5), Inuk (p. 14) and Mohawk (p. 21). The use of these terms sees more to every group characteristic and is used when describing the group belonging of individuals mentioned within the report. However, the terms First Nations, Inui,t and Métis are still terms that have been legally established and decided by the Canadian state within the Constitution Act from 1982 and can therefore be sensitive to use.

Usage of the term Canadian

Another sensitive aspect is that within the report the commission refers to the whole population of Canada as Canadians. This can be interpreted for some as offensive, as they do not identify as Canadian in respect for their ancestors as they had no intention to become Canadians in the aspect that the Canadian state means. This can be seen in several pages in the report, one example is on p. 34. One sentence is phrased as follows: "The Treaties are a model for how Canadians, as diverse peoples, can live respectfully and peacefully together on these lands we now share"

(p. 34). It is clear that they talk about the population as a whole, as they state that they talk about living as diverse people together on the lands. It would have been more appropriate here to use Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, as it still separates the two groups in a way and respects the feelings of Indigenous peoples more. This is done in other parts of the report which is better than only label them as Canadians.

What impacts have the choices that the commission has made regarding naming and labeling had on the power structure between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples? There seems like the commission has been mixing a bit in how they choose to label the Indigenous groups, which speaks to the fact that the choice of a term often is not intended to offend a group. However, it can still be seen as a structure within society, since there is a reason why the terms came up in the first place. The fact that the commission uses terms that have been established in legal documents established by the Canadian state shows that it can be seen as a tool of power. The same goes for the usage of the categories First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. It is a political and cultural practice that helps to uphold the existing power structure which is not conscious, which is explained by the third dimension of power (Lukes, 2005, pp. 25-26). As Vowel explains, the term Aboriginal speaks to a more legal context and is a term established by the Canadian state (Vowel, 2016). The term is a part of the discourse of the report and in this way affects the power-relationship (Kohn & McBride, 2011) between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This is an argument for that there exists a post-colonial structure within the commission. It should be noted that the commission avoids using the most debated term in their report, Indian. They only refer to it while talking about the Indian act or mentioning the schools by the full term, Indian Residential Schools. In that way, they have avoided using the term that has mostly been used in a derogatory way (Vowel, 2016). They have also chosen to use specific group names at some places within the report, which also shows respect towards them.

4.2   Indigenous vs. Western perspective

As was described in the theory section, every society is influenced by a dominating worldview. What worldview the commission has will affect its work. The question is if the commission is mainly influenced by the dominating Western perspective that Canada is or if it is taking into account the Indigenous perspective as well. I will look at three things where we can see the differences between the two perspectives: land, economy, and colonization of the Indigenous perspective.

The view on land

If we first look at the view of land within the report, you can see that the subject is discussed in several places within the report. The view that the report has is that it is something that can be owned. This can be seen in the following example when the land claims policy is discussed. Page 24 states: "Under the federal government's comprehensive land claims policy, 122 claims have been accepted for negotiation, but only 26 land claims agreements or modern-day Treaties have been finalized in the forty-two years since the policy was first introduced in 1973" (p. 24). Since they explain how land is something that can be claimed it is connected to ownership of land. This can also be exemplified when the historical relationship that the Indigenous peoples have to the land is considered: "As the original occupants for thousands of years of the lands and territories that became Canada, Aboriginal peoples have unique legal and constitutional rights" (p. 87). The word occupants refer to how someone possesses the land and therefore also owns it. The view that we get out of the commission's report can be connected to parameters that define the Western perspective (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 53). The commission's view therefore goes against the Indigenous perspective on land, which view is that land is very important for nature and is nothing that you can own (Coulthard, 2010, p. 79).

The view on economy

The next aspect I am going to look at can also be connected to the view of the land in a way, but here it is from an economic point of view. In this, the discussion on how the relationship to nature looks like is also central. The question is whether or not land can be used as a source for resources and economic benefit. There are several examples in the text, but on one page we can find examples that include both aspects. Page 28 states the following while explaining what right for Indigenous peoples that should be included in the Canadian constitution: "…the right to possess the land; the right to the economic benefits of the land…", and also: "Governments and individuals proposing to use or exploit the land…can avoid a charge of infringement or failure to adequately consult by obtaining the consent of the interested Aboriginal groups". These two statements show that the view on land is that it can be used for economic benefit and extraction, as they use words as exploit and economic benefit to explain the relationship. Humans are put over nature as they have the right to economically use the land. This does not go in line with the Indigenous relational worldview characterized by equality within nature (Hart, 2010, p. 3). In an Indigenous view, land is nothing to be used for exploitation while the Western perspective sees land as something to be used for resource extraction and economic use (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 53), as is expressed in the report from the commission.

