

Race, Riot, and Rail:  
The Process of Racialisation in Prince Rupert, B.C., 1906-1919

By

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B.A., Queen's University, 1994

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In the Department of History

We accept this thesis as conforming  
To the required standard

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## ABSTRACT

“Race” has been used to identify difference among people of different origins. In early twentieth century Canada, a British ideal for civilisation dominated and it was into this archetype that new immigrants were thrust.

The remarkable progress of this society, heralded by western expansion, can be seen in the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. Prince Rupert was created as the western terminus of the GTPR and was designed to fulfil the needs of a rapidly expanding Canadian frontier. Prince Rupert was a wholly planned community and firmly embedded in the dominant mores and norms of a British Canada.

Prince Rupert, however, was not settled solely by people of British descent. Many continental Europeans, “Asians” and Native persons contributed to the emergence of this new city. “Race” was a common tool to differentiate peoples and define their experience of one another. The dominant British discourse excluded many of the new settlers.

Interestingly, what was meant by “White” should not be conflated with British, because the boundary of “White” shifted to encompass continental Europeans if threatened by an obviously non-“White” Other. Similarly, other groups should not be considered homogenous and treated as having had a shared common experience in Canada.

Exploring how these diverse peoples co-existed in Prince Rupert means shifting the focus away from individual experiences and instead putting the emphasis on the process of racialisation. Simply put, racialisation is the act of racialising people--determining who they are based on “race” as a system of classifying human difference. It is a process because it involves the transmission of ideas over time and in a specific place; engaging people on many different fronts.

This thesis will utilise the idea of “sites”, ephemeral moments and places--real or perceived--where exchanges took place regarding ideas concerning “race”. These “sites” are physical, spatial, economic, cultural, social, and ideological. How the process of racialisation developed, over time, will be demonstrated by the use of “sites” in Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

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## CHAPTER ONE -- FORGING A DESTINY

The Canadian west of the early twentieth century offers valuable insights into the formation of new societies. From the Prairies to the coast the dominant British Canadian society continuously tried to replicate itself. The framework widely evident in the development of prairie towns was superimposed on successive new locales as "civilisation" reached out to the Pacific. The realignment of traditional ideologies in a raw, "undeveloped" setting presents not only the ability to evaluate what emerges, but what has been and what might be.

The study of new communities demonstrates how different processes--in this case, especially racialisation--contributed to the creation of "space". Racialisation, the means of construing and legitimating difference, can be demonstrated in various ways, through land settlement patterns, economics, municipal, social relations and intellectual development. This process is both constructed and imbedded in the cumulative Canadian experience as it was revealed in the early history of Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

A dynamic emerges from the discourse of "race", that affects both the perceptions and the lived realities of people's experience(s) of "race". It is necessary, therefore, to develop an understanding of "race" in order to refute essentialist ideas of biological difference (species and subspecies) and to provide a starting point for a discussion of the racialisation process. "Race", according to

many modern observers,<sup>1</sup> is not a biological reality but rather a construction of multiple origins. Relying on the perpetuation of notions concerning essentialism and employed in the classification of human diversity, many people have and do use “race” as a major organizational tool in ordering their world perception. Thus “race” cannot be extracted from those ideas of which “race” forms an integral part. As Michael Banton observes:

Racial theories, as these have been formulated in Europe and North America over the last two centuries, have been embedded in the political and social life of the societies to which their authors and readers have belonged.<sup>2</sup>

What is evidenced here is that “race” cannot be extracted from its historical or social setting without obfuscating the experience or understanding of it.

Banton has identified three phases in the application of the word “race” throughout history. He ascribes the confusion about “race” to its previous applications and imprecise usage.<sup>3</sup> In the sixteenth century new knowledge about human diversity resulted in efforts to classify and interpret difference. These efforts were expanded to incorporate biological theorizing during the nineteenth century and, most currently, the focus has shifted to sociological conceptualisations of “race”. “Race” has been presented as a matter of lineage, type, subspecies, status and class at different points in history.<sup>4</sup> The etymology of

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<sup>1</sup> For example Kay J. Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown Racial Discourse in Canada, 1857-1980* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press, 1987), and Peter Jackson and Jan Penrose, *Constructions of Race, Place, and Nation* (London: UCL Press, 1993) and many other contemporary theorists.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Banton, *Racial Theories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 167.

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

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

the word "race" highlights how "race was and is just one of several ways of perceiving, interpreting, and dealing with human differences."<sup>5</sup>

Many academics have issued a resounding call to discuss "race" as an invented idea necessarily understood in "specific historical circumstances."<sup>6</sup> If one agrees with these theorists that "race" cannot be discussed without its context, one implicitly accepts that "race" would be devoid of meaning without specific historical, social, economic or political markers.

In light of current debates, two principal ways of understanding must be recognized when addressing "race" as an academic topic: that biological difference still holds currency and that scholars themselves participate in the clustering of peoples. The notion of biological "race" is still present, meaning that the fundamental assumptions concerning "race" need to be discussed. Secondly, the "cluster" paradigm, utilizing historical categories, artificially limits the ways in which "race" is approached; while much history can be understood in this fashion, even more might be revealed by challenging the categories themselves.

While valid, an inquiry into the experiences of specific groups must be considered within the larger dynamic of society. This dynamic includes all groups and emerges in the "sites" where the groups intersect in perception, ideology, and social, economic, and labour exchange. Thus, more than individual

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<sup>5</sup> Robert J.C. Young, *Colonial Desire Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 91, and Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder: Worldview Press, 1993), p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Phyllis Palmer, "How We Talk About Race Affects What We Do About Race," *Journal of American Studies*, vol 28 part 2 (August 1994), p. 265.

lives are affected by the discourse of "race"; racialisation impacts the whole of society. This study is a modest attempt to redress an unbalanced look at the history of group interaction in British Columbia.

Most historians of "race" in British Columbia prefer to deal with the experiences of particular "sets" of groups such as "Asians", Natives, or "Whites", thereby skirting the more contentious topic of the construction of "race". Through their efforts, these historians have contributed to a vast scholarship predicated on understanding the reception of identifiable groups within the dominant society: they have rarely revealed how all of these groups coexisted within the confines of a single locale. Likewise, the diversity and contention within the dominant/host society has seldom been addressed. Peter Ward, one of the most prolific writers on the history of "Asians" in British Columbia, has attempted to understand the dominant society's behaviour towards Chinese, Japanese and East Indian immigrants.<sup>7</sup> Like other historians, he has used ideas of "race" and "racial" difference to shape his discussion of racism in B.C.,<sup>8</sup> but he seldom adequately explains what is meant when he employs (or fails to employ) these terms. The limited effort to problematize or define "race" results in the homogenisation of groups and provides little insight into the nuances of inter-group relations. Even Ward's attempt to address "race" directly in "Class and

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<sup>7</sup> W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978).

<sup>8</sup> Quotation marks are used to denote the potential confusion generated by the interchanging use of nationality, "race" and religious affiliation, the people of Prince Rupert used whichever appealed most to their worldview.

Race in the Social Structure of British Columbia, 1870-1939" failed to note the subtleties of the issues or recognize that social structure is a process which involves change.<sup>9</sup>

Another B.C. historian interested in "race" and "Asians" in particular is Patricia Roy. In her most substantive discussion of "race", *A White Man's Province*, she addresses the definition of "race" and discusses economic, social, and political relations involved in "race". This book deals with overt expressions of racism in British Columbia and provides one of the necessary foundations for additional study in fields involving "race".

Interestingly, both Roy and Ward include different peoples under the category "Asian". Roy refers to, and recognizes, the Japanese and Chinese, while Ward also incorporates East Indians. The lack of uniformity in "racial" categorisation by two of British Columbia's leading scholars supports two arguments: that categories are mutable and that homogenisation of groups can be a liability in sustained analysis. This inconsistency in the field of B.C. history suggests that there is insufficient attention given to the very notion of "race".

Similarly, Native history in B.C. has been marked by a limited tripartite approach--contact, missionary work, and politics--all of which are important areas of study, but none so far has developed notions of sustained contact with the dominant society. Robin Fisher detailed Indian-European relations until the 1890s, but not afterward, and no one has filled this post-contact void. Paul

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<sup>9</sup> Rennie Warburton, "Race and Class in British Columbia: A Comment," *BC Studies* 49 (Spring 1981), p. 79.

Tennant and others have investigated politics and Natives in a more contemporary setting, but have contributed little to an understanding of daily interactions between Native people and the dominant society (or who might be said to comprise that society). If Natives have been constructed as existing outside the dominant “White” norm of British Columbian history, how does the process of racialisation pertain to them?

The articulation of isolated “racial” exchanges by B.C. historians has helped to establish homogenised groups with parallel histories which need to be tempered by an understanding of larger processes. Kay Anderson’s study of Vancouver’s Chinatown is one of few works in Canadian history that “attempts to demonstrate empirically the workings of the racialisation processes about which theorists have written”.<sup>10</sup> While Anderson does not adequately explore what Chinatown meant to either non-British members of society or to the Chinese themselves, she does offer many insights into the construction of Chinatown and the idea of Chinatown sparked by “White” British Columbians’ imaginations. Building on Anderson’s efforts, this study will concentrate on the complex interactions of many groups in a localized setting, not on how individual groups were perceived, understood, and defined by “race” and racialisation.

Racialisation (singular) is a ubiquitous term for it engages numerous processes--economics, social exchange, political empowerment. While racialisation inherently builds on the concept of “race” the emphasis is on how

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<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *Vancouver’s Chinatown*, p. 3.

ideas of “race” are transmitted and imbedded within time and place. Racialisation is the act of racialising individuals and groups--in effect determining who diverse peoples are and what their relations with one another will constitute--based on “race” as a system of classifying human difference.

This thesis aims to demonstrate how the process(es) of racialisation functioned in a community setting. The focus is not on the abundant ideas of “race”. Rather it is on how these ideas were manipulated, transferred and systemically invoked through the racialisation process. It takes a substantive look at inter-group relations involving mutual suspicions and animosity in conjunction with non-“White” encounters with the host society.<sup>11</sup> It explains how people of different backgrounds developed racial attitudes by looking at three major “sites” of interaction: geographical situation, economic relations, and social interaction.

The discussion must begin with a substantive look at “race” and how the construction of “race” shaped behaviour and contributed to the material reality of many people’s lives. Many daily choices and observations are predicated on peoples’ understanding of “race”: for example, who they choose to do business with, and whose appearance they presumed trustworthy. While most people do not engage in overt acts of racism, their experience of the world involves ideas concerning “race”. However, the emphasis here is on the process of racialisation

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<sup>11</sup> Franca Iacovetta, “Manly Militants, Cohesive Communities, and Defiant Domestic: Writing About Immigrants in Canadian Historical Scholarship,” *Labour/Le Travail* 36 (Fall 1995), p. 240.

(or on the manifestation of racial understandings) rather than on the more narrowly defined issues of “race” and racism because:

When race is isolated as a concept, even for the purpose of analysis, there is a tendency to essentialise it, to fix it as an unchanging and inflexible reality. This tendency is echoed in the public discourse about race and racism, and here politics of complicity play a large part in the construction of race relations in terms of negative differences and irreparable divisions. While theoretically we are moving toward new ways of conceptualizing race and racism, in practice race relations remain constrained by an argumentative essentialism that undermines the crafting of racial equality.<sup>12</sup>

The view of “race” as socially constructed and not biologically determined argues that “race” is not genetic and should not be confused with phenotypes. The application of the word “race” and its appropriation for analysis have contributed to the confusion surrounding the historical (and contemporary) understanding of “race”. Indeed, that confusion, in itself, is support for the social constructedness of “race”.

The idea of essentialism emerged as a dimension of polygenesis, which postulates that each “race” originated separately--their differences therefore being a matter of essence. It remains one of the most widely referenced ideas invoked to support a continued belief in the organic or biological nature of “race”. In effect, the idea of essentialism confers legitimacy on the notion of natural,

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<sup>12</sup> Mark Lawrence McPhail, “The Politics of Complicity: Second Thoughts About the Social Construction of Racial Equality,” *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, vol 80 no 3 (August 1994), p. 354.

biological “races” and thereby purports to explain genetic difference.<sup>13</sup> It is a simple matter to reject the notion of essentialism, but to dismiss the argument does not address its currency in discussions of “race” and racialisation.

Notably, scholars saying “race” has been constructed does not mean that people do not, or have not, experienced behaviour, or behaved in a manner, predicated on essentialist notions of “race”. As Peter Jackson and Jan Penrose state in *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation* “the scientific disavowal of the ‘racial’ differentiation of human populations has not been followed by a similar repudiation of its social significance within either political discourse or popular culture”.<sup>14</sup> But, in using this continued presence of “race” in popular hegemonic discourse as a basis for historical discussion,<sup>15</sup> it should be noted that the intention is not to look at the composition of “racial” categories, but to understand how the categories became so ingrained and to understand how these categories help shape human relationships.<sup>16</sup> It is interesting to note that certain theorists believe that “the human mind must think with the aid of categories” and that these categories are equivalent to generalizations.<sup>17</sup> If categories are in fact construed as generalizations which assist the human mind in ordering experiences and perceptions, the categories themselves do not then support value judgments. It

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<sup>13</sup> Peter Jackson and Jan Penrose, *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation* (London: UCL Press, 1993), p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Jackson and Penrose, *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation*, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> See Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown*, p. 23, “A hegemonic culture is not simply a set of values...but a ‘realized complex’ of ideas, practices, and social relations that reflect the interests of a dominant sector and which have come to permeate society’s private and institutional domains.”

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954), p. 20, and Jackson and Penrose, *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation*, p. 2.

also warrants mentioning that the composition of categories is historically variable--even if the categories remain "unchanged".<sup>18</sup>

The mutability of categories can be seen in the subdivision and addition of members and groups within previously established "racial" categories. The Sixth Census of Canada in 1921, for example, introduced a category for "Asiatic Races" which included Chinese, Japanese, Syrians, and Other;<sup>19</sup> in the Seventh Census the "Asiatic Races" remained, but Syrians were no longer included in this division. This is an obvious and easily detectable example of how "racial" categories were/are subject to variability and redefinition.<sup>20</sup> It also follows, that relying too heavily on census data could result in assumptive fallacies regarding "race".

This thesis will refer to several specific groups, in quotation marks, to signify the artificially homogenised nature of "racial" categories, and where possible will provide the specific origins of individuals or groups under discussion. However, given the mutability of these categories the emphasis shall be on the recognition of difference and racialisation. The problematising of "White" as an identifiable group was necessary because, when "White" is the referent for a discussion on non-"White" people, the label loosely embraces everyone of European origin. "White" can encompass a surprisingly narrow field of persons, however, depending on how it is used. References to the dominant society are almost exclusively limited to people of British origins--those born in

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<sup>18</sup> Palmer, "How We talk About Race," p. 258.

<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, Syrians were not recorded in the Fifth Census, of 1911.

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix 1.

Canada or Britain--and in these instances what is "White" seldom moves beyond the prevalent British imagination. Therefore, the peculiar derivation and political ramifications of using "race" analytically are associated with essentialist arguments and the homogenisation of groups including "Asians", Natives and "Whites".

By its definition, racialisation moves beyond the limitations of essentialism and embraces a broader understanding of group interaction (than looking at specific "races"). It must be situated in history and society, not biology and nature.<sup>21</sup> By contextually situating racialisation we are recognising its non-fixed nature. We are acknowledging that, at any instant in the past, racialisation will differ from the present. Racialisation cannot occur without the transference of ideas and beliefs among people and therefore cannot be arbitrarily divorced from its temporal and spatial framework. Racialisation, implicitly rejects the assumptions of essentialism; it emphasizes the analysis of the interstices where difference is met.

Importantly, though, it is necessary to recognize the potential for the (negative) reification of "racial" discourse(s) through research involving "race" and racialisation. Reification is the legitimation and perpetuation of ideas by referring to them as real entities requiring problematising. Inherent in any discussion of "race" is its objectification; "race" is construed as "real". While the constructed nature of "race" is not in doubt, all discussions amplify the ideology and consequence of "race".

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<sup>21</sup> Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown*, p. 6.

In addition to understanding the social construction of “race” and its fluid categories, it is imperative that we recognize the contributions of ideas of “race” and the process of racialisation to contemporary and historical societies. Categories might not have included inherent value judgments, but noting difference can acquire negative connotations such as those often associated with “race”. The valuation of “race” has occurred through, and contributed to, the process of racialisation. Expanding on this valuation of specific categories, it remains that the language used in discussing “race”, “ethnicity”, racism, and racialisation has a frightening ability to reify the very notions being dismantled. It is similar to the reification common to the dualist rhetoric of “us” and “them”.

Establishing the categories of “us” and “them” is another way of identifying in-groups and out-groups. It is a form of the dualism usually inherent in discussions of difference, often centered around “race”. Indeed, racial attitudes typically play a profound role in creating the “Other”. According to Rob Shields, there exist “liminal zones of Otherness” wherein a physical marginalisation contributes to the concept of sites as “never simply locations”.<sup>22</sup> This tangible element of Otherness is significant in that the concept, much like racialisation, has a real expression within society. The project of Othering occurs simultaneously the basis of the recognition and understanding of “racial” difference without acknowledging the Other? It could be conjectured that the process of

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<sup>22</sup> Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin Alternative Geographies of Modernity*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 6.

racialisation is one and the same as Othering. Yet the process of racialisation functions on the basis of the Other and often defines and maintains the Other. It would be extremely difficult to divorce the two concepts or to establish precedence, a linguistic problem which plagues discussions of racialisation.

Another linguistic difficulty is presented by the interchangeable usage of "race" and "ethnicity". As these words are not co-terminous there is sufficient reason to avoid conflating their potentially different discourses.<sup>23</sup> Both "ethnicity" and "race" are socially, ideologically, and politically constructed concepts,<sup>24</sup> but historically the terms have not been treated as synonymous with one another. In addition, in contemporary usage "ethnicity" often refers to the positive elements of difference, while "race" is employed to describe the negative aspects.<sup>25</sup> "Ethnicity", invokes cultural difference, but does not supplant ideas of "race". While there exist cultural aspects of difference among people the emphasis here is based on "race". Regardless of recent debates on language and its power, human difference retains a hold on public imagination and academic theorizing.

By using "sites" rather than "race" to set parameters, the impact of reification is lessened. The approach also facilitates a study of the impact of racialisation in a community setting. "Sites" are those ephemeral moments and

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<sup>23</sup> This discussion on racialisation will use both terms independently as it appears that they contain subtle and different meanings.

<sup>24</sup> Roxanna Ng deliberately uses "ethnicity" and "race" interchangeably in an attempt to draw attention to the constructedness of both concepts. Roxanna Ng, "Sexism, Racism, and Canadian Nationalism," *Race, Class, Gender: Bonds and Barriers*, ed. Jesse Vorst (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1991), p. 14.

<sup>25</sup> There is a discourse between these two terms with its own political connotations beyond the scope of this inquiry.

places--real or perceived--wherein people meet and exchange services, goods, ideas, ideals, and values. The aim of this thesis is to utilize "sites"--physical, spatial, economic, cultural, psychological--as a way of understanding how the process(es) of racialisation acted among the citizens and within the town of Prince Rupert.

Prince Rupert can be seen as the product of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (GTPR) and the values inherent in Canada and the western world at the turn of the century. As railway companies carved their routes along the Canadian prairies, the west coast was their natural destination. Prince Rupert was firmly established in the minds of the GTPR's progenitors and railroad enthusiasts well before construction of the townsite began. "Boostering" of the town began along the railway before there was a settlement. The initial furor of land speculation and property improvements provided for the early inhabitants of Prince Rupert and eventually tapered off to a steady resource based economy.

Contemporary sources on Prince Rupert indicate an early and sustained interest in the historical role of "racial" issues. The Prince Rupert Pioneers' Association made an early note of its "necessarily" cosmopolitan membership, suggesting that those qualified to join--residents prior to May 1909--were a diverse group in a new setting possessing few formal institutions to shape

interaction.<sup>26</sup> Reference to Prince Rupert's cosmopolitan make-up was not a statement about the town's sophistication; rather, it was a way to acknowledge the presence of people who were not of British origin. Differentiation amongst people based on origin or "race", therefore, was present in Prince Rupert from its inception. The idea of "race" as a classificatory system and how understandings, perceptions, and actions embedded in notions of "race" would profoundly affect the progress of this planned community. It can be seen, for example, in the probably unconscious assumptions evident in the words of Mayor Thomas Dufferin Pattullo in 1913:

Prince Rupert has increased from a town of 400 or 500 to one of 6,000 inhabitants during the past four years, in spite of the fact that the railroad is not yet completed through. Not only is the population steadily increasing, but we are getting a better class of settlers than we had before.<sup>27</sup>

Who comprised this "better class of settlers"? How does this reflect on the earlier citizens of Prince Rupert? And why did Pattullo feel the need to make this statement? Who were the community's pioneers and what did they contribute to the emergence of Prince Rupert, a town originally designated as the west-coast terminus for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (GTPR)? Exploring the development of Prince Rupert should reveal the answers to these questions and more.

