

Colonial Reproductions of Everyday Spaces:

An Analysis of the Empress Hotel

by

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B.A., University of Calgary, 2015

B.Ed., University of Calgary, 2018

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We acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱ SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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Abstract

My thesis argues that the Empress Hotel functions as a colonial infrastructure that not only normalizes but actively reproduces colonial power dynamics through its spatial organization. This landmark embodies and reinforces historical colonial power structures while simultaneously generating new forms of colonial relations, thereby perpetuating the disruption of Indigenous relationships with the land.

I make three arguments about how colonialism and colonial relations are embodied and reproduced through the material and spatial structure of the Empress. First, I argue that the Empress Hotel's strategic location atop reclaimed land asserts colonial domination by rendering Indigenous lands as "waste" to be "civilized". Second, I argue that the Empress' architecture, the Baronial-Chateau style inspired by European traditions, symbolizes the Canadian state's efforts to legitimize its colonial project and assert its sovereignty. Third, I argue that the practices and artifacts of colonial spaces, including the themed rooms of the Empress, the Bengal Lounge and Palm Court, and ritualized practices like afternoon tea, recreate colonial social hierarchies and relations.

I further argue that the organization of these colonial social spaces is inextricably linked to the production of power, with the two being mutually dependent. By examining the micro-level manifestations of colonial power in the Empress Hotel, I illuminate the broader mechanisms of macro-level political domination. This approach addresses a gap in political science, which traditionally overlooks how power manifests in everyday colonial structures.

The study contributes to our understanding of how colonial power manifests in everyday structures by critically expanding Henri Lefebvre's work through integration with Glen Coulthard's notion of "colonial relations" to provide a more comprehensive framework for analyzing settler colonialism and the reproduction of colonial relations spatially. At the same time, the research also discloses the potential for resistance in relation to alternative ways of inhabiting these spaces. In so doing, I emphasize the need for critical engagement with the spaces we inhabit and experience.

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Introduction: Unveiling Colonial Power in Everyday Spaces

In recent years, the City of Victoria has taken steps towards reconciliation with the $\text{lək}^w\text{əŋən}$ (Lekwungen) peoples, the Songhees and the Esquimalt Nations. In 2017, the city began working on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action for municipal government, leading to an involvement in connecting with these Indigenous communities (City of Victoria). These talks aided in the development of 32 Calls to Action through the Victoria Reconciliation Dialogue series, a collaborative effort between the city, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and other urban Indigenous people to move reconciliation forward (City of Victoria).

One notable initiative, which began in 2008, has been the installation of the "7 Signs of the Lekwungen," which aims to acknowledge and honour Indigenous connections to the land by reinforcing and reestablishing $\text{lək}^w\text{əŋən}$ place names (City of Victoria; Songhees Nation, N/A). These signs serve as acts of resistance, challenging the colonial erasure of Indigenous presence and asserting the ongoing significance of $\text{lək}^w\text{əŋən}$ relations to place, stories, and histories. One of these signs is situated in front of the Empress Hotel and reminds us that this space is named $\text{xws3-yq}^{\prime}\text{əm}$ (we-sei-kum) or "place of mud" (Songhees Nation, N/A, para.13). The presence of this sign reinforces the existing relations between the land and the Lekwungen people that continue to this day (Songhees Nation, N/A, para. 13). This part of downtown Victoria, that is visually and experientially colonial is interrupted by the spindle whorl as it reclaims the space and punctures the perspective from which passersby understand the space.

Reimagining space in this way raises a critical question: Where does colonial power reside and manifest, particularly in the material structures that persist in settler colonial spaces? With this question in mind, I turn to the Empress Hotel, an iconic landmark emblematic of colonial luxury and power, presenting a compelling case study for this inquiry. It is generally

known that the Empress Hotel is a colonial structure. However, the extent to which colonial power and relations are still spatially reproduced and maintained in this micro-level space is undertheorized. By micro-level I mean the everyday and lived dimension of social spaces.

Political science traditionally overlooks how power manifests in everyday colonial structures and micro-level manifestations, tending to locate and engage with power in more macro-level institutional focuses (Beswick, 2021). By examining the Empress Hotel as a site for the production and reproduction of colonial power we can unmask power that has seemingly become a normalized part of the everyday landscape of downtown Victoria.

One of the reasons I use Henri Lefebvre's work throughout this thesis is because he engages with how power manifests and is embedded in non-institutional spatial forms, which, he argues, reinforce institutional power. Or, as I have alluded to in the previous paragraph: the reproduction of micro-level everyday colonial power is reinforced by the institutional macro-level.

I focus on the Empress Hotel because, despite its grandeur, hotels are a common feature of many cities around the world. As a common feature of cities, hotels serve as social spaces that invite guests to experience a microcosm of the city itself. The everydayness of hotels comes from the unquestioning of their construction and their normative status in the landscape of a city (Avermaete & Massey, 2013).

Analyzing the Empress Hotel, as a colonial space, allows us to see an aspect of colonialism that we do not see by looking at more conventional institutional sites of political power, like the legislative building across the street from the Empress. To understand the political significance of everyday spaces I highlight how the Empress Hotel, despite appearance as a public space accessible to all members of the public, is implicated in the ongoing

(re)production of settler colonial spatialities and subjectivities. The hotel invites its guests to partake in colonial relations by occupying the land when they stay there, interacting within grand spaces built with the wood and bone of empire, and engaging in lifestyle practices such as afternoon tea that were shaped by colonial lifestyles and colonial exploitation.

This study examines the contrast and juxtaposition between The Empress Hotel's luxurious facade and the violent dispossession and exploitation that underpinned its construction. In doing so, we can better understand the complexities of power within colonial spaces. Which highlights the need for critical engagement with historical and contemporary colonial practices.

The hotel's luxury masks a darker reality. I argue that, by separating the hotel's opulence from its history of violence and dispossession, we risk depoliticizing everyday spaces. This separation neglects the structures of oppression that operate and become normalized at the micro-level. Analyzing the Empress Hotel is crucial because it reveals what other spaces often allow to be normalized. Namely, how power and colonial relations are reproduced and deeply embedded in material ways. This examination prevents us from ignoring the subtle ways oppression ingrains itself in our daily environments. As such, this study aims to advance decolonizing efforts by engaging with power.

I argue that advancing decolonizing efforts and engaging critically with power in various forms necessitates a deeper examination of the material structures that persist in Victoria. By unpacking these structures' political and colonial underpinnings, we can understand how power is concealed spatially. Engaging with this puzzle aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how colonial relations are reproduced and maintained spatially and the potential for decolonial futures.

This thesis argues that the Empress Hotel in Victoria, a quintessential example of colonial infrastructure, embodies the state's spatial strategies to shape physical environments and disrupt Indigenous relationships with the land and the more-than-human world. By analyzing the Hotel's development and operations through the lens of state space-making, this study reveals how colonial infrastructures perpetuate and reproduce historical and contemporary power dynamics, reinforcing colonialism's ongoing impact on Indigenous peoples and their connections to the land. By space-making, I refer to three main elements: location, architecture, and colonial practices and artifacts. Understanding these three core aspects of space helps to unveil how colonial infrastructures embed and reproduce historical and contemporary inequalities, disrupting Indigenous relationships with the land and the more-than-human world. Before I develop why I use these three aspects of space, I introduce the historical context of the Empress Hotel.

History of the Empress Hotel

The Empress Hotel in Victoria, British Columbia, is one of Canada's most iconic sites. The Chateau-Style Hotel, designed by Francis Rattenbury for the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), was part of a series of luxury hotels built to encourage wealthy travellers to take transcontinental train trips across Canada (Reksten, 1997, p.18). Over the years, the Empress has become synonymous with Victoria's identity, attracting visitors with its grand Baronial-Chateau architecture and beautiful setting overlooking the Inner Harbour and the legislative building (Fairmont; Liscombe, 1993a).

Built during a period of active Western expansion in Canada, the Hotel's establishment coincided with a broader colonial agenda that involved the displacement of Indigenous peoples and the appropriation of their lands to facilitate European settlement and Western economic

development. The Empress's opulent, European-inspired design stands as a symbol of colonial power and prestige, reflecting a period when European settlers' cultural and aesthetic preferences were dominant, often at the expense of Indigenous cultures and heritage. Its location in Victoria, named after Queen Victoria, further underscores its colonial associations, serving as a reminder of British imperial influence in Canada and tying it to its colonial heritage. However, this was achieved through the destruction of the mudflats. The hotel's foundations were sunk deep into the buried Whosaykum (James Bay mudflats), permanently altering the land and disrupting the Lekwungen's connection to this place.

The Empress Hotel is not just a 'relic of the past' but a living testament to colonialism's ongoing impact. The Hotel's lavishness is deeply entrenched in colonial governance and spatial organization, not merely a reflection of architectural grandeur. Therefore, we can only disentangle the Hotel's significance from its profound colonial roots by thoroughly understanding its spatial structure. This analysis advances the argument that spaces developed for colonial infrastructure do more than transform the physical environment; they also disrupt and alter longstanding Indigenous relationships with the land and the more-than-human world. From this perspective, space and place are perpetually contested and integral to broader power relations.

Puzzling Colonial Structure

The Empress Hotel in Victoria, British Columbia, stands as a testament to colonial grandeur. Its materiality and location, however, reveal deep-seated contradictions. The Hotel's chateau-style architecture imposes European designs on Indigenous lands, mirroring other grand hotels across central Canadian cities (Liscombe, 1993a). Within its walls, themed spaces like the

Palm Court and Bengal Lounge evoke imperial luxury while simultaneously highlighting the exploitation of colonized territories.

The very fabric of the Empress tells a complex story. Australian wood, sourced through penal labour, and china crafted from Saskatchewan buffalo bone serve as stark reminders of the violent dispossession and resource extraction that underpinned colonial enterprises (Claxton, 1997). This juxtaposition of opulence and exploitation raises critical questions: Why was this particular edifice erected in Victoria, especially given the existing accommodation in Oak Bay? What motivated the incorporation of features directly transplanted from far-flung colonized spaces?

This study delves into the intricate web of colonial power dynamics woven into the Empress's location, architecture, internal spatiality, materiality, and symbolism. By examining these elements, we uncover how this landmark normalizes colonial domination over Indigenous lands while obscuring the brutal realities that underwrote its construction. The architectural and material choices not only symbolize but materialize coloniality, revealing spatial contradictions and juxtapositions inherent to the colonial project.

Moreover, the Empress Hotel actively reproduces colonial relations. It invites guests to participate in colonial practices by occupying the land, interacting within spaces built from the spoils of empire, and engaging in activities like afternoon tea—a ritual shaped by colonial lifestyles and exploitation. This analysis unpacks the hotel's role as an instrument of colonialism through its strategic location, imposing architecture, and carefully designed internal spaces that hold colonial practices and artifacts.

Crucially, this examination reveals three core ways in which the Empress Hotel reproduces colonial relations: dividing "civilization" from "waste," projecting state sovereignty,

and recreating everyday practices of colonial exploitation and relations. These aspects of colonial space contribute to our understanding of how colonial power manifests in seemingly benign structures.

Advancing decolonizing efforts and engaging critically with power in various forms necessitates a deeper examination of the material structures that persist in Victoria, such as the Empress Hotel. By unpacking these structures' political and colonial underpinnings, we can understand how power is concealed spatially. The central question guiding this inquiry remains: How do these elements reflect the production of space and the imposition of colonial power through state-organized spatial arrangements? By grappling with this question, we can better comprehend the enduring impact of colonial structures in our contemporary landscape and contribute to ongoing decolonization efforts.

Three Aspects of Space

I will conduct a comprehensive spatial analysis to unravel the complexities of colonial power dynamics embodied by the Empress Hotel. My study focuses on three interrelated aspects of social spaces: location, architecture, and colonial practices and artifacts.

First, I analyze the intentional selection of the Hotel's site. The Empress's location is not arbitrary; it strategically occupies a space that asserts colonial dominance over the landscape. I argue that this placement is a deliberate act of spatial colonization, designed to project state power and redefine the urban fabric of Victoria.

Second, I examine the architectural design of the Empress. The Baronial Chateau-style architecture imposes European aesthetics on Indigenous lands, creating a visual representation of colonial authority and Canadian sovereignty. I contend that this architectural choice is more than

mere decoration; it is a powerful tool for cultural displacement and the assertion of settler colonial presence.

Finally, I investigate the curated social spaces within the Hotel, namely the practices and artifacts of colonialism. The internal configuration of the Empress, with its themed rooms, like the Bengal Lounge and Palm Court, and ritualized practices like afternoon tea, recreates colonial social hierarchies. I argue that these spaces are not neutral; they actively reproduce colonial relations by inviting guests to participate in practices shaped by colonial exploitation.

Through this analysis, I reveal how the Empress Hotel's spatial elements work together to normalize colonial domination and obscure Indigenous presence. My study contributes to our understanding of how colonial power manifests in everyday structures, challenging us to critically engage with the spaces we often take for granted. By unpacking these spatial dynamics, I aim to advance decolonizing efforts and promote a more nuanced understanding of the persistent colonial underpinnings in our built environment.

Location

I analyze how the Empress Hotel's strategic location atop reclaimed land and between key political buildings asserts and maintains colonial domination.

I claim that the location of the Empress Hotel rendered Indigenous lands and relationships with the land as "waste" to be displaced or erased for colonial "civilization" and economic gain, exemplifying a civilized-waste binary. The intentional selection of its site, atop reclaimed land and between key political buildings, underscores the strategic use of space to reinforce this binary and assert colonial domination.

Central to this outlook was an "ethic of improvement" that valorized land utilization for economic gain while stigmatizing alternative approaches as wasteful (Tully & Skinner, 1993, p. 163). This ethic, rooted in settler colonialism, utilizes frontier logic to perpetuate the civilized-waste binary, which then justifies the exploitation and commodification of natural resources, reinforcing colonial power dynamics and perpetuating socio-economic inequalities.

Architecture

The Hotel's architectural form draws inspiration from European architectural traditions and is a deliberate spatial strategy that reflects and reinforces colonial power dynamics. Through its design and construction, the Empress Hotel is a material and symbolic manifestation of the Canadian state's efforts to assert sovereignty and legitimize its colonial project.

Designed by Francis Rattenbury, the Empress Hotel exemplifies the emerging "Baronial-Chateau" style that became a recognizable Canadian architectural identity from the 1900s to the 1960s (Liscombe, 1993). Drawing inspiration from Scottish, French, and British architectural traditions, this style aimed to create a distinctly "Canadianesque" experience from coast to coast (Liscombe, 1993). However, beneath its seemingly innocuous aesthetic lies a more profound symbolic significance.

Through its design and construction, I claim that the Empress Hotel is a material and symbolic manifestation of the Canadian state's efforts to assert sovereignty and legitimize its colonial project. By analyzing the Hotel's architecture, I seek to unveil how it plays a crucial role in producing and reproducing colonial power relations, shaping and being shaped by the social hierarchies and inequalities inherent in the settler-colonial project.

Colonial Practices and Artifacts

The last element of space that I will examine is the internal structure of the Empress, such as the Palm Court and Bengal Lounge, with a particular emphasis on the ritual of afternoon tea, to reveal how these curated spaces perpetuate colonial ideologies, social hierarchies, and the marginalization of Indigenous cultures.

I claim that the physical materials used in constructing the Empress Hotel, sourced from various parts of the British Empire, symbolize the interconnectedness of colonial territories and the power of an empire that extends across several continents. Standing in for the British empire, the Empress Hotel brings together in the same space wood from Australia, bones from Saskatchewan buffalo made into china, and tea produced from the plantations in Assam and Darjeeling (Claxton, 1997). These elements embody the transplanting of British identity on the American continent, reinforcing the colonial structure of the Hotel.

Through this comprehensive analysis, I aim to demonstrate how the Empress Hotel's location, architecture, and internal structures perpetuate the civilized-waste binary logic inherent in the colonial project. By unpacking the manifestations of this binary, my argument seeks to contribute to a nuanced understanding of how colonial infrastructures like the Empress Hotel embody and reproduce historical and contemporary power dynamics, disrupting Indigenous relationships with the land and the more-than-human world.

Theoretical Framework

Lefebvre's spatial framework guides my argument that social relations and social spaces co-constitute and transform each other. I build on Adele Perry's (2001) methodological approach, which emphasizes Marxist and Lefebvrian theory. Following Lefebvre, I assert that we must

understand social relations as materially and spatially constituted, involving land, labour, and production. My theoretical framework centers on Lefebvre's expansion of Marx's ideas.

Specifically, Lefebvre contends that we cannot reduce the materiality of social relations to their connection with material objects alone. Instead, we must examine how social relations shape social spaces and, conversely, how social spaces influence social relations. This dynamic interplay forms the core of my analysis.

However, Lefebvre's account fails to capture the differences and intersections between gender, race, and colonial relations in the production of spaces. While Lefebvre did critique imperialism, neo-colonialism, and French colonialism, particularly in Algeria, he did so in a way that flattened colonialism and neglected colonial subjects' resistance and transformation of colonialism in different spaces and times (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2013). At this point, I see a limitation to the extent to which I can still use the core of Lefebvre to emphasize the way colonial relations are reproduced spatially.

What I find appealing about Lefebvre is his emphasis on how resistance emerges within dominated spaces and punctures the homogenizing tendency of those spaces. I argue that colonial spaces, as dominated spaces, can also show this puncture. However, it is insufficient to provide a generalized picture of what that puncture looks like without engaging with colonial relations. Resistance takes different forms, and two of these forms are spatial and relational. The kinds of spaces we analyze show us different ways of resisting oppressive structures.