One section at the end of the report is dedicated to discussing the corporate sector in connection to economic development. An example of this can be found in the following sentence: "As Canada maps its economic future in regions covered

by historical Treaties, modern land claims agreements, and unceded Aboriginal title, governments and industry must now recognize that accommodating the rights of Aboriginal peoples is paramount to Canada's long-term economic sustainability. Governments aim to secure the economic stability and growth necessary to ensuring prosperity for all Canadians" (p. 204). This sentence shows the strive of moving forward and developing economically as the main goal. This is a characteristic that can be found within the Western perspective, as economic development is important going forward (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, pp. 53, 57).

Colonization of the Indigenous perspective

The final aspect is to look at if the Indigenous perspective has been colonized or not. Looking at the examples used to investigate the other aspects above, there are several examples where it can be seen that the Indigenous perspective is colonized. The land claims are a process where Indigenous communities are asking for lands back, which is a legal process connected to the Canadian government as the example from page 24 shows. This shows that the view on land from the Indigenous perspective has been overlooked by the Indigenous communities and has adapted to the Western perspective instead. Another example is while discussing the economy and resources. The discussion on page 204 on this subject also includes a quote from an Indigenous leader, stating, for instance, the following: "…We share a lot of common interest in areas like resource development. We need to find ways to work together, support one another on these difficult topics" (p. 204). This example shows how the view on land is that it is something that can be used for economic development, which goes against the Indigenous perspective.

The commission has, even if they mainly work from a Western perspective, acknowledged that there is a difference between the two perspectives. They state in many places within the report that they have to be aware of these differences while working towards reconciliation. One example is given on page 207: "All too often, economic development has disrupted Indigenous peoples' cultural, spiritual, and economic ties to the land, resulting in the devastation of traditional economies and self-sufficiency, community trauma, public welfare dependency, and poor health and socio-political outcomes" (p. 204). This, however, does not mean that the commission is not affected by post-colonial structures, as the analysis of its discourse has shown above. In all three aspects; the view on land, the view on economy and colonization of the Indigenous perspective, we can see that the commission has been affected by the Western perspective. This affects the power relationship between the two, as the structure of society favors the Western perspective and leaves the power to define what is to be done with the non-Indigenous peoples (Lukes, 2005, pp. 25-26).

4.3 The relationship between different governmental bodies

The next aspect is the relationship between different governmental bodies within Canada, mostly the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments. Seizing power via governments is a common way of exercising colonial rule (Loomba, 2015, p. 69). In Canadian society, the relationship is characterized by asymmetry, leaving the Indigenous governments with less power. In this section of the thesis, I will analyze if this is true for the commission's work as well by first looking at the text within the general report and after that discuss the calls to action.

General report

If we first look at the general report from the commission, the first thing that can be noticed is that a lot of power is given to the Canadian governments when it comes to taking action for reconciliation. One example of this can be found on page 20: "Governments, churches, educational institutions, and Canadians from all walks of life are responsible for taking action on reconciliation in concrete ways, working collaboratively with Aboriginal Peoples" (pp. 20-21). With the application of the framework, we can observe two main ways that this affects the power relationship. First, the responsibility given to the government and other institutions within the Canadian state within the text is a way of upholding different processes. Out of this sentence, educational institutions can be said to uphold for example intellectual processes, the churches' cultural processes, and the state political and economic processes, even if all government institutions more or less contribute to the upholding of all of them. Within this, the Canadian state seizes power over the Indigenous communities (Loomba, 2015, p. 69). Second, there is a tendency towards ranking the Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments in a hierarchal way. The sentence expresses that the institutions should work in collaboration with the Indigenous peoples. This puts the main responsibility on the Canadian state institutions rather than establishing an equal relationship between the two. And encouraging a nation-to-nation relationship (Butler, et al., 2015, p. 48). Both these examples show that the Canadian governments remain in power by upholding the political practices in the way that society is structured. It might not be a conscious decision but it is because of socially structured behavior based on how the society is built, which is in line with Lukes's power theory (Lukes, 2005, pp. 25-26). This leads to the power relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments being affected by post-colonial structures, and not to any particular change in the relationship.