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<sup>26</sup> Prince Rupert Pioneers' Association, *Charter Souvenir, Nineteen Hundred and Fourteen* (Prince Rupert: Fredell and Fraser, 1914), p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> "What Prince Rupert is Doing," *British Columbia Magazine* 9 (1913), p. 512.

It is difficult to separate peoples' recollections of Prince Rupert from the idealized creation of the town. There is something mystical about a city being carved out of the dense rainforest of the Northwest and in "man's" conquering of the west, and the opening of a new destiny; there is also much that was and remains illusory. People flocked to Prince Rupert expecting it to rival Vancouver in the world marketplace. Those boosters who made that commitment and remained faithful to the city's ambitious inception desperately fought the slow erosion of its great destiny and their own dreams. The reality was that Prince Rupert never gave any real indication of fulfilling the booster images that circulated with such fanfare at its inception. While children in Prince Rupert continued--and continue--to be told a tragic tale of its death, after Laurier's Liberals lost the 1911 election and Charles Hays, Prince Rupert's visionary leader and focal point, perished on the Titanic, no one appears to understand why the dream faltered. The rationales are many, but the explanatory substance is unconvincing.

Prince Rupert started as--and it remains--a community apart, lying within the sheltered arm of the Tsimpsean Peninsula just shy of Southeastern Alaska. One can imagine the sense of isolation that the original settlers had to overcome when they first arrived on Kaien Island where the town would be built.<sup>28</sup> The nearest communities were Metlakatla, a nominal Indian reserve<sup>29</sup> formerly under the zealous guidance of utopian missionary Reverend William Duncan, a fading

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<sup>28</sup> The city of Prince Rupert is situated on the northwestern side of Kaien Island.

<sup>29</sup> Metlakatlah was significantly reduced in numbers when Prince Rupert was built with most of its population recently removed to New Metlakatlah, Alaska.

Hudson's Bay post at Port Simpson and Robert Cunningham's fishing village on the Skeena river. Prince Rupert was going to serve as the Gateway to the East and open up new world relations; Prince Rupert was to join the remote north with southern Canada, bringing with it a unity and prosperity imagined only by the most "forward thinking" individuals of the day. The year was 1906 and progress was a catch phrase in the collective discourse of the, then, empire builders.

The GTPR was the chief carrier of such vast and expansive ideas, as it pushed its line across Canada (at times only a few miles north of the Canadian Northern) and began work in the Prince Rupert townsite in 1906. Track was laid eastbound to meet more rapidly the incoming line and the glorious, anticipated destiny; workers were called upon in great number to clear the way and lay track while builders set about making Prince Rupert worthy of its future. Residents and railway builders with various origins and cultures gravitated to Prince Rupert for work, to live and to share in the town's destiny. How did these people respond to the peculiar demands of time and place? How did their collective responses shape the progress of Prince Rupert? How did they understand each other?

Prince Rupert is a useful laboratory in which to study the process of racialisation because certain features distinguish it from other communities in British Columbia. Unlike most settlements, Prince Rupert was a wholly planned community under the auspices of the Grand Trunk Pacific Town and Development Company. This company, formed by Charles Hays to purchase

land for the GTPR, originally selected the site in 1904 and engaged engineers to lay out the spatial dimensions of a well organized and well serviced townsite.<sup>30</sup>

Another distinct feature of Prince Rupert is its location on Kaien Island (close to the Alaskan panhandle), near the mouths of both the Skeena and Naas rivers. It boasted an enviably deep ice-free harbour some 500 miles closer to the "Orient" than any other North American port. Prince Rupert's location encouraged certain types of industry and explains why the GTPR believed that Prince Rupert would rival Vancouver as a port city.<sup>31</sup> The rapid pace of settlement and diversity of Prince Rupert's early population belied its initial limited accessibility.<sup>32</sup>

Since the place of a city within its hinterland can help identify norms and standards of the larger society,<sup>33</sup> it is important to look at Prince Rupert's immediate hinterland for comparative and explanatory purposes. As Metlakatla, Port Essington and Fort Simpson were all developed prior to the GTPR's decision to locate its terminus on Kaien Island, it could be posited that Prince Rupert rapidly adopted the norms and standards already present in the lower Skeena region of British Columbia's Northwest coast; this was not the case.

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<sup>30</sup> Donald MacKay, *The Asian Dream: The Pacific Rim and Canada's National Railway* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1986), p. 74.

<sup>31</sup> E.A. Harris, *Spokeshute Skeena River Memory* (Victoria: Orca Book Publishers, 1990), p. 75, noted that in 1910 construction and land speculation were the two largest industries in Prince Rupert.

<sup>32</sup> Prince Rupert was, from its inception until the completion of the GTPR in 1914, only accessible by sea.

<sup>33</sup> Jan de Vries, "Studying Cities in Their Context," *Urban History/Revue d'Histoire Urbaine*, vol XVIII no 3 (February 1990), p. 198.

The older communities in the region did not have enough social currency to overcome the popular ideologies circulating within Prince Rupert. Metlakatla was not so much a conventional town or Indian reserve as a Christian mission. Its peculiar position as a reservation in a dominant society meant that Prince Rupert as a non-reserve community took precedence. Similarly, the fishing village of Port Essington failed to influence Prince Rupert as it was quite literally situated on the wrong side of the tracks. Denizens of both older communities might share attitudes, yet Prince Rupert had considerably more influence and import from the beginning. Finally, the coming of the railway meant that Fort Simpson, the old Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) outpost, could no longer compete for access to the world beyond the North--in effect the fort was supplanted by Prince Rupert and its aggressive business people.

The isolation and limited accessibility created a unique setting for Prince Rupert especially as its immediate hinterland was "undeveloped".<sup>34</sup> Early reports also suggest that Prince Rupert had a distinctly "racial" composition as working "shoulder to shoulder, white men, red men, and men of the yellow race, fell trees, draw stumps, burn brush and level ground".<sup>35</sup> However, understanding the specific, numerical diversity is of limited utility. Given that official census

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<sup>34</sup> "Undeveloped" is in quotation marks as it raises later questions concerning appropriation of land and the introduction of new/different ideas concerning land usage.

<sup>35</sup> See Rosalind W. Young, "Prince Rupert," *British Columbia Magazine* 3 (1908), pp. 247-8, for discussion on the early diversity of Prince Rupert's population.

reports occurred only every decade and that much of the population was transient, the likelihood of many individuals of different backgrounds having been and left Prince Rupert during the intervening period is high.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the census data are descriptive and not explanatory; they do not help much in evaluating a subject such as "race" since numbers do not reflect the degree of attention/animosity directed at particular groups and/or individuals. Mediating factors which detract from the immediate relevance of census data when examining racialisation include class, gender, contact, and fear--any one of which has the potential to heighten or decrease the "real" perceptions of persons during the period of study.

The creation of an instant community on Kaien Island in 1906 provided a transitional context in which people made contributions to the altar of civilisation. The settlers brought with them an impetus to succeed, an impetus which demanded sustained economic development. They understood "progress" as forward movement towards a desirable end; the growth of Prince Rupert and the prosperity of its citizenry hinged on an understanding and sustained belief in the hegemonic ideals of the broader society. Furthermore, their understanding of progress was a racialised idea, owned by those members of society whose cultural imperialism was sanctioned by a pervasive British sentiment and a dominant British establishment. Minimal references to a specific Canadian identity coupled

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<sup>36</sup> *The Daily News* reported in early 1914 that the population had grown to over 6,000, yet in the 1921 Census the official population was set at 6,393. Given news reports on the continued influx of new settlers it is unlikely that the population of 1921 consisted of the same 6,000 persons as reported earlier. More likely, several people had already abandoned the wild land speculation in Prince Rupert and the numbers remained constant while the shifting citizenry did not.

with a Canadian nationalism that incorporated loyalty to Britain, have meant that there will be no effort to pursue Canadians as a specific group. Nor will the articulation of a Canadian identity be viewed as a "site" of racialisation.

Using "sites" of racialisation, and not "race" as an analytic guide should uncover new research avenues for accessing the history of group interaction.<sup>37</sup> Racialisation qualifies as a process because it *occurs* at temporal and/or spatial sites of "racial" interaction. It can be seen as an exchange of knowledge and perceptions about difference relayed through various mediums, such as personal behaviour, media, spatial allocation(s), and labour relations. This thesis will show how "sites"--geographic, social, economic, intellectual--can be used to understand the ways in which racialisation took shape in the years between 1906 and 1919.

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<sup>37</sup> Banton, *Racial Theories*, p. xiii, notes "race" has acquired different meanings with different types of contact and has been appropriated for analysis a potentially new direction for research is an exploration of the relationship between these two discourses.

## CHAPTER TWO -- ROOTING IN THE SOIL PHYSICAL SITES OF RACIALISATION

The non-Native persons who followed the dream of Charles Hays and the GTPR brought with them a new understanding of the land and environment. They insisted upon a redefinition of the land's purpose in order to achieve their ends. This conformed with what Cole Harris has written: that "new settlements and landscapes were among immigrants' principal creations, and issues of power characteristically turned on the control of land".<sup>1</sup> As people with different occupations or origins, the newcomers held different views on land and its place in society.<sup>2</sup> Whatever their perspectives, these new "owners" of the land brought with them a wealth of history and particular sights focused on land. Thus, the process of using and distributing land in Prince Rupert itself serves as a site of racialisation.

New understandings of space coincide with new interpretations of land and its primary use. If land is highly valued for its resources or yield, it will be held at a premium whereas land viewed as potential living space will be subjected to varying degrees of competition to acquire vast tracts of it. The inherent preconceptions about geography that the settlers brought with them made physical

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<sup>1</sup> Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia Essays on Colonialism and Geographical Change*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997), p. xiv.

<sup>2</sup> Particular status positions determined by land ownership or hereditary land use are factors in the different understandings of land.

location a significant and obvious "site" of interaction amongst peoples of different origins.

New and varied meanings of "space" emerge within society as old and new amalgamate to cope with the geographical sites imposed by the local topography. As Prince Rupert is primarily located in a mixture of rock and muskeg, there was little arable land to meet traditional farming needs or to establish rolling greenspace for parks. Land that could be used for building sites was at a premium and new measures were employed to make previously undeveloped land more habitable.

"Space" consists of more than merely the land held by an individual or groups--"space" involves ideas of occupancy and ownership. General designations of "space" such as "private vs. public" or "rural vs. urban" are constantly modified and challenged but are superficially understood to represent different connotations of "space" within the existing social structure. Lastly, when interpreting the relationship between space and racialisation, it may be important to note that some early promotional literature compared the local geography of Prince Rupert with that of locations in the British Isles.<sup>3</sup> There is no reason beyond the decision to superimpose a familiar landscape on an alien space to justify these comparisons. Therefore, "space" can be interpreted to reflect or define those who occupy it.

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<sup>3</sup> For example, see Ernest Cawcroft, "A City Being Made to Order," (BCARS, 1910), p. 972.

“Space” can be broken down into both the physical and social geography of a community. At a superficial glance, the physical pervasiveness of racialisation in Prince Rupert seems apparent given the distribution of European construction workers and British agents. The geographical spread of these people in Prince Rupert, including their residences, associations, institutions, and mobility, move understandings of “space” beyond the physical presence of different groups within the city. The process of racialisation occurred at sites of physical interaction among groups who were understood to have different origins and consequently “formed” different “races”. The distribution of “space” is one of the clearest expressions of racialisation in Prince Rupert as it constitutes a physical, social, and ideological site of exchange.

#### LOCATION IS EVERYTHING

The creation of a new town involves the claiming and mapping of its location, followed by decisions on how to redistribute the land and allocate “space” to new occupants. In the process, the role played by land undergoes a fundamental shift, particularly in how it is perceived and presented to the public. Within this shift it is necessary to look at the physical sites occupied by people of differing origins; where they resided and worked provide insight into the process(es) of racialisation.

## Physical Geography

Scholars have recognized that the city is a likely convening spot for peoples of various backgrounds and have extensively studied the city as a site of complex human interaction. Some have argued that a small community cannot segregate living or spatial quarters,<sup>4</sup> but this was not entirely so in the case of Prince Rupert because certain peoples did make themselves more "present" than others. An example of this ability to "present" oneself were the residents of British Hill near 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue; their public face definitely reflected its name.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the notion of "city" itself may provide a means of accessing peoples' ideas about progress, "race", class, and gender.

Students of urban history offer many suggestions on the specific role of the city within its hinterland. Urban historians from J.M.S. Careless to Alan Artibise have suggested that cities are a battleground for "local and regional hegemony",<sup>6</sup> implying that control of a city's progress means control of its region. According to Gilbert A. Stelter, "towns depending on fish or lumber remained colonial entrepôts, collecting the primary products of their hinterlands for shipment abroad and importing processed goods in return".<sup>7</sup> Prince Rupert was ideally situated to function as a point of import and export in northern British Columbia. Touted as

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<sup>4</sup> Cole Harris, "Industry and the Good Life Around Idaho Peak," *Canadian Historical Review* 66 (September 1985), p. 337.

<sup>5</sup> *The Empire*, November 3, 1915. Reference was made about the Church of England being located on this summit.

<sup>6</sup> Gilbert A. Stelter, "A Regional Framework For Urban History," *Urban History Review/Revue d'Histoire Urbaine*, vol XIII no 3 (February 1985), p. 194.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 197.

the “new capital” for the North by the GTPR, it was inevitable that the city would seek to exert control over the existing, nearby communities.

Moreover, Jan de Vries’s exploration of urbanization presents the city as an identifier of cultural norms and standards (while the hinterland serves to reinforce the legitimacy of a central place urbanization). De Vries’s approach would be difficult to itemize in the case of Prince Rupert, but it is of value because of the inherent idea that the city is a place for cultural interaction and exchange. If culture is viewed as intrinsically meshed with “race”, then it would appear that the city also functions as a site for the transmission of ideas concerning “race” and is therefore instrumental in racialisation. Prince Rupert set the tone for the region it dominated.

While these approaches contribute to an understanding of the city’s function within a region, it is in the concept of the city that racialisation is revealed. Paul Voisey, in his study of the creation and society of Vulcan, Alberta, noted that the “cult-like worship of the pioneer suggests a Genesis motif; before 1904 history did not exist, and like Adam and Eve, the first settlers were responsible for its origins”.<sup>8</sup> The obliteration of earlier history demonstrates how “Canadian pioneers sought to recreate their old world” and how their ethnocentrism essentially excluded Native populations.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, beyond the

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<sup>8</sup> Paul Voisey, *Vulcan The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), p. 29.

<sup>9</sup> J.M.S. Careless, *Frontier and Metropolis Regions, Cities, and Identities in Canada Before 1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), pp. 14 and 19.

exclusion of Native peoples' interpretations of land, the very idea of settlement, held by the dominant society, entails a site of racialisation.

As settlers equated the city's emergence with their arrival, they implicitly asserted their right to dominate, thereby voiding any potentially competing interpretations of history. Progress, heralded by the advent of new settlers who were liberated from the concept of pre-history, meant that "they faced an open untrammelled relationship with the future, a relationship affected by the terrain through which they would pass, but not by prior human geographies".<sup>10</sup> In Prince Rupert, as in Vulcan, the articulation of a similar view of progress effectively erased any history prior to European arrival and undermined opposition to the GTPR's plans for its northern terminus: it eliminated conflict over land ownership--notably by aboriginal people.

This understanding of the nature of land ownership in Prince Rupert followed a similar path to that of Vulcan and, one might argue, that of Canada and North America. Until "White" arrival--meaning British in this instance--the land was occupied by the Tsimpsean and had different representations in their society. But, with the GTPR's purchase of Kaien Island, the land acquired a pristine past, new owners and new uses; the Island's history was voided. To paraphrase Cole Harris: another human geography was suddenly imposed on Prince Rupert.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*, p. 186.

<sup>11</sup> Cole Harris, "Industry and the Good Life," p. 321.

## Human Geography

The imposition of new human geographies entails the creation of new “sites” through which people might be observed and interact. The city is defined in part by its land and control of “space”. The allocation of “space” reflected the ideas and attitudes shared by the community. Kay Anderson interpreted Vancouver’s Chinatown as an important site through which “White” society’s concepts about the Chinese were constituted and reproduced.<sup>12</sup> Prince Rupert can be seen in much the same way as a site through which “White” society’s concepts about “race” were constituted and reproduced, not least in how land was used.

In recording the “Geographies of the Lower Skeena” Daniel Clayton asserts that

particular notions of community were articulated in spatial terms; changes in location and living arrangements were considered to play an active role in the creation of social order and control.<sup>13</sup>

While primarily concerned with the three communities established before Prince Rupert, Clayton’s framework can be easily be extended to help understand the city. Its early society drew upon the region’s inherited relationships among British institutions, industries, immigrants, and Native peoples. Counted among these inherited relationships were the Hudson’s Bay Company’s role in Fort

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<sup>12</sup> Anderson, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Clayton, “Geographies of the Lower Skeena,” *BC Studies* 94 (Summer 1992), p.

Simpson, the cannery's development of Port Essington, and the Anglican missionaries at Metlakatla.

Clayton's work invites a comparative factor to the study of spatial racialisation in Prince Rupert. Looking at Port Essington, Clayton noted that

The town's cultural groups were pressed together along a narrow strip of land at the water's edge, yet set apart in different abodes. Few from any group could speak any other tongue (except, perhaps, Chinook), and disconnected networks of association were forged around language and a group's type and place of residence. For Chinese cannery workers on summer contracts, life revolved around the cannery, butchering table and the bunkhouse. Few had the money to venture far, many would send what they had made back to China, and according to some the evenings were spent with opium. There was both a permanent and seasonal native population. The former were from Kitselas and Kitsumkalum well up the Skeena and lived on a private "reserve" donated to them by Cunningham in 1880. The latter were from all over the region and lived in rows of huts rented from the canneries, where aspects of their subsistence economy--such as drying salmon for the winter--still accompanied wage labour. Japanese fishermen, some of them with families, also lived in blocks of cannery-built huts, although much less is known about their existence. Within the white community--most of whom were either British emigrants or Canadian--class and occupational distinctions emerged. The resident elite of store owners and cannery officials lived in large fenced houses on the hillslope away from the noise of the canneries and the smell of offal. They ran a number of social clubs that blossomed in the winter months, and between them elected an unofficial mayor. But there were also many white seasonal fishermen, some of whom boarded in the town's two large hotels, and many of whom drank in the hotels' bars during the weekly fishing close on the river. Parts of cultures from different parts of the world were juxtaposed, and for the majority fleeting social attachments were conditioned by the exigencies of a resource industry and the needs of strangers.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, pp. 48-9.

Much of what he describes applies equally to early Prince Rupert: for example, the specific kind of housing available, the physical separation of people, and their treatment based on “race” and class. Unlike Port Essington, however, Prince Rupert continued to develop. The influence of the GTPR was instrumental to Prince Rupert’s existence and altered Port Essington’s role in the North, but what constituted the fundamental difference in their development?<sup>15</sup> Most likely, the combination of people and place served to alter Prince Rupert’s fate from that of Port Essington, even though the two communities shared many popular perceptions.

As Prince Rupert was at the center of much publicity by the GTPR and promoted as the official outpost in the North, it had improved services. The construction of government docks, major street grading projects, wholesale distribution companies and the presence of the GTPR meant that the citizenry of Prince Rupert had better access to both goods and services than other nearby communities. Consequently, the various needs and desires of Fort Simpson, Port Essington and Metlakatla merged at Prince Rupert. These previously isolated enclaves grew to depend increasingly on the community of Prince Rupert for access to the world at large. That meant they relied on a community dominated by “White” expectations and norms.