Colonial spaces are complex and house multiple systems and structures of oppression; therefore, they require an analysis that considers spatial and relational complexity. Intersections of racism, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism complicate spaces and reveal multi-layered social

relations and spatial practices. Resistance would then also take multiple forms; to engage with these forms spatially, they must be grounded.¹

I agree to an extent with Kipfer and Goonewardena (2013) that Lefebvre's spatial theory can be helpful when read along with Indigenous and counter-colonial scholarship like Fanon, Aime Cesaire, and Alfred Memmi. Kipfer and Goonewardena's (2013) reading of Fanon and Lefebvre together advances the argument that "imperial capitalism is mediated by struggles over the spatial organization of political domination" (p.109). While I agree with their argument, I focus on the micro-level colonial structures organized by settler colonial states. By doing so, I provide a more grounded examination of the spatial manifestations of settler colonial reproduction and power dynamics.

To truly grasp how macro-level political domination operates, we must first understand the intricate relationship between power and space at the micro-level. I argue that by neglecting to examine how power manifests in these micro-level interactions, we risk further obscuring the mechanisms of power at the macro-level. In my view, domination and oppression become normalized at the micro-level, perpetuating a cycle of control, which then further reinforces institutional forms of domination.

Furthermore, I claim that producing social spaces is inextricably linked to producing power. The two are mutually dependent, forming social spaces catalyzing the emergence of power structures. This dynamic is particularly evident in the context of colonial power, where the creation of colonial spaces directly reinforces and entrenches colonial domination.

¹ The resistance that arises in dominated spaces is a fascinating topic that warrants further research and a dedicated project to fully explore its role in colonial space and the reproduction of colonial relations. While I highlight the importance of resistance in my sections on contradictory and lived experiences, a comprehensive analysis of this aspect is beyond the scope of my current project.

To demonstrate the above, I argue that the Canadian state and the British Empire organize spaces through frontier logic that utilizes a civilized-waste binary. Specifically, I claim that when examining the Canadian state's role in spatial organization, particularly in colonial relations, it becomes evident that a binary logic of civilized versus waste is a foundational element. This logic, deeply rooted in settler colonialism, employs a frontier mentality that shapes spaces, relationships, and narratives into sites of inclusion and exclusion. Colonialism penetrates spaces by introducing and reproducing capitalist and colonial relations of production. Frontier logic divides large geographical spaces like Canada into bounded, quantifiable spaces that serve as sites of exclusion and inclusion (Barker, 2021, pp. 46-47; Rose & Davis, 2006). It divides these bounded spaces into relations of center and periphery. Lefebvre calls this "state-bound territorial relations of domination" (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2013 p.106). Territory, in relation to the state, is conceived as "a space which can be mapped, demarcated, and controlled" (Elden, 2004, p. 234). Thus, the state spatially reproduces colonial and capitalist relations through state agents and settlers.

While this civilized-waste binary logic operates at the state level, its manifestations and implications permeate individuals' and communities' everyday lived experiences and spaces. To fully understand the depth and breadth of colonial power dynamics, examining how these state-level spatial strategies and relations are reproduced and reinforced in everyday life's mundane, quotidian spaces and practices is crucial.

I borrow the concept of "everyday" from Henri Lefebvre (1991) and use it, along with Lefebvre's critique of the everyday, to help understand the reproduction of power in a colonial context. In doing so, I build on the work of scholars of colonialism like Glen Coulthard (2014) and Mark Rifkin (2014), who engage with the concept of "everyday colonialism" to show how

colonial power dynamics are embedded within mundane spaces, practices, and interactions and shape the lived realities of Indigenous peoples.²

To illustrate the concept of everyday colonialism, I examine the Empress Hotel as a prime example of colonial infrastructure. My analysis of the hotel reveals how it embodies and reinforces historical and contemporary colonial power dynamics. This colonial presence actively disrupts Indigenous relationships with the land and the more-than-human world, highlighting colonialism's pervasive nature in everyday life.

This lens allows us to understand how colonial power operates beyond grand political gestures or historical events, permeating the fabric of daily life. The Empress Hotel is a tangible manifestation of how colonial structures continue to shape social spaces and relations, often in subtle yet profound ways.

In this framing, I situate my study within Lefebvre's spatial theory while acknowledging its limitations and the need to integrate Indigenous perspectives. By synthesizing Lefebvre's work with Coulthard's notion of "colonial relations" and the concept of "everyday colonialism," I offer a unique contribution to the literature on spatial and colonial theory, grounded in a micro-level examination of the Empress Hotel as a colonial structure that reproduces colonial relations at a spatial and experiential level.

² Indigenous feminist scholarship has also contributed to the above discussion such as Arvin, M., Tuck, E., & Morrill, A.'s (2013) work "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy" and Hunt, S., & Holmes, C. (2015) "Everyday Decolonization: Living a Decolonizing Queer Politics". Ananya Roy's (2011) "Postcolonial Urbanism: Speed, Hysteria, Mass Dreams" explores the embeddedness of colonial power relations within the everyday urban fabric of cities in the Global South. I acknowledge these scholarly works but focus on settler colonialism and tie the term "everyday colonialism" with Lefebvre's critique of the everyday. I focus on how the everyday reproduces colonial relations spatially in material and symbolic ways.

To do the above, I rely on Coulthard's (2014) notion of colonial relations to offer a way to utilize Lefebvre's theoretical framework while engaging in the spatial aspects of colonial social relations. Coulthard's use of 'colonial relations' grounds the scope of my study to the micro-level social spaces of settler colonialism. This approach allows me to conduct a nuanced analysis of spatially and materially reproduced colonial, capitalist, and racist ideologies. By working through the micro-level case study of the Empress Hotel in Victoria, B.C., I aim to demonstrate the expansive, macro-level breadth of state organizations of spaces and the reproducibility of colonial relations.

Given the above, I analyze the Empress Hotel materially and symbolically. I adopt Lefebvre's work because by conceptualizing social spaces as both material and symbolic, Lefebvre invites us to consider how the production of space intersects with the reproduction of power structures. I complicate Lefebvre's invitation by explicitly looking at settler colonialism and colonial relations spatially.

Furthermore, this theoretical framework allows me to examine the Empress through a *relational* spatial lens. To conceive of colonial infrastructure as social relations and spaces are inherently intertwined, shaping and being shaped by one another. This co-constitutiveness is pivotal in understanding colonial infrastructures like the Empress Hotel in Victoria, British Columbia. I argue that, rooted in colonial agendas, such infrastructures serve as physical manifestations of state spatial strategies, perpetuating historical and contemporary power dynamics while disrupting Indigenous relationships with the land and the more-than-human world.

Through this theoretical synthesis, I seek to demonstrate the expansive breadth of the state's organization of colonial spaces and the ongoing reproducibility of colonial relations, as

embodied by the Empress Hotel's location, architecture, internal spatiality, materiality, and symbolism. By focusing on the Empress Hotel as a case study, I provide a nuanced analysis of how colonial infrastructures perpetuate and reproduce colonial power dynamics through their spatial manifestations.

Chapter Summary

Chapter One: Understanding Co-Constitutive Social Relations and Spaces

The first chapter delves into the intricate interplay between social relations and spaces as co-constitutive entities. Drawing on Lefebvre's spatial theory, I argue that the production of space inherently links to the reproduction of social relations, with each influencing and shaping the other in a symbiotic relationship.

Lefebvre's theory is critical because it emphasizes the inseparability of social relations and spaces. In other words, social space and social relations are co-constitutive, and I claim that this co-constitutiveness explains how power is reproduced spatially and materially.

In this chapter, I also introduce Lefebvre's spatial trialectic, which I claim is a critical feature of his theory, particularly his inclusion of the lived dimension of space. The lived is how we experience and interact with social spaces, despite the representation of - and representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991, p.33).

This chapter lays the groundwork for my later analysis of the Empress Hotel as a material and symbolic nexus of colonial power and resistance, highlighting colonialism's enduring impact on Indigenous peoples and territories. The Empress Hotel is a tangible manifestation of this co-constitutive relationship, wherein its physical construction and spatial organization reflect and perpetuate colonial power dynamics.

Chapter Two: Lefebvre's Limited Understanding of Colonialism

Building upon the theoretical foundations established in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 stretches the Lefebvrian spatial framework by integrating Coulthard's concept of "colonial relations." I first demonstrate the limitations of Lefebvre's understanding of colonialism. Examining settler colonial spaces alongside colonial relations reveals how we reproduce power materially and spatially. This expansion allows for a more comprehensive analysis encompassing broader power dynamics and the specific spatial manifestations of settler colonialism.

Chapter Two is organized around three central tenets: colonial relations and state-bound strategies of producing abstract space, frontier logic, and lived experiences and contradictory spaces. I use these three tenets to engage with Lefebvre's spatial theory within colonial contexts critically.

Through this synthesis, I demonstrate how colonial structures shape social relations over time, perpetuating colonial domination by organizing social spaces. The chapter delves into frontier logic, which uses a civilized-waste binary central to the Canadian state's spatial organization. It explores how this logic categorizes spaces, bodies, and commodities as valuable or wasteful, thereby spatially reproducing colonial relations of domination.

Chapter Three: The Empress Hotel: its Location and Architecture

There is an overall argument that I develop in Chapters 3 and 4 based on the three tenets I introduce in Chapter 2 colonial relations and state-bound strategies of producing abstract space, frontier logic, and lived experiences and contradictory spaces. These three tenets help me advance my argument that the Empress Hotel produces and reproduces colonial relations spatially.

In Chapter 3, I focus on the Empress Hotel's location and architecture, examining how these physical aspects embody and reinforce colonial power dynamics. Utilizing a Lefebvrian lens, I analyze the Hotel's strategic positioning in Victoria's landscape, symbolizing the transition from fort to capital and the consolidation of colonial authority over the land and its Indigenous inhabitants. My analysis of the Empress Hotel's architecture and location shows that the Hotel is not an apolitical space. Instead, I show that its architecture and location intentionally legitimized British imperial and later Canadian state sovereignty.

The chapter also explores how the Hotel's opulent design, reminiscent of European architectural styles, signifies colonial prestige while reinforcing class and race hierarchies within its spatial layout. By interrogating these spatial practices, I argue that colonial infrastructures like the Empress Hotel serve as sites of contestation and negotiation, perpetuating colonial relations while simultaneously being contested and subverted by Indigenous resistance and resurgence. For instance, the recent toppling of the Captain Cook statue in front of the Empress and the placement of the spindle whorl to reaffirm Lekwungen connection to the land are acts of resistance that challenge the abstraction of the Empress as apolitical (Renaerts, 2020).

I organize this chapter into two main sections: location and architecture. Within each section, I incorporate the three tenets I introduced in Chapter 2.

Chapter Four: The Empress Hotel: Its Internal Spaces

Chapter 4 delves into the Empress Hotel's internal spatiality, focusing on the commodification and ritualization of space through the lens of afternoon tea. Commodities like tea, produced under colonial domination, play a crucial role in reproducing colonial relations spatially.

The chapter examines how the Empress Hotel's association with the ritual of afternoon tea represents a microcosm of colonial exploitation and social stratification. While afternoon tea has evolved into a symbol of British sophistication, its origins are deeply rooted in the labour of racialized individuals and the complex colonial history of tea production.

By tracing the spatial and relational history of tea production, particularly in colonial territories like India, I illustrate how the growth of the tea industry facilitated mass consumption globally, reinforcing the conceptualization of Britishness and its association with a refined national identity. Despite modernization, the Empress Hotel continues perpetuating these colonial legacies through its afternoon tea tradition and luxurious aesthetic, concealing the politics of colonialism and the exploitation underlying its operations.

I organize this chapter into three main sections based on the three tenets I introduced in Chapter 2: colonial relations and state-bound strategies of producing abstract space, frontier logic, and lived experiences and contradictory spaces.

Chapter 1: Understanding Co-Constitutive Social Spaces and Relations

In this chapter, I argue that understanding power requires a deep examination of how it organizes social relations spatially and reproduces itself through social spaces. To build this argument, I draw heavily on Lefebvre's theory of social space and relations. Particularly valuable is his distinction between natural and social spaces, which highlights the crucial role of human intervention in producing social spaces.

Lefebvre's conception of social space, while groundbreaking, has limitations. Specifically, it does not fully capture the nuances of how power operates through colonial spatial organization. To address this gap, I propose an extension of Lefebvre's spatial analysis to better encompass colonial power dynamics.

The chapter unfolds in three main sections. First, I delve into Lefebvre's theories of production and social relations, establishing the foundational concepts necessary for my argument. Next, I explore how we can apply and extend Lefebvre's spatial analysis to examine power in colonial contexts. Finally, I address the limitations of Lefebvre's framework in fully grasping colonialism. To overcome these limitations, I introduce Glen Coulthard's concept of 'colonial relations,' which will serve as a crucial bridge to advance my argument in subsequent chapters.

This chapter integrates Lefebvre's spatial theory with Coulthard's insights on colonialism to lay the groundwork for a more comprehensive understanding of how power operates through and reproduces itself in colonial spaces.

Lefebvre's Spatial Contribution

I emphasize that power plays a distinct role in producing social relations over time and across different societal contexts. As Stuart Elden (2011) notes, production has two functions for Lefebvre: economic production of material 'objects' and the production of oeuvres - knowledge, ideas, and other societal productions (p.44). This distinction makes Lefebvre's work particularly valuable, as it implies that something exists beyond the production of material 'objects.'

Specifically, social relations both produce and are produced by the social spaces around us.

To illustrate this concept more concretely, consider the example of a university campus. The physical layout of buildings, the designation of spaces for different activities (classrooms, libraries, administrative offices), and the pathways connecting these spaces all reflect and reinforce specific social relations. The centrality of administrative buildings often symbolizes authority, while the arrangement of classrooms and common areas can either facilitate or hinder certain types of interactions among students and faculty. Moreover, the production of knowledge within this space (an oeuvre in Lefebvre's terms) is not separate from the physical space itself. The design of lecture halls, for instance, with their tiered seating and central podium, reinforces a particular model of knowledge transmission. Lecture halls are usually organized with a central podium for the lecturer and students seated in rows facing the podium. This spatial organization emphasizes a "sage on the stage" kind of hierarchy, where the lecturer is the one imparting knowledge into the minds of the students. There is a distinct separation between the student and the teacher. Similarly, the creation of collaborative spaces or individual study areas reflects and shapes ideas about learning and academic work.

I argue that Lefebvre's concept of the production of space is rooted in Marx's core assumption that producing things is a uniquely human activity that is inherently social. The introduction of new ideas and technology causes social relations to change. For example, the feudal system had specific social relations of production that required serfs and feudal landowners. Capitalist social relations of production are marked by private ownership of the means of production and wage-based labour.

Lefebvre (1991) builds on Marx's conception of social relations, viewing human labor as a productive social activity that shapes the natural world. However, Lefebvre extends this idea by arguing that we cannot discuss social relations in isolation from space. He insists that these relations must be grounded spatially. I concur with Lefebvre's (1991) assertion that social relations are inherently spatial, as they unfold and reproduce within specific spatial contexts.

To illustrate this point, consider the spatial organization of a workplace, such as a factory. The physical layout of the factory floor directly influences the social relations between workers and managers. For instance, an open-plan office might foster more frequent interactions and a sense of equality, while a layout with separate, enclosed offices for managers can reinforce hierarchical divisions. The placement of break rooms, the design of workstations, and the location of managerial offices all contribute to shaping the power dynamics and social interactions within the workplace.

Moreover, the division of labor is often reflected in the spatial arrangement of work areas. Assembly line workers might be confined to specific stations, while supervisors have the freedom to move throughout the space. This spatial division reinforces the hierarchical structure of the workplace, influencing how workers and managers interact and perceive their roles within the organization.

By spatializing social relations in this way, we gain a deeper understanding of their nature and how they are reproduced in everyday settings. This approach reveals how space is not merely a backdrop for social interactions but an active participant in shaping them.

Drawing on Lefebvre's perspective and Doreen Massey, I emphasise the theoretical conceptualization of social relations and spaces as co-constitutive. To further develop this idea alongside discussions of settler colonialism, I reintroduce the concept of production of space and social relations by analyzing the role of commodities in colonial rule. These commodities exist not only in their material forms but also serve as tools for producing knowledge and ideologies. This analysis will be expanded upon in the following chapters, demonstrating how the production and circulation of goods in colonial contexts shapes social spaces and social relations materially and symbolically, reinforcing colonial power structures in subtle yet pervasive ways.

The Production of Space and Social Relations

Lefebvre bases his conception of space on the distinction between natural and social spaces. Nature creates natural spaces, while human labour and intervention produce social spaces (Lefebvre, 1991, p.101). Social spaces require human intervention to come into existence, unlike natural spaces that exist without human intervention³. Natural spaces, according to Lefebvre (1991), are those created by nature without human intervention, existing as unique 'beings' that

³ Lefebvre's theory emphasizes that space is socially produced, which remains a crucial insight even if we reject the idea of purely natural spaces. This perspective highlights how human activities, power relations, and cultural factors shape our environments.