Several examples are given in the text on how to try to move towards reconciliation. One example if this can be found on page 28, that states as follows: "Aboriginal people's right to self-determination must be integrated into Canada's

constitutional and legal framework and its civic institutions in a manner consistent with the principles, norms, and standards of the *Declaration*" (p. 28). This action that the commission is asking for is not all bad since they are trying to establish rights for Indigenous peoples in Canadian state institutions, but the fact that they are still being determined by the government's power gives a benefit for the Canadian governments over the Indigenous ones. Because of this, it can be seen as a post-colonial structure within the commission's discourse.

Calls to action

The calls to action are the actions that the commission recommends for reaching the goal of reconciliation. There are 94 calls in total, which 52 of them deal with the work towards reconciliation. While reading through them you can note a tendency in 33 of them towards ranking the Canadian state institutions over the Indigenous ones. Instead of saying that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments should work together, they write that the federal government should work in collaboration with the Aboriginal peoples. The collaboration statement is within 16 of the 52 calls. One example of a call that can exemplify this is Call 80, which is written as follows: "We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal Peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honor Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process" (p. 238). As we saw in the general text this leads to a hierarchal structuring of the different governments, ranking the non-Indigenous governments higher than the Indigenous (Butler, et al., 2015, p. 48). If they would have stated that they should work as equals, the power relationship between the two would be interpreted as more equal.

   If we look at another call, we can see that they choose to use Aboriginal peoples instead of saying that they are going to collaborate with the Aboriginal governments. Call 68 states as follows: "We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, and the Canadian Museum Association to mark the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017 by establishing a dedicated national funding program for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation" (p. 236). Since they are not using the words governments or nations, there is no nation-to-nation relationship established. This leads to a nation-to-citizen relationship instead and undermines the power of the Indigenous governments (Corntassel & Holder, 2008, p. 474).

It should be noted that the commission does mention in the report that they are aware that institutions, included governments, have been affected by the colonial times, as they state on page 193: " Just as governments, church, legal and public education institutions in this country has been shaped by colonial systems, attitudes, and behaviors…" (p. 193). This is only one of many sentences that acknowledge the issue of inequality between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. However, the commission does not succeed in not being affected by the colonial

systems themselves, as has been exemplified above with several quotes from the report.

4.4   Reconciliation

The last aspect I am going to look at is how the post-colonial structures described in the previous sections have affected the commission's work towards reconciliation. If we first look at the naming/labeling of Indigenous peoples, there are some parts that are being affected. The commission's definition of reconciliation includes establishing and maintaining a respectful relationship, as they write out in the report (p. 11). The definition is given by Ramsbotham et al also has a point that can be added, as they include that reconciliation should include clearing of the past (Ramsbotham, et al., 2016, p. 289). Both these things can be argued that the commission does not live up to. Since they are using terms that can be interpreted as being offensive it would not be an establishment of a respectful relationship. They also have historical implications in the way that they use terms that have been part of legal documents established by the Canadian state. If they wanted to clear the ground, maybe the more proper term to use would have been Indigenous since it does not have any national connection to Canada specifically, but rather is an international term used in both legal and colloquial contexts (Vowel, 2016).

When it comes to land, it is seen as a central part of reconciliation for Indigenous peoples (p. 12-13). As land is seen as something that should be treated with respect and be seen as equal to humans, this is important if there should be reconciliation. That view of land has not been respected within the report. This factor also affects the commission's definition of reconciliation. They state that it is important within the work of reconciliation to recognize and respect Indigenous approaches (p. 12-13). Not only does the commission's view on land fail to acknowledge this, but their view on nature and resources as something to be extracted and used for economic gain goes against the Indigenous perspective as well. This also leads to the problem of reaching reconciliation within the commission. Another aspect of reconciliation that is within the principles of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is the work towards inclusion in economic and cultural development. To some extent, this has been reached, as they write about how they should collaborate with the Indigenous peoples on economic development, but they still fail to see the importance within the Indigenous perspective not to use the land for resource extraction. Furthermore, the Indigenous view on reconciliation includes mutual adjustment and listening between the two parties (p. 12-13). This goes in line with what the report mentioned in seeing the Indigenous perspective, which has been explained above how they have failed to do so.