From its inception, Prince Rupert embodied the ideals of the dominant, “White” Canadian society. When the GTPR acquired the Prince Rupert townsite,

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<sup>15</sup> E.A.Harris, *Spokeshute*, p. 27. Port Essington continued to be a successful cannery town for an additional 20 years, belying arguments that the railway was the sole cause of the town’s eventual abandonment.

there was no permanent settlement on Kaien Island.<sup>16</sup> Given the “uninhabited” state of the island and the GTPR’s close monitoring of settlement how the recent arrivals exercised control determined how Prince Rupert was developed. The presumption that the land was available for purchase is indicative of the general misunderstandings over land issues between the government of British Columbia and the Natives involuntarily included under the government’s auspices.

Assuming that land is owned through permanent (not seasonal) occupation and cultivation was a “White” agrarian standard, not an inherent Tsimpsean idea. That view accepts the “White” standard that land not used in essentially European ways was not being used productively. Such assumptions about ownership and land use betray cultural interpretations of land and “space”; indeed, the very idea of productivity reveals a biased understanding.

It was not a view that went unchallenged. For example, Charles Venn, a Tsimpsean resident of Metlakatla, wrote the editor of *The Empire*:

It has been said that the land belonged to the province, and that we had no right to sell it. What is the history of it? We have a story to tell, too. According to our view, there is no one in a position to make any objection to our selling our land.<sup>17</sup>

Venn’s rebuke to those who questioned Natives’ right to sell land to the GTPR simultaneously recognized and betrayed the pre-history of Kaien Island. In an editorial, Sam Newton of *The Empire* claimed that Indians believed the land was theirs because their fathers had owned it even though they had never paid for

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<sup>16</sup> The presence of shell middens indicates that the Tsimpsean did dwell on Kaien Island at different points in their history.

<sup>17</sup> *The Empire*, January 18, 1908.

it--in effect, challenging the idea of land purchase equating ownership. Newton claimed that "if their idea of the nature of ownership of land were the correct one they would surely be right in their contention".<sup>18</sup> This editorial is *prima facie* evidence of the tacit recognition of different ideas of ownership, with one privileged over another, based on unspecified criteria, but favouring the interests of non-Native peoples.

Another significant aspect of the pre-settlement of Prince Rupert was the employment of Franklin Brett and George D. Hall, the landscape architects, to map out the town plan (neither visited the proposed townsite). Most important was their desire to map. Mapping was neither vital to, nor essential for, the Tsimpsean understanding of the land, but it was fundamentally important for "White" settlement. Thus, the hiring of landscape architects--one of the first acts of the GTPR in developing Prince Rupert--was a new means of establishing ownership. The act of mapping reveals much about the values held by the city's planners when they set out to establish what they considered to be a well-laid out town. Secondly, the GTPR was apparently concerned with sustained development and, taking its cue from the chaos of other boom towns, carefully planned for growth in advance in Prince Rupert, thereby signifying its desire to control development and progress within the city.

The original plan proposed by Brett and Hall included the "controlled naturalism" of English landscape gardens combined with the garden city movement; in effect, it was a formal but picturesque design attempting to blend

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<sup>18</sup> *The Empire*, February 17, 1913.

efficiency with beauty.<sup>19</sup> The architectural impetus for Prince Rupert's design had little to do with the actual geography or the needs of its inhabitants--instead, the city was developed along lines deemed acceptable and popular within the British architectural set.<sup>20</sup> This is consistent with the idea that the British apparently could only define the geography of Prince Rupert within the established norms and standards of a British hegemony--one which did not include the "White" presence of continental Europeans. By its very design, Prince Rupert as a "site" was intended to embody the values of a British society.

#### ADDRESS AND IDENTITY

The topography of Kaien Island "precluded the prosaic checkerboard layout of the [GTPR]'s prairie towns".<sup>21</sup> With the concession to the Island's ruggedness, came Brett and Hall's attempts to superimpose order on nature and the GTPR's efforts to regulate development and foster land speculation. The division of Prince Rupert along sectional lines--the townsite was conceived with nine distinctive areas--was meant to accommodate the natural topography and pace growth, providing modern observers with the situational context in which to evaluate settlement patterns.

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<sup>19</sup> Harold D. Kalman, comp. *Prince Rupert Heritage Inventory and Conservation Program* (1983), p. 14. The garden city movement involved urban beautification through strategically placed parks and public gardens.

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>21</sup> Robin Fisher, *Duff Pattullo of British Columbia*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), p. 87.

The proposed development began with Section One (1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues) being business and industrial blocks; Section Two (west of Morse Creek) serving as a freight and wholesale district; Sections Three to Six (4<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues) as business expansion blocks, and the remainder of Sections meeting residential needs.<sup>22</sup> While the plan was approved during the original lot sales, only business Sections One, Two, Four, Five and Six were made available for purchase; that meant in effect, that the residential development would later take place in all but Section One.<sup>23</sup> When the lot sales were conducted, very few purchasers had been to the townsite and the reality of settlement posed immediate housing concerns; people built on whatever property they acquired. Thus, the actual sale of lots changed the original design of Prince Rupert while the Sections themselves remained intact and did affect later development.

Significantly, the original sales receipts indicate that persons from a multiplicity of "racial" backgrounds--according to names available--purchased land. Whatever the intent of the city's original planners, those who could afford to buy were given the opportunity.<sup>24</sup> While this presents a harmonious picture, it was apparently not without conflict based on notions of "race". George Pethick, a member of the original survey crew, reminisced about how

A Chinaman bought two lots in Third Avenue and killed  
the sale of all property for a large section around him; so

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<sup>22</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>23</sup> Kalman, *Prince Rupert Heritage*, p. 15.

<sup>24</sup> See 1911 Ledger of McKlimtock Real Estate Agent, PRA 1565, for evidence that people of Japanese, Chinese, Norwegian, British, and other origin were involved in the original purchases.

that the Real Estate Agents in Prince Rupert had to get together to buy him out at an exorbitant figure to start the ball rolling again.<sup>25</sup>

This incident exemplifies the importance put on “race” in relation to land ownership and occupation. If there were widespread acceptance of land ownership regardless of “racial” background, others would have purchased lots around those bought by the “Chinaman”; as this was not the case, it appears that “space” was interpreted and inhabited according to conceptions of “race”.

The continued animosity to Chinese land purchase is evident in *The Empire*'s 1915 article “Excluding Orientals”. It details a property owners’ petition to the city council to prohibit any “Orientals” from building in Section Two.<sup>26</sup> While no official action was recorded, the very notion that such a petition could be circulated and treated as a legitimate concern demonstrates the community’s acceptance of racialising settlement.

Racialisation in Prince Rupert’s settlement is also evident in the development of ghetto districts. Ghettoisation, or the occupation of peripheral locations according to racial, ethnic or vocational characteristics, distances people from the hub of power within the social structure of an emergent community.<sup>27</sup> Looking at where people were situated in relation to others according to “race”

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<sup>25</sup> George H. Pethick, “Reminiscences of a Near Pioneer,” (typescript, n/d), p. 41.

<sup>26</sup> *The Empire*, November 3, 1915. Twenty signatures were collected, but the resolution was carried by city council under the building by-law.

<sup>27</sup> See Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*, p. 157, for discussion on the pejorative “White” identifications which permitted and encouraged the forcing of Chinese and Native peoples into defined spaces.

can reveal how social localization--facilitated by elitist, hierarchical mentality--contributed to, or reflected, the process of racialisation in Prince Rupert.

The information available on Prince Rupert's so-called restricted district, on Comox Avenue, contributes to an understanding of the spatial infrastructure which engaged people on levels of "race" and class. Prostitution and the availability of alcohol characterized the district and the immorality of these activities was the reason for spatial isolation.<sup>28</sup> The denizens of Comox Avenue were not racialised because of where they lived; so much as, they were classified by their occupation and conduct. At the same time, those residing near the district were not of British descent which incidentally also demonstrates the connection between "race" and "space".<sup>29</sup> A petition to move the restricted district because of its adverse effect on property value was initiated by Mrs. and Mr. Eric Rosang, Hans Olson, Mrs. and Mr. W.J. Scherk, P. Malko, and V. Reda--none of whom had British surnames, a fact which implies that local residents of British descent either had no interest in this dispute or did not live near the district. The police commissioners (who were of British descent) resolved to do nothing as they were unwilling to expel the prostitutes from town or to disperse them.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> See Robert A.J. McDonald, *Making Vancouver Class, Status, and Social Boundaries, 1863-1913*, p. 190. Prostitution "was countenanced only when located in socially marginal areas of the city" and while referring specifically to Vancouver he notes that prostitution was often in areas "Dominated by Asians, non-British Europeans, and single men, these districts stood apart from the homes of White families of British origin." Also, James H. Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies* (Toronto: Macmillan Company, 1971), p. ix.

<sup>29</sup> See Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies*, p. 23, "The existence of the houses of ill fame on the fringes of the immigrant areas became an awkward and bothersome threat to the morals of immigrant families."

<sup>30</sup> *The Empire*, May 10, 1913.

The restricted district helps to show how people were localized within Prince Rupert. It shows how several factors, accepted by the community as a whole, set people apart; the red light district on Comox Avenue is an obvious example since it differentiates a particular group and its activities within Prince Rupert. The streets, blocks and buildings were intimately associated with the persons who occupied them.

It also demonstrates the connection between social "space" and racialisation. The repeated arrests on Comox Avenue demonstrate the connection between physical and social geographies within Prince Rupert. These arrests and the fines incurred by the women and their clients brought them into the public eye. At a time when official reports claimed few Natives resided in Prince Rupert, two Native women were fined for being inmates of a disorderly house.<sup>31</sup> They did not own the property, but they were living within the city's limits. Likewise, news reports of infractions made it apparent that Black women lived in Prince Rupert. Such information might never have surfaced if the district had not occupied a voyeuristic "space" in the public imagination. Another example of the impact of "race" on land value was the development of a ghetto on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in Prince Rupert. That area's depressed land values were attributed to the initial Chinese settlement. Ghettoisation coincided with general avoidance of the block by "White" merchants and presumably "White" customers.<sup>32</sup> Although the Chinese had only one or two buildings, these structures constituted a

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<sup>31</sup> *The Daily News*, June 10, 1916.

<sup>32</sup> Alistair Donald Crerar, "Prince Rupert, British Columbia-A Study of a Port and Its Hinterland" (University of British Columbia, M.A. Thesis, 1951), p. 164.

“Chinatown”. *The Optimist*’s report of a “Police Raid on Our Chinatown” belies exaggeration of the block’s negative perception. No persons were arrested in the incident, although a quantity of opium was seized. The lack of arrests was not considered unusual in Prince Rupert as it was felt that “the wily Oriental is swift to conceal the traces of his doings”.<sup>33</sup> In retrospect, the raid on King Tai’s holdings was minor,<sup>34</sup> but says much about the popular perception that a largely male, substance abusing contingent lived within the city. The suspicion with which people of Chinese origins were viewed extended to the physical sites that they occupied.

The ramification of a perceived Chinatown meant depressed land values associated with Chinese settlement despite the real physical presence of people of Chinese origin in Prince Rupert. The city council was “Grappling With [an] Influx of Chinese” in 1911 and tried different means to limit or reverse the growth of Prince Rupert’s Chinese community. Given news reports, it would appear that King Tai’s holdings were the extent of Prince Rupert’s Chinatown until 1915 when Mayor Sam Newton received “A Curious Letter” purportedly from a Chinese citizen alleging gambling and opium dealing by certain Chinese merchants. Solicitor Peters advised against investigating the anonymous letter as “the ‘revelations’ were, [in his opinion] only an instance of enmity between two Tongs of Chinese in the city, one goes after the other. Both are probably

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<sup>33</sup> *Prince Rupert Optimist*, January 23, 1911. Two men were subsequently charged although the case was adjourned. Much language was given over to the description of the drug paraphanelia seized and the courtroom being “thronged with Orientals”.

offenders".<sup>35</sup> Comments made by the city council indicate that the "White" citizenry of Prince Rupert recognized the "idea" of Chinatown, and the internal dynamics of the local Chinese community. The rivalry between these two "Tongs" continued, with both parties to some extent manipulating the local authorities to exact vengeance on one another.<sup>36</sup> The newspaper's reporting of these events and the city council's commentary on Prince Rupert's Chinese population substantiates the notion that much attention was given to defining and watching a racialised group within the city; that Prince Rupert's Chinatown served as a "site" of racialisation.

The already depressed land value of the area (located on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) and its resultant enclave status made it available to Natives arriving in Prince Rupert.<sup>37</sup> Indian loitering had been attributed to poor accommodation.<sup>38</sup> Limited vacancies and, one suspects, a general unwillingness of hoteliers to accommodate Native guests were compounded by the absence of Native land owners in Prince Rupert. Effectively, the inability of Native peoples to find accommodation within the city demonstrates that accommodation itself served as a "site" of racialisation.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> King Tai occupied a tenuous position in Prince Rupert. He was recognized as perhaps the most affluent and influential member of Prince Rupert's Chinese community and as such was accorded some respect as a merchant, but he never figured in a broader social context.

<sup>35</sup> *The Empire*, July 9, 1915.

<sup>36</sup> *The Empire* reported a raid on Chinese premises located on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue on February 20, 1918 and on the 25<sup>th</sup> another raid, this one on Fulton Street, led by an elderly Chinese man. These events indicate retaliation or at the very least divisiveness amongst Prince Rupert's Chinese community.

<sup>37</sup> Interesting in itself as the official Census reported few native persons residing within Prince Rupert proper. However, multitudinous news reports suggest otherwise.

<sup>38</sup> Crerar, "Prince Rupert, British Columbia," p. 164.

<sup>39</sup> The idea of "racially" specific accommodation will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

Coupled with the desire to maintain reservation permits--another racialised "site"--Natives neither rented nor purchased land in Prince Rupert.<sup>40</sup>

Loss of status--the systemic obstacle to Native land ownership under the Indian Act--also suggests a desire to limit the presence of non-"White" persons off reservations. Further evidence of this desire in Prince Rupert is the city council's rejection of Indian agent C.C. Perry's request to establish a hostelry for visiting Indians. Arguments that a hostel would increase the amount of trade conducted by Indians in Prince Rupert were overturned as "the object should be not to attract them [natives] to Prince Rupert but to keep them away".<sup>41</sup>

Coinciding with the rejection of a hostel was the city solicitor's further comment that fish canning factories should be established on "their own reserves". This introduced an additional aspect of spatial relations that distanced the reserve from Prince Rupert. Residency in Prince Rupert was determined by or, rather determined, a Native's status in the eyes of the authorities. The reserve system established in the nineteenth century British North America "introduced new modes of demarcation between natives and non-natives. Places were now marked by their position within a legal apparatus that favoured some groups and constrained others".<sup>42</sup> Thus, Natives were racialised through institutional definitions of "space" and their place within the ordering of land ownership.

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<sup>40</sup> Crerar, p. 164. Reservation rights would be lost if a native person rented or owned property in Prince Rupert.

<sup>41</sup> *The Empire*, June 26 and 28, 1912. The city solicitor felt that the facility would be used primarily by Native women and that most of these women became "bad" in the city, therefore the idea was dismissed as unwise. Alderman Maitland was also firmly against an Indian hostelry located in the city.

<sup>42</sup> Clayton, "Geographies of the Lower Skeena," p. 51.

Society and “space” served to racialize people as “Natives and immigrants found themselves in new settlements composed of different peoples in new social configurations”.<sup>43</sup> Shifting Native locale affected relations with “Whites” and,<sup>44</sup> while it was difficult to racialize a specific region (the reserve being the obvious exception), much creative energy was spent racialising “Native” “social space”. If on the reserve, they were Indians who could potentially be redeemed through careful instruction in British value systems; if off the reserve they would become drunkards at the mercy of unscrupulous “blind pig” operators and a disruptive element of society. Either way, Natives were regarded as wards to be protected, while their lack of land ownership reflected Native status in Prince Rupert. Prince Rupert itself, and the reservation, served as a geographic “sites” of racialisation, as much for Native as some non-Native peoples.

### “White” Trash

A last element in the physical geography of Prince Rupert reflects the importance of class. Housing was directly related to class, in that those who could afford the prime lots established themselves apart from those who could not pay the cost of housing in “choice” neighbourhoods. In essence that meant that those “with a view” were the haves and those without were the have-nots.<sup>45</sup> Most

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<sup>43</sup> Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*, p. 137.

<sup>44</sup> Clayton, “Geographies of the Lower Skeena,” p. 55.

<sup>45</sup> The topography of Prince Rupert is hilled as it slopes up the mountainside but is intersected by a couple of ravines and low-lying areas as you move away from the waterfront.

of those without were fishermen. As Scandinavians constituted the largest “White” “racial” group involved in local fishing, it follows that Scandinavians were housed in similar quarters of Prince Rupert.<sup>46</sup> While conveniently “White” when discussing obviously non-“White” people, Scandinavians were nevertheless racialised as a group and by occupation in Prince Rupert. Their existence shows that there was a significant correlation among “race”, class and “space” in Prince Rupert.

The human geography of Prince Rupert also affected more than tangible land ownership; it helped shape the ownership of social “space”. De facto segregation sustained the immutability of the perceptions of “Asians”, given that few Whites had much contact with “Asians” outside the competitive market place.<sup>47</sup> The limited social presence of “Asians” meant their relations with non-“Asians” were constrained--perhaps reinforcing prejudices because of the lack of meaningful personal interaction. That no forum was available for such non-competitive interaction among “racial” groups can be construed as a feature of development in Prince Rupert as different facilities were made available to people based on “race”.<sup>48</sup> During the 1918 flu epidemic emergency facilities for native people were established at the Salvation Army headquarters rather than integrate their care with the “White” population of Prince Rupert. Also, “space”--even

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<sup>46</sup> John Adams, “Prince Rupert, British Columbia,” *Economic Geography* 14 (1938), p. 176. Scandinavians is a heterogeneous classification in this instance.

<sup>47</sup> Roy, *A White Man's Province*, p. 13.

<sup>48</sup> R.G. Large, *Prince Rupert A Gateway To Alaska* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press Limited, 1960), p. 101. Also, “space”--even public “space”--was charted by class/respectability as women

public “space”--was chartered by class/respectability as women from the restricted district could only conduct retail business during specified hours. The de facto segregation of people in Prince Rupert is highlighted by the established patterns of regulation--connecting ideas of “space” and “race”.

Particular groups erected halls and other meeting places to serve their own needs; occasionally these halls were let to other groups for specific functions but none was designed to serve as a multi-“ethnic” meeting place. Likewise, a preliminary overview of Prince Rupert accommodations suggests that people of specific origins registered in different hotels.<sup>49</sup>

Social segregation was closely linked to social position in the town and reflected the racialised development of early Prince Rupert society. Incorporated in the recognition of segregation is the idea that “White” views were shaped by spaces within which non-“White” and “White” interaction was allowed to occur.<sup>50</sup> Interaction could occur at many “sites”--economic, religious, legal, domestic--within Prince Rupert. This idea, that “sites” allocate and/or shift power relationships, could be extrapolated to all interactions between “White” and non-“White” persons in Prince Rupert. The sites of interaction and the position, and role, of the different people within these sites can then form the basis for understanding irrespective of the highly unique setting.

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from the restricted district could only conduct retail business during specified hours. Therefore the idea that “space” and “race” were connected is in keeping with established patterns of regulation.

<sup>49</sup> However, this might reflect wealth rather than “race”, not enough is known to draw substantive conclusions at this point.

<sup>50</sup> Clayton, “Geographies of the Lower Skeena,” p. 56.

It would appear that “space” was racialised in order to meet societal demands to reinforce difference, but as there existed no uniform approach to “race” there was an ongoing negotiation of social boundaries with inclusion/exclusion based on such criteria as language, religion, and phenotype. Geographical and social space, served as the most obvious “site” of racialisation in Prince Rupert.

CHAPTER THREE -- "A COSMOPOLITAN CITY"  
ECONOMIC SITES OF RACIALISATION

One of the most prominent aims of the GTPR officials was to establish Prince Rupert as a metropolis that would soon have a population of 50,000 or more.<sup>1</sup> They carefully mapped out initial development to facilitate the goal of rapid urbanization, by designating commercial and residential "Sections" and by providing sewage, water, and power services. The GTPR officials expected this advance planning and the development of waterfront facilities would hasten growth. To preserve its plans--and potential profits--the GTPR made a concerted effort to protect Prince Rupert from unsanctioned development.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the GTPR's visionaries, notably Charles Melville Hays, were unwilling to tolerate squatters or non-official land sales.<sup>3</sup> Having laid the groundwork, the GTPR was satisfied to let Prince Rupert assume its own momentum, but not its own "progress", an idea that will be more fully developed in Chapter Five. Rampant land speculation marked the opening of Prince Rupert to settlers. That the speculators and settlers were a varied group of individuals is evidenced by the surnames--such as Sajuro, Maw, Iverson, other Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian--of the new property owners. In addition, the lot sales were well publicised in

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<sup>1</sup> Large, *Prince Rupert*, p. 1. This aspiration is presented as coinciding with the notion of empire building.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Leonard, *'A Thousand Blunders': The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company and Northern British Columbia, 1902-1919* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1996), pp. 24-5. Townsites were appreciated as sources of income and not as long-term development by GTPR officials.