In essence, while critiques of the concept of "natural" space are valid and important, they do not negate the core insights of Lefebvre's theory about the social production of space. His framework remains a powerful tool for analyzing how spaces are created, experienced, and transformed through social processes, even if we understand all spaces as being influenced by human activity to some degree.

grow and die naturally (p.70). A meadow of wildflowers or a lake, for instance, exists without the knowledge or conceptualization of its beauty.

In contrast, social spaces are produced through human labour and imagination. Lefebvre (1991) argues that humans use their imaginations, conceptions, and ideas to transform natural resources, which only provide use-value – the potential for transformation by human labour (p.70)⁴. A garden, for example, is a produced space because it requires human imagination. Boundaries, fences, bridges, and other elements are added to a garden to tell a particular story about that space.

Furthermore, Lefebvre underscores that the production of space encompasses more than just tangible or material objects. It includes the production of ideas, ideologies, discourses and symbolic actions. Non-material products, such as societal norms and institutions like marriage, contribute to the unique character of human societies. Lefebvre underscores the significance of analyzing the production of space as a pivotal aspect of understanding societal dynamics.

I agree with Lefebvre's (1991) claim that "(social) space is a (social) product" (p. 26). This statement means that the spaces we inhabit and interact within are not neutral or pre-existing; rather, they are created through social processes and reflect the social relations of their time. Lefebvre (1991) asserts that these locations are not passive settings but are actively produced alongside social relations.

To illustrate this concept, consider a public park. The decision to allocate land for a park, its design, and the rules governing its use all reflect social values and power structures. The

⁴ While acknowledging the problematic nature of the term "natural," it remains a useful concept when not understood merely as an inert resource for human projects. Instead, "natural" elements can be viewed as having their own agency, as illustrated by my example of ivy destroying the Empress Hotel (pp. 73-74). This perspective on the agency of nature will be further explored in Chapter 3.

park's layout might prioritize certain activities over others, reflecting societal preferences. Its location within a city can reinforce or challenge existing social divisions. In this way, the park as a social space is produced by and reproduces social relations. The space that the city has allocated for a public park could destroy a “wilder” natural space or it could displace certain communities. These decisions present how power manifests in the organization of spaces.

While the idea of space as a social product is related to the co-constitutive nature of space and social relations, it specifically highlights the active role of society in creating spaces, challenging the notion of space as a passive backdrop. Spaces are continuously shaped and reshaped by social interactions and power dynamics.

Minkenberg's (2014) analysis of capital cities provides a compelling illustration of this idea. He argues that capital cities, like nation-states, are "products of political machinations, ideological contestations, and personal ambitions" (p.6). This view aligns with and extends Lefebvre's ideas, highlighting how social and political forces actively shape urban spaces.

By examining the production of space alongside social relations, I contend that Lefebvre reveals how power and domination embed themselves in the very materiality of the spaces we inhabit. For example, the layout and architecture of colonial cities often reflected and reinforced imperial power structures (Minkenberg, 2014). In many colonial urban centers, grand boulevards and monumental government buildings showcased the colonial regime's dominance (Vale, 2014), while Indigenous populations were often relegated to segregated neighbourhoods or pushed to the urban periphery.

The spatial organization of cities, neighbourhoods, and institutions reflects and reinforces the power dynamics and social hierarchies that shape our lived experiences (Elden, 2004, p.236).

Minkenberg's (2014) work on capital cities supports this view, showing how capitals are often regarded as centers of political power, with their architecture and location reflecting this status.

Drawing on these insights, I argue that we must view social space as a social product inextricably tied to social relations. While space serves as the physical location for social production, it is not purely material. The nature of the produced space depends on existing social relations and individuals' lived experiences within it.

By acknowledging this co-constitutive relationship between social relations and social spaces, we can better understand how power dynamics operate and how they might be challenged or reshaped. For instance, take the design of a university campus and its spatial organization. The central location and imposing architecture of administrative buildings often symbolize authority, while student spaces may be more peripheral. This spatial arrangement can influence social interactions, potentially creating a sense of hierarchy between administration, faculty, and students. However, students might resist this power dynamic by reclaiming spaces for their own purposes, such as transforming a formal quad into an informal gathering area for protests or cultural events. This example illustrates how dominant groups have historically moulded spaces to maintain their power and how marginalized groups have resisted and reclaimed spaces to assert their identities and challenge oppressive social relations. A critical analysis of these spatial dimensions reveals the ongoing negotiation of power through the use and transformation of physical spaces.

To illustrate how space serves as more than just a material location for social production, let's examine a grocery store. In this everyday setting, people enact and reproduce various social relations, demonstrating the dynamic interplay between space and social interactions. Consider the layout of a typical grocery store. The placement of items, such as positioning luxury goods at

eye level and staple items on lower shelves, subtly reinforces class distinctions and consumer habits. This spatial arrangement influences shopping behaviors and reinforces social norms related to consumption and status.

The interactions between consumers and workers in this space also reveal and reinforce social hierarchies. For instance, the physical barrier of the checkout counter creates a clear division between employee and customer, shaping their relationship and reinforcing norms of service and authority. The way customers interact with cashiers - often brief and transactional - reflects and reproduces broader social expectations about service industry roles.

Moreover, the store's organization into departments (produce, meat, dairy) shapes how we categorize and value different types of food, influencing dietary norms and cultural food practices. The prominence given to certain products over others can reinforce or challenge cultural food hierarchies.

By recognizing these spatial dynamics, we see how the grocery store actively produces and reproduces social relations rather than serving as a mere backdrop. This co-constitutive relationship between social relations and social spaces reveals how power dynamics operate in everyday settings. Understanding this relationship allows us to identify opportunities to challenge or reshape these dynamics.

In colonial contexts, I contend that the production and exchange of commodities crucially shape social relations and spatial arrangements. The extraction of natural resources, labour exploitation, and goods circulation represent spatial processes reinforcing colonial power structures. By analyzing commodities' role in colonial rule, we can understand how the production and organization of space intertwine with the reproduction of colonial social

relations, such as the subjugation of indigenous populations and the consolidation of imperial power.

Lefebvre and Space

I agree with Lefebvre (1991) that human beings form social relations, and in doing so, they create social spaces. For example, our familial relations partly shape our identities, and as we are introduced outside our family, we begin to form relations with others. These relations are dependent on both time and place. What I mean by this is that a child born and raised in the 1960s in Canada would have different relations than a child born in the 2000s in the same place. Economic, political, and geographic/spatial differences play an extensive role in identity formation. Even the relations in urban and rural spaces differ and create distinct social spaces. A child raised in downtown Toronto in the 1990s negotiates their spatial relations with a high density of immigrants and diverse socio-economic statuses. They must navigate their relations through different variables than a child born in a rural setting with lower population density and potentially less diversity.

In other words, simply analyzing class relations does not sufficiently engage with how social space and relations are materially produced. As Massey (2005) points out, if identities are constructed relationally, spatially, and otherwise, we must then consider the geography of those relations of construction (p.10). She emphasizes the openness of spatial relations and the potential for multiple social spaces to be produced and to coexist within the same geographical area (p.10). While I agree with Massey's framework, I want to particularly focus in on her emphasis on power relations to analyze how dominant relations and power are reproduced spatially, particularly at the micro level. This focus on the micro-level manifestations of power in

spatial organization provides another dimension to understanding how social hierarchies and power are reproduced and contested in everyday life.

Lefebvre (1991) asserts that the production of space is inherently tied to the exercise of power and the reproduction of social hierarchies. His analysis illuminates how dominant groups shape and organize spaces to reinforce their power and marginalize others. For instance, in his critique of the modern city, Lefebvre (1991) highlights how urban planning and architecture have created segregated neighbourhoods, fortified enclaves for the wealthy, and spaces prioritizing capitalist accumulation over human needs. These spatial arrangements reflect and perpetuate existing power dynamics, reinforcing social hierarchies based on class, race, gender, and other factors.

To that end, while Lefebvre does not explicitly address racial or gendered relations, his work is crucial for spatially demonstrating how power and domination become embedded within spaces.

The Complexity of Produced Social Spaces

Unlike a produced 'object,' social space extends beyond a simple commodity. Production requires complex, interconnected social relations that form multiple physical and mental/social networks, pathways, and cognitive (cultural, semiotic, meaning) linkages (Lefebvre, 1991, p.83). As I mentioned, ideologies, ideas, and discourses developed from the production of social relations have material realities. The interaction between social beings produces physical pathways, like roads, and mental linkages, like families and social groups. For Lefebvre (1991), social space is not an empty container that must be filled but rather gains its existence through the body and social relations (p.308). In other words, social spaces do not exist without social

relations. Previously, I mentioned that Lefebvre distinguishes between natural and social spaces. Natural spaces are created while social spaces are produced. Production requires human labour, and that labour is relational and lived spatially. Social spaces cannot be empty containers because they are produced and lived through individuals labour and relations with one another.

Understanding how space is produced is complex because we, as human beings, embodying various social practices, perceive and interact within our lived social space while creating the potential for new social spaces. This complexity shows us that space can never be static or fully homogenous; it is always lived and experienced by social relations.

Doreen Massey (2005) argues that to understand "space as a product of interrelations," we must define them as 'embedded practices' (p.10). That is, the lived experiences that are grounded spatially. Alternatively, Lefebvre would qualify 'embedded practices' as social practices. Social practices can be understood through a triad – conceived, perceived, and lived (Lefebvre, 1991, pp.38-39). To think of this concept materially, we can use the body as an example. The body's hands, feet, and all of the extremities are representative of the physical, material definition of social practices – we use our hands to construct various works, to produce; in other words, to "*perceive*" the external world and modify it (Lefebvre, 1999, p. 40). Social practices also include the *representations of the body*, how we scientifically understand what a body is composed of, the anatomical, biological and ideological implications of bodies and their relation to nature and surroundings (Lefebvre, 1999, p.40). Finally, the "*bodily lived experience*" involves social practices where culture intermixes with religious or spiritual beliefs or the dominant views and prescriptions associated with the body (Lefebvre, 1999, p.40). The above can look like associating women as caregivers of children and the home while men embody a

more public role as breadwinners. Lefebvre's example of bodily *lived* experience is where morality infiltrates the body in such a way that the body can be both chastised and cleansed.

Let us think of a body on a walk through a forest; the perceived realm is where the body uses its legs to jump over branches and rocks, moving obstacles along its way with its hands or grabbing a stick to aid it in walking. In the representational realm, we can look at this body and consider the scientific aspects: the rhythm of their breathing, lung capacity, muscles working to keep them upright, understanding or lack thereof of topography, nature, and the path made for the safe travel of bodies in this forest.

The last realm, the bodily *lived* experience, is where we begin to put a face to this body. The body becomes inundated with societal prescriptions, and gender, sex and racialized identity become more relevant. In the realm of bodily lived experience, societal influences emerge, shaping the individual's identity through gender, race, and social norms. This human body walking in the forest has a relational being – other bodies recognize this individual as human, along with particular social assumptions.

Within this lived experience, the body's interactions with others in the forest are significant, as they contribute to forming social relationships and assumptions about belonging and familiarity.

With a recognizable being, we can prescribe certain assumptions about what community they may belong to, whether they are friends, acquaintances, or strangers. In more simplistic terms, this triad of perceived-conceived-lived makes up both bodies and spaces and influences how bodies exist in spaces and how they produce new spaces. However, the bodily *lived* experience requires an additional element: social relations. It is social relations that produce particular categorizations and differences among bodies.

At the most superficial level, human beings' daily interactions with their environment and other human beings explain social relations as social practice. Take a coffee shop in Victoria, B.C., for example. Several social practices are going on within the coffee shop. A couple of university students are typing and talking at a few tables, a lone man is waiting for a first date, the baristas are making coffee, and old friends are meeting after years of absence. At the base level, these people within the coffee shop use various modes of communication and interaction to relate to others around them and indicate how others should relate to them. The barista must make coffee, form professional customer relations, converse politely, and exchange money.

University students build social relations at the table through discussions about their classes, mutual procrastination, and shared conversations. On a first date, people wonder what kind of relationship will form between themselves and the person they meet for the first time. At a micro level, the social relations lived and experienced in the coffee shop are a part of social space, appearing as a prominent element of human relations.

On a macro level, social relations encompass the organization of social spaces and the political dynamics that underpin them.

Abstract Space and the Everyday

I argue that Lefebvre's conceptualization of abstract space and the everyday and his differentiation between natural and social spaces is crucial for understanding the contradictions and complexities surrounding the Empress Hotel as a colonial power and domination site. Lefebvre's concept of "abstract space" demonstrates how the production of space ties into the domination of lived experiences and the imposition of abstract systems of control and surveillance (Lefebvre, 1991).

To give an example of abstract space, the establishment of prisons, factories, and bureaucratic institutions represents the abstraction and homogenization of space, which serves to discipline and regulate human behaviour in ways that maintain existing power structures. For example, consider the spatial design and architecture of modern prisons. Prison layouts often feature rigid geometries, segregated cell blocks, and centralized observation points that enable constant surveillance and control over inmates' movements and activities.

Furthermore, prison layouts are a part of abstract spatial organization, which reflects and reinforces the power dynamics between the incarcerated individuals and the institutional authority. The lack of privacy, the regimented routines, and the ever-present gaze of the guards all contribute to a sense of domination and subjugation, effectively stripping inmates of their autonomy and individuality.

Moreover, the concept of enclosure and confinement inherent in prison design separates and excludes those deemed undesirable or threatening to the dominant social order. This spatial segregation not only physically removes individuals from society but also symbolically reinforces their marginalized status and the power imbalances that led to their incarceration in the first place.

The spatial organization of prisons serves as a powerful example of how architecture can reinforce social control. Prison layouts are not merely functional; they are deliberate exercises of power that reproduce and entrench existing social hierarchies. This concept extends beyond prisons to our everyday lives. In everyday life, we observe a parallel to what Marx observed in the economic sphere—that the conception of the social human being is conditioned by a system produced through private labour (Merrifield, 2006, pp. 10-11). Marx argued that society is built on a foundation of privatized economic relations (Merrifield, 2006, pp.10-11). Similarly,

Merrifield (2006) suggests that in our daily lives, capitalism struggles to fully integrate or "humanize" social interactions through its inherently private mechanisms (pp. 10-11). This parallel highlights how the economic structure of capitalism impacts our social experiences beyond just the realm of production.

The privatized nature of capitalist production carries over into how social relations are structured in everyday life, preventing capitalism from fully realizing a humanized and socially oriented way of being (Merrifield, 2006, p.10-11). The abstraction of space in this context serves to homogenize and dominate lived experiences, effectively shaping human behaviour and perpetuating structures of oppression.

Building on his trialectical conceptualization of space, Lefebvre (1991) argues that social space can evolve into abstract spaces when the spatial dimension takes a backseat and becomes a homogenizing force. He describes this as "the production of a homogenous and pathogenic political 'medium'" that is "norm-bound, coercive and rationalized" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 377). To that end, abstract spaces discourage differences; social relations become reproducible and self-perpetuating. This argument significantly contributes to distinguishing the lived experiences of space from the everyday.

In my understanding of Lefebvre (1991), abstract space and the everyday occur when particular ways of living or being in the world are considered normative (p.236). For example, the intertwining of production and reproduction at the spatial level illuminates how space produces social relations through replication. Existing social relations interact with the already present social spaces, further entrenching themselves within those spaces through reproduction. This replication and reproduction of social relations occur through people's everyday lived

experiences in social spaces. As humans interact within multiple social spaces, the existing spatial configurations transform their lived realities, becoming normalized.

For example, a city may develop a public park with manicured lawns, picnic areas, and designated play areas for children and adults, which cater to middle-class families and their leisure activities. Ponds and flower gardens are cared for by gardeners, and designated times are posted for the use of the park. As both adults and children use this park for these intended purposes, their everyday experience reinforces that particular spatial configuration. When something interrupts this, like graffiti or adults drunkenly climbing on the jungle gym, there is an outcry from individuals “This is not how we use this space”.

To further complicate this example and to show how these spaces can reproduce domination and power, imagine the city decides to enforce a ban on encampments which specifically target unhoused individuals. This policy specifically targets a group of individuals that are seen as a burden on the city. Their presence in the city park disturbs the social practices that are acceptable in that space.

The spatial configurations of our built environments are not merely inert backdrops but active participants in producing and reproducing particular social hierarchies, norms, and power dynamics. The configuration of lecture halls in universities reinforces habits of instruction. Teachers face everyone, students face only the teacher, who is supposed to provide all the content; the space is not set up to encourage conversations between students who are presumed to have no knowledge to impart. In contrast, seminar rooms are set up to facilitate a relatively equal collegial atmosphere. Individuals are encouraged to contribute fully and engage with each other while the teacher acts as a facilitator.

In Lefebvre's (1991) formulation, the everyday is as historical as a part of modernity, both spatial and temporal (pp.192-5). In other words, our daily lives are composed of narratives formed by ideologies, language, knowledge, etc., that help us organize our social world (192-193). Capitalism, in particular, tends to dominate spaces in a way that makes it seem as though there is no viable choice outside of capitalism.

Consider the ubiquitous example of grocery stores in our everyday lives. These spaces' spatial layout, organization, and design reinforce specific social relations - profit-driven capitalist ones. The division between customers and workers, the directed flow of movement through aisles, and the strategic placement of products all contribute to the normalization and reproduction of consumer capitalism's social hierarchies and market logic.

These spatial configurations ingrain themselves into our routines and psyches, shaping our behaviours and interactions within these spaces. For a working family, the grocery store visit integrates into the weekly rhythm—parents take children to school and go to their jobs. On the way home, they go to a grocery store to purchase food and daily necessities, enacting capitalist relations of production and consumption. These rhythms of everyday life routinely go unquestioned by those who live these lives.