The way that the commission writes about Canadian governments has also affected the work towards reconciliation. If we first look at the definition given by the commission, they state that reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a respectful relationship (p. 11). Since the Indigenous governments are not being respected in the same way as Canadian institutions are, this could imply how the

relationship between the two looks like and therefore also affects the goal of reconciliation. The definition that is given by Ramsbotham et al also does not fit in with the way that institutions are ranked in the report. They bring up distributive justice as a part of reconciliation, which means that the structural and systemic injustices should be removed from society (Ramsbotham, et al., 2016, p. 291). The commission does not succeed to clear the ground of the past due to these post-colonial structures being present, which is also an important part of reconciliation according to Ramsbotham et al. (2016, p. 289). The Indigenous peoples' view on reconciliation can also be seen as affected by the structures, as there is no mutual adjustment to new circumstances. Instead, the Canadian state institutions are allowed to work in a way that they did in the past. Alfred's take on reconciliation with continuing injustices can also be connected to the way that Ramsbotham et al's definition do not apply to the commission's work. In the declaration from the United Nations Article 3, it is stated that the Indigenous peoples should have the right to self-determination. In this case, the right can be seen as violated since the Indigenous governments still are ranked under the non-Indigenous ones.

As a whole, we can see that the strive towards reconciliation has been affected by the post-colonial structures connected to all three aspects analyzed in the report. Both the commission's own definition of reconciliation is not fulfilled as well as the other definitions used in this research.

5   Conclusion

The research question asked for this thesis was as follows:

Are there any post-colonial structures visible in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada? If so, how and why did they impact the Commission and how, and why, are they obstacles to reconciliation?

And the two guiding research questions were:

Are there examples in the report of the Canadian governmental bodies trying to seize power via cultural, intellectual, economic or political processes?

Are there examples of the Indigenous perspective being colonized?

The analysis of the final report from the commission has shown, according to the theoretical framework presented in section 2.1.1, that the commission's work has been affected by post-colonial structures. This can be seen in the discourse used in the report within the three areas analyzed here. The theoretical framework is built up by the following aspects: Naming/labeling of Indigenous peoples, Indigenous vs Western perspective and the relationship between different governmental bodies. In all three we can see examples of post-colonial structures.

When it comes to naming and labeling of Indigenous peoples, the commission has used terms that are politically sensitive. The choice to use Aboriginal instead of Indigenous show that old structures are still present, as the term Aboriginal is a legally established term within the Canadian constitution. The same thing can be said on the choice of using First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. These terms were established and decided by the Canadian state as they have the power to do this and is a post-colonial structure that lives on today.

There is evidence that the commission is working from a Western perspective, as there is a clear bias towards seeing land as something to be used for resource extraction and economic purposes. This has also shown to have affected the Indigenous perspective, as they also talk about land in this way which goes against the traditional perspective. The power of the Canadian state to decide the agenda has led to the Indigenous perspective being colonized by the Western one, as they have to adapt to get their voice heard.

The last aspect, the relationship between the different governmental bodies, shows that there is still an asymmetric power relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments. Both in the general report and within the calls to

action, we can see that the Canadian governments are given the main power to form policies recommended by the commission. The power is to be upheld by e.g. economic and cultural processes within the Canadian state. There is also a tendency towards seeing the Indigenous peoples as state citizens within Canada rather than trying to establish a nation-to-nation relationship, which also strengthens the Canadian governments' power in relation to the Indigenous governments.

As has been shown above, there are examples of the commission being affected by the post-colonial structures that exist in Canadian society. These structures have also affected their work towards reconciliation. The work has not led to an establishment of a respectful and equal relationship, to a cleaning of the past, to self-determination for Indigenous communities, or to distributive justice for Indigenous peoples. The commission has therefore failed to some extent in their mission to work towards reconciliation.

The hypothesis of my research was that the post-colonial structures within Canadian society have affected the TRC of Canada and its intention to be a step towards reconciliation. As it has shown in the analysis, the conclusion that can be drawn from my research is that the commission has been affected by post-colonial structures as they have been defined here, and also affected the goal of reconciliation.

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