<sup>3</sup> It was possible to acquire temporary mineral rights from the government which is how John Houston, editor of *The Empire*, was able to remain in the townsite against the company's wishes.

southern B.C. and along the GTPR.<sup>4</sup> Pattullo himself was drawn to Prince Rupert because of the town's highly publicised potential. He invested heavily in real estate and became one of the town's foremost boosters.

Ethnic diversity soon became a feature of Prince Rupert as it was of many B.C. communities. The people of British Columbia ranged "from the prevailing Britishness of society at the region's political and administrative centre in Victoria to the social mixing of aboriginal and European peoples on the resource periphery".<sup>5</sup> The Prince Rupert Pioneers' Association's data on "race", and other early breakdowns of the population, reflect more the characteristics of the periphery. However, construing these statistics as completely accurate and insightful is another matter. In 1907 the residential population of Prince Rupert was 150 persons: 123 Europeans (unspecified); 15 Japanese; 9 Chinese; and 3 local Natives. This breakdown suggests a predisposition to hierarchically differentiate persons based on categories encompassing "non-White" or "coloured" over nationality.<sup>6</sup> Yet, it must be noted that, as with the census reports, the physical presence of people of specific "race" does not always correlate with the perception or the reality.

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<sup>4</sup> See T.C. Meredith, "Boosting British Columbia: The Creation and Rise of Invermere," *Urban History Review/Revue d'Histoire Urbaine*, vol XVI no 3 (February 1988), for an example of the tradition of boosterism in town development.

<sup>5</sup> McDonald, *Making Vancouver*, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Jack Fuller, "Earliest Days in Prince Rupert," (1950), p. 8.

## SOJOURNERS OR SETTLERS

In 1906 the first workers to arrive on Kaien Island were surveyors intent on mapping the future site of Prince Rupert. Joel Pillsbury, assistant harbour engineer, later recalled how two survey parties comprised of thirty men arrived.<sup>7</sup> He made no mention of their "race" or nationalities apart from noting that the crews included three Chinese cooks. This indicates that the Chinese members of the crew were incrementally more "Other" as no other individuals were mentioned in conjunction with their "nationality" or "ethnic" or "racial" origins. Visibility played a large factor, as did perception of difference as the Chinese cooks accounted for only a tenth of the crews' number.

Insight into the perception of the "Other" might be gleaned from the process of social definition which accompanied subsequent settlement. The established order saw British persons, or people of British descent, as "settlers" with full rights.<sup>8</sup> Other Europeans who shared similar values were encompassed under the auspices of "settler", but non-British persons had the potential to be defined as "immigrants" or "sojourners," in effect the "Other". In this same formulaic approach to social definition (nationality plus value systems) Native peoples were without rights--a virtual non-entity--as they were

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<sup>7</sup> Joel H. Pillsbury, "Notes on the Beginnings of Prince Rupert From Questions Asked," (n/p, 1942), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> McDonald, *Making Vancouver*, p. 24. By definition respectability included many types of workers or people, but all were "White" of British or American descent and understood the values and could comport themselves in society.

perceived as either childlike or as a dying breed.<sup>9</sup> The social definition of a settler in Prince Rupert racialised individuals and groups and relied on assumptions regarding economic participation in the community.

It would appear that a vested interest in maintaining control over the perception of difference contributed to both the process(es) of racialisation and the general development of Prince Rupert. In the editorial notes of an article entitled "For Naturalization" the *Prince Rupert Optimist* advocated the privileging of the categorisation "White" over that of nationality when claiming

This city has a large enough problem on its hands in the Oriental labor question without creating a strife or ill-feeling between the various nationalities of white men. Prince Rupert is bound to be a cosmopolitan city, and every white man of clean character is welcome.<sup>10</sup>

That sentiment suggests that, while attention was paid to the numerical presence of different groups within Prince Rupert, more emphasis was placed on character. Yet, one can speculate that character itself was at the whim of racialisation and that "White" went a long way in establishing the good character of a "settler". As one *Empire* observer pointedly noted, "this is a British community",<sup>11</sup> a statement that is an affirmation of both British authority and superiority. The observation was made regarding businesses which operated on

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<sup>9</sup> Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), pp. 16 and 38. *The Daily News*, February 3, 1914 "Great Chief Makes Eloquent Plea for Dying Indian Race".

<sup>10</sup> *Prince Rupert Optimist*, May 2, 1910. 136 applications for naturalization were made with only 20 being granted largely due to the judge's insistence on personal appearances given the large foreign population in Prince Rupert. There was no indication of what comprised "cosmopolitan" which suggests that this idea--cosmopolitanism--was both familiar and understood within the community and therefore no qualifications were offered.

<sup>11</sup> *The Empire*, October 7, 1918.

Sundays which was contrary to British law; significantly, it is the observer noted that the offenders “were mainly those of foreign extraction”.<sup>12</sup> In other words Prince Rupert’s economic development was a “site” of racialisation that inevitably differentiated people of non-British origins. It invariably tied racialisation to arguments about class; the offenders were breaking ranks with their British peers, thereby demonstrating how racialisation occurred.

### CLASS ATTITUDES

Introducing class to the relationship between the process of racialisation and the economic “sites” of Prince Rupert may seem additive, but it identifies how ideas of “race” were bonded with other means of thinking about human difference. Workers shared “a common masculine subculture but faced obvious differences of occupational status and ethnicity. Race divided workers fundamentally”.<sup>13</sup> Class division introduces the potential to study how relative economic situations might coincide with valuations of “race” or contribute to racialisation within the community.<sup>14</sup> It is not possible to divorce all aspects of class from discussions on “race”. As one justification in *The Empire* went: “FILTH, IMMORALITY, AND DRUNKENNESS [were] found in every city on

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> McDonald, *Making Vancouver*, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> Warburton, “Race and Class in British Columbia,” p. 182. Cautioning historians not to view “racial” diversity without recognising the corresponding role of class, Warburton notes that “race relations, as found in most colonial settings, are not the result of mental factors or collective representations of whole societies but are bound up with particular forms of division of labour and the contradictions generated by an imposed mode of production.”

the Pacific Coast boasting of a Chinese quarter” therefore the city’s working class must be “White” if Prince Rupert was to be clean and sober.<sup>15</sup>

Another editor who indirectly addressed the relationship between class and “race” felt that race hatred was being incited among workers through an “offensive reference to the white European workers in the city” and that

No one in Prince Rupert will deny that most of us would prefer men of our own breed to Latins, Teutons or Slavs. But failing an ample and immediate supply of Anglo-Saxons, the presence of men and women of the other European races is warranted on economic and sociological grounds. Even from the racial point of view they are valuable as a bulwark against an Asiatic invasion.<sup>16</sup>

This qualification of “White” betrays a deeply nuanced understanding of “race” which invariably privileged certain “races”. The justification of difference was necessary for elites trying to cope with the presence of a large non-British working class in Prince Rupert. The retrieval of incidents, such as the editorial commentary cited, demonstrates how resilient were notions concerning “race”, and that people were racialised according to different circumstances--in this case the homogenised “Asian” was perceived as an economic threat.

Yet, the interest in class is still more subtle because it has the potential to engage more than differences of wealth but also differences in relation to the means of production and the ownership of labour.<sup>17</sup> There are inherent

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<sup>15</sup> *The Empire*, January 30, 1909, “Can Prince Rupert Be Made A City That Will Be Clean, Sober, and White?”

<sup>16</sup> *Prince Rupert Optimist*, January 6, 1911. Indicating that the need for a working class was tempered by the desire for a “White” if not British workforce.

<sup>17</sup> See K.E. Luckhardt, “Prince Rupert: A ‘Tale of Two Cities’,” *Sa Ts’e Historical Perspectives on Northern British Columbia*, ed. Thomas Thorner (Prince George: College of New Caledonia Press, 1989), for discussion on Prince Rupert encompassing two coinciding communities: the development city and the working-class city.

contradictions in a capitalist society and one of those is an ability to challenge the social structure economically (in some instances wealth did not always equate with privilege). Any person who worked long hours had the ability to succeed monetarily yet the dominant society negatively racialised groups who were perceived as an economic threat, as is evidenced by fervent discussions regarding specific pools of labourers. For all the virulent anti-“Asian” sentiment that was present in B.C., the “Asians” (and one might include all immigrants) were responding to the demands and contradictions of industrial capitalism that thrived on competition.<sup>18</sup>

Within Prince Rupert, as in all communities, people of different status or class co-existed. Class is a socio-economic means of differentiating people and, in recognising the systemic nature of racialisation, it follows that ideas concerning “race” are not class specific. In order to develop, Prince Rupert needed a labouring class and those in a position to direct “progress” went about acquiring this work force. The awareness of class as a “site” contributes to an understanding of the process of racialisation in Prince Rupert.

### Dollars and Disputes

Consequently, for the GTPR, “White” cannerymen, and other labour-intensive employers who frequently hired the cheapest source of labour (which usually meant immigrants), the process of racialisation was necessary to exert

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<sup>18</sup> Warburton, “Race and Class in British Columbia,” pp. 278, 281.

power over potential employees. It has even been suggested that the middle class was less racist than the working class because its members faced limited job competition.<sup>19</sup> It would appear that racialisation occurred on all fronts as the actions and beliefs of those in authority positions racialised workers and as economic competition between the different groups of workers exaggerated differences among them. That many employers chose to hire people of non-“White” origin became a point of contention for many British labourers who felt their wages were undercut by sojourners.

In Prince Rupert, people of “Asian” origins were most frequently targeted as a racialised “class”. The non-“Asian” working class was encouraged to refuse paid labour rather than work alongside “Asians”, while elites, as a class, were admonished to cease hiring “Asian” employees. In one instance *The Empire* boldly asserted that:

There will be no Asiatics employed on Kaien Island, if only white workingmen do their whole duty to themselves. Asiatics cannot secure employment alone. They must work alongside white men and women. How many white working men and women will throw up their jobs rather than work with Asiatics? White working men and women, do your duty to yourselves.<sup>20</sup>

The economic impetus to organize along “racial” lines affirms the resilience and prioritization of difference based on “race” rather than class.

The formation of Prince Rupert’s Workingmen’s Association (PRWA) in the spring of 1909 heralded an attempt to recognize the needs of a specific

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<sup>19</sup> Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West A History of British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991), p. 147.

<sup>20</sup> *The Empire*, May 1, 1909.

segment of the community. The Association, formed to represent all trades, had approximately 300 members. Its treasurer was John Houston, the rabid anti-“Asiatic” editor of *The Empire*. The PRWA’s mandate was equally concerned with securing fair wages and the “non-employment of Asiatics” in Prince Rupert. It never targeted any other “race”.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, in Prince Rupert “White” most often referred to citizens of British descent but shifted to incorporate other European groups under particular circumstances, especially when it seemed necessary to form a bulwark against the perceived “Asian” tide. It is clear that this shifting--between economic and ethnic conflict--caused its own stress within the community framework. The inclusion of all Europeans under the label “White” when faced with a perceived “Asian” threat belies the difficulty of maintaining “fellowship” among workers of different backgrounds.<sup>22</sup>

One instance of economic fellowship vividly illustrates the differentiation between people of British and European descent. The “Battle of Kelly’s Cut” was the culmination of continued efforts to improve the lot of Prince Rupert’s working class. In March 1911, railway workers went on strike because their contracted wage was not being honoured; they were soon joined by city workers who went out in sympathy when scabs were brought in. This act of solidarity was backed by the Prince Rupert Industrial Association and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)--renowned for its organization of unskilled immigrant

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<sup>21</sup> *Labour Gazette*. April 1909, vol 9, p. 1035.

<sup>22</sup> See Cole Harris, “Industry and the Good Life,” p. 333, for discussion of “fellowship” and unity among workers.

workers.<sup>23</sup> A convulsive meeting of strikers, primarily European immigrants, and the local authorities, all people of British origin, on April 6, 1911 saw 56 workers arrested, 4 people wounded, others receiving various injuries, and the union hall ransacked.<sup>24</sup> Of the allegedly 4500 who participated in the Battle “only one Anglo-Saxon [was placed] under arrest...but he [was] not suspected of causing trouble”.<sup>25</sup> In his closing remarks on the Battle, William Mahlon Davis, reported to the Department of Labour that the “ignorant foreigners [were] undoubtedly tools of white agitation”<sup>26</sup> thereby removing agency from the lower classes, and “races”, and placing the instigation of the battle within the context of a British power struggle. The Battle vividly illustrates how class and “race” were not separated when identifying individuals within the community.

In response to the Battle, the Prince Rupert Trades and Labour Council was formed in 1912 to represent all labour, specifically the largely foreign and unskilled who were without union representation. However, it was not until 1914 that the Council held any influence in the municipality and even then the unions found the Council conservative because it refused to be used for politics.<sup>27</sup> The

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<sup>23</sup> Mark Leier, *Where The Fraser River Flows The Industrial Workers of the World in British Columbia* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1990), p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Strikes and Lockouts, file # 3326. William Mahlon Davis (Prince Rupert City Engineer) to the Department of Labour, April 8, 1911.

<sup>25</sup> *Nelson News*, April 8, 1911. Strikes and Lockouts, file #3326.

<sup>26</sup> Strikes and Lockouts, file #3326.

<sup>27</sup> *BC Federationist*, May 22, 1914 and September 8, 1916. In 1914 the election of Mayor Newton and 4 alderman that the Trades and Labour Council had endorsed indicated a rise in municipal influence.

most important point, however, was that the process of racialisation made the creation of a strong united force for labour impossible.

The shifting nature of racialisation intersects with personal identity and introduces the idea of labour groups being played off of one another. Encouraged by their employers in a bid to block union activity; “the labour movement struggled for an 8-hour day, union rates, [and] against the importation of cheaper Oriental labour”.<sup>28</sup> These struggles were part of widespread wage competition among different groups in British Columbia.<sup>29</sup> As pointed out, “distinctions based on race were a common feature in all industries employing large numbers of workers from specific racial groups, and they inevitably posed problems for union organizers.”<sup>30</sup> As organized labour was bent on locking out competition from groups not under their auspices, union halls and industrial negotiations became sites of racialisation. The unusual, or perhaps usual, hiring methods employed by canneries suggests that unions were sites of racialisation because the “division of labour in plants reflected differences in gender and race, and this feature was incorporated into union agreements”.<sup>31</sup>

A second group that was frequently racialised and used to control labour

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<sup>28</sup> Luckhardt, “Prince Rupert: A ‘Tale of Two Cities’,” p. 318.

<sup>29</sup> J. Donald Wilson, “Matti Kurikka: Finnish-Canadian Intellectual” *BC Studies* 20 (Winter 1973-74), p. 51.

<sup>30</sup> Alicja Muszynski, “The Organization of Women and Ethnic Minorities in a Resource Industry: A Case Study of the Unionization of Shoreworkers in the B.C. Fishing Industry 1937-1949” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 19 (Spring 1984), p. 98. While Muszynski’s study is of a later time frame it reflects a more highly organized version of previous action by groups within the fishing industry.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

were women. Not unexpectedly, it is difficult to recover what paid labour women performed in Prince Rupert.<sup>32</sup> However, the city directory indicates that many women worked in service industries. It becomes apparent that certain positions were filled specifically according to "race" as in the case of the Pioneer Laundry which employed large numbers of European women and the Phone Company which used an apparently British work force.

Yet, it is as a direct result of the process of racialisation that we are aware of the gendered differences of work in Prince Rupert. The recognition of "race" and hiring practices based on perceptions of "racial" characteristics reveals women's work such as the practice of hiring Native women and occasionally "White" women to work in canneries. Because of the way racialisation occurred, it was necessary to distinguish between Native and "White" workers; that they were women appears to have been secondary. "Race" was the determining factor in the recognition of women's work.

"White" women were only hired to work in canneries located near Prince Rupert,<sup>33</sup> and since they were provided with daily transportation very few of them actually resided in company houses. Some people expressed concern for sanitary conditions experienced by "White" women; no concerns were expressed about conditions endured by non-"White" women.<sup>34</sup> As Native women frequently

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<sup>32</sup> Only five women were noted in County Court (Prince Rupert), Firm Declarations, between 1908-40 and of these, two were Lebanese; two were most likely German, and one likely British. This indicates that more women worked for others than owned their own business, but as there are no specific records concerning employment of women it is too early to draw conclusions on how the process of racialisation contributed to women's paid labour.

<sup>33</sup> Muszynski, "The Organization of Women," p. 92.

<sup>34</sup> *The Empire* October 10, 1908, and *The Daily News*, February 5, 1914.

comprised a large portion of cannery labour, gender does not seem to be the deciding factor dictating different treatment.<sup>35</sup>

The scrutiny and treatment of “White” women revealed, through gender, the roles of their female Native and male Chinese counterparts. *The Daily News* reported in 1914 that “White” women were being recruited to break the Chinese labour monopoly in the canneries as the previous padrone system gave Chinese workers too much power.<sup>36</sup> The gendered aspects of hiring practices reveal the process of racialisation. Two highly specific work forces were manipulated to reduce the position of wage labour and “race” was a significant factor.

There is little record of “White” men being hired to work in the canneries beyond supervisory capacities; men of different “races” were available to work in canneries but “White” men were not. Similarly, there is no mention of “White” men cooking, yet Chinese men were commonly so employed. Unequal treatment within gender categories implies that personal identity was bounded in both gender and “race” and that it is impossible to divorce the two. Another instance supporting the boundaries of human difference was the fact that Native men came to act as Native women’s representatives--a behaviour which “probably reflected the Euro-Canadians’ habit of dealing with males in all business transactions”<sup>37</sup>--

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<sup>35</sup> In order to induce Native women to work many canneries hired Native fishermen, which supports the argument that gender was racialised within the work force, Carol Cooper, “Native Women of the Northern Pacific Coast: An Historical Perspective, 1830-1900” *Journal of Canadian Studies*, vol 27 no 4 (Winter 1992-93), p. 66.

<sup>36</sup> *The Daily News*, February 5, 1914.

<sup>37</sup> Cooper, “Native Women of the Northern Pacific,” p. 53. Representation by men was not a traditional practice.

thus even gender authority was muted by the process of racialisation.

Congratulating Prince Rupert's citizens for ending their "dependence" on Chinese services, *The Empire* urged: "Let us make Prince Rupert the one town in British Columbia where white men and women can earn a living at any calling without being classed with Chinese".<sup>38</sup> In a similar appeal, Andrew Mereer of the Indian Land Committee complained that Natives resented being treated "as if we were like Japanese or Chinese".<sup>39</sup> The concern over being "classed" with the Chinese reveals a negative hegemonic perception of the Chinese as both a class and a "racial" group. However, the declaration calls on those competing for work and not those in a position to hire labourers; betraying the close ties between class and "race". The complex interaction of these two constructs--class and "race"--played out in all levels of society with inducements to maintain both the difference and the hierarchy.

Reporting on a meeting concerned with a "White B.C." in 1912, *The Daily News* felt that Premier Richard McBride must surely recognize that the province was too young to dictate who cannerymen could employ.<sup>40</sup> This sentiment indicates that the economic strength of the middle and upper classes was such that they could not effectively be brought to heel over the issue of "race" when it came to hiring practices and clear economic self-interest. Thus, it would seem that there is a degree of truth in the assertion that different classes responded

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<sup>38</sup> *The Empire*, March 21, 1908.

<sup>39</sup> *The Empire*, January 22, 1912.

<sup>40</sup> *The Daily News*, July 16, 1912.

differently to the demands, and created different manifestations, of the process of racialisation in Prince Rupert.

At the mercy of an unstable and highly mobile work force the GTPR,

would employ 'any kind of immigrant.' Though the company also sought labourers from Russia, the obvious alternative was workers from China or Japan, and Hays had requested the import of Asian labour even before construction began in British Columbia.<sup>41</sup>

This request was poorly received in Prince Rupert where it was felt that there were "sufficient Oriental labourers....If contractors want Oriental Labour".<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, the GTPR attempted to assuage outraged workers by claiming it used Chinese and Japanese labour only for menial tasks, ignoring the many Japanese employees of the railway who served as axemen.<sup>43</sup> While the significance of the axemen is perhaps lost in time, the idea of specific labour being performed by differing individuals is not; status was accorded by the nature of work and who was allowed to perform certain tasks. The relationships among workers--who performed what tasks--often involved occupations that were racialised. Likewise, an employer's willingness to hire certain labourers was predicated on, and demonstrated the process of, racialisation.