A key aspect of Lefebvre's spatial theory that I find particularly relevant to my analysis of the Empress Hotel is his distinction between the consumption of space and spaces of consumption. Lefebvre (1991) argues that people move from spaces of capital accumulation and quantifiable space (space of consumption) towards an “unproductive form of consumption” (consumption of space) (pp. 352-353). Both types of spaces are dominated and controlled by the state organization of spaces and are considered abstract (Lefebvre, 1991, p.353). What I take

Lefebvre to mean is that both types of spaces are abstract – that is dominated by the state and organized for a particular purpose in service of capitalism.

The space of consumption then refers to the extractive labouring over land. In my understanding the consumption of space refers to the organization of spaces of leisure, whereby individuals are invited into spaces that are meant for consumption. For spaces of consumption, Lefebvre gives the example of beaches and other leisure spaces constructed in France where individuals that experience these spaces are not labouring to produce an external ‘object’. Rather, they are taking a temporary reprieve from the everyday while simultaneously experiencing leisure for profit. In other words, these spaces of consumption are marketable and quantifiable (Davies, 2016). In alignment with Lefebvre (1991), I find that hotels and the tourism industry are a part of the organization of spaces of consumption. This concept will be crucial in my later chapters, as it provides a theoretical framework for understanding how spaces like luxury hotels function as state-organized spaces of leisure.

The Moveability of Social Relations

Lefebvre's framework falls short of capturing the nuanced experiences of Indigenous, racialized, and gendered individuals within these spaces and relations. While Lefebvre's focus on class dynamics under capitalism is valuable, it overlooks crucial dimensions of spatial production and social interaction.

The limitations of Lefebvre's approach become evident when examining settler colonialism. Through a purely Lefebvrian lens, we might analyze the transformation of Indigenous lands into profitable spaces for capitalist exploitation. However, this perspective fails to capture the profound alterations in social relations that accompany such spatial changes.

Consider, for instance, the introduction of White settler families and heteropatriarchal systems into Indigenous spaces. This process goes beyond mere colonial occupation; it fundamentally reshapes Indigenous social structures and relationships. As Pyle (2020) argues, colonization and assimilatory practices lead to the internalization of heteropatriarchal ideas among Indigenous people (p. 113). This complex interplay of spatial occupation and social transformation is not adequately addressed within Lefebvre's framework.

Furthermore, Lefebvre's theory does not fully account for how power is spatially reproduced across diverse social contexts over time. The intersecting dynamics of race, gender, and indigeneity in the production of space require a more nuanced analysis than what Lefebvre's class-centric approach offers.

To truly understand the production and reproduction of social spaces and relations, we must critically examine their specific compositions, acknowledging the intersecting power dynamics at play. This approach allows us to move beyond Lefebvre's limitations and develop a more comprehensive understanding of how space is produced, experienced, and contested by diverse groups.

Limitations of Lefebvre

I argue that Lefebvre is missing critical features of social relations. Although Lefebvre helps us spatialize social relations, I claim that we must also investigate the dimensions and differences of social relations to understand a more complete picture of social change and domination. To that end, when I use social relations in this work, I refer to social practices that include race, gender, class, and power. To address this limitation, I propose an expansion of the conceptual lens by incorporating the notion of 'colonial relations' as articulated by Glen

Coulthard. Colonial relations encompass colonialism's economic and political dimensions and the cultural, spiritual, and environmental aspects that colonial processes have disrupted and transformed (Coulthard, 2014). For example, the dispossession of Indigenous lands and the imposition of colonial spatial arrangements, such as reservations and residential schools, have had profound material and cognitive impacts on Indigenous social relations, including kinship systems, knowledge systems, governance structures, and relationships with the land and non-human beings.

By introducing colonial relations, I claim that we move beyond the Eurocentric framework on which Marx and Lefebvre are based.⁵ I use Glen Coulthard's (2014) term "colonial relations" to encompass the variety of existing relations and point to the material reality of social relations. In Chapter Two, I further unpack how I use colonial relations to address Lefebvre's limitations.

If social relations and social spaces are co-constitutive, as I have argued above, we also engage with the production of colonial spaces when we examine colonial relations. As I will show in the next section, the domination of social spaces also comes about through the domination of social relations.

⁵ I recognize that this is very generalized and that it neglects the lived experiences of racialized and Indigenous individuals who cannot ignore these structures in the same way that White individuals and settlers can. Furthermore, It places an undue burden on racialized individuals and Indigenous communities to work against the current of dominant structures. While individuals may not be in thrall with ideologies, they cannot take on a passive role either. As Barker (2021) argues, "Indigenous resurgence movements have established the importance of biopower in very clear terms: no change can come solely from individual actions and choice, but none can come without them either" (p.222).

Heterogenous and Homogenous Social Spaces

Lefebvre's (1991) insight into the heterogeneous nature of social relations and spaces is crucial. He contends that social spaces and relations are not solely shaped by dominant forces like capitalism and the state but also encompass diverse social relations that resist spatial domination and abstraction (p.371-3). I extend this idea, asserting that social spaces comprise multiple ideas, ways of being, human labour, and interconnected histories that constantly interact and influence each other. As Massey (2005) notes, these interrelations continually shift and mould new social spaces in an ongoing process (pp. 94-95).

I contend that dominant political and economic powers leverage their wealth and influence to shape spaces, particularly on the peripheries, in ways that attempt to limit and homogenize inherent heterogeneity. These powers impose standardized, controlled environments that suppress diverse social practices and reinforce existing power structures.

Davies (2016) provides a pertinent observation: individuals "are not inevitably deluded or stupid or in the thrall of ideologies," but rather, "everyday life is such that we can, or sometimes must, live as if we were" (p.29). This insight underscores how the pervasive influence of dominant powers creates conditions where people feel compelled to conform to prevailing norms and structures, even if they are aware of their limitations.

The sheer magnitude and complexity of entangled oppressive structures and capitalist relations of domination further complicate this issue. These interconnected systems of power infiltrate every aspect of life, from economic practices to social interactions, making it difficult for individuals to imagine and pursue alternative ways of structuring our world. The omnipresence of these structures creates a sense of inevitability, discouraging critical thinking and innovation.

For example, the spatial organization of urban areas often reflects the interests of powerful economic entities, prioritizing commercial development over community needs. This prioritization can marginalize vulnerable populations and limit their access to resources, reinforcing social inequalities. Similarly, the global reach of capitalist markets imposes uniform economic practices that stifle local traditions and alternative economic models.

By shaping spaces to reflect and reinforce their interests, dominant powers maintain control and limit opportunities for resistance and change. Understanding this dynamic is crucial for developing strategies to challenge and transform these oppressive structures, fostering spaces that support diverse social practices.

In alignment with Lefebvre (1991), I claim that one dimension of the state, as a produced political space, is its attempt to dominate over existing perceived differences, which is particularly evident in capitalist and settler colonial states, where, as Wolfe (2006) points out, the primary goal is access to territory (p.388).

However, I maintain that the homogenizing force of abstract space invariably encounters resistance from the inherent heterogeneity of lived social spaces, as Lefebvre (1991) suggests. Moments of rejection and contestation of these normative spatial forces are constant. For instance, the reclaiming of PKOLS through a return to its WSÁNEĆ name in Victoria, British Columbia, serves as a potent example (Barker, 2021). Rejecting the colonial names given to sacred Indigenous spaces is a form of resistance that puts into focus the heterogeneity of lived spaces. As Barker (2021) illustrates, this act of resistance challenges the mountain's renaming and disrupts normative power structures for Indigenous peoples and settlers through ceremony.

I claim that there is crucial tension between political space's homogenizing tendencies and social space's heterogeneous realities. This tension is demonstrated by the very organization

of political space, which is itself constructed through ideological, economic, and political conflicts that are continually contested (Dahl, 2023). Political space, as conceived by dominant powers, often seeks to impose a uniform order. It attempts to standardize experiences, regulate behaviours, and create a cohesive narrative that supports existing power structures. However, this homogenizing force constantly clashes with the diverse, lived realities of social space. Social space encompasses the myriad ways people actually use, interpret, and transform their environments, often in ways that deviate from or resist official designations. The kind of resistance to the dominant political space I want to show requires an extension of Lefebvre's theory to include colonial relations and how the state organizes settler colonial spaces.

The state's organization of settler colonial spaces often involves strategies of displacement, containment, and assimilation of Indigenous peoples. These strategies aim to reshape the landscape according to settler norms and economic interests. However, this process is never complete or uncontested. Indigenous communities continually resist, adapt, and reclaim spaces, creating a dynamic tension between the state's homogenizing efforts and the heterogeneous realities of Indigenous spatial practices.

Through these examples and theoretical frameworks, I argue that while dominant forces attempt to homogenize and control social spaces, the inherent diversity and resistance within these spaces ensure an ongoing struggle and potential for change.

My next chapter looks at how Lefebvre understands colonialism. I then expand on Lefebvre's understanding of colonialism by using Coulthard's 'colonial relations' to help me develop my argument that the state organizes spaces using frontier logic that utilizes a waste-civilized binary.

Chapter 2: Lefebvre's Limited Understanding of Colonialism

Building on the theoretical foundation established in Chapter 1, which explored the co-constitutive nature of social spaces and relations through Lefebvre's spatial framework, I now address the limitations of Lefebvre's understanding of colonialism, particularly in accounting for settler colonial dynamics.

To address this gap, I integrate Glen Coulthard's concept of "colonial relations" into my analysis. This integration allows for a more nuanced and comprehensive framework that better captures the complexities of settler colonialism. By combining Lefebvre's spatial theory with Coulthard's insights, I create a more robust analytical tool for examining the spatial aspects of colonial power.

The chapter unfolds in four key sections, each designed to propel my argument forward. The first section critically evaluates Lefebvre's perspective on colonialism, highlighting its shortcomings and demonstrating how Coulthard's "colonial relations" concept enhances our understanding of settler colonial dynamics. The subsequent three sections focus on specific tenets of spatial theory that I argue are most applicable to analyzing settler colonialism and illuminating the state's organization of space.

The first tenet I explore is the production of abstract spaces through state-bound strategies. I contend that Lefebvre's theory of abstract space production can be effectively applied to settler colonialism. Specifically, I argue that the organization of colonial spaces generates abstract spaces perpetuated through colonial relations.

The second tenet I examine is frontier logic, which I call the civilized/waste binary. I assert that the Canadian state actively uses this logic to categorize spaces as "wasteful" or

"civilized." This binary, deeply rooted in settler colonialism, organizes spaces, bodies, and commodities into a hierarchy of "civilized" (valuable) and "wasteful" (Barker, 2021).

Consequently, it spatially reproduces colonial relations of domination across settler-occupied lands. The settler colonial imaginary transforms liminal spaces between the "frontier" and "civil society" into tangible settler spaces, effectively erasing Indigenous histories and presences (Barker, 2021, p.47; Edmonds & Nettleback, 2010; Rose & Davis, 2006). Moreover, this colonial conceptualization directly contributes to the dispossession and racialization of Indigenous territories and bodies.

In the final section, I introduce the concepts of lived experiences and contradictory spaces. Here, I focus on the experiences of racialized individuals such as Chinese, Hawaiian, and Black labourers, whose presence challenges the homogeneous binary of settlers/non-settlers and Indigenous/White that the settler project attempts to construct. Their contradictory existence in spaces deemed "wastelands" by the Canadian state undermines the simplistic categorization of land and people as valuable or wasteful.

I argue that by examining these lived experiences alongside the state's organization of spaces, we can better understand how the spatial strategies of the settler colonial project, such as the civilized-waste binary and frontier logic, reinforce hierarchies and power dynamics. Simultaneously, we can observe how these strategies are challenged and subverted by the complex realities on the ground. Interestingly, Lefebvre's work on colonialism and imperialism, though limited, provides valuable insights that support my arguments.

Through this structured approach, I aim to demonstrate how spatial theory can illuminate the complexities of settler colonialism and the ongoing contestation of space in colonial contexts.

Lefebvre's Understanding of Colonialism

I argue that Lefebvre's conceptualization of colonialism evolves throughout his work, offering valuable insights and revealing significant limitations. His definition of colonialism as a "particular, state-bound strategy of producing abstract space: territorial relations between dominant and dominated social spaces" (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2013, pp. 103-4) is particularly useful for my analysis. This perspective avoids the pitfall of "deterritorializing" colonialism, recognizing that it is inherently tied to land and territory (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2013, pp. 103-4).

I contend that Lefebvre's emphasis on the territorial dimensions of colonialism aligns well with the study of settler colonialism. His focus on spatio-temporal social relations resonates with my understanding of how settler colonialism is deeply intertwined with the relationships between land, Indigenous peoples, and the more-than-human world. In other words, settler colonialism builds colonial relations spatially. This approach echoes Patrick Wolfe's work, which emphasizes the territorial and structural nature of settler colonialism.

Lefebvre's conceptualization of colonialism, while insightful, falls short in addressing the diverse forms of colonialism and the varied lived experiences of colonized peoples. I argue that his framework overgeneralizes individual experiences and fails to capture the nuanced realities and resistance strategies employed by different groups, particularly racialized and Indigenous individuals.

A clear example of this limitation appears in Lefebvre's analysis of French colonialism in Algeria. He overlooks the active resistance and challenges posed by colonized groups against colonial domination (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2013). This oversight contradicts Said's (1993)

crucial observation that the most productive forms of resistance and opposition to colonialism often emerge from the peripheries - those spaces most heavily impacted by colonial strategies (p.239).

I contend that Lefebvre's limited grasp of colonialism stems from his failure to apply his critique of the everyday to the specific contexts and experiences of colonized peoples. As a result, his analysis of social relations lacks critical gendered, racialized, and Indigenous dimensions. This omission is significant because it leaves out crucial perspectives necessary for a comprehensive understanding of colonial spaces and relations.

By not fully engaging with these aspects, Lefebvre's framework misses the opportunity to explore how different forms of oppression intersect and manifest in colonial contexts. For instance, it fails to address how Indigenous women might experience and resist colonialism differently from Indigenous men or non-Indigenous colonized groups. This oversight limits our ability to understand the complex power dynamics at play in colonial spaces.

Addressing these limitations is crucial for developing a more robust theoretical framework. By incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences, we can better analyze how colonial power operates across different contexts and how various groups resist and challenge this power. This expanded approach would allow for a more nuanced understanding of the production of space in colonial settings, revealing the intricate interplay between spatial arrangements and social relations shaped by race, gender, and indigeneity.

Lefebvre's spatial theory, despite its limitations, offers crucial insights into the spatial dynamics of settler colonial projects. His concept of the production of abstract space illuminates how settler states impose standardized, measurable, and commodifiable spatial arrangements on

Indigenous territories. This process often erases or obscures pre-existing Indigenous spatial relationships and knowledge systems.

Furthermore, Lefebvre's emphasis on colonialism's territorial nature helps us understand the material and symbolic strategies settler states employ to assert control over land. These strategies may include mapping, surveying, and the imposition of property regimes that conflict with Indigenous land-use practices.

By integrating Lefebvre's framework with more recent scholarship on settler colonialism, we can develop a more comprehensive analysis. This approach allows us to examine how settler colonial spaces are not only produced but also contested and reimagined. It enables us to consider the ongoing processes of spatial production and resistance rather than viewing colonial spaces as fixed or complete.

Ultimately, building on Lefebvre's work while addressing its shortcomings creates a more nuanced and inclusive analytical framework. This enhanced perspective can better capture the complexities of settler colonial spaces and relations, including Indigenous resistance and alternative spatial practices.

Coulthard's Colonial Relations

I argue that analyzing settler colonialism as a **distinct** form of colonialism is crucial, as scholars like Barker (2021), Bruyneel (2007), and Byrd and Rothberg (2011) have emphasized. These scholars highlight how settler colonial ideologies, narratives, and histories structure the spatialities of settler colonizers and Indigenous and other non-settler populations (Barker, 2021, p.12). Building on their work, I contend that examining the material structures and spatial

organization by the state at the micro-level offers a compelling method to analyze the reproduction of settler colonialism spatially.

The concept of "colonial relations," as developed by Coulthard, is central to my argument. I follow Coulthard's (2014) assertion that colonialism, like capital, is not "a thing," but rather "the sum effect of the diversity of interlocking oppressive social relations that constitute it" (p.15). This perspective underscores the multifaceted and complex interconnections that make up colonial relations. Given my earlier claim that social relations and spaces are co-constitutive, I argue that colonial spaces also embody this multiplicity and interlocking relationships between capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and racialization.

Coulthard (2014) argues that in the Canadian context, colonial power relations are now primarily reproduced through "the asymmetrical exchange of mediated forms of state recognition and accommodation" rather than coercive means (p.15). This shift aligns closely with Lefebvre's concept of abstract space. Abstract space, as Lefebvre (1991) conceptualizes it, homogenizes and fragments lived experiences (p.282). By employing Lefebvre's notions of the everyday and abstract space, I claim we can analyze the state's various spatial strategies to organize spaces in ways that reproduce colonial relations.

By applying Lefebvre's notions of the everyday and abstract space to Coulthard's insights in the above paragraph we can uncover the subtle spatial strategies employed by the state to organize and manage spaces and relations in ways that perpetuate colonial relations. These strategies manifest in the everyday practices and experiences of Indigenous peoples, where seemingly neutral or benevolent state policies actually serve to reinforce colonial power dynamics.