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<sup>41</sup> Leonard, *A Thousand Blunders*, p. 104.

<sup>42</sup> *The Optimist*, October 1, 1909. The article "Oriental Labor" treated this labour force as a commodity.

<sup>43</sup> Leonard, *A Thousand Blunders*, p. 107, and *The Empire*, November 16, 1907, "G.T.P. Favors Japanese".

## Identity and/or Occupation

In Prince Rupert social status, class and occupation all served to situate individuals within the community. As “race” also contributed to this identification blueprint it is important to evaluate how an individual’s “race” might become enmeshed in other aspects of social identity or--to put it a little differently--how the process of racialisation informed daily life.

Racialisation, for example, can be seen by considering the occupation of “cook” a common economic role for people of Chinese origin in Prince Rupert. In reporting on an opium raid by police; the *Daily News* commented that “Employers of Chinese Labour in the City Were in Great Distress This Morning”<sup>44</sup>--they had no one to cook their food. The direct link between occupation and a specific group of people helped establish the closely bound nature of “cook” with perceptions about Chinese identity in Prince Rupert.

A second racialised occupation was that of fishermen. John Adams has asserted that by 1915 Swedish and Norwegian immigrants had increased greatly and “as the halibut fishing industry has increased in relative importance in Prince Rupert, so have the Scandinavian fishermen”.<sup>45</sup> His statement indicates the occupation’s association with a particular group in Prince Rupert. An additional twist is added when this differentiated group is also identified as “White” within the broader context of the fishing industry. The Fishermen’s Protective

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<sup>44</sup> *The Daily News*, May 15, 1913.

<sup>45</sup> Adams, “Prince Rupert, British Columbia,” pp. 179-80.

Association was organized to “secure to all white fishermen of B.C. the right to obtain a living by fishing in B.C. waters,...to resist the encroachment of Asiatics and other aliens by compelling the government to issue fishing licenses to white fishermen in preference to Asiatics”.<sup>46</sup> Given the predominance of Scandinavians in the fishing industry their inclusion as “White” further demonstrates the connection between occupation and racialisation.

Unlike the acknowledged influence of Scandinavians, the Native presence in fishing was often subsumed by the canneries’ historical reliance on Native labour. Canneries customarily sent their own agents to Native villages to hire labour. This recruitment process demonstrates that hiring practices varied within industries and supports the contention that occupations were racialised. Many plants were deliberately located on or near reserves because of the available labour pool, suggesting that some quality about this particular labour market made it unique and attractive. Native labour was an integral part of the fishing industry and cannery owners and operators, acting on their ideas concerning “race”, sought out a highly particular work force. The cannery, with its individualistic hiring practices, is another site of racialisation--beliefs about specific groups were articulated through hiring practices.

In Canadian history, Natives have occupied a unique position of social distinction. The underlying precept has varied from savage to noble savage to dying “race”, but regardless of the common attitudes and the law, they were rarely

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<sup>46</sup> *The Daily News*, March 29, 1916, “Joint Action By Coast Fishermen”. A similar policy had previously been implemented as 170 licenses were reserved on the Skeena River for

viewed as full citizens. As Howard Adams has remarked, it was a perspective established during initial contact all across Canada:

If natives had become integrated into Canadian society it would have been impossible to separate them from other people as a class of special workers. However, as long as Indians were isolated as a special group, they were easily exploited....<sup>47</sup>

The fact that Natives were conditionally isolated--in ways similar to the "Chinese class"--shows how the process of isolating labour can be viewed as an act of racialisation; it was predicated on the recognition of "racial" difference and was adopted by society to meet specific economic and social needs.

The differentiation of Native consumers was also an accepted practice in early Prince Rupert with reports that "the Indians here are making lots of money and this Fall will have lots to spend"; "the Indians are the most welcome visitors to town of any for they buy large supplies here".<sup>48</sup> In this instance the recognition of difference in Prince Rupert is blatantly predicated on "race" and encourages racialised economic exploitation.

Indians were also differentiated as employees. When the editor of *The Empire* wrote "An Indian never does anything for a white man for nothing",<sup>49</sup> he was marking Natives as an economic group--one involved in paid labour--and one juxtaposed with "Whites" as employers. In reality, though, he was negatively

independent White fishermen to encourage settlement in the North, British Columbia, *Sessional Papers*, Fisheries Commissioner's Report For 1912, 1913, p. 17.

<sup>47</sup> Howard Adams, *Prison of Grass Canada From the Native Point of View* (Toronto: New Press, 1975), p. 14.

<sup>48</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, July 23, 1910, and *The Daily News*, October 2, 1914.

<sup>49</sup> *The Empire*, September 28, 1907.

reifying Native people for typical wage-labour behaviour and no other group was likewise criticized for similar actions in Prince Rupert.

An *Optimist* report further suggests how racialisation shaped the fishing industry when it reported how agitation by unidentified Skeena fishermen had resulted in the revocation of fishing licenses held by Natives on the Naas and Skeena.<sup>50</sup> At the turn of the century approximately 44% of the salmon fishermen were Native; if Native fishermen had to relocate the fear was that Native women would be unavailable to work in the canneries.<sup>51</sup> Given that a large portion of fishermen in the Prince Rupert area were Scandinavian, or more loosely “White”, the agitation clearly involved assumptions concerning “race”. While the issue was never fully explained, nor its outcome documented, it signifies competition based on ideas concerning “race”, one of the key determinants of the fishing industry in the Prince Rupert region.

In yet another incident, the Skeena River Canneries Cut ensured that the bulk of independent licenses were purchased by “White” men in Prince Rupert. The canneries gave Indian boats to Japanese fishermen to make up for the shortage of available licenses; it was “well known that Japs work[ed] harder”.<sup>52</sup> The premise behind the re-allocation of licenses was an understanding of “race”;

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<sup>50</sup> *Prince Rupert Optimist*, May 23, 1910. Two ringleaders Jim Fleuin and Robert Nelson were mentioned, but no others were named.

<sup>51</sup> The reliance on native women was unchanging under the period studied, as *The Daily News*, July 2, 1918, noted that while Native fishermen were not being licensed by canneries who had contracted their labour, these same canneries would “graciously permit the Indian women and girls to fill cans.” It is significant that both Native men and women were racialised.

<sup>52</sup> *The Daily News*, June 10, 1914.

it provides a readily identifiable and significant moment in the racialising of Prince Rupert's fishing history.

In a different fashion, the fishing industry also served as a site for interaction between "Native" and Japanese persons in Prince Rupert. The annual report of the Department of Fisheries for the period noted a long-term agreement between the two groups in the development of a lucrative export operation. Japanese fishermen hired local Native people to help them catch and salt dog salmon which was then exported to Japan. This operation was independently organized and, while there are no available records of transactions, its existence showed that Native and Japanese people could have direct contact outside the sanctioned relations observed by the dominant society.<sup>53</sup>

More documented were "White" perceptions of Japanese people, again marking the fishing industry as a site of racialisation. In 1907, *The Empire* reported that "There Are No Canadian Fishermen"--the canneries in Port Essington had given control to "Japanese Coolies".<sup>54</sup> Responding to concerns about the Japanese presence in Prince Rupert, G.H. Barnard, the Conservative member for Victoria, introduced a bill in Parliament to restore the industry to "our own people". Barnard's efforts to bar the issue of fishing licenses to fishermen not meeting the standard physique of the naval reserve as "the Japs are invariably

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<sup>53</sup> Canada, *Sessional Papers*, Fisheries Inspector's Report-British Columbia, Paper no 22,1906, p. 205, 1907, p. 32, and-1911, p. 240.

<sup>54</sup> *The Empire*, November 30, 1907.

undersized they cannot hope to comply with such a provision”;<sup>55</sup> revealed the racialised motivation behind his legislative initiative. While the bill did not pass first reading, it showed how legislation directed at a particular industry could reinforce the process of racialisation. This bill directly juxtaposed occupation and “race” and indicated how public perception of “race” determined occupation. It is one more example of how the fishing industry was a “site” of racialisation.<sup>56</sup>

The notion of social entity bounded in class and “race” was reinforced by the targeting and discussion of racialised occupations within the fishing industry.<sup>57</sup> This can be seen in the different hiring practices for Chinese, Native, and “White” cannery workers.<sup>58</sup> While the job description seldom varied, the means of procuring labour did. “White” canners had little direct contact with Chinese sojourners who were recruited through contractors responsible for hiring, paying, and feeding them.<sup>59</sup> Suggestions that such explicitly racially conscious hiring practices directly contributed to low living standards and segregation,<sup>60</sup> say

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<sup>55</sup> *Prince Rupert Optimist*, December 17, 1910 and House of Commons Debates, Fisheries Amendment Act, Thursday December 15, 1910, p. 1343.

<sup>56</sup> See Frank Sidney Wright, comp. *Northern British Columbia Index and Guide: General Information of the District, Detailed Description of Settlements and Industrials, residents of Prince Rupert and Outlying Settlements, 1916* (Prince Rupert: F.S. Wright, 1916), for the nationalities of employees in salmon fisheries: 15% White, 44% Indian, 6% Japanese and 35% Chinese; in halibut fisheries: 100% White. The use of “White” includes non-British persons.

<sup>57</sup> John Norris, *Strangers Entertained A History of the Ethnic Groups of British Columbia* (Vancouver: Evergreen Press Limited, 1971), p. 124, suggests that the occupational patterns of Scandinavians (Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Finns [not according to Census]) reflected those of B.C. and contributed to a relative ease of social adjustment. For a related theory on Scandinavians’ environmental adjustment see Crerar, “Prince Rupert, British Columbia,” p. 43.

<sup>58</sup> Muszynski, “The Organization of Women,” p. 92.

<sup>59</sup> *Prince Rupert Optimist*, March 16, 1911, “Pacific Northern Emporium Chinese Labor - Contractors and Employment Agency and Intelligence Office” (advertisement).

<sup>60</sup> Gillian Creese, “Organizing Against Racism in the Workplace: Chinese Workers in Vancouver Before the Second World War,” *Racism in Canada*, ed. Ormond McKague (Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1991), pp. 34-5.

little about how the sojourners felt about these practices. There are indications of in-group camaraderie, but no substantive evidence that this compensated for, or alleviated the strain of, disassociation with mainstream society.<sup>61</sup>

In reviewing the distinctions between settler and sojourner, the economic role of both groups emerged as a deciding factor in how different people were received in Prince Rupert. The argument and differentiation extended into notions of class and invoked strongly held opinions about “race” to justify differential treatment of groups within the community. Labour organization and agitation, hiring practices, and occupation all emphasize economics as a site of racialisation in Prince Rupert.

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<sup>61</sup> See E.A. Harris, *Spokeshute*, and Clayton, “Geographies of the Lower Skeena”, pp. 48-9, for general impressions on the lives of local Chinese persons.

## CHAPTER FOUR -- POWER, POLITICS AND PRIVILEGE THE MUNICIPALITY AS A SITE OF RACIALISATION

Individuals and groups alike are exposed to public scrutiny through participation in daily life. Behaviour, circumspect or otherwise, is frequently commented on by casual observers, law enforcement, and local newspapers within the municipal setting. Racialisation is evident in the city by-laws, education practices, the creation of civic pride, public amusements and the development of wartime allegiance. As a "site" of racialisation the municipality allows for heightened public scrutiny, inadvertently betraying the observer as well as the observed.

### GENDER WARS OR IDEOLOGY?

Consideration of gender provides an interesting insight into racialisation in that society's understanding and conscious application of gender roles reveals how people are categorized. Women's inclusion in the newspapers frequently dealt with their participation in social events and/or in their working relationships. Lists of travellers to and from Prince Rupert often included female visitors, as did official accounts of women's organizational efforts for charity. Racialisation can be seen in the dialogue surrounding gender in Prince Rupert.

Having previously reviewed women's role in paid labour it is necessary to acknowledge that some women's work, such as boarding house owners, was

largely ignored in official records. The position of Miss Roehning who owned and operated The Inlander Mess indicates that women were engaged in private enterprise, visible to the community, but not in larger industrial interests. Describing her operation as one of the most comfortable and homelike establishments in Prince Rupert, *The Empire* alluded to her inevitable success.<sup>1</sup> Roehning owned the building and ran the Mess but was not recorded as a business operator. Given the large number of rooming houses catering to specific “racial” or ethnic groups, many of these women were probably of non-British descent.<sup>2</sup> Public notice of women’s work reveals the racialised nature of rooming houses.

The introduction of gender as another site of racialisation is subtle and offers a potential wealth of insight. Both women and men were racialised socially and economically. The subtleties are such that it is difficult to establish if gender affected a racialised society or vice versa. It might be argued that racialisation was also a feature of a gendered society as one “Letter to the Editor” of *The Empire* states “You are a mean, old crank for advocating the non-employment of Japanese. What are we women to do when we want our wood cut and split or other rough work done? When we get white men to do this kind of work, they ask three prices”.<sup>3</sup> This complaint registers how racialisation accommodated the needs of particular groups within Prince Rupert. Women, in

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<sup>1</sup> *The Empire*, June 28, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> In Prince Rupert as elsewhere, rent was a fixed and rigid expense for the largely immigrant working class. See Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc, 1993), p. 75, for boarding as a form of women’s work.

<sup>3</sup> *The Empire*, December 14, 1907.

this instance, felt free to racialize Japanese men in order to fulfill a specific need in their daily lives. Racialisation served a function in society whether it be to acquire cheaper labour or reinforce gender differences.

These trends involving gender and industry help explain how pervasive the process of racialisation was within society. Institutional and political elements within society, in addition to gender, also reveal how public scrutiny within the municipal setting is a “site” of racialisation in Prince Rupert. The necessarily public role of politicians and the expansive influence of their politics were easily scrutinisable as were newspaper editorials.

#### GOSSIP MONGERS OR PURVEYORS OF KNOWLEDGE

Much can be gained through exploring sites of media transmission, in the case of Prince Rupert essentially the press. Prince Rupert’s first paper, *The Empire*, was established in 1907 and was shortly joined by the *Prince Rupert Optimist* in 1909. The christening of Prince Rupert’s second newspaper warrants some attention as the editor rejected the name *Skookum* (the Chinook word for “strong”), because “the boys refuse to have any Siwash served up with a first-class menu of news”--Chinook was a vernacular language employed largely by Native peoples and apparently unsuited to official media communications.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, July 1, 1909. “Name this Paper”.

As both newspapers provided daily editions, presumably there was an active readership (if not large circulation).<sup>5</sup> The papers engaged in a circumspect rivalry, with *The Empire* championing Conservative politics in the face of the *Optimist's* Liberalism. However, the content of both papers reflected similar interests and concerns in their readership. Both papers were written in English and, given that there was no local non-English newspaper, the newspapers in Prince Rupert informed an audience capable of understanding written English.<sup>6</sup> Not only did language delineate media, the subject matter pursued was informed and chosen with a particular audience in mind. Both papers reported social and political movements within the city, yet the local columns were dominated by discussion of and for the British members of society. "Others" rarely appeared in the news except when they ran afoul of the law. Therefore, the source of regular news in Prince Rupert was disseminated in English; was potentially exclusive in its transmission to those unfamiliar with the language; and seldom directly involved people of different "races". Newspapers were a component of systemic racialisation in Prince Rupert.

The newspapers were also themselves sites of racialisation. In their content, advertisements, language, and readership reflected the needs and interests of a particular faction within Prince Rupert: namely, those adept with the

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<sup>5</sup> According to G.H. Pethick, "Reminiscences of a Near Pioneer", typescript, n/d., p. 20, "everyone read *The Empire*".

<sup>6</sup> While this holds true, it is necessary to acknowledge that on two separate occasions *The Empire*, and once *The Daily News*, published brief notices in a language other than English. However, as the bulk of the paper was in English it merely assumes that the readership affected were familiar with both languages. Similarly, the group(s) affected--most likely Scandinavians--had to have occupied a significant position in the community for the papers to agree to print non-

dominant discourse. The papers' "racial" content often furthered ideas about specific groups through their commentary which was seldom challenged. Many articles had no local content, but were chosen with the local audience in mind. A random selection of these articles featured "racial" tension such as Vancouver's attempts to resolve the "Asian" problem, the federal government's use of head taxes, and American concern over "Black" people.

Racialisation was even more firmly institutionalized in local politics. Whose voices were heard and represented in Prince Rupert? Was racialisation a factor? The uncontroverted truth can be seen in candidates' avowed positions "on the employment of white labour"<sup>7</sup> and the importance of such avowals in the city's political discourse. During elections the candidates' positions regarding the employment of non-"White" labour was routinely examined. Concern over "racial" issues was a publicised aspect of Prince Rupert politics.

It appears that only two non-British members were elected as aldermen to Prince Rupert's city council between 1910 and 1921. Neither John Dybhavn (real estate broker) nor Victor Basso-Bert (contractor) were mayoralty candidates. Dybhavn was elected and remained on council for the duration of the period under study. Little is known about Basso-Bert and his time on council, except that an Italian voting block never appears to have been a concern in Prince Rupert.

Dybhavn's 1912 bid for city council was "by request of Scandinavians", who, according to *The Daily News*, felt that he was one of the "best known

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English material. Thus, the papers still serve as racialised and racialising sites within Prince Rupert.

<sup>7</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, May 3, 1910.

members of the Scandinavian colony in the city".<sup>8</sup> Such phrasing suggests that the Scandinavians existed beside, but not within, the dominant society and were a sufficiently large and unified electoral block to secure official representation. Incidentally, this, and other articles, also homogenised the "Scandinavian" community--the largest non-British group in Prince Rupert--by failing to acknowledge the distinct groups which comprised this supposedly unified "whole".<sup>9</sup>

The short article was affirming, but would seem to have stirred much speculation and backlash as three days later the same paper reported that

Some of the Scandinavians are anxious to have it explained that the meeting which endorsed him [Dybhavn] on Friday night is not an evidence that they are forming a political association. They merely met and discussed municipal affairs in their native language for the benefit of those who are not yet expert in English.<sup>10</sup>

This disavowal of collusion illustrates the question of diversity in the "racial" categorisation of Scandinavian, and also reflects turmoil within the community over the suggestion that Scandinavians had the desire and ability to acquire political power.<sup>11</sup> In scrutinizing the electoral process the newspaper revealed the

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<sup>8</sup> *The Daily News*, January 6, 1912.

<sup>9</sup> In 1912 the breakdown of Scandinavian would have included people of Norwegian, Swedish and Danish origins.

<sup>10</sup> *The Daily News*, January 9, 1912, "Ward Two Candidates Mr. John Dybhavn Has The Support of Local Scandinavians".

<sup>11</sup> Dybhavn was Norwegian and there is no indication that his origins were a factor in his subsequent elections. Prince Rupert Pioneers' Association, *Charter Souvenir, Nineteen Hundred and Fourteen*.

insecurity of the dominant group and its desire to maintain the status quo in Prince Rupert. The newspaper introduced Dybhavn as a candidate, and was *agent provocateur* among different members of a racialised society.

## THE JUDICIARY

Another institutional venue providing insight into racialisation in Prince Rupert was the judiciary and law enforcement. The policing of Prince Rupert offers a good focal point from which to view “racial” interaction. An early article in *The Empire*, made clear that authority in the Prince Rupert area was held securely in the hands of the dominant British society. A Native man brought charges of illegal fishing against four Japanese fishermen and, while the judges admitted that they knew neither language, they proceeded to lecture the perceived offenders in “classic English”.<sup>12</sup> The position of the dominant “White” society in Prince Rupert was upheld in its municipal institutions.

“Racial” interaction was frequently (if unintentionally) monitored by local law enforcement. Municipal authority, served as a site of racialisation, claiming that Prince Rupert was without crime notwithstanding the constant presence of a foreign and transient class of men who followed the rail.<sup>13</sup> And, while an examination of law enforcement still fails to give voice to the individual, it remains valuable as a “site” of racialisation for it publicly scrutinizes the

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<sup>12</sup> *The Empire*, August 17, 1907, “Justice Tempered With Mercy”.

<sup>13</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, July 1, 1909.

interstices of exchange between peoples.