For example, the organization of designated Indigenous spaces within cities acts on multiple fronts, one of which can be seen as an attempt to incorporate Indigenous peoples into the abstract space of the state. While ostensibly offering recognition, these spatial organizations can serve to fragment Indigenous territories and experiences, fitting them into a homogenized framework of state governance (Coulthard, 2014). This process of spatial organization aligns with Lefebvre's description of how abstract space operates to maintain domination over space.

The state's spatial strategies, viewed through this lens, reveals how land use policies, urban planning and development, and recognition practices can serve to reproduce colonial relations and the everyday. For instance, recognizing the cultural rights of Indigenous peoples rather than Indigenous sovereignty and land claims allows for the state to categorize its relationship with Indigenous peoples on uneven ground (Coulthard, 2014). Spatially this can look like selective inclusion of Indigenous presence in urban settings - important cultural signifiers of Indigenous historical presence like the artifacts in the Royal BC Museum are disconnected from the present land claims and sovereignty of the Lekwungen nations.

Coulthard's conceptualization of colonial relations allows us to move beyond Lefebvre's generalized critique. It enables us to delve into the nuanced ways colonial power manifests in the everyday lives of racialized and Indigenous individuals. This approach highlights how the spatial organization of the settler colonial project reproduces domination and dispossession, shaping the lived experiences of those subjected to its logic, even in the absence of overt coercion (Davies, 2016, p.33).

By examining the everyday through the lens of these ongoing colonial relations, I assert that we can develop a more comprehensive analysis. This analysis accounts for the localized spatial strategies employed by the settler colonial project that categorize spaces, bodies, and

commodities as valuable (civilized) or wasteful (Rose & Davis, 2006). Through this approach, we can better understand how settler colonialism operates spatially and continues shaping social relations and lived experiences in contemporary contexts.

Frontier Logic and the Categorization of Space

I argue that frontier logic is crucial in how colonial powers categorize and organize space. This logic, deeply rooted in settler colonialism, employs a civilized-waste binary that shapes spaces, relationships, and narratives. Colonialism penetrates spaces by introducing and reproducing capitalist and colonial relations of production, dividing territories into bounded, quantifiable spaces that serve as sites of exclusion and inclusion (Rose & Davis, 2006).

As I use it, the concept of frontier logic explains how colonial relations and spaces are divided into relations of center and periphery. Frontier spaces necessitate particular social relations to labour over the land and prepare it for colonial structures. I assert that these spaces become sites of excess production and, consequently, spaces of waste. This aligns with Tully's (1994) interpretation of Locke's argument that Indigenous peoples' lack of property and money results in a perceived absence of desire to "possess more than one needs" (p. 152).

I argue that the Canadian state and the British Empire organize spaces through this civilized-waste binary logic. This process often displaces Indigenous histories and places, relegating them to the distant past (Edmonds and Nettelback 2010). However, while state strategies of spatial organization use frontier logic to create spaces of civility and waste, these strategies are not uncontested, nor do they follow a linear path toward a completed colonial project (Rose & Davis, 2006), an idea I return to in the next section.

Charles Mills' work provides crucial insights into the connection between waste production and the racialization of individuals. Mills (2001) argues that the long-standing association of Black bodies with pollution, menial labor, and slavery has profoundly influenced the organization of social spaces and relations (p.78). This racialized spatial logic extends beyond Black bodies to include Indigenous peoples as well.

Building on Mills' argument, I contend that colonial relations are constructed from a similar perspective that views Indigenous bodies as existing outside the realm of civility. This perception has led to the creation of spaces that reinforce racial hierarchies and perpetuate colonial power dynamics. For instance, the establishment of reservations and the forced relocation of Indigenous communities reflect this spatial segregation based on racialized notions of civilization and progress.

Frontier logic attempts to organize spaces through more subtle practices in urban settings. In cities, this racialized spatial organization often manifests as attempts to "hide" the "unsavoury" aspects of urban Indigenous populations. The process of restructuring and gentrifying existing social spaces leads to the exclusion and concealment of racialized peoples and their spaces. This restructuring can take various forms, such as whitewashing histories, renaming locations, dredging, and building over existing spaces. These actions serve to erase or obscure the presence and histories of Indigenous and other racialized communities. In my later analysis of the Empress, I look at how waste is concealed in the construction of the hotel to build up a "civilized" image of Victoria.

In this analysis, I examine waste in three interconnected senses, each revealing different aspects of colonial spatial organization. The first sense is waste in the sense of materials or byproducts that are produced by industry and human labour, this includes pollutants, excretion,

sawdust from cutting wood, among others. These physical manifestations of waste are often hidden or displaced, reflecting power dynamics in spatial organization.

The second is waste as a colonial strategy of categorizing undeveloped or underdeveloped land. I argue that this designation of “waste” is a tool used by the colonial project to justify land appropriation and exploitation, thus producing colonial relations through the organization of spaces. The example of India’s wasteland rules in the 1800s, which I examine in a later chapter, illustrates how this conceptual framing enables colonial expansion.

The third sense is that of social waste, which refers to the marginalization and displacement of communities deemed undesirable or unproductive within colonial frameworks. This form of “waste” is often a byproduct of spatial reorganization driven by colonial relations. Waste in capitalist societies is significantly associated with value. I agree with Dillon's (2014) interpretation of Gidwani and Reddy's (2011) work, which posits that "waste is the limit of civil society and the ever-shifting frontier of surplus value production" (p. 1208). From this perspective, undeveloped land is considered unproductive and wasteful, requiring transformation into a valuable form.

The kinds of waste produced by the production of colonial spaces are connected to the particular social relations of production. In the late 1800s, the social relations of production were leading toward a capitalistic society. Waste is an interesting aspect of production that represents what kind of social relations and social spaces exist. For the most part, waste is seen as something that is hidden from public view, a silent part of society (Hird, 2017). I claim that the silence of waste is most important because, in its silence, waste becomes depoliticized. In other words, when waste is pushed to the peripheries and hidden away from “civilized” spaces, it allows for waste to be seen as separate from civility. Yet, as I have argued previously, waste and

civility are both a feature of capitalist and colonial organizations of space and cannot be separated from one another.

Determining what constitutes "civil society" and "waste" stems from colonial relations of domination – the domination of social spaces and the transformation of their economic, political, and social ties. This capitalist and colonial conceptualization of land as either wasteful or valuable is intrinsically tied to the dispossession and racialization of Indigenous land and bodies (Gidwani and Reddy 2011; Tully 1999; Coulthard 2014). I further add that the organization of colonial and capitalist spaces conceals waste, thereby aiding in the reproduction of colonialism. Through the social relations of production, there is a literal production of waste and a disruption of the interrelations and social productions. To illustrate this concept, I point to the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) as a frontier-space-making tool in Canada. The CPR's westward expansion from Eastern Canada created surrounding communities, trade, labour, and settlement networks that connected the center (Toronto, Ottawa) to the peripheries (Alberta, British Columbia). Areas further separated from the CPR were regarded as "wild" places (Barker, 2021). These spaces were considered wasted in their natural state yet held the potential to be incorporated into the growing Canadian state (Barker, 2021). This is the critical point I want to make. It is a colonial logic that utilizes these categories to organize spaces (Barker, 2021, p. 138).

Alongside waste and civilized spaces there is an abstraction of space that comes through the state determination of what is considered civilized (valuable) and what is waste. Despite the diverse lived experiences and interactions of various groups within these spaces - including Indigenous peoples, settlers, Black Canadians, Chinese immigrants, Ukrainians, and others - the state's determination of what was "civilized" (valuable) and what was "waste" flattened this

diversity into simplified categories. This abstraction of space through categorization ignores the nuanced realities on the ground, reducing complex landscapes and communities to binary classifications that served the interests of colonial expansion.

However, to maintain these constructed categories, I claim that in the organization of dominant spaces, waste must be hidden away so that the civilized may take centre stage. To unpack these ideas further, I'll explain how the organization of dominant spaces relies on concealing waste to maintain the illusion of civility. This process of hiding waste extends beyond physical refuse to include the concealment of colonial relations themselves. In the construction of "civilized" spaces, waste - both literal and constructed- is deliberately pushed to the margins or hidden. This spatial arrangement serves a dual purpose: it maintains the appearance of order and cleanliness in central, visible areas while simultaneously obscuring the less desirable aspects of society. The "bad" parts of town, areas plagued by pollution, or neighbourhoods experiencing higher rates of violence are often relegated to the peripheries, effectively removed from the narrative of civilized space.

However, this spatial segregation is not a natural occurrence but a deliberate strategy of colonial domination, and specifically state strategies of organizing relationships. By pushing waste and "undesirable" elements to the margins, colonial powers create a false dichotomy between "civilized" and "waste" spaces. This dichotomy serves to justify the continued domination and exploitation of Indigenous lands and peoples.

In hiding away waste, colonial relations are also hidden away under the veneer of civility. In other words, in concealing waste, we create an illusion of order and cleanliness and the social relations that are seen as acceptable within dominant spaces become normalized.

Yet, those same spaces of waste emerge from the domination of social relations and spaces, specifically Indigenous spaces and relations. Crucially, these spaces of waste are not separate from but rather a direct product of this domination.

The very act of creating "civilized" spaces necessitates the production of "waste" spaces. For example, the industrial areas that support urban centers often become sites of pollution and environmental degradation (Dillon, 2014; Mills, 2001). Similarly, the displacement of Indigenous communities from their traditional lands creates areas of social and economic marginalization.

The act of hiding waste serves a dual purpose: it not only removes unsightly refuse from view but also obscures the colonial relations that underpin our society. When we conceal waste, we create an illusion of cleanliness and order, a veneer of civility that masks the underlying power dynamics at play.

This process of hiding waste doesn't eliminate the problem; it merely relocates it. The spaces where waste accumulates are often the result of long-standing patterns of social and spatial domination. These waste spaces don't emerge randomly but are deliberately created through the exploitation of marginalized communities and territories.

In particular, this domination often targets Indigenous spaces and relations. The disposal of waste on Indigenous lands or in areas predominantly inhabited by Indigenous peoples is a continuation of colonial practices. It reflects a persistent disregard for Indigenous sovereignty and environmental stewardship.

In this way, the hidden spaces of waste emerge as a direct consequence of colonial relations and the imposition of Western notions of civility and progress. The peripheries, far from being incidental, are integral to the functioning of the colonial system. They absorb the

negative consequences of "civilization" while allowing the centers of power to maintain their illusion of order and prosperity.

Lived Experiences and Contradictory Spaces

There is a critical distinction that exists between state influence over social relations and spaces and the actual lived experiences within those spaces. The state's attempts to organize and control spaces are continually contested by the individuals who inhabit them. This contestation is particularly evident when we consider the broad category of "Indigenous," which encompasses diverse groups with unique social relations and spatial practices.

Building on Lefebvre's (1991) observation that individuals are active participants in social spaces, I contend that the lived experiences of settlers and Indigenous people in state-constructed peripheries like frontiers are complex and transformative. This complexity directly challenges the notion of frontier logic as a completed, uncontested project. For instance, Indigenous marriages to settlers and the emergence of the Métis reveal intricacies that contradict simplistic narratives of a completed colonial project (Rose & Davis, 2006).

Moreover, I assert that the lived experiences of racialized individuals, such as Chinese, Hawaiian, and Black labourers, further challenge the homogeneous binary of settlers/non-settlers and Indigenous/White that the settler colonial imaginary seeks to construct. Their presence in spaces designated as "frontiers" or "wastelands" by the Canadian state exposes these spaces' contradictory and heterogeneous nature, undermining simplistic categorizations of value and waste (Barker, 2021).

While Launius and Boyce (2021) rightly observe colonialism's profound impact on colonized peoples' culture, identity, and spatial relations, I argue that this imposed framework is

not absolute. It is constantly challenged by lived experiences, as evidenced by ongoing resistance and adaptation.

In this context, I draw on Leanne Simpson's (2017) work on generative resurgence, which offers an alternative to state recognition within Indigenous communities. Namely, generative resurgence refers to the multi-varied ways Indigenous resistance looks. Knowledge keepers, elders, traditional ways of being, Indigenous law and politics are all contributing forces in resistance to domination and oppression. Simpson's connections with Nishnaabeg Elders of Long Lake #58 exemplify refusal and generation rooted in social relations rather than state structures. This approach aligns with my use of the term "everyday," which I employ in line with Lefebvre's understanding but extends to encompass Simpson's more relational sense tied to lived experiences and connections to the land.

Lefebvre's (1991) concept of abstract space is crucial to my argument. While abstract space strives for homogeneity, I contend that in colonial contexts, it replicates social relations that maintain colonial domination over spaces and time. However, Simpson's (2017) work offers a powerful reimagining of everyday life outside colonial and capitalist spatial organization, aligning with Lefebvre's notion of contradictory spaces as sites of resistance and refusal.

To illustrate this point, we can look at specific instances of Indigenous resistance to colonial spatial organization. For example, the Idle No More movement in Canada demonstrates how Indigenous peoples have leveraged their lived experiences to challenge and reimagine spaces imposed by the colonial state (Coulthard, 2014, p. 160). The Idle No More movement was inspired by the December 12, 2012, passing of Bill C-45, which threatened Indigenous treaty and land rights, granting the Canadian state further ability to access Indigenous reserve land for economic development (Coulthard, 2014, p.160). While Coulthard's work presents a detailed

analysis of the Idle No More movement, I want to emphasize the movement's disruption of the everyday. Specifically, I argue that the resurgence of Indigenous social spaces and relations opposes the Canadian states' organization of relationships and spaces.

Idle No More's tactics went beyond conventional protests. The movement leveraged social media to rapidly mobilize supporters, share information and organize blockades (Coulthard, 2014, pp.160-162). These strategies helped Idle No More build a broad coalition of support that extended internationally.

Through these actions, Idle No More contested the spatial and social organization imposed by the Canadian state. The movement reasserted Indigenous ways of relating to land and community, challenging capitalist notions of property and resource extraction (Coulthard, 2014). By occupying public spaces with Indigenous cultural practices, Idle No More demonstrated that Indigenous peoples and worldviews persist despite centuries of attempted erasure and assimilation.

Ultimately, Idle No More represents more than opposition to a single piece of legislation. It embodies an ongoing struggle to redefine the relationship between Indigenous nations and the Canadian state on more equitable terms.

In conclusion, while colonial relations may be abstract in Lefebvre's sense, the lived dimension consistently opposes this homogeneity. This tension between abstract space and lived experience creates contradictory spaces that challenge and reshape colonial spatial organization, offering possibilities for alternative ways of understanding and inhabiting space.

So far, I have expanded on Lefebvre's spatial contribution by incorporating Coulthard's colonial relations. In doing so, I have provided three ways in which colonial relations are reproduced. The first is through state strategies of projecting sovereignty, second is frontier logic

and the civilized/waste binary, and finally, the reproduction of the everyday practices of colonial exploitation. The following two chapters engage with these three features through three different ways to show how the Empress Hotel is an instrument of colonialism: location, architecture, and colonial artifacts and practices.

Chapter 3: The Empress Hotel: Its Location and Architecture

In this chapter, I contend that the Empress Hotel's location and architecture are deeply embedded in colonial power dynamics, reproducing colonial relations. By applying a Lefebvrian lens, I analyze how the hotel's strategic positioning in Victoria's landscape symbolizes the transition from fort to capital, consolidating colonial authority over the land and its Indigenous inhabitants. This chapter demonstrates that the Empress Hotel is far from an apolitical space; its architecture and location are intentionally designed to legitimize British imperial and later Canadian state sovereignty, thereby reproducing colonial relations spatially.

I explore how the hotel's opulent design, reminiscent of European architectural styles, signifies colonial prestige while reinforcing class and race hierarchies within its spatial layout. By interrogating these spatial practices, I argue that colonial infrastructures like the Empress Hotel serve as sites of both perpetuation and contestation of colonial relations. Indigenous resistance and resurgence challenge the hotel's role in reinforcing colonial power. For instance, the toppling of the Captain Cook statue in front of the Empress and the placement of the spindle whorl to reaffirm Lekwungen connection to the land are acts of resistance that contest the abstraction of the Empress as an apolitical space (City of Victoria, n.d.; Renaerts, 2020).

I organize this chapter into two main sections: location and architecture. Within each section, I incorporate the three tenets introduced in Chapter 2: colonial relations and state-bound strategies of producing abstract space, frontier logic, and lived experiences and contradictory spaces. This structure allows me to systematically explore how the Empress Hotel embodies and reinforces colonial power dynamics while also serving as a site of Indigenous resistance.

By examining the Empress Hotel through these lenses, I aim to show how colonial spatial practices are both maintained and contested. This contributes to the broader thesis argument that state organization of space reproduced colonial relations at the micro-level.

The Empress Hotel's Location as a Colonial Strategy

The Empress Hotel's location embodies colonial spatial organization strategies in Victoria, reflecting broader aims of control and economic exploitation. Its positioning reveals how colonial powers used space to assert and maintain dominance.

Victoria's establishment as British Columbia's capital in 1862 marked a turning point in colonial transformation. The city's aspiration to become the "City of Wealth" (British Columbia Board of Trade, 1901, p. 32) came at the direct expense of the Lekwungen people. Colonial authorities displaced Indigenous inhabitants from their ancestral lands, disrupting traditional socio-economic practices (City of Victoria, 2019, 1:24:50-1:28:30). This displacement was not incidental but integral to the colonial project of reimagining and repurposing space.

The colonial vision centred on an "ethic of improvement" that prioritized land exploitation for economic gain, dismissing alternative approaches as wasteful (Tully & Skinner, 1993, p. 163). This ethic justified the exploitation of natural resources, reinforcing colonial power dynamics and perpetuating socio-economic inequalities.

Constructed between 1904 and 1908, the Empress Hotel exemplifies this colonial agenda. Its strategic location as a "magnificent centerpiece" between the Parliament Buildings and the Post Office (Reksten, 1997, p.19) asserts colonial power and prestige in Victoria's heart. The hotel's construction atop traditional Lekwungen lands, burying oysters and clam beds, symbolizes the physical and cultural erasure of Indigenous presence. This act of burying

Indigenous food sources under a symbol of colonial luxury starkly illustrates the violence inherent in colonial spatial reorganization.

As Western Canada expanded rapidly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, urban planners conceived the Empress Hotel as a strategic move to cement Victoria's position as the provincial capital and secure its economic prosperity. The hotel's grand scale and luxurious amenities aimed to attract wealthy tourists and investors, further entrenching Victoria's role in the colonial economic system.

The provincial government's 1892 allocation of \$600,000 for new legislative buildings on James Bay's south side was a move to reorganize spaces in Victoria to spatially present Victoria as a Capital (Reksten, 1997, p.10). This fund for rebuilding key political buildings acted as a counter to Victoria's peripheral position within the British empire and the Dominion of Canada, addressing anxieties about the city's future stemming from the 1866 Act of Union (Reksten, 1997, p.6).

To that end, the Empress Hotel's location is critical to understanding how colonial powers used space to assert and maintain domination in Victoria. Specifically, its strategic positioning, construction process, and even its name worked in concert to reinforce colonial power structures spatially and reshape the urban landscape according to imperial visions of progress and civilization.

By examining the Empress Hotel's location through this lens, we gain crucial insights into how space functioned as an essential tool of colonial power. The hotel actively shaped and maintained colonial relations rather than serving as a mere backdrop to colonial history. This analysis reveals the material and symbolic dimensions of colonial spatial practices in Victoria, demonstrating how state organization of space reproduced colonial relations at the micro-level.

Victoria: The "Health and Pleasure Resort of Canada"

Victoria's portrayal as a timeless entity deeply connected to the British Empire is a deliberate construction reinforcing colonial power. Archie Bell's (1918) observation that "Victoria is Victorian chronologically as well as nominally" (p. 20) exposes how colonial authorities crafted the city's identity to suggest an unbroken connection to British history. This framing attempts to erase Indigenous histories, presenting Victoria's colonial establishment as the beginning of "real" history in the region.

The tourism industry plays a crucial role in perpetuating this colonial narrative, driven by state strategies of organizing spaces for commodity consumption. I contend that Victoria's transition from a gold rush town to a capital city led to its spatial reorganization with the explicit goal of becoming "the leading health and pleasure resort" (Reksten, 1997, p.10). By marketing Victoria as a slice of England in North America, colonial authorities offered visitors a sense of "homecoming" to an idealized British past. This strategy goes beyond creating a pleasant tourist experience; it normalizes Western modes of knowing and being in this space. Tourists are invited to participate in and validate the colonial project, potentially becoming permanent settlers and further entrenching colonial power.

Victoria's transformation into a "home away from home" for British subjects exemplifies Lefebvre's concept of abstract space in the context of settler colonialism. According to Lefebvre, abstract space is produced through the imposition of dominant ways of knowing, producing, and experiencing space and place. In Victoria, this manifested as the normalization of colonial spatial practices and representations, which simultaneously erased or obscured pre-existing Indigenous relationships to the land. In applying Lefebvre's theory of abstract space, we can understand how

the process of abstraction in Victoria was fundamentally tied to the oppressive structures of settler colonialism. The city became a space where British colonial norms and views of civility were reproduced and normalized, while Indigenous ways of relating to and understanding land and space were marginalized. This spatial transformation was not merely incidental, but a key mechanism through which colonial power was established and maintained.

Another element of abstract space that Lefebvre (1991) posits is that it can emerge from state strategies of organizing spaces in a homogenizing manner. I apply this concept to the Empress Hotel's location, across from the legislature and the steamship terminal at the harbour. This spatial arrangement shows Victoria as a cohesive and homogenous Canadian space. As tourists and dignitaries arrive via steamship, they encounter the legislative building (a symbol of political power) and the grandeur of the Empress Hotel (Reksten, 1997, p.11). This carefully orchestrated first impression reinforces the colonial narrative of Victoria as a British outpost and legitimate seat of power while the “unseemly” areas like the mudflats and Kanaka row have been buried or moved into the margins

The Empress Hotel's location is critical to colonial domination's spatial strategy. Its intentional placement on reclaimed land between key political buildings is not merely symbolic but material. Specifically, the Empress' location is a material manifestation of what Lefebvre (1991) terms as the consumption of space (p.352). As I previously discussed, the consumption of space is what Lefebvre (1991) refers to as an unproductive form of consumption (p.352). These are places of leisure and tourism where everyday life of work, grocery shopping, and school take a pause. Instead, tourists are led to consume the spaces that are organized for their leisure, thus separating them further from their labour and the labour of those who live in these spaces (Lefebvre, 1991, p.352).

This spatial arrangement actively produces and reproduces social relations of domination. The hotel's position reinforces colonial power structures materially (through its physical presence and use of space) and symbolically (through its representation of colonial luxury and authority).

Frontier Logic: Waste/Civility

The location of the Empress conceals the production of waste spaces. These spaces become peripheral and racialized or are hidden away (Dillon, 2013, p.1213). As Dillon (2013) argues, waste production needs to go somewhere, away from spaces that are perceived as valuable (p.1213). I claim that the removal of waste also includes the peripheralizing of racialized and Indigenous individuals.

The transformation of the James Bay mudflats into the site of the Empress Hotel vividly illustrates the waste/civility binary inherent in colonial spatial organization. This process vividly exemplifies Lefebvre's concept of the production of space and Coulthard's understanding of colonial relations. Initially deemed a 'waste' space, the mudflats were filled with industrial refuse from factories like Pendray's soap-making plant and stigmatized as a health hazard. Colonial authorities then reimagined the mudflats as a potential site of colonial 'civility', embodying their ideals of order and progress. The physical act of filling in the mudflats and constructing the Empress Hotel concealed the material waste and the social and economic 'waste' associated with marginalized communities like those of Kanaka Row. This spatial transformation thus operated on multiple levels, reshaping both the physical landscape and the social fabric of Victoria. It is in this sense that colonial power actively produced and reproduced colonial relations of domination through the manipulation of urban spaces.

Furthermore, the renaming of Kanaka Row to Humboldt Street and its partial destruction to make way for the hotel represents a broader colonial strategy of erasing Indigenous and non-white histories from the urban landscape. This act of spatial reorganization serves multiple purposes in reinforcing colonial power dynamics. By replacing the name Kanaka Row with Humboldt Street, colonial authorities effectively obscured the area's associations with Hawaiian, Chinese, and Indigenous peoples. The partial destruction of the area to make way for the hotel physically moved marginalized communities into peripheral areas, reinforcing social hierarchies and segregation. The construction of the Empress Hotel in place of existing communities and Indigenous connections to that space represents an attempt to impose colonial notions of civility and progress onto the urban fabric.

This spatial transformation created contradictory spaces where colonial ideals of civility clashed with the lived realities of displaced and marginalized communities, further reinforcing the colonial power dynamics embedded in Victoria's urban fabric. The juxtaposition of the luxurious Empress Hotel with the remnants of diverse, working-class neighbourhoods vividly illustrates the tensions between the people who lived and worked in and around the mudflats and the organization of space for the colonial project.

The kinds of waste produced by the production of colonial spaces are connected to the particular social relations of production. Waste is an interesting aspect of production that represents what kind of social relations and social spaces exist. For the most part, waste is seen as something hidden from public view, a silent part of society (Hird, 2017). I use the Pendray soap-making factory and other factories along the mudflats, linked with waste disposal and the people of Kanaka Row, to demonstrate how dominant spaces and relations conceal social spaces and social relations.

The James Bay mudflats in late 19th century Victoria embodied a complex notion of "waste" that extended beyond physical refuse. The area had become Victoria's de-facto city dump, accumulating personal trash and industrial waste (Reksten, 1997, p.11). The Pendray soap factory and other industries along Humboldt Street, formerly known as Kanaka Row, released harmful byproducts into the mudflats, including soap, paint, lye, and vinegar residues (Reksten, 1997, p.11). This physical waste created a tangible representation of the area as unclean and uncivilized in the colonial imagination.

However, "waste" in this context went beyond the physical realm. Colonial authorities also categorized the social and economic activities associated with the mudflats and Kanaka Row as "waste." The diverse inhabitants of Kanaka Row, including Indigenous Hawaiians, Chinese, and Japanese labourers, faced stigmatization. Their community was often portrayed as a site of "undesirable" activities such as prostitution and excessive drinking (Lutz et al., 2018, p.326). This social stigmatization played a crucial role in the waste/civility binary, providing colonial authorities with justification for the area's transformation.

The decision to fill the mudflats and construct the Empress Hotel marked a dramatic shift from "waste" to "civility" in the colonial spatial imagination. This transformation exemplifies Lefebvre's concept of the production of space and Coulthard's understanding of colonial relations. The City of Victoria voted to fill the mudflats, citing health concerns and expansion desires (Reksten, 1997, p.13). Dr. Fagan, the city's chief medical health officer, went so far as to frame opposition to the project as "a disgrace to the intelligence of the city" (Reksten, 1997, p.13).

A social erasure accompanied this physical transformation of the landscape. The partial destruction of Kanaka Row effectively erased a space of cultural diversity and working-class life,

replacing it with a monument to colonial luxury. The hotel's construction atop traditional Lekwungen lands, including oyster and clam beds, symbolically buried Indigenous food sources and lifeways beneath a symbol of colonial opulence. This act starkly illustrates the violence inherent in colonial spatial reorganization and how the waste/civility binary was used to justify the displacement and erasure of Indigenous peoples.

The colonial project of "civilizing" waste spaces extends to the linguistic concealment of place names associated with said spaces of waste. The renaming of Kanaka Row to Humboldt Street represents an attempt to rewrite the area's history. Colonial authorities further obscured the diverse communities that had lived and worked there by replacing a name associated with Hawaiian labourers with one that evoked European exploration.

This analysis demonstrates how colonial power operated through spatial reorganization, shaping Victoria's urban landscape in ways that continue to impact the city today. The waste/civility binary served as a powerful tool for colonial authorities to justify the displacement of Indigenous and racialized communities, the erasure of diverse histories, and the imposition of a colonial vision of urban space.

Contradictory Spaces at the Empress

The Empress Hotel, while designed as a symbol of colonial power and civility, paradoxically embodies what Lefebvre terms "contradictory space." This concept illuminates the tensions between the hotel's intended purpose and its lived reality.

On the one hand, the hotel stands as a monument to colonial authority, and its grand architecture and strategic location assert British imperial and later Canadian state sovereignty. The transformation of the James Bay mudflats into this luxurious space was meant to erase the

"waste" - both physical and social - associated with the area's industrial past and diverse, working-class communities.

However, this attempt to create a purely "civilized" space is inherently flawed. As Dillon (2013) argues, "waste production needs to go somewhere, away from spaces that are perceived as valuable" (p.1213). I extend this argument to include the peripheralization of racialized and Indigenous individuals who were displaced by the hotel's construction but whose labour was still required for its operation and maintenance.

In addition, the narrative of Victoria as a White settlement was not wholly accurate. Even the separation of Kanaka Row from the rest of "civilized" Victoria was not an accurate representation of the lived experiences of individuals. We can see this in Adelle Perry's work on gender and race in the making of British Columbia's history. Perry (2020) brings to our attention the intimate relationships between Hawaiian male labourers and Indigenous women (p.200). In many cases, these married families reside in Kanaka Row. The lived experiences of residents on Kanaka Row and around Victoria generally differed from the narrative of white "civil" Victoria (Lutz et al., 2008). This shows that there was never a complete erasure of the social relations and spaces of Indigenous or racialized individuals. Instead, Victoria's complex and diverse population, specifically the now Empress Hotel's location, represent how social relations and spaces are produced. This leads to my claim that the construction of the Empress was an attempt to homogenize Victoria through the displacement and concealment of new social spaces and relations.

Moreover, the grand Empress Hotel, intended to attract wealthy tourists and investors, starkly contrasts the diverse, working-class communities it displaced. This juxtaposition

contrasts with what Lefebvre would term a "contradictory space," where colonial ideals of civility clash with the lived realities of marginalized communities.

Despite its attempts to project a unified image of colonial civility, the Empress Hotel becomes a site where colonial relations' ongoing tensions and conflicts are made visible. It simultaneously represents colonial power and the persistent resistance to that power, embodying colonial spaces' complex and contradictory nature.

Architectural Grandeur of the Empress Hotel

In this next section, I argue that the Empress Hotel's architecture vividly embodies the civilized-waste binary central to frontier logic and settler colonialism. This binary shapes spaces, relationships, and narratives, thereby dividing territories into bounded, quantifiable spaces that serve as sites of exclusion and inclusion (Rose & Davis, 2006). The hotel's grand facade presents an image of civilization while concealing the waste and exploitation underpinning its existence.

Furthermore, I claim that the Empress Hotel's architecture serves as both a material and symbolic manifestation of the Canadian state's efforts to assert sovereignty and legitimize its colonial project. The monumentality and grandeur of the Baronial-Chateau-style, with its symbolic references to European architectural traditions, reinforces the narrative of a continuous colonial presence and the transplantation of British identity onto the American continent (Liscombe, 1993).

This architectural choice further legitimizes the Canadian state while erasing Indigenous relations to land. As Daum (2005) notes, capitals "serve as 'temporal hinge' in other words they mediate between the nation-state's past, present, and envisaged future" (p.19). I argue that the Baronial style of the Empress acts as such a temporal hinge, connecting Victoria's colonial past

with its envisioned future as a "civilized" space. This temporal hinge also extends to the broader Canadian state and its projected sovereignty by creating a web of colonial relations between the Empress and other Baronial-Chateau-style hotels across Canada.

Applying Lefebvre's spatial theory, we can see that the Empress Hotel's architecture is inseparable from the social relations it produces and reproduces. Its material reality and symbolic meaning are inextricably linked, shaping and being shaped by the colonial power dynamics it perpetuates. The hotel's architectural form is not merely a physical structure; it is a spatial manifestation of the Canadian state's colonial agenda, disrupting Indigenous relationships with the land and reinforcing the hierarchies and inequalities inherent in the settler-colonial project.

The Empress Hotel's architecture embodies the colonial ethos of improvement and progress, which sought to transform and dominate the landscape. This transformation was not just physical but also ideological, embedding colonial values and hierarchies into the very fabric of the city. The hotel's grand design and strategic location were instrumental in reshaping Victoria's identity, aligning it with the broader goals of the British empire and reinforcing the colonial narrative of civilization and progress.

The Architecture of Waste and Civility

In thinking through how waste and civility are represented and spatially produced through architecture, I argue that the Baronial-Chateau style acts as a material and monumental indicator of shifting sites from spaces of waste to spaces of civility. This grand structure serves as both a material and symbolic manifestation of the Canadian state's efforts to assert sovereignty and legitimize its colonial project. As I have argued previously, the civilized-waste binary, while operating at the state level, manifests and infiltrates individuals' and communities' daily lives.

The imposition of the Baronial-Chateau style onto Indigenous space shifts and transforms the social relations of those spaces.

I follow Minkenberg's (2014) argument that "public architecture, official buildings, and the urban design of official places can always be interpreted as ingredients of the establishment of political power" (p.3). In other words, architecture is the manifestation and organization of political space (Minkenberg, 2014, p.3). That being said, it is not only distinctly political buildings that manifest political space, but also buildings meant for leisure - the Empress Hotel exemplifies this.

The architecture of the Empress, like other Canadian Pacific Railway Hotels, reproduces colonial relations that project an image of civility and luxury. This architectural strategy is deeply political, elevating notions of civility through monumental design that emphasises the grandeur of dominated spaces. The Chateau-style employed in the Empress and many Canadian Pacific Railway Hotels emerged from Liscombe (1993) notes that the Chateau-style, used in the majority of Canadian Pacific Railway Hotels, emerged from Scottish and French influences and was particularly appealing to both politicians and architects in the late 1800s (p.130). Interestingly, the Chateau-style was seen as an architectural symbol of allyship between British and French settlers because of its blending of both Scottish and French styles (Liscombe, 1993, p.127). That said, by 1924, this particular style of architecture came to mean "Railway Hotel" and was seen as distinctly Canadian (Liscombe, 1993, p.129).

The architecture of the Empress Hotel serves as a material and spatial embodiment of colonial relations, imposing notions of "civility" onto spaces previously deemed as "waste." The hotel's monumental design, with its imposing presence and elaborate details, emphasizes the grandeur of dominated spaces, making a deeply political statement that elevates an image of

colonial civility. However, this architectural manifestation of civility paradoxically produces its own forms of waste, revealing the inherent contradictions in colonial spatial organization. The Empress' architecture attempts to conceal "waste," yet waste persists in subtle, often overlooked forms. A prime example is the invasive ivy species that once adorned the hotel's facade. Introduced by settlers to enhance the building's aesthetic appeal and its connection to Britain, this ivy ultimately caused severe structural damage, becoming a form of waste produced by the very attempt to project civility.