Several police cases stand out as instances of racialisation within Prince Rupert. In one instance a hotel proprietor was charged with harbouring a prostitute. She was "known" to be a prostitute because Mong Yung, a Prince Rupert businessman, collected rent from her at 12 Comox Avenue in the red light district. Yung confronted the woman at the Windsor Hotel for monies owed after "a Japanese told him she was there".<sup>14</sup> At the time of reporting, the woman had already left the city, but the charges reveal a seldom exposed subculture in Prince Rupert that brought together people of Chinese, Japanese, British and unknown origin.

In another case--a local murder trial--the defendant, Lofstedt, was without defense "as a foreigner" (there was no further coverage). Also reported, although no one was found guilty, was an incident where Mah Ling, a resident of Chinese origin, was assaulted while walking home and, as he "had been mauled quite a bit", went to the police.<sup>15</sup> The implication of these reports is that non-"White" encounters with violence were only reported to the police when they were particularly severe.

Yet another case involving one Earl Brown, Afro-American, reveals the suspicion with which Prince Rupert viewed "Black" persons. Brown was arrested because the police had received three calls about attempted break-ins and

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<sup>14</sup> *The Empire*, March 8, 1912, "Considerable Evidence taken in Hotel Case".

<sup>15</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, January 30, 1911. There were no similarly related events which involved "White" persons.

he appeared suspect. When Brown resisted arrest, he was also accused of drug use. *The Daily News* reported that

There have been several complaints recently regarding prowling negroes around private dwellings in the city and it is to be hoped that such an example will be made of this case as will deter any possible offenders in this respect.<sup>16</sup>

Because of a lack of evidence, the charge of breaking and entering was dismissed. This dismissal “caused considerable indignation” as the public believed Brown guilty.<sup>17</sup> Alderman Casey suggested that the city solicitor be empowered to secure additional legal advice while acting mayor McClymont felt that the city council could not interfere, although he too had heard public criticism of the case’s handling. The case against Brown marked the first major public furor and direct council interference over a judicial matter. Subsequent letters to the editor evidence the importance this case had in the public imagination and Brown was sentenced on April 11 to three months hard labour for resisting arrest.<sup>18</sup> The degree of public involvement in this case was unprecedented in Prince Rupert even though the evidence was minimal. Earl Brown was treated with fear, suspicion and hostility because he was not “White”.

Similarly, Joseph Rangea was brought in on charges of vagrancy in 1918 even though, as *The Empire* described him, he was a well-dressed “coloured man” with an “air of self possession and alertness”.<sup>19</sup> Several charges were laid while

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<sup>16</sup> *The Daily News*, March 23, 1917.

<sup>17</sup> *The Daily News*, March 27, 1917.

<sup>18</sup> Brown’s lawyer wrote to *The Daily News* condemning pressure on the courts and claimed it was their “duty to try these cases in accordance with the law and not in accordance with the prejudices and desires of the citizens.” March 29, 1917.

<sup>19</sup> *The Empire*, April 11, 1918.

Rangea was in custody--watch theft, use of marked cards, idleness--but all were dismissed at trial. However, in dismissing the charges the judge referred to Rangea as a "miserable sneak" who would "get his".<sup>20</sup> Rangea left town immediately after. In this case, it seems being non-"White" in Prince Rupert was reason enough to be considered guilty.

While these examples are limited, it is evident that the judges, attorneys, and police officers in Prince Rupert were not only "White" (problematic, given the shifting definition of "White"), but the offenders were commonly non-"White". Compounding the "racial" homogeneity of the authority figures in Prince Rupert was the apparent way in which law enforcement was directed at particular groups. An example of this selectivity might be that the only reported police raids involved Chinese residents charged with offenses related to opium and gambling.<sup>21</sup> Again, this selectivity provides a looking glass into sites of racialisation as these raids brought to light clandestine relationships otherwise lost. In one raid "4 Chinamen and 1 colored man" were arrested, while another saw 16 men charged with gambling--two Japanese and the rest mainly Chinese<sup>22</sup>--these reports provide evidence of otherwise undocumented relationships among people of different "race". While these relationships are important it was the routine efforts of law enforcement to let the "Chinese" know that they were being observed that exposes the notion of public scrutiny in Prince Rupert as a "site" of

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<sup>20</sup> *The Empire*, May 2, 1918.

<sup>21</sup> *Prince Rupert Optimist*, January 23, 1911, and April 20, 1911. *The Daily News*, September 11, 1912, May 15, 1913, July 27, 1914, and September 10, 1915.

<sup>22</sup> *The Daily News*, February 8, 1917, and *The Empire*, September 25, 1918.

racialisation.

The only other group consistently reported in the news as having come into contact with the local authorities were Natives. Most often, they were charged with drunkenness. This is not to say that only Natives were arrested; in point of fact, many more persons were found guilty of supplying liquor to Natives than there were Natives actually arrested for drunkenness.<sup>23</sup> In a forceful editorial, *The Optimist* warned that Native people had more money than they were accustomed to in their possession and remonstrated the police to “protect these people from the blind pigs and from those who [would] give the Indian intoxicants with sinister motives...the Indian needs protection from his own weakness”.<sup>24</sup> In short, authorities within Prince Rupert had singled out Natives for particular attention concerning alcohol and were avidly pursuing any infractions of the liquor laws which pertained to Native peoples.

This is not to imply that “White” persons were absent from the criminal docket; rather, it is to note that considerable newspaper coverage was given to cases tried against non-“Whites” while the crimes themselves were relatively minor. In addition, when being prosecuted, the “race” of otherwise “White” persons--continental Europeans--became a noteworthy feature of their case.

Drawing substantive conclusions about the process of racialisation in Prince Rupert is difficult, but an examination of the community’s precepts concerning gender, and the role of institutions and authority reveals that

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<sup>23</sup> *The Empire*, May 9, 1908. *Prince Rupert Optimist*, March 7, 1911. *The Daily News*, October 1, 1912, January 20, 1913, January 22, 1913, and May 13, 1913.

<sup>24</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, August 16, 1910. “The Native and His Money”.

racialisation was a factor in many official forums within the community. No single interpretation, of course, can account for all the nuances involved in such an ephemeral study of interaction; other considerations could include consumer interaction, street behaviour, and popular entertainment. Yet, one can draw some preliminary conclusions about the nature of interaction among persons of different "racial" origins in the localized setting of Prince Rupert. It is clear that people of different "races" were treated differently and that this varying treatment was related to aspects of development within the city. By-laws targeting specific groups were introduced to the town as a whole, but were enforced selectively. Regulations concerning labour and wages were mediated by the deliberate employment of specific, and often, "racially" defined labour pools.

Racialisation, as revealed by public scrutiny in Prince Rupert, entails many "sites". The exploration of gender in economic and comparative instances revealed how the dominant society approached and understood their non-"White" counterparts. Similarly, reviewing the role of newspapers as a racialised "site" indicates how a British elite conveyed its perceptions and reinforced ideas concerning "race". Lastly, the institutional and public roles of politics and authority within Prince Rupert demonstrate how racialisation was a dynamic process, shifting to accommodate the different needs and attitudes of the dominant community.

## THE PAPER TRAIL

In fact, various city by-laws introduced a scrutinisable site of racialisation in Prince Rupert, especially those pertaining to the physical character of the community. Seldom was a city by-law openly aimed at a specific “racial” group, yet the motivation behind them and their enforcement often had the effect of singling out an individual group--differentiated by “race”.

The first by-law concerned with regulating behaviour in Prince Rupert racialised Native peoples. The “New Licence Act” of 1910, stipulated that no liquor might be sold, given or bartered with drunks, wastrels, vagrants, prostitutes or Indians.<sup>25</sup> The inclusion of Natives with individuals considered unsavory by the community was not accidental and by association implicated all aboriginal peoples as undesirable. The paternalistic inclusion of “Indians” in the by-law negatively racialised Natives in Prince Rupert regardless of any beneficent intent and created a non-Native “space”: namely, places where liquor was purveyed

It is difficult to uncover who occupied what “space” within a society, but in this instance the by-law contributed to a visible form of de facto segregation. And, while Natives were not the only group to fall under this by-law, they were perhaps the most readily identifiable and therefore potentially the most consistently enforced.

The institutional role of by-laws in creating racialised “space” in Prince Rupert did not focus solely on aboriginal peoples. The pervasive effect of by-

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<sup>25</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, May 6, 1910.

laws can also be seen in the deliberate attempt to legislate where Chinese settlers could reside by regulating the location of laundries, a business dominated by Chinese men in Prince Rupert.<sup>26</sup>

Superficially the by-law did not target any specific groups. Furthermore, it pertained only to those laundries which were not steam operated. As the council members were aware, the only steam laundry in Prince Rupert was the Pioneer Laundry. In a long running advertisement in *The Daily News*, the Pioneer Laundry featured a caricature of a Chinese man spitting on clothes with an iron in hand. The caption read “Do away with this patronize a white laundry. White labour only at Pioneer Laundry”. The by-law’s exception of the steam laundry--owned by a “White” member of the community who employed mainly continental European women--racialised different people within the community. As the remainder of Prince Rupert’s laundries were owned and operated by people of Chinese origin the by-law’s application was targeted at a specific “racial” group.<sup>27</sup>

Judge Alex Manson, who lived next door to a Chinese laundry, confidently asserted that a by-law to restrict “these laundries to a certain district will be passed”.<sup>28</sup> The denigrating phrase “these laundries” paired with his

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<sup>26</sup> The idea of racialised occupations, including launderers, was raised in Chapter Two. Also, a similar by-law was created in Vancouver in 1893 and “forced a process already underway, the segregation of Chinese residents into a distinct area of Vancouver.” McDonald, *Making Vancouver*, p. 87.

<sup>27</sup> *The Daily News*, July 18, 1911. The article, “White Man’s Sunday and Yellow Man’s Laundry”, makes abundantly clear that Chinese launderers were specifically identified as a group in Prince Rupert.

<sup>28</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, September 14, 1910.

awareness of who owned the laundries makes one wonder if the distaste was for the laundry as a commercial enterprise or its owners.

Manson's position, as judge and neighbour, raises two important issues about the racialised nature of "space" in Prince Rupert, the first being that civic institutions were constructed as "White" "space".<sup>29</sup> The by-law to restrict the location of laundries was introduced after the laundry next to Manson's home caught fire; it is likely that his position influenced the timely introduction and favourable reception of the by-law. Thus, the city council acted swiftly and in the favour of its "White" mayor and citizenry--without any visible opposition.

This by-law also raises the question why it was necessary to restrict laundries? If steam laundries were acceptable, it must have been the nature of the work being done in the other laundries, except that they too were merely washing and hanging clothes out to dry. The reason for restricting laundries more likely lies with who was performing the task. As there is strong evidence that many people of Chinese origin lived where they worked, the by-law to segregate laundries can be viewed as a circuitous means of isolating part of the Chinese population in Prince Rupert.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Draft City Charter. Prince Rupert Archives 77-58. Article 1 states that "The qualification for mayor at the first municipal election, and at every election for mayor held thereafter until January, 1913, shall be, his being a British male subject of the full age of twenty-one years..."

<sup>30</sup> See Gunter Baureiss and Leo Driedger, "Winnipeg Chinatown: Demographic, Ecological and Organizational Change, 1900-1980," *Urban History Review/Revue d'Histoire Urbaine*, vol x no 3 (February 1982), p. 15, for information on the practice of Chinese businesses renting accommodation to individuals. There is also strong evidence to support the same conclusion in Prince Rupert. The director of King Tai's Emporium listed a separate residence yet night raids on the premises by the police always found a number of men living there. Similarly in the laundry fire next to Manson's mention was made of "Chinamen Caught Asleep Dash For Their Lives", *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, September 14, 1910.

While on the surface this by-law appeared to be a mere matter of commercial designation, the fact that Chinese persons operated all the non-steam laundries in Prince Rupert meant that the by-law was an attempt to control where Chinese immigrants settled. And there is no doubt that laundries were linked with the Chinese as one alderman objected to the by-law on the grounds that it would have a negative effect on property values, but withdrew his complaint after being shown a map with the proposed relocation. In addition, "it was explained that the object of the proposition is to stop the tendency of laundries--particularly Chinese Laundries--to becoming established in good residential sections".<sup>31</sup> There was no attempt here to hide the main concern and that was the Chinese, not the laundries.<sup>32</sup> The city council was well aware of who would be affected by this by-law and of the idea of racialised "space". Relocating the laundries near Comox Avenue or the redlight district provided an additional incentive for "White" women to switch their business to the Pioneer. Located in a more respectable part of town, the Pioneer benefited from this new by-law which additionally limited contact between "White" women and "Chinese" men.<sup>33</sup>

Slightly less invasive was the application of the Fire-Arm By-Law which regulated the use of fire-arms and fire works in Prince Rupert. Provision was made for a special permit for the discharge of fire works. It is not known how many permits were granted, but *The Daily News* noted at least one successful application by the Chinese community during a festival and *The Empire* made a

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<sup>31</sup> *The Empire*, August 9, 1911.

<sup>32</sup> Recall *The Empire*, November 3, 1915, "Excluding Orientals".

<sup>33</sup> *The Daily News*, August 9, 1911.

direct reference to “the Chinks [as] heavy on the fireworks”, an observation never made about any other group.<sup>34</sup> While any discharge of fire arms could affect the broader community, the wholesale restriction on the use of fire works appears to have resulted from their association with Chinese culture.

By exerting control over Chinese tradition, the city council was displaying its own authority and largesse--marking the council itself a site of racialisation in Prince Rupert. Another more insidious explanation would be that the by-law muted public awareness of Prince Rupert’s Chinese population.<sup>35</sup> Fire works were highly visible and noisome; in regulating their use, the city limited the amount of attention focused on Chinese settlers and reclaimed public “space”. By this it is meant that the “space” drawn into focus by the fire works implicitly becomes “Chinese”; by disallowing the fire works the “space” reverts to the non-“Chinese” public.

Prince Rupert’s informal use of by-laws to racialize people and the “spaces” they occupied was not limited by the colourline. With the introduction of by-law 301 in 1917 to regulate rooming, boarding and lodging houses, the city council encroached upon the lifestyle of common labourers--many of whom were of continental European descent. Ironically, the by-law was originally implemented to monitor vice. After the disbandment of the restricted district, numerous women from Comox Avenue attempted to start up rooming houses as

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<sup>34</sup> *The Daily News*, February 15, 1912 and *The Empire*, February 15, 1912.

<sup>35</sup> Public perception of Chinese as loud coincided with the recognition of difference, see for example *The Empire*, January 19, 1915 “Chickens, Chinks Ducks and Mickey” and George Pethick, “Reminiscences of a Near Pioneer” (typescript, n/d), p. 7.

fronts for their primary business. Though introduced for one purpose, the by-law effectively regulated and racialised the community.<sup>36</sup> It was mandatory that all residents and the houses themselves be registered; and twice monthly the operators had to provide the names and occupations of residents. The by-law was invasive, especially to labourers who were largely single, male, and non-British.<sup>37</sup>

Many immigrants who chose to work and potentially to settle in Prince Rupert, but who were unable or unwilling to build their own homes, boarded at one of many establishments. The different lodgings were often frequented by people with the same “racial” background, presumably because of language and familiarity.<sup>38</sup> The city’s desire to put these boarders under surveillance was not casual; it expressed a need to exert control over specific groups. While homeowners may have viewed boarders as a transient populace, it is doubtful that a fear of social deviance guided the council in creating this regulatory by-law. Given the public accessibility of the city directory, it would seem that the city was already cognizant of the “racial” component of the boardinghouse lifestyle and that the by-law reflected a need to gain authority over the “Other”. Boarders, as a largely non-British group, were denied privacy in Prince Rupert.

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<sup>36</sup> *The Empire*, July 10, 1917. The by-law made it easier to enforce the Idler Act in Prince Rupert which involved the prosecution of many non-British persons in Prince Rupert, see discussion on Joe Rangea.

<sup>37</sup> This composite of boarders was built on the directory listings which included name, residence, and occupation.

<sup>38</sup> One example is the three Star Hotel which had consistently large numbers of European residents and many with the same, or Cyrillic, surnames which suggests that men chose to maintain close links with their heritage. *The Empire*, February 16, 1915, reported a “new Boarding House” for Scandinavians was opening on Fulton Street which supports the idea that housing was related to “race” or nationality (the ideas were all but conflated at the time).

Not only were these by-laws a site of racialisation; they demonstrate its progression over time. The by-laws concerned with liquor licensing and laundry locations were enacted in 1910; the regulation of rooming houses in 1917. Each of the by-laws racialised different people; their chronological ordering is significant.

That Native peoples were the first to be racialised is consistent with their majority presence in Prince Rupert's immediate hinterland.<sup>39</sup> If "White" society were to be dominant in the city it had to neutralize its single largest contender for power in the region. By establishing itself as the authoritative voice in the city, the councilors, who were primarily of British descent, asserted their occupation of a site of power in the community, effectively validating their right to power by exercising it--while simultaneously marking authority positions as "White"--if not solely British.

The move to regulate the Chinese in Prince Rupert reflected a more pervasive concern over the "yellow peril". While the actual number of Chinese in Prince Rupert was small, "White" imagination created a much greater<sup>40</sup> population which had to be managed. The disproportionate amount of attention given to anything pertaining to Chinese people in Prince Rupert underlines the perceptual strength of ideas regarding Prince Rupert's Chinese citizenry. Of limited scope, both by-laws nonetheless put Prince Rupert's Chinese community under surveillance and

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<sup>39</sup> Crerar, "Prince Rupert, British Columbia," p. 164.

<sup>40</sup> Recall the idea of Chinatown presented in Chapter Two.

could be used as a mechanism to exert further restrictions if the need arose.

The boarding house law refined racialised policies and indicated change over time. This by-law reflected a concern over both the perceived and the numerical presence of “Others” in Prince Rupert. By 1917 much of the initial construction phase was over--certainly the GTPR required only operating and maintenance staff. Moreover, the world was at war, so the presence of a largely male, single, and European group within the city became suspect.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, it would seem that the newest by-law was an unintentional refinement of an old policy and the censorious eye of the dominant group remained fixed on the “Other” and the “space” they occupied was racialised. Authority had already been asserted over the two most obvious “Others” and, in an extension of this dominant-subordinate ordering of Prince Rupert, a by-law was introduced to monitor and control the remaining “Other”. Thus, the people being racialised changed, but the mechanism and the reasoning remained constant.

## EDUCATION

The city council was not the only institutional “site” of racialisation in Prince Rupert. Racialisation was also an issue when formal education was introduced as the school itself and its trustees constituted racialised “space” within the community. Classes were taught in English by teachers of British origin,

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<sup>41</sup> Coinciding with this by-law was a healthy dose of wartime xenophobia which could account for the rigorous enforcement of this surveillance e.g. *The Empire*, August 30, 1918, reported that a dwelling occupied by foreigners near Hayscreek would be investigated by police.

administered by a board invariably made up of people also of British descent; indeed, the most salient feature was the appreciable British control in Prince Rupert's education system. British dominance is referred to rather than "White" for, just as there were no "Asian" members, there were no French Canadian or European influences on the board, staff or curriculum. Thus, within the school system there existed a hierarchy of power which noticeably excluded people of non-British origins, regardless of their vested interest in education.

As Native children were taught separately in schools operated by churches for the Department of Indian Affairs, and there is no early record of more than singular Chinese or Japanese attendance, it would appear that as an institution the school was an important site of spatial racialisation<sup>42</sup>--socially and physically, it was characterized by an overwhelming "Whiteness". It was inconceivable that the public was unaware of the "White" bias in education as matriculation information was published in the newspapers and the school board, invariably British, was an elected institution.<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, because the schools did not offer adult education, non-English speaking residents of Prince Rupert had little formal opportunity to learn English. While the school board discussed a night school in the fall of 1918 with "English for foreigners" as part of its suggested curriculum, there is no evidence that the

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<sup>42</sup> School promotion lists published in *The Daily News* listed only 3 (with a possible 4th) "Asian" surnames from 1911-1919. Allowance should be made for anglicized names, but there is no information available to confirm or draw conclusions from this possibility.

<sup>43</sup> No non-British surnames were recorded in any of the elections for the school board in the time under study.

school became a reality.<sup>44</sup> Recognition of the need for English language classes reveals that the community leaders felt a population conversant in English would be an improvement over the existing situation; the Labour Council attributed the lack of union organization in Prince Rupert to the large numbers of unskilled labourers “unversed in the English language”.<sup>45</sup> Prior to the suggested night course, the Salvation Army offered a nominal English language program, but its only students were Norwegian. Even the limited access to language training was racialised.<sup>46</sup>

#### CIVIC PRIDE

Another unusual instance which allows for insight into the convoluted relationship between authority and social “space” is civic pride. Straddling the gulf between officiousness and entertainment were the public celebrations heralding such national holidays as Victoria Day, Dominion Day and Labour Day. The citizenry of Prince Rupert embraced these civic holidays with various forms of entertainment.<sup>47</sup> However, it is unknown to what extent non-“White” persons participated in either the official or unofficial celebrations being held. The most

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<sup>44</sup> *The Daily News*, October 11, 1918.

<sup>45</sup> *The BC Federationist*, September 8, 1916.

<sup>46</sup> Little is known about this program. It is highly probable that the instructor(s) were the Johnstones who were (apparently) familiar with Norwegian. That, coupled with a basic knowledge of English, might have been their sole qualification. Mrs. Johnstone was reputed to sing Norwegian folk songs.

<sup>47</sup> McDonald, *Making Vancouver*, pp. 33-4. The Dominion Day parade of 1889 asserted the British presence in Vancouver with ethnic ties (Sons Of England); community life (Knights of Pythias); business (real estate). While some of the organizations differed, Prince Rupert’s parades could also be said to assert the status quo.

significant non-“White” role was that of Native persons performing in bands. Coming from as far as Ayansh, occasionally as many as five bands assembled from nearby reserves to compete and provide accompaniment for the day’s festivities. The role of the Native bands was modified with the Dominion Day festivities of 1914 when organizers selected their programs for them and issued instructions to make the “proceedings work systematically”<sup>48</sup> introducing the notion that under autonomous direction the bands were unpredictable. Control was exercised over the all Native bands by the Day’s co-ordinators. The 1914 celebration also saw the first non-British float in the city parade.<sup>49</sup> The Scandinavian Aid Fellowship Viking ship, the sixth of eleven floats, received much applause. Once the non-Native bands started to appear, probably around 1916, there was an absention of the Indian bands who had characterized and previously provided “much of the day’s entertainment”.<sup>50</sup>

No mention was made of non-“White” contenders in any of the sporting events that Police Chief Vickers routinely organized as a part of these celebrations. Largely arranged to occupy children, the events were divided by age and gender categories; non-“White” persons were not even listed as having participated. Thus, civic holidays as official events arranged by the city, provide a limited view of racialisation in Prince Rupert. The prescribed roles for Native persons as entertainers and not participants deserves noting as does the apparent

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<sup>48</sup> *The Empire*, July 2, 1914.

<sup>49</sup> This was the first instance noted and may not be the only one.

<sup>50</sup> *The Empire*, March 25, 1911.

absence of other non-“White” participants. What could not be physically seen could not be socially felt.

To this point we have examined how “space” was racialised in Prince Rupert through formal institutions. There was a complex interaction between physical and social “space” and the use of formal institutions revealed how social “space” was often predicated on physical “space”. Adding to this ambiguity is the necessary juxtaposition of British and “White”, which fluctuated depending on the needs of the dominant group in Prince Rupert. However, it is necessary to evaluate the less formal associations in Prince Rupert to gain a more nuanced understanding of how social “space” was owned by particular groups frequently differentiated by “race”.

A leading example was the Pioneers’ Association, whose constitution and by-laws specified that “All white persons who were Bona Fide residents of the City of Prince Rupert...shall be eligible for membership”.<sup>51</sup> This stipulation effectively prescribed who occupied the “space” reserved for pioneers and this “space” excluded non-“White” persons. The Association’s applications and membership reveal that “White” included continental Europeans, but does not explain why people considered non-“White” were barred.<sup>52</sup> Thus the “received” perception of a pioneer came to be closely linked to the definition of “White” and the “space” provided for pioneers was exclusive. Similarly, the Prince Rupert

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<sup>51</sup> *The Constitution and By-Laws of the Prince Rupert Pioneers’ Association*, Article 2.

<sup>52</sup> The Prince Rupert Pioneers’ Association, *Charter Souvenir, Nineteen Hundred and Fourteen*, listed 108 members of whom 12 were not British, but all of whom had been in North America for several years. A breakdown of the 12 reveal: 2 French Canadians, 2 Swedes, 2 Norwegians, 3 Germans, 1 Syrian, 1 Pole, 1 n/a (Akerberg).

Club, formed in 1914, listed only four non-British surnames out of a 131 person membership. There is nothing overt in its articles of association, but the candidacy procedure and membership rolls imply that it was an insular group that did not advocate a non-“White” presence in Prince Rupert.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, if an association closely aligned with the reputation and future of the city did not accept non-“White” people, it likely blocked access to sites of power in the city’s social structure whenever possible.

The Pioneers’ Association and the Prince Rupert Club were not the first associations to claim public “space” for the “White” citizens of Prince Rupert. The Society of White Pioneers was established in 1908 with its only membership requirement being an oath to oppose the admission and employment of “Asiatic Coolie Laborers”.<sup>54</sup> There were no membership dues or meetings; the group was unified by its hostility and sanctioned individual acts of racism. According to *The Empire*, the Society carved out a “space” for itself within the community and was responsible for freeing Prince Rupert from a dependence on Chinese services and the employment of “Asiatic coolies”.<sup>55</sup> This cannot be verified, since only 69 Chinese and Japanese persons were noted in the 1911 Census, suggesting that the Society’s perceptions were out of proportion with the reality of the “Asian” presence in Prince Rupert.<sup>56</sup> Formal institutions, including the Prince Rupert Board of Trade, were similarly engaged in exclusive behaviour; its membership

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<sup>53</sup> Prince Rupert Club, Ltd. Memorandum and Articles of Association with By-laws, House Regulations and list of Members, (Prince Rupert, 1914).

<sup>54</sup> *The Empire*, February 28, 1908.

<sup>55</sup> *The Empire*, March 21, 1908.

<sup>56</sup> See Appendix 1.

card stipulated that employers of Asiatic labour were not eligible for membership.<sup>57</sup>

While no organizational records survived, local papers often carried notices of social events held by different societies apparently organized along “racial” lines. Two of the more frequently mentioned groups, the Valhalla Society (“racial” and national) and the St. Andrew’s Society (religious and national) held large dances--the St. Andrew’s Society annual ball was a prestigious event routinely attended by the “leading society people of Prince Rupert”.<sup>58</sup> Also present in Prince Rupert were the Daughters of the Empire, the Sons of Norway, the Sons of Ukania, and the Sons of England; the last named had constructed an archway over 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue which was blazoned with “England’s Sons at Empire’s Outpost”, effectively marking out “space” for people of British origin.<sup>59</sup> The societies tended to be formed along in-group activities while the associations seemed to feature exclusivity. All of the organizations in Prince Rupert, however, cordoned off social “space” for specific people.

Many of these same organizations shared overlapping memberships with various religions. The majority of Prince Rupert’s early religious history remains unknown, church records were not available, and only rarely did the newspapers mention religious observances or holidays.<sup>60</sup> Interestingly, religion was often a

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<sup>57</sup> Roy, *A White Man’s Province*, pp. 256-7.

<sup>58</sup> *The Daily News*, November 29, 1913.

<sup>59</sup> Photograph reprinted in *The Daily News*, February 8, 1980.

<sup>60</sup> For example, *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, October 5, 1910, noted the Jewish New Year and “how the festival is kept in Prince Rupert.” *The Daily News*, January 8, 1915, provided some coverage of the Greek Christmas celebrations.

justification to rebuke or racialize different groups. In one instance a lecturing missionary who, had “lived among the Indians”, thought “that Japs [were] undermining the fidelity of Indians”. He reported that, upon chastising Native people for drinking, he was “often told: ‘wait until our brothers, the Japs, come; they will fix you whites’”.<sup>61</sup> In one religiously sanctioned moment this missionary reinforced negative images of both Native peoples, as easily led, and Japanese people as disloyal and sinister. Likewise, *The Daily News*, rapaciously used its article describing Father William Duncan’s work to remonstrate the “ungrateful Indians who advanced because of Duncan”.<sup>62</sup> The article, criticised the insubordination of the Tsimpsean who marginalised Duncan’s role and rejected his restraints. While church records are unavailable, what religious notes were made in the newspapers were unflattering, at best, to non-“White” people: they show churches as sites of racialisation.

Another feature of such groups, whether one focuses on “race”, ethnicity or nationality, was the aid they offered to members. The exclusive nature of this aid reveals the essential in-group nature of the exchange, as in the case of a Scandinavian Society benefit dance to aid an ailing member; all were welcome to attend but the beneficiary was part of the immediate group and not the dominant community.<sup>63</sup>

The cohesion of the different organizations within Prince Rupert was not

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<sup>61</sup> *The Daily News*, October 1, 1912. This same missionary actively encouraged training Natives to be loyal like the “natives of India”.

<sup>62</sup> *The Daily News*, November 20, 1913.

<sup>63</sup> *The Daily News*, September 18, 1917.

confined to the more formal groups. Informal group solidarity was felt in many ways, and, as the groups involved were often “racially” unified, these instances can be viewed as in-group behaviour. For example, in 1912 liquor charges were laid against N. Rocovich, the proprietor of the Three Star Hotel. The police case fell through after sixteen of Rocovich’s “countrymen” claimed that they had formed a co-operative and bought the liquor wholesale, and that Rocovich was not selling the liquor.<sup>64</sup> Thus, patterns of in-group behaviour served to protect and distance un/organized groups and the groups themselves could be racialised or racialising. Unofficial in-groups affected the community, but without media recognition it is nearly impossible to determine to what extent and what effect such groups were present in Prince Rupert or more importantly, perceived as being present in Prince Rupert.

#### AFTER HOURS

Another social “space” in which racialisation occurred was entertainment. Newspaper accounts of social events included picnics and theatres as well as the various socials organized by specific groups. The composition of those who attended various outings is difficult to establish: however, the Tsimpsean complained that the many day excursions to Metlakatla<sup>65</sup> were an invasion

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<sup>64</sup> *The Empire*, January 31, 1912.

<sup>65</sup> A sample of the excursions are provided in *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, July 30, 1910. *The Empire*, June 23, 1911, May 24, 1912, and July 17, 1913. *The Daily News*, August 11, 1913 and August 10, 1916.

of their “space.” This sense of invasion supports the claim that “space” was owned in ways other than physical occupancy. The Tsimpsean knew that the picnickers were not attempting to annex the band lands, but objected all the same to the non-Native intrusion on their landscape. All groups within Prince Rupert were capable of “racial” exclusivity and in examining the “sites” of racialisation more than the dominant group behaviour should be examined. Thus, the pursuit of entertainment could involve issues of “space” and racialisation with an incipient “us” versus “them” controversy.

Equally challenging could be the entertainment provided by the various theatre companies. The Coon Concert for the benefit of the Ridley Indian School reveals a general acceptance of racialised stereotypes on the part of Prince Rupert’s citizens,<sup>66</sup> as did the wartime Carnival of the Allies, hosted by the Red Cross Society. The Carnival featured booths representing different allied nations with the proceeds directed to the Belgian Relief Fund. Women of British descent operated all of the non-British booths irrespective of nationality; the only exception was the Norselands booth.<sup>67</sup> On at least two occasions, news reports referred to local plays which contained overtly “racial” themes. “The Squaw Man,” presented in 1910, was described as a play which “appeals particularly to the people of the great west as it has been classed the most realistic western drama ever put on the boards”.<sup>68</sup> A second play which raises some interesting issues

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<sup>66</sup> *The Daily News*, May 16, 1916. The Anglican Church choir was to sing “old plantation melodies” while several actors were to portray caricatures such as Sambo.

<sup>67</sup> *The Empire*, November 10, 1914.

<sup>68</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, June 25, 1910.

concerning “space” and racialisation was a comedy headlined by *The Daily News* as follows: “Ole Olson The Well Known Swedish Comedy is Calculated to Make Anybody Laugh”. The actor, Mr. Williams was considered to be “very true to nature and the Swedish character,”<sup>69</sup> presuming that there was such a character and that it could be typecast. If a Swedish character could be differentiated from fellow Scandinavians, Europeans, and “White” members of society, it may be assumed that Swedish people were differentiated. The comedy’s subject matter makes it apparent that in Prince Rupert, “race” was an integral part of everyone’s identity and that it could be a source of comedy or drama.

Expanding on this idea, “race” could define membership within a group, treatment by civic institutions, access to public thoroughfares and houses--in essence, “space” was not allotted to all members of society equally;

While the elite of the city danced with the War Veterans and their friends at St. Andrew’s Hall last night, the Indians and their friends danced at some of the down town cafes.<sup>70</sup>

Sometimes descriptions are very nearly explanations.

The citizens of Prince Rupert’s idle time was a “site” of racialisation. The organizations that people joined, the leisure activities pursued, public entertainment and participation in civic events all contributed to the process(es) of racialisation.

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<sup>69</sup> *The Daily News*, October 14, 1911.

<sup>70</sup> *The Daily News*, September 20, 1918. The celebration was for the Fall Exhibition.

## THE WAR YEARS

Prince Rupert was not immune to change over time, but many of the same attitudes appear to have been honed rather than dismantled. The war years heightened tensions and differences based on “race”. The city had already established a pattern of racialising continental Europeans and the divisions within the category “White” had already been established. At the outbreak of war, *The Daily News* threatened economic sanctions in the job place against those who failed to display patriotism and warned that “any foreigner who expects to make his home here had better be very careful of how he behaves in the present crisis”.<sup>71</sup> By March, 1915, readers complained of Germans holding government jobs in Prince Rupert; “A Canadian” wrote that “many British subjects in Prince Rupert [are] searching for employment”.<sup>72</sup> The city engineer, Mr. P. Lorenzen, had two separate letters written on his behalf to explain that he was Danish and not German as the Returned Soldiers Association alleged.<sup>73</sup> Even Pattullo’s name had to be justified as voters and others in the constituency had the impression that he was Italian or of “Italian extraction”.<sup>74</sup>

Most telling were the public lists of contributors and contributions to the war effort. The press carried notices of donors to the Patriotic Fund who

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<sup>71</sup> *The Daily News*, November 11, 1914.

<sup>72</sup> *The Daily News*, March 8, 1915.

<sup>73</sup> *The Daily News*, January 27, 1917 and *The Empire*, April 17, 1917.

<sup>74</sup> *The Daily News*, September 18, 1916. Presumably the assurance of the “purely Scottish” name Pattulloch, abbreviated in Canada to Pattullo, put the Prince Rupert electorate at ease.

frequently included non-British groups. *The Empire* reported that many aliens who “represent the smaller races of Europe” would be willing to contribute to the Fund if given the opportunity.<sup>75</sup> Praise was also given to Native peoples as their intense display of loyalty (residents of Metlakatlah donated 1,000 dollars to the Carnival of Allies and some men had enlisted) was a “gratifying” feature of war. And British women qualified to vote in the 1917 federal election, were encouraged to balance the large foreign male vote in the province<sup>76</sup> indicating that specific groups were identified and racialised in the community’s support of the war effort. Nationalism appears to have supplanted “race” in defining one’s social identity--subject or foreigner--but it would appear that in Prince Rupert the two were intimately acquainted.

There is little evidence to support the idea that Prince Rupert’s awareness of “race” receded during its transition from frontier metropolis to northern outpost. Instead, it would appear that racialisation acted to consolidate opinions already present in the young community and served to organize the city “spaces”--social and physical--along the alternating and dichotomous lines of “us” and “them”. The institutional aspect of racialisation facilitated the transference of, and revealed, ideas concerning “race”. The process of racialisation was deeply imbedded in Prince Rupert by the advent of the first World War.

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<sup>75</sup> *The Empire*, November 13, 1914.

<sup>76</sup> *The Daily News*, April 17, 1917.

CHAPTER FIVE -- THE BURDEN OF PROGRESS  
 IDEOLOGY AS A SITE OF RACIALISATION

There can be no question as to the future of Prince Rupert. It stands as a northern commercial center and with the development of the fisheries, lands, mines, and the future of the surrounding country when the G.T.P. railway is completed, there can be no doubt of its rapid growth and prominence.<sup>1</sup>

This quotation, ascribed to Premier Richard McBride, reflects the ideological discussion of progress and reveals the concept's pejorative nature. The creation and driving force behind the development of Prince Rupert was progress. The technologies of transportation and communication--integral to the GTPR's establishment--were irrevocably associated with modernity and progress.<sup>2</sup> Prince Rupert, destined to be a modern city, exercised due control and "by its people standing together--[made]--it a place for white men and women and their kindred".<sup>3</sup> The *a priori* assumption that humanity was engaged in inevitable progressive movement constituted the source of rational order in the universe. This is not to imply that everyone in Prince Rupert was aware of this "continuous and irreversible" progress, but the norms of the day dictated an understanding of growth driven by ideas of progress.<sup>4</sup>

The accelerated development of "material civilisation" in the nineteenth century, coupled with European world domination (itself partly a

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<sup>1</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, November 11, 1910.

<sup>2</sup> Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*, p. xii.

<sup>3</sup> *The Empire*, June 6, 1908.

<sup>4</sup> Franco Ferrarotti, *The Myth of Inevitable Progress* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985),

product of industrialization) saw the proliferation of the idea of progress.<sup>5</sup>

People's search for meaning saw that

The idea of progress became central to their thinking precisely because it offered the hope that current changes might be part of a meaningful historical pattern...the idea of progress was imposed upon history to create the sense of order that the Victorians craved.<sup>6</sup>

In essence, progress implied that new movements in civilisation were in a desirable direction.<sup>7</sup> The idea of progress acted as a retroactive justification and explanation for the changes occurring within an increasingly industrialized and individualized world: it conferred a positive rationale, and end result, for those people who felt disassociated from contemporary changes in society.

The idea of progress, a European invention itself, served as a site of racialisation contributing to the emergence and development of Prince Rupert. It was closely associated with Britain, the first country to industrialize rapidly and therefore the first to require the optimism provided by the notion of progress. That other Europeans, particularly French and German philosophers, were quickly engaged in the discourse and dissemination of progress also demonstrates the currency this idea rapidly gained in the European community. But nowhere did anyone suggest that non-“White” persons participate in the project of progress.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Robert A. Nye, “Sociology and Degeneration: The Irony of Progress” *Degeneration The Dark Side of Progress*, eds. J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander L. Gilman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 49.

<sup>6</sup> Peter J. Bowler, *The Invention of Progress* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 3. It stands that the imposition of progress on the past by Victorians corresponded with their view of the present and future.

<sup>7</sup> Ferrarotti, *The Myth of Inevitable Progress*, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*, p. 271. Native people inhibited progress and development: “The reserve was the solution, another place apart required by a white discourse of otherness”.

Therefore, the entire intellectual debate over progress was conducted by a specific group and later exported by the elite to countries being drawn into the expanding capitalist marketplace.

That there were countries which could be exploited for labour, raw goods, and new consumerism reveals how progress was controlled by those who had reached different stages in hierarchical development. European industrial domination “and [the] theory of progress held that they [Europeans] had the moral right to lead other branches of humanity into the light”.<sup>9</sup> These “lower races” (nationality was closely linked to “race”) had stagnated because they had failed to contribute to the “march of progress”.<sup>10</sup> These pronouncements were made by the same individuals and societies that had initiated the discussion of progress and who effectively “owned” the discourse of progress.

Pivotal to this discussion of Prince Rupert is the idea that progress was a hegemonic idea for the British and other “White” settlers confronting the contradictions of early twentieth century capitalism. It was these same people who assumed control of the development of Prince Rupert, believing it their right to do so. Both *The Optimist* and *The Daily News* made reference to Native displays of progress and *The Daily News* went so far as to ascribe the “Oriental problem” to a lack of development--“progress” was a discourse with which Prince Rupert was familiar.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Bowler, *The Invention of Progress*, p. 19.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p.14.

<sup>11</sup> *The Prince Rupert Optimist*, February 9, 1911, and *The Daily News*, August 7, 1911 and December 17, 1913.