This ivy serves as a metaphor for the broader colonial project: introduced elements intended to reinforce colonial aesthetics and ideals often lead to unintended consequences that undermine the very structures they were meant to support. In a sense, the ivy acts as a non-human rejection of dominated space. Actively leading to the ruination of the Empress Hotel. The presence of this invasive species demonstrates that waste and civility are inextricably linked in colonial spaces and that colonial spaces produce their own waste separate from what colonial relations would deem as waste.

By examining these subtle manifestations of waste within spaces organized to epitomize civility, we can uncover the complex and often contradictory nature of colonial spatial relations.

Lived and Contradictory Spaces

The Lekwungen spindle whorl situated across from the Empress Hotel serves as a powerful manifestation of contradictory and lived spaces within Victoria's colonial spaces. This Indigenous artwork disrupts the seemingly homogenous colonial space and relations imposed by the Empress Hotel, legislature, and harbour. While the Empress Hotel, like other colonial edifices, projects an image of a completed and well-embedded colonial space, the spindle whorl

introduces a critical counterpoint, reminding residents and tourists of the Lekwungen relations to space that exist to this day.

The spindle whorl's presence is particularly significant given its location near Xwszyq'əm, or 'place-of-mud,' which refers to the mudflats that the construction of the Empress Hotel has buried over. The spindle whorl creates a juxtaposition between itself and the Empress, highlighting the tension between colonial spatial organization and Indigenous connections to the land that persist despite physical alterations of the landscape.

The spindle whorl embodies Leanne Simpson's (2017) concept of generative resurgence by serving as a daily reminder of Lekwungen people's enduring relations to the land. This artwork centers Lekwungen relations without necessarily centering colonialism. In other words, the purpose of the spindle whorl is not to remind passersby of colonialism but rather to reinforce **Lekwungen** relations to land which in turn **disrupts** passerby's passive experience of the space.

Using Simpson's concept of generative resurgence Indigenous relations and knowledge is the central lens through which we can look at structures like the spindle whorl. This is important as it pushes us away from understanding Indigenous forms of resistance through the lens of colonialism. This is important when considering Lefebvre's (1991) conceptualization of "lived space" - a space that resists the dominant spatial narratives and practices by experiencing and using a space in a contradictory way. The spindle whorl does this in a material and literal puncturing of downtown Victoria.

Although the Empress is a monumental building, the spindle whorl is also a magnified version of the tool used by Lekwungen women to spin wool and was a staple in Lekwungen familial relations (Songhees Nation, 2013, p. 110). The spindle whorl contradicts the

homogenizing effect of colonial spaces because it punctures the experience of downtown Victoria as a colonial space. It does this by reminding us that despite the concealment of the mudflats, this space is still Lekwungen, and further to that point, Lekwungen social relations are produced through their lived experiences of the space as it was and as it is now. Despite the dominating force of colonial space and the reproduction of colonial relations by the Empress Hotel there is ongoing resistance.

This contradictory space, where colonial grandeur meets Indigenous resistance, aligns with Simpson's (2017) emphasis on the persistence of Indigenous presence and agency. The spindle whorl becomes a site of contestation, compelling observers to engage with the multifaceted nature of the space on Lekwungen terms. In this way, the spindle whorl exemplifies Simpson's (2017) vision of Indigenous resurgence as a process of creating alternative futures through everyday acts of resistance and reconnection to land and culture. It stands as a powerful relational and spatial symbol of the Lekwungen people's ability to maintain and regenerate their relationship to place (Songhees Nation, 2013).

In addition, the spindle whorl is not only a reminder of Lekwungen relations to the mudflats, but it also acts as a way for new social spaces to be produced, challenging the homogenizing effects of colonial spatial organization. It does so by being in conversation with tourists and visitors and their own lived experiences of the spaces in downtown Victoria. In other words, how individuals relate or consider the story and purpose of their encounter with the spindle whorl adds another dimension to the disruption of dominated everyday life.

Chapter 4: The Empress Hotel: Its Internal Spaces

This chapter delves into the intricate web of colonial relations woven within the Empress Hotel's internal spatiality, focusing on the commodification and ritualization of space through the lens of afternoon tea. This quintessentially British tradition, deeply rooted in the complex history of tea production, serves as a microcosm of colonial exploitation and social stratification.

The Empress Hotel's association with the ritual of afternoon tea represents a spatial manifestation of colonial relations. Commodities like tea, produced under colonial domination, play a crucial role in reproducing these relations spatially. By tracing the spatial and relational history of tea production, particularly in colonial territories like India, the analysis illustrates how the growth of the tea industry facilitated mass consumption globally, reinforcing the conceptualization of Britishness and its association with a refined national identity.

While afternoon tea has evolved into a symbol of British sophistication, its origins are deeply rooted in the labour of racialized individuals and the complex colonial history of tea production. This section explores how the ritualization of afternoon tea at the Empress Hotel perpetuates frontier logic, asserting cultural superiority and concealing the politics of colonialism and the exploitation underlying its operations.

Despite modernization, the Empress Hotel continues perpetuating these colonial legacies through its afternoon tea tradition and luxurious aesthetic. However, this chapter also examines the lived experiences and contradictory spaces that challenge and subvert these colonial narratives, highlighting the resistance and resilience of marginalized communities in reclaiming their narratives and asserting their presence within these spaces.

Organized into three main sections based on the three tenets introduced in Chapter 2 – colonial relations and state-bound strategies of producing abstract space, frontier logic, and lived experiences and contradictory spaces – this chapter unravels the intricate threads that interweave the Empress Hotel's afternoon tea tradition with the broader colonial histories of exploitation and social stratification. By examining the spatial commodification and ritualization of this iconic British tradition, the chapter unveils the ongoing negotiation and contestation of colonial relations within the hotel's internal spatiality.

Internal Structures and Colonial Relations

The Empress Hotel's architectural design and spatial layout reflect colonial power dynamics, broader social hierarchies, and class distinctions. Internal structures of the Empress showcase spaces like the Palm Court, which was initially intended for afternoon tea gatherings and served as sites for the performance of social status and cultural identity. The ritual of afternoon tea, with its associations with British aristocracy and civility, reinforced colonial ideals of superiority and continuity across the empire. Similarly, the Grill Room, frequented by politicians and the press, functioned as a space for political networking and discourse, further entrenching existing power structures within colonial society. Before closing, the Bengal Lounge reminded guests of the British colonial holdings in India.

The physical materials used in constructing the Empress Hotel, sourced from various parts of the British Empire, symbolize the interconnectedness of colonial territories and the power of an empire that extends on several continents. Standing in for the British empire, the Empress Hotel brings together in the same space wood from Australia, bones from Saskatchewan Buffalo made into china, and tea produced from the plantations in Assam and Darjeeling

(Claxton, 1993). These elements embody the transplanting of British identity on the American continent, reinforcing the colonial structure of the hotel.

Internally, the Empress has modernized several aspects, which is evident in the revamped Lobby Lounge, which continues serving afternoon tea. The recent "glam" revival features contemporary design elements, such as grey upholstered sofas accented with vibrant pillows juxtaposed with traditional tea service. Pop-art renditions of Queen Victoria's portrait adorn the walls of the Q bar and restaurant, reinforcing imperialist imagery while obscuring the colonial politics embedded within the hotel's history.

Frontier Logic: Waste and Civility

I argue that the hotel's afternoon tea ritual exemplifies the waste/civility binary inherent in colonial spatial organization. Just as the James Bay mudflats were transformed from "waste" to a symbol of colonial civility, tea as a commodity underwent a similar transformation. Originally a product of exploited labour in places like Assam, tea became a symbol of British refinement and civilization within spaces like the Empress Hotel, further reproducing colonial "civilization" over the perceived "waste" of Indigenous cultures and ways of life.

The Palm Court, with its opulent decor and formal atmosphere, creates a curated abstract space where guests indulge in the rituals of British high society. This reinforces the hierarchical thinking that positions colonial culture as "civilized" and Indigenous practices as "uncivilized waste." Consuming delicate pastries and sipping tea from fine china, often sourced from colonized lands, symbolizes the colonial power to extract resources and labour from territories frequently viewed as "waste" to be exploited.

Moreover, the strict adherence to afternoon tea etiquette reinforces the colonial notion of "civilized" behaviour, implicitly devaluing Indigenous cultural practices as "uncivilized waste." This ritualized performance of colonial superiority within the Palm Court perpetuates the colonial mindset that justified the displacement and erasure of Indigenous peoples and their relationships with the land.

By examining the ritual of afternoon tea through this lens, I demonstrate how it reproduces colonial relations at the Empress Hotel. This analysis advances my argument by showing how the civilized-waste binary logic operates within internal spaces, perpetuating the hierarchies and inequalities inherent in the settler-colonial project.

To further illustrate this point, I explore tea as a commodity that links various global colonial relations. I argue that colonial governance and tea production formed a global British identity influenced by state policies. By investigating the complex colonial relations and spaces produced through the commodification of tea, I position the Empress Hotel as a product of colonial relational practices embedded within dominated social spaces through a "civilizing" logic.

The Empress Hotel's association with afternoon tea, marketed as a "quintessentially Victoria experience", exemplifies this embedding of colonial practices (Fairmont Empress, N/A, para.). Since 1908, over 400 guests per day in summer have participated in this ritual, experiencing a performance of British elegance that captures the reality and ideality of empire (Fairmont Empress, N/A). Thereby, colonial relations are reproduced indirectly and embed the ritual of afternoon tea as a normalized feature of tourist experiences.

While guests partake in afternoon tea as a social practice, they are shielded from the labour process and social relations that produce tea. This concealment of colonial relations

extends beyond the Empress Hotel, impacting global social spaces and relations. Disconnecting tea consumption from its social and productive meaning obscures the political nature of this ritual.

This analysis reveals tea's spatial and relational history, demonstrating how the seemingly innocuous ritual of afternoon tea at the Empress Hotel is deeply embedded in and reproduces colonial relations. By examining afternoon tea at the Empress Hotel, I advance my broader argument that state organization of space reproduces colonial relations at the micro-level while acknowledging the potential for resistance and alternative ways of understanding and inhabiting these spaces.

The Multi-Scalar Dimension of the Civilized/Waste Binary

In this section, I argue that tea serves as a powerful political tool in enforcing British civilizing logic, transforming social relations into exploitative and disruptive ones. The production and consumption of tea play a crucial role in forming and legitimizing a global British national identity while simultaneously reinforcing colonial power structures. The fact that the Empress serves its signature tea blend, which includes components from various British colonies (Assam, Kenya, Ceylon), further emphasizes its role in reproducing colonial relations (Fairmont Empress, N/A).

The transformation of tea from a product of exploited labour in places like Assam to a symbol of British refinement and civilization within the Empress Hotel mirrors the physical transformation of the James Bay mudflats. Just as the mudflats were converted from a "waste" space filled with industrial refuse and stigmatized as a health hazard into a site of colonial 'civility' (Reksten, 1997, p.11), tea underwent a similar conceptual transformation.

Building on Wolfe's (2006) concept of the logic of elimination, I propose a parallel "logic of civilization" that works alongside it. This civilizing logic embeds itself in pre-existing social spaces, reframing relations by universalizing particular ideologies, knowledge, and social practices. As Wolfe observes, the settler-colonial project does not always aim to eliminate Indigeneity but to transform it, "sometimes including those deemed 'civilized' while excluding the 'uncivilized'" (p. 388).

In the process of colonial and imperial expansion, Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies are supplanted by Western understandings of civilization, which view land primarily through productive and extractive relations. Tully (1994) articulates this process succinctly: "All available land becomes occupied and put to use," and the "underproduction" of land is transformed into an ethic of "industriousness" (p.156). This perspective justifies the destruction of established Indigenous socio-economic systems as an inevitable consequence of progress.

Tea, as a commodity produced through colonial domination and dispossession, serves as a powerful tool for creating and maintaining colonial relations and spaces. While Fromer (2008) describes tea's commodification as encapsulating the cyclical reproduction of colonized and colonizer relationships, I argue that tea goes further by actively shaping and transforming spatial relations on a global scale.

I emphasize two simultaneous spatial phenomena that tea, as a commodity, is a central part of. On the one hand, the space of consumption is the social space organized for the production of tea as a commodity (Assam, Darjeeling). On the other hand, the consumption of space is where tea, as a commodity, is consumed as a ritual (Empress Hotel).

The British colonial government's organization of tea production spaces in Assam and Darjeeling exemplifies this process. This reorganization violently disrupted and attempted to erase preexisting social relations, replacing them with a new colonial order. Simultaneously, tea evolved into a symbol of British sophistication, reinforcing power dynamics and colonial relations of domination. Tea's dual role—as both a product of colonial exploitation and a symbol of colonial refinement—demonstrates its significance in reproducing colonial relations spatially.

Furthermore, I argue that the Empress Hotel serves as a nexus of colonial power, embodying these global commodity chains that embed and reproduce colonial relations structurally and spatially. Its construction using materials from across the British Empire - Australian wood for the dining room, tea from Darjeeling and Assam - physically manifests the reach and power of the colonial project (Canadian Pacific Railway Company, 1908). Bell's (1918) description of Victoria as England "transplanted to the American continent" underscores my argument that these social spaces were deliberately crafted to reproduce and reinforce colonial relations (p. 15). To that end, I focus on the internal spaces of the Empress Hotel as a critical component of the spatial reproduction of colonial relations.

The hotel's internal spaces, particularly the former Bengal Lounge, further intensify these colonial connections. By decorating this space with Indian motifs and naming it after Queen Victoria, Empress of India, the hotel creates a microcosm of the British Empire. This spatial arrangement showcases the empire's power and global reach and normalizes colonial relations for its visitors.

The hotel's tea service presents tea as a refined, civilized practice, obscuring the exploitative conditions of its production. This abstraction is crucial to maintaining the spatial

division between leisure destinations like Victoria and production spaces like Assam, a key mechanism for reproducing colonial relations.

Imperial Tea and Women

Tea emerged as a powerful civilizing tool within the British Empire, actively reshaping social spaces and cultural norms. Wealthy elite women spearheaded temperance societies, which played a crucial role in associating tea with British civility (Rappaport, 2017, p.167). These societies strategically produced social spaces aimed at encouraging sobriety among men, effectively altering public behaviour (Rappaport, 2017, p.167). In so doing, these women were a part of the production of new social relations and spaces, ones that reinforced and embedded colonialism.

The 1870s in Glasgow witnessed the establishment of the first temperance society, which maintained strong ties to Assam's planting and business communities (Rappaport, 2017, p.167). Temperance societies appeared in colonial spaces globally as political groups who advocated for a prohibition on alcohol, deeming alcohol to be a contributing factor to the ills of society (Rappaport, 2017, p.167). This connection highlights the intricate relationship between colonial tea production and domestic social reform movements. These societies gained fame for their tea shops and caterers, with the Cranstons standing out as renowned hoteliers and caterers famous for their tea rooms (Rappaport, 2017, p.167).

This phenomenon demonstrates a clear link between tea as a "civilizing" tool and the internal restructuring of social spaces, particularly hotels, to accommodate new tea rooms. These spaces actively produced social relations that reinforced and reimagined the ideal of a "civilized"

public within the British Empire. This transformation aligns with Lefebvre's concept of the production of space, where social practices and ideologies shape physical environments.

The gendered component of temperance societies and tea rooms offers a lens through which to examine how British "civility" was not only presented to the world but also how it maintained and developed businesses globally. Tea planters actively sought out wealthy women to establish tea rooms, recognizing their effectiveness in popularizing tea and tea shops among the social elite (Rappaport, 2017, p.169). This strategy effectively leveraged gender roles to promote colonial products and ideals.

I concur with Rappaport's (2017) conclusion that these tea shops functioned as "imperial institutions" where "businesswomen exploited the imperial project," thereby producing gendered social relations and spaces (p.169). Building on this, I argue that tea parlours, afternoon tea rituals, and temperance tea parties became spatial tools for embedding colonial relations through the notion of "civility." This process exemplifies Lefebvre's theory of how social practices and ideologies manifest in physical spaces, shaping both the built environment and social interactions within it.

To further my point, after the Empress Hotel was completed, there were many events and celebrations, some of which included the afternoon tea ritual, which by the 1870s and 80s became very popular across the British empire (Rappaport, 2017, pp.165-167). In 1908, at the completion of the hotel, the Palm Court played host to the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) (Reksten, 1997, p.42). This group was heavily involved in the support of the British empire and the "Canadianization" or assimilation of immigrants (Meister, 2006). The IODE was heavily involved in politics within predominantly female social spaces, and tea rooms were a popular choice for the IODE (Meister, 2006). The Lounge and Palm Court of the Empress

played host to many influential politicians and celebrities which helped embed an image of British elegance and civility into the internal spaces of the Empress.

The Empress's afternoon tea tradition aligns well with the temperance movement's goals, offering a sophisticated, alcohol-free social gathering space. This connection is further supported by the distinction between "high tea" and "afternoon tea". High tea refers to a similar event as afternoon tea but usually reserved for a later time in the day with light lunches and is also frequented by working class individuals. The Empress specifically offers afternoon tea, which was associated with upper-class leisure, as opposed to the working-class "high tea" (Rappaport, 2017; Fairmont Empress, N/A).

The hotel's tea service, with its use of fine china, silver teapots, and elegant settings, clearly aimed to create an atmosphere of British civility and refinement. This aligns with my argument that such spaces and rituals were used to solidify colonial presence and ideals.

“Civilizing” the Wasteland

The use of tea as a "civilizing" tool by missionaries in Africa and the military in India, as described by Rappaport (2017), further supports my argument about tea's role in colonial expansion. The practices of using tea parties for Christian evangelism or promoting sobriety were not just cultural exchanges but deliberate strategies of colonial domination. These activities simultaneously spread colonial ideologies while facilitating the exploitation and reformation of land to serve imperial needs. The colonization of Assam, marked by violence and population decimation, mirrors the commodification of land in Canada (Rappaport, 2017). This parallel demonstrates a consistent colonial strategy of reframing land as a commodity to be exploited for the global market. Despite its nominal non-intervention policy, the East India Company's

involvement in Assam's political instability reveals the complex mechanisms through which colonial powers manipulated local conditions to their advantage (McCabe, 2017).

The implementation of "wasteland rules" in Assam, granting land to Europeans and wealthy Indigenous elites, parallels the narrativization of Canadian land as requiring settlers' "improvement" (Rappaport, 2017). This similarity reveals a consistent colonial strategy of organizing spaces based on land as a commodity, reinforcing the waste/civility binary central to colonial logic.

As previously mentioned, while the civilized-waste binary operates at the state level, it manifests at the everyday social spaces and relations. This, in turn, reshapes spaces and interactions, perpetuating colonial relationships while driving capitalist profit. The growth of the tea industry in Assam and the global consumption it enabled demonstrate how colonial relations reshaped entire social, political, and economic structures (McCabe, 2017). This transformation allowed for the production of "civilized" leisure spaces like the Empress Hotel, where the afternoon tea tradition symbolizes a refined British style and reinforces a shared colonial identity. Colonial governance that established tea plantations in India fundamentally reorganized space and social relations, creating an abstract landscape of production separate from spaces of consumption like the Empress Hotel.

In conclusion, as both a commodity and cultural practice, tea played a crucial role in spatially reproducing colonial relations. From the tea plantations of Assam to the refined spaces of the Empress Hotel, tea connected and shaped colonial spaces, reinforcing power dynamics and cultural hierarchies on a global scale. The ritual of afternoon tea at the Empress Hotel thus becomes a microcosm of these complex global colonial relations, embodying the civilizing logic that transformed landscapes, economies, and societies across the British Empire.

Lived and Contradictory Spaces within the Empress

The Empress Hotel works to present the City of Victoria as a leisurely place for the wealthy, powerful elites to congregate. However, when we consider the colonial relations required to construct this monumental building, we unveil the domination and subjugation of individuals on a global scale.

Yet, the lived experiences within the Empress Hotel often diverge from its idealized representations. The hotel, marketed as a symbol of luxury and leisure, conceals the stark reality of the tea labourers toiling outside its walls. This stark contrast between the image projected to tourists and the experiences of those working to produce commodities consumed within the Empress serves as a stark revelation of the hidden complexities of representation and power within colonial spaces.

The Empress is a curated social space that reinforces colonial relations by offering guests a sanitized glimpse of luxury and elitism. It shields them from the realities of waste production and the complex web of social interactions beneath the surface. Despite these modernizations, the Empress Hotel remains a bastion of colonial aesthetics, inviting guests to indulge in the luxury of empire while glossing over its contentious past and enduring implications.

As mentioned previously, the Empress Hotel's interior spaces, like the former Bengal Lounge, function as microcosms of British imperial power. By decorating this space with Indian motifs and naming it after Queen Victoria, Empress of India, the hotel not only showcases the empire's power and global reach but also normalizes colonial relations for its visitors. This spatial arrangement is problematic as it perpetuates a romanticized and sanitized version of settler colonialism, obscuring the violent realities of imperial rule.

The Bengal Lounge serves as a tangible manifestation of Lefebvre's concept of abstract space. It functions as a homogenizing force as it presents the colonial history and experience of Victoria and its connection to the British empire under a singular imperial vision, while simultaneously fragmenting the lived experiences of colonized peoples. This creates a false separation between the violence of settler colonialism and the

Moreover, the internal spaces and colonial artifacts of the Empress aligns with Coulthard's analysis of how colonial power relations are reproduced through seemingly benign forms of recognition. In the case of the Empress, this recognition manifests through the presentation of colonial imagery as exotic décor, subtly reinforcing the unequal power dynamics embedded in colonial relationships. Visitors are invited to consume a sanitized version of imperial history, potentially normalizing colonial attitudes in their everyday experiences.

The recent modernization efforts, such as the 'glam' revival in the Lobby Lounge, present another layer of contradiction (Fairmont Empress, N/A). While attempting to update the hotel's image, these changes reinforce imperialist imagery through elements like pop-art renditions of Queen Victoria's portrait. This ongoing negotiation between contemporary design and colonial symbolism illustrates this space's tension between past and present.

That ongoing negotiation still reproduces colonial relations because it is still a colonial space. The consistent reinforcement of experiencing this space as luxurious and paying homage to imperial and colonial Britain points to the perpetuation of colonial relations – albeit distanced from the violence and displacement of Indigenous relations.

The 2017 renovation, which removed five suites to create an expansive Fairmont Gold Lounge, is a modern reimagining of colonial exclusivity. In other words, the Fairmont Gold is another feature of colonial relations and spaces, which create areas of inclusivity and exclusivity.

This new space, offering stunning harbour views and personalized service, creates a literal "hotel-within-a-hotel" experience that mirrors the hierarchical structures of colonial society (Wilson, 2017). The addition of the outdoor terrace with fire pits evokes a sense of "civilized" enjoyment of conquered landscapes, subtly reinforcing colonial narratives (Wilson, 2017). The renovation of the hotel's interior blends both contemporary and Victorian notions of "civility" and luxury.

While the Empress's renovations bring modern amenities to its interior, they spatially embed and reproduce colonial power structures. In a sense, the renovations extend the hotel's colonial spatiality. As it is brought further into modernity, however, it further conceals the violence of settler colonialism while simultaneously reproducing colonial relations through its glorification of an imperial "past." Wilson (2017) of the Times Colonist writes,

Paul Hawes, Tourism Victoria's chief marketing and distribution officer, said the Empress "has shaped our destination and Greater Victoria's history for more than 100 years. Today, the 'Return of the Queen' and its glorious renovation give tourists even more reason to visit our world-class destination." (para.24).

The Empress's internal renovations are a testament to the ongoing reproductions of colonial relations spatially. What is interesting is the blend of modernity with Victorian and imperial aesthetics, which is indicative of the embeddedness of colonial relations that persists.

In conclusion, the Empress Hotel reveals its lived and contradictory spaces primarily through its external features. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the hotel's location and architecture expose the contradictions inherent in abstract spaces. However, identifying contradictory spaces within the hotel proves more challenging due to its consistent references to empire and Canadian patriotism. The hotel presents a compelling juxtaposition between its continuous projection of luxury and the complex histories and ongoing struggles that shape its

existence. The hotel's numerous modernization efforts may appear as attempts to distance itself from colonialism. Alternatively, these renovations could be interpreted as efforts to sanitize the hotel experience for tourists, obscuring its colonial legacy. This tension between modernization and historical preservation highlights the hotel's role in reproducing colonial relations while simultaneously attempting to adapt to changing social norms and expectations.

Conclusion

Sitting in the Q Bar, I immerse myself in the colonial space I have spent months researching and analyzing. The harbour and boats stretch out before me while a modern portrait of Queen Victoria looms to my left. Intricately carved beams from Australian forests arch overhead, a tangible reminder of the far-reaching impact of colonialism and the reproduction of colonial relations in this space. I wonder if writing my conclusion here creates a counter-space within the Empress's dominating colonial atmosphere. I could not indulge in the afternoon tea at the Lobby Lounge, a ritual steeped in colonial nostalgia. Instead, I begin my conclusion at the Q Bar, physically placing myself in the space I have dissected over many pages. In doing so, I hope to confront how this space reproduces colonial relations more directly.

The Empress Hotel is a symbolic and material manifestation of colonialism, a part of the Canadian nation-building project that included the railway and settlement of the West thereby displacing Indigenous relations to land and the more-than-human. This thesis argues that the state organization of spaces reproduces colonial relations. I have focused on the Empress Hotel as a colonial structure that spatially and relationally embeds colonialism. I offer an analysis of three aspects of the organization of space involved in the hotel's building: its location, architecture, and colonial practices and artifacts. By unpacking the features of the Empress Hotel, we gain a better understanding of the profound effects of the historical colonial project and the Empress's role in it and its ongoing reproduction. I argue that understanding the spatial dimension of colonialism – how colonialism is built into social space – is crucial to understanding both aspects of colonialism.

Throughout this work, I have demonstrated my argument by first establishing the theoretical foundation of Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space in Chapter One. I showed how social relations and social spaces are co-constitutive, and that analyzing one requires analyzing the other. This framework allowed me to illustrate how power is reproduced spatially through social relations. Despite Lefebvre's limitations when examining colonialism, particularly settler colonialism, I still find his core emphasis on the production of space valuable. Particularly significant is his argument that power at the micro-level shapes our daily lives, which reflects power at the macro level. This perspective brings into focus how power is inextricably tied to space and social relations. By applying Lefebvre's theory to the context of colonial spaces, I have been able to uncover the subtle ways in which colonial power dynamics are embedded in and reproduced through spatial arrangements, even in seemingly benign or modernized settings like the Empress Hotel. In Chapter Two, I expanded Lefebvre's theory to examine colonial relations and spaces, incorporating Coulthard's concept of colonial relations. I identified three fundamental tenets: frontier logic, state-bound territorial relationships, and lived/contradictory spaces. I applied these tenets to analyze the production of frontier spaces, highlighting the contradictions between the material reality of these spaces and the binary narratives of civility and waste.

In Chapter Three, I examined the role of location and architecture in colonial space-making, focusing on the Empress Hotel in Victoria. I demonstrated how the hotel's construction and design perpetuate narratives of waste and civility and how its architecture connects to broader power structures and legitimation processes that displace and disrupt Indigenous social relations to land and space.

Finally, in Chapter Four, I analyzed the colonial artifacts and practices of the Empress Hotel, specifically the ritual of afternoon tea. I showed how this tradition contributes to the reproduction of colonial relations and spaces by disconnecting itself from the material production of tea as a commodity and the exploitative labour involved in organizing tea gardens in India. Through this analysis, I have reinforced my original argument that colonial relations are reproduced through spatial organization, but with an important nuance: while the Empress Hotel is a private enterprise, it operates within a framework shaped by state power and colonial history.

The Empress exemplifies the complex interplay between state power and private capital in perpetuating colonial relations. Although privately owned, the hotel's construction and operation have been deeply intertwined with government interests and policies. The Canadian Pacific Railway, which originally built the Empress, was itself a product of state-sponsored nation-building efforts. The hotel's strategic location on reclaimed land, its architectural style chosen to project Canadian sovereignty, and its role in hosting political events all demonstrate how private enterprises can serve as extensions of state power in colonial contexts. While this study is limited in its scope this interplay between state organization of space and capital enterprise points to a potential avenue for further research.

The broader implications of this study are threefold. First, by demonstrating how the Empress Hotel embodies and perpetuates colonial relations, I highlight the intricate ways in which colonial power dynamics are spatially reproduced through urban landscapes.

Second, this analysis reveals the waste/civility binary embedded in colonial spatial practices, shaping urban environments and social relations into deeply colonial ones. The transformation of the xws3-yq'əm (we-sei-kum) (James Bay mudflats) into the site of the

Empress Hotel imposes this binary, which is then reinforced through the hotel's experiences. This waste/civility binary operates as a powerful tool of colonial spatial organization, concealing physical waste and the complex social lives of marginalized communities.

While the waste/civility binary operates as a tool of colonial spatial organization at the state level, its manifestations and implications permeate individuals' and communities' everyday lived experiences and spaces. To fully understand the depth and breadth of colonial power dynamics, examining how these state-level spatial strategies and relations are reproduced and reinforced in the mundane, quotidian spaces and practices of everyday life is crucial. This micro-level analysis reveals how colonial ideologies are internalized, perpetuated, and sometimes resisted in daily interactions, rituals, and spatial practices.

My work, focusing on the Empress Hotel and afternoon tea rituals, demonstrates how seemingly innocuous social practices and spaces can be robust vectors for reproducing colonial relations. This approach illuminates the subtle yet pervasive ways in which colonial power dynamics shape institutional structures and the fabric of everyday life, from social interactions to the organization of urban spaces.

Third, my work underscores the importance of examining micro-level manifestations of colonial power to understand broader mechanisms of macro-level political domination. While scholars like Barker (2021), Bruyneel (2007), and Byrd and Rothberg (2011) have emphasized how settler colonial ideologies structure the spatialities of various Indigenous communities, they focus on the institutional and state level. I build on their work by examining how businesses, hotels, tourism, and other everyday non-state entities contribute to spatial structuring while also

being tied to state organizing of spaces. This approach addresses a gap in political science literature, which traditionally overlooks how power manifests in everyday colonial structures.

By integrating Lefebvre's theory with Coulthard's concept of colonial relations, I provide a helpful framework for analyzing settler colonialism and its spatial reproduction. This perspective offers new insights into the complexities of colonial power dynamics, demonstrating that examining material structures and spatial organization at the micro-level provides a compelling method to analyze the reproduction of settler colonialism spatially. This theoretical framework proves particularly illuminating when applied to the modernization of the Empress Hotel, where the tension between old colonial spaces and their contemporary reimagining becomes evident.

The modernization of the Empress Hotel, including the partial removal of overtly colonial spaces like the Bengal Lounge, presents a tension between old colonial spaces and their contemporary reimagining. This modernization process does not necessarily decolonize these spaces; instead, it often conceals colonial legacies beneath a veneer of contemporary capitalism.

The concealment of colonial histories in everyday spaces can lead to a false sense of progress, where we believe we have moved beyond colonialism simply by rebranding or removing prominent colonial symbols, thus (re)producing modern forms of colonial relations and spaces. The transformation from the Empress to the Fairmont brand, while removing explicit colonial artifacts, still perpetuates modern forms of colonialism through luxury tourism and exclusivity.

Take the Empress Hotel's continued practice of afternoon tea. On the Empress Hotel website, guests are invited to be treated like royalty by engaging in afternoon tea (Fairmont,

N/A). There are constant references at the hotel to the connection between afternoon tea and the British royal family. For instance, the china sets from different royal visits are sold in the shop next to the Lobby Lounge (Fairmont, N/A). These elements reproduce the colonial relations that have been ingrained in the Empress while further elevating the idea of what civility looks like. Exploring the historical roots of afternoon tea reveals the complexity of colonial relations produced. In the late 1800s, these social spaces were imbued with politics as they were some of the limited social spaces where women could participate in politics and colonial business. The history of tea as a commodity offers a nuanced picture of the colonial relations produced, but that history is often concealed and sanitized for modern tourists and guests. In other words, the abstraction of afternoon tea as a modern tourist practice conceals these complex social relations and normative structures. The tension between modernization and colonial legacy offers a rich area for future research. It highlights how the concealment of colonial histories in everyday spaces can lead to a false sense of progress, where we believe we have moved beyond colonialism simply by rebranding or removing obvious colonial symbols. These modernized spaces often continue to reproduce colonial power structures in more subtle, insidious ways.

While this thesis has focused on how the Empress Hotel reproduces colonial relations, it also reveals potential avenues to explore in future research on how counter-spaces act as forms of resistance and transformation. The spindle whorls in downtown Victoria serve as a powerful example of how Indigenous presence can puncture and disrupt colonial spaces, challenging the dominant colonial narrative and asserting Indigenous sovereignty and relationality to the land.

Future research could delve deeper into these forms of Indigenous resistance and refusal. Building on Launius and Boyce's (2021) observation of colonialism's deep influence on colonized peoples' culture, identity, and spatial relations and Leanne Simpson's (2017) work on

regenerative resurgence, this research demonstrates that while the colonial framework is pervasive, it is not immutable. The lived experiences of Indigenous and marginalized communities continually challenge and reshape these imposed structures through ongoing acts of resistance and refusal. Acts of resistance and refusal produce counter-spaces within the dominated colonial spaces. The tension between colonial imposition and Indigenous resilience is demonstrated in spaces like the Empress Hotel, where seemingly static colonial architecture and practices are subtly but persistently contested through lived experience and alternative narratives.

Furthermore, examining these forms of resistance could provide a more nuanced understanding of how colonial spaces are contested and negotiated daily. It can reveal the subtle, yet significant ways Indigenous peoples maintain their connections to land and community despite the pervasive nature of colonial structures.

Future research can contribute to a more holistic understanding of colonial space-making by focusing on these acts of resistance and resurgence. This approach acknowledges the persistence of colonial power and the enduring strength of Indigenous relations and practices. It aligns with the goal of critiquing colonial structures while highlighting pathways toward more just and equitable urban environments.

In conclusion, while this thesis has demonstrated the deep embeddedness of colonial relations in spaces like the Empress Hotel, it also points towards the potential for transformation. By examining both the reproduction of colonial relations and the forms of resistance that challenge them, we can work towards a more comprehensive understanding of urban spaces in settler colonial contexts. This understanding is crucial for developing effective strategies for

decolonization and creating urban environments that respect and honour Indigenous rights, relationships, and ways of being.

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