Compared to Prince Rupert's elites, the idea of progress meant that for the Tsimpsean, and other non-"White" persons, "subjection was an inevitable consequence of interaction with their superiors on the evolutionary scale".<sup>12</sup> Claims that the climate of World War One was receptive "to the suggestion that race conflict was the driving force of human evolution"<sup>13</sup> built on the idea of "racial" difference. While not the main premise of the theory of progress, it would seem that "race" was embedded in the explanation of differential progress and in the legitimization of "White" power in multi-"racial" settings.<sup>14</sup>

The role of progress was pervasive in the early history of Prince Rupert. It was a matter of faith deeply held by the community's leadership. The impetus to build a Pacific terminus for the GTPR itself reflects the hold of "progress" since railway development had long been closely associated with industrialism and capitalist expansion. Thus, the role of the GTPR as a railway, and its subsidiary development company, suggests that at least one condition for progress was met on Kaien Island before Prince Rupert itself was conceptualized. The railway was a precursor to, or stimulus for, growth and the completion of another transcontinental railway was expected to herald the arrival of progress in British Columbia. Prince Rupert was designed to meet the needs of the march of progress via rail.

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<sup>12</sup> Bowler, *The Invention of Progress*, p. 106, and *The Empire*, May 15, 1909. A direct link was made between the progressive move of hiring a sanitary inspector and the negative foreign influence on public health.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p. 122.

<sup>14</sup> It is also noteworthy that theories of evolution were simultaneously produced and debated with the theory of progress.

Moreover, Prince Rupert was the first entirely planned community in the West. That the city was designed to accommodate 50,000 people within a limited time span indicates that the planners were working under the assumption of forward and irreversible movement of this city--rapid expansion--in effect, progress. It is apparent in the virulent anti-"Asian" sentiment and various attempts to force "Asians" from Prince Rupert that the city's elite did not envision their metropolis as a heterogeneous society. Similarly, the pre-emptive annexation of Native peoples through land purchase also indicates that this progress did take into consideration the role that indigenous people would play in Prince Rupert.<sup>15</sup> Coinciding with the acquisition of land were the ideas of transposing "native" land to "civilized" territory with "the land...divided up in the image of its inhabitants".<sup>16</sup>

The "idea of progress" is particularly evident in a 1912 pamphlet produced by the Prince Rupert Board of Trade. *Prince Rupert, British Columbia, Canada's Pacific Port of Progress*, was a thirty-two page celebration of the Board's belief in progress, linking progress with the accumulation of wealth and speed of advancement. The tone and content of the introduction exemplify the currency of the idea of progress within Prince Rupert's leadership:

Progress--that is the word which pictures best in the cold type Prince Rupert today. Progress is Prince Rupert's watch-word. Every year, every month, every week, every day, every hour at present marks rapid progress for Prince Rupert. Those who live in Prince Rupert can watch their

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<sup>15</sup> Department of Indian Affairs, file #B5865 and British Columbia. Sessional Papers, RE:Kaien Island Land Grant (return) and Papers Presented—Tsimpsean Indian Reserve, 1906-07.

<sup>16</sup> Rob Shields, *Places on the Margin Alternative Geographies of Modernity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 12.

seaport city grow even moment by moment, for streets alter, wharves expand and houses spring up with astonishing speed. In the pages of this pamphlet you can quickly gain photographic proof and a vivid impression of the marvelous progress Prince Rupert has made in an astonishingly short space of time. No city, even in the wonderful west of Canada, has ever shown such tremendous development in so brief a space of time as Prince Rupert. And today, while you are reading these words, Prince Rupert is pressing forward with still faster stride on that great march of Progress [original capitalization] toward unrivaled prosperity.<sup>17</sup>

Progress was the Board's god and Prince Rupert its playground. This same pamphlet set out to substantiate these claims with the idea of progress, which fed upon itself and grew exponentially.

The evidence of progress in promotional literature indicates that progress was a commonly disseminated idea or, at least, a familiar one to the general public. Yet, it was the Board of Trade that chose to invoke the idea of progress, contributing to the suggestion that those people most familiar with the idea were the same people who controlled and disseminated progress in Prince Rupert.

Racialisation consigned certain people--some continental Europeans, "Asians", and Natives--to the periphery and excluded them from positions of power in Prince Rupert's march of progress. The notion that progress was "owned" and promoted by the "White" citizenry of Prince Rupert marked the idea of progress as one which was racialised and racializing.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Prince Rupert, BC, Board of Trade, *Prince Rupert, British Columbia, Canada's Pacific Port of Progress* (Prince Rupert, 1912), p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *The Daily News*, July 11, 1916, "Town Planning Expert Will Arrive on Friday". He was scheduled to meet with the Board of Trade.

In the end, progress appears to be a catch phrase, invoked in the booster tradition with no need to substantiate the Board's claims beyond the presence of progress in their discourse. Progress, apparently real and measurable within Prince Rupert, existed within the public imagination, and in the discourse and literature of the city's leadership.

The passage of time consolidated progress as a rallying point for the dominant "White" group in Prince Rupert. The Board of Trade continued to be organized and run by people of predominantly British origins, as was the city council, and from all appearances the Trades and Labour Council. These three groups, definitively "White" in their composition, personified the "idea of progress"; they were the most powerful forces in the development and industrial growth of Prince Rupert; they were strong agents in the racialisation of the city.

In January 1917 the front page(s) of both *The Daily News* and *The Empire* were dominated by a large advertisement signed by local merchants asking the readership "Do You Want To Help Prince Rupert Grow? Do You Believe In Progress?"<sup>19</sup> The idea of progress was invoked to influence the public in favour of Wednesday as the half-holiday

Or are you content to knock, look backward, and in general retard progress and hinder the development of Prince Rupert? If so you will support Saturday as the Half-Holiday.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Daily News*, January 8-10, 1917. The article/advertisement was on the front page in a place of prominence for its entire run and was distinguished by a unique border.

The slightly malevolent cast of the promotional piece was no doubt designed to shame the public into supporting the day that the Board of Trade wished as half-holiday. The entire city would be affected by whatever decision was made, but only one side was represented in the media. And that the side printed on the front page was that supported by one of the dominant "White" groups within the city is not surprising, as it is difficult to access the discourses not privileged by position.

Racialisation did affect the progress of Prince Rupert to the degree that certain groups were excluded from the development process and it is possible and highly probable that their involvement would have made a significant contribution to the development of the city. Without the influence of these "races" and with so much energy spent on barring their contributions, Prince Rupert's progress arguably suffered.

Progress, like "race", remained a concern throughout the war, meaning that in Prince Rupert ideas were sustainable. It seems that Prince Rupert was capable of maintaining and generating ideologies which were relevant to its citizenry. While the idea of progress offered a vision of the future and infused development with meaning, racialisation did not have a similar justification for its continued presence in the city. Given that both ideas were present and that the one, progress, was firmly in the hands of the dominant "White" elite, is it not possible that the idea of progress served to racialize the Other within the community? Or, if not actively distinguishing among citizens, the "Owned" discourse of progress indicates different axes of power based on "race"? Perhaps issues of "race" covertly affected Prince Rupert's march of progress?

## CONCLUSION -- A FINAL CONSIDERATION

Prince Rupert, British Columbia, was foremost an invention of the GTPR. The city was established by the railway to serve as its western terminus--a linchpin between East and West in an increasingly industrialized world. Under the guidance of Charles Hays and the GTPR officials, the city of Prince Rupert was designed to embody the structured progress of civilisation.

Furthermore, Prince Rupert was an economic venture. The city, in its function as the western terminus, was the harbour point for one of Canada's national railways and a primary location for the exchange of goods. To facilitate this exchange and to function in its economic capacity, Prince Rupert required an able-bodied workforce.

The nature of the resultant workforce in Prince Rupert was large and diverse, but predominantly male. This workforce incorporated immigrants from around the world. The most common feature of this workforce was its subjugation to an established British norm. The dominant group holding authority positions in Prince Rupert were "White" and more specifically British.

This thesis has been concerned with the development of Prince Rupert from 1906 to 1919. The emergence of this new community--with the implicit British reference points (common to much of the Western Canadian experience)--has provided an opportunity to access ideas concerning "race". The focus, however, has not been on a discussion of "race", but on the process of

racialisation. Racialisation, as it has been defined, is a process which engages all people on a variety of levels and can be accessed by the "sites" at which it occurs.

The use of "sites" makes it possible to see how the process of racialisation developed, over time, in a given community. The physical, economic, social, municipal, and intellectual "sites" of racialisation illustrate how ideas concerning "race" came to be embedded in the fabric of society. These interstices where difference was met--for example, settlement patterns, occupation, the law, education--were varied and incorporated the physical relationships shared by the people of Prince Rupert as well as their economic, social, and intellectual exchanges.

The single largest impediment to accessing issues concerning racialisation in Prince Rupert is the source material. Aside from the written memoirs of one non-British individual, all primary evidence has been gleaned from "White" sources. Thus, the perceptions recorded have been those of a highly specific group which does not even encompass the notion of "White". The newspapers have been heavily combed for any and all references to "race" or interaction among people of different origins and many pivotal items have been found through such examination. But, it is necessary to acknowledge that the only perceptions of such exchanges are those proffered by the "White"--British--authors of such accounts (with the minor exception of a few reprinted letters by non-"White" persons). There is no means available to recover how the individuals directly involved experienced "race" or how their reality was informed by racialisation. The primary sources available on Prince Rupert reveal much

about the pervasiveness of ideas of racialisation; they tell us little about individual experiences.

The available secondary sources have dealt largely with the broader and more loosely defined topic of "race"; in theory, in Canada, and in British Columbia. These sources point to the need to develop a sustained examination of how racialisation has emerged from accounts of specific acts of racism and the worldviews which inform racist behaviour. In particular, the works of Ward and Roy introduce the subject, while Anderson's contribution lies in the conceptualisation of racialisation as a process.

The primarily "White" affidavits, primary and secondary, make it abundantly clear that racialisation was so prevalent that even the dominant group felt its effects. If newspapers--themselves "sites" of racialisation--can refer to difference within groups (even though treated as homogenous in most of the popular discourses) it intimates that these groups were visible, were heard, and were felt. Though muted and largely barred from authority positions, groups differentiated by "race" made their presence felt within Prince Rupert, or rather the "White" population of Prince Rupert perceived these groups to be making themselves felt. Whichever is truest, the reality is that ideas concerning "race" circulated in Prince Rupert and had significant impact.

If the popular discourse was willing to acknowledge "race", and it was, then it is evident that racialisation occurred in more than a liminal, subconscious capacity. In fact, this thesis has been full of events which were steeped in "race" and racialisation--the trials of labour in Prince Rupert, the social and community

events--all of which involved acts of differentiation which made use of the classificatory model provided by changing ideas about "race". The citizenry of Prince Rupert were actively racialised and racialised one another in meeting their specific needs as either individuals or groups. In doing so, they used "progress" as a central conceptual tool used in justifying the emergence and growth of the city. That this tool was itself a "site" of racialisation indicates how pervasive the process was and how widespread notions of "race" contributed to broad patterns of development. Racialisation affects more than isolated individuals, it could shape the entirety of human and civic experience of development.

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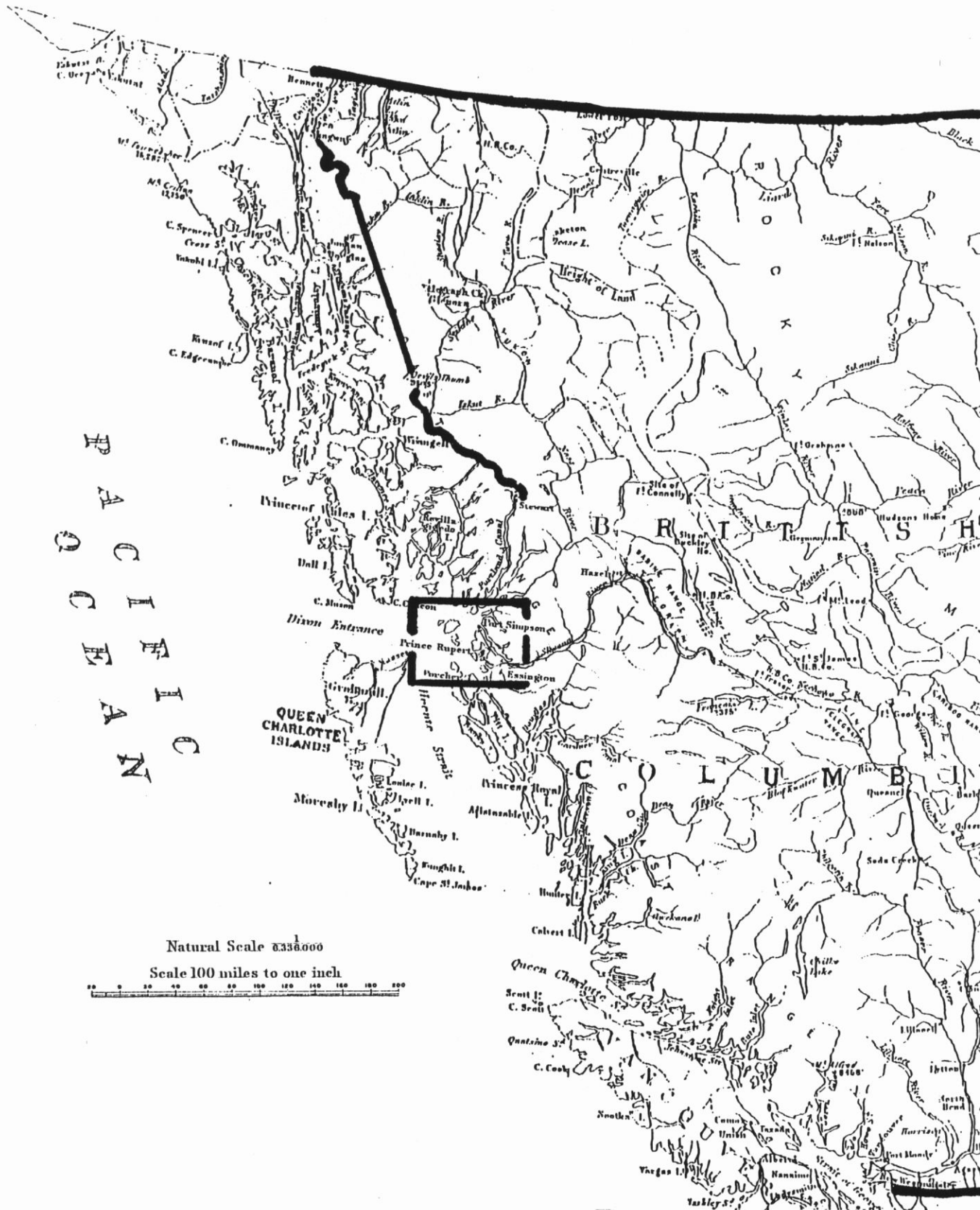
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## APPENDIX I--CENSUS DATA

ORIGINS OF THE PEOPLE	1911		ORIGINS OF THE PEOPLE	1921	
	BRITISH COLUMBA	PRINCE RUPERT		BRITISH COLUMBIA	PRINCE RUPERT
British	252 683	2 343	British Races	387 513	4 465
English	133 186	887	English	221 145	2 128
Irish	40 642	521	Irish	54 298	674
Scotch	74 493	899	Scotch	104 965	1 572
Other	4 362	36	Other	7 105	91
European Races	66 231	1 490	European Races	72 317	1 411
French	8 907	157	French	11 246	202
Austro-Hungary	7 015	228	Austrian	2 993	66
Belgian	938	11	Belgian	1 324	15
Dutch	1 255	8	Dutch	3 306	24
German	11 880	236	German	7 273	103
Italian	9 721	229	Italian	8 587	153
Polish	561	7	Polish	1 361	12
Russian	6 896	85	Russian	7 373	55
Scandinavian	15 968	426	Scandinavian <sup>1</sup>	19 002	588
Greek	810	46	Greek	703	29
Jewish	1 265	31	Hebrew	1 696	14
Finnish	2 858	0	Finnish	3 112	40
Bulgarian-Rumanian	219	17	Bulgarian-Rumanian	326	0
Swiss	796	9	Swiss	983	0
			Ukranian	793	12
			Other	2 239	98
Asiatic Races	30 786	69	Asiatic Races	39 724	388
Chinese	19 568	57	Chinese	23 533	362
Japanese	8 587	12	Japanese	15 006	26
Hindu	2 292	0	Hindu	951	0
			Syrian	0	0
			Turkish	234	0
			Other	0	0
Indian	20 134	2	Indian	22 377	59
Negro	473	18	Negro	676	23
Unspecified	22 512	262	Unspecified	1 454	47
			Various	521	0
Totals	392 480	4 184	Totals	524 582	6 393

<sup>1</sup> Scandinavian includes: people of Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Swedish origin in the 1921 Census.

MAP I-- PHYSICAL MAP OF BRITISH COLUMBIA<sup>1</sup>

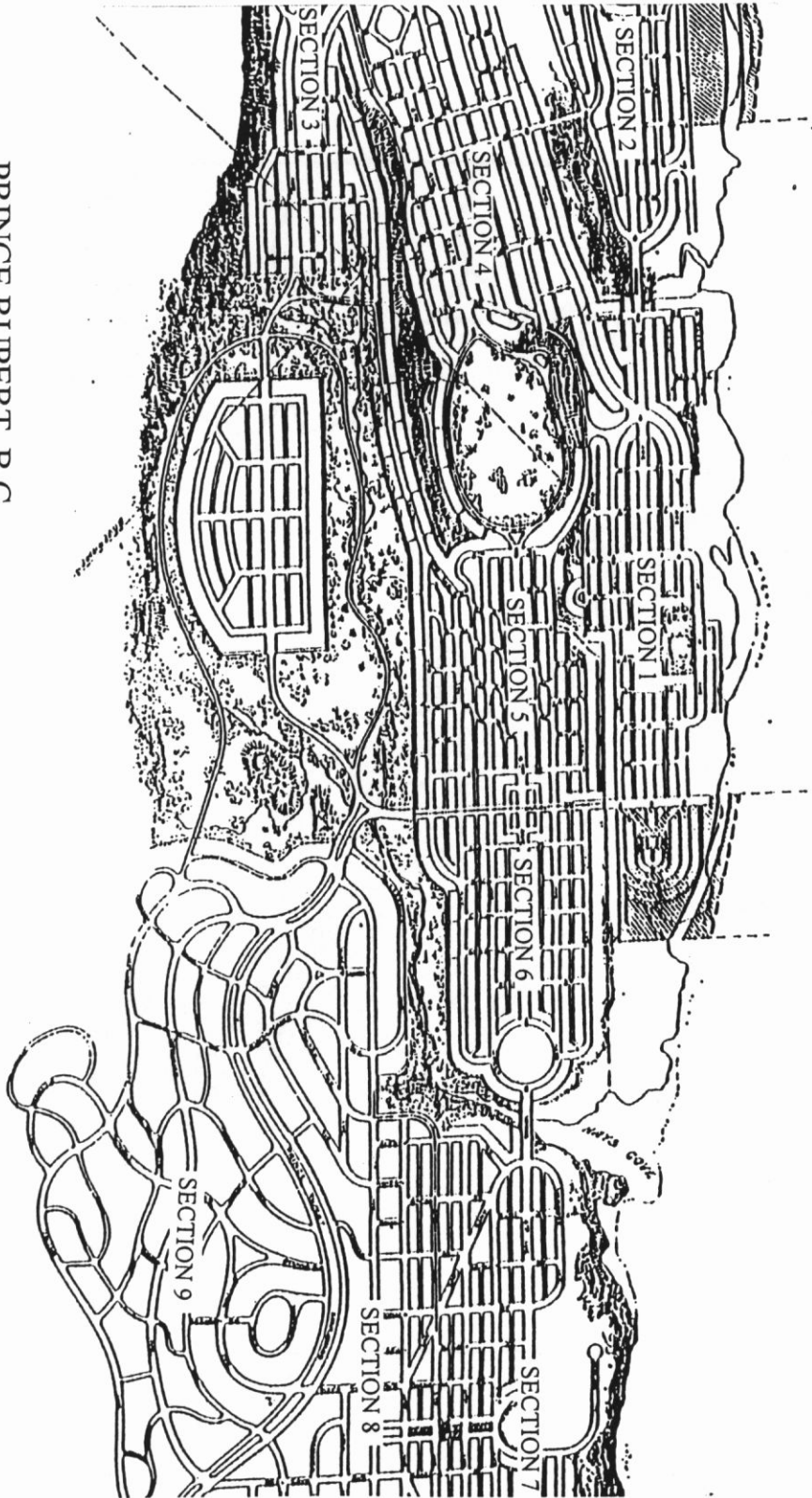


Natural Scale  $\frac{1}{333,000}$   
 Scale 100 miles to one inch

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from Canada. *Atlas of Canada*, (Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1915).

MAP II--GTPR TOWNSITE MAP OF PRINCE RUPERT<sup>2</sup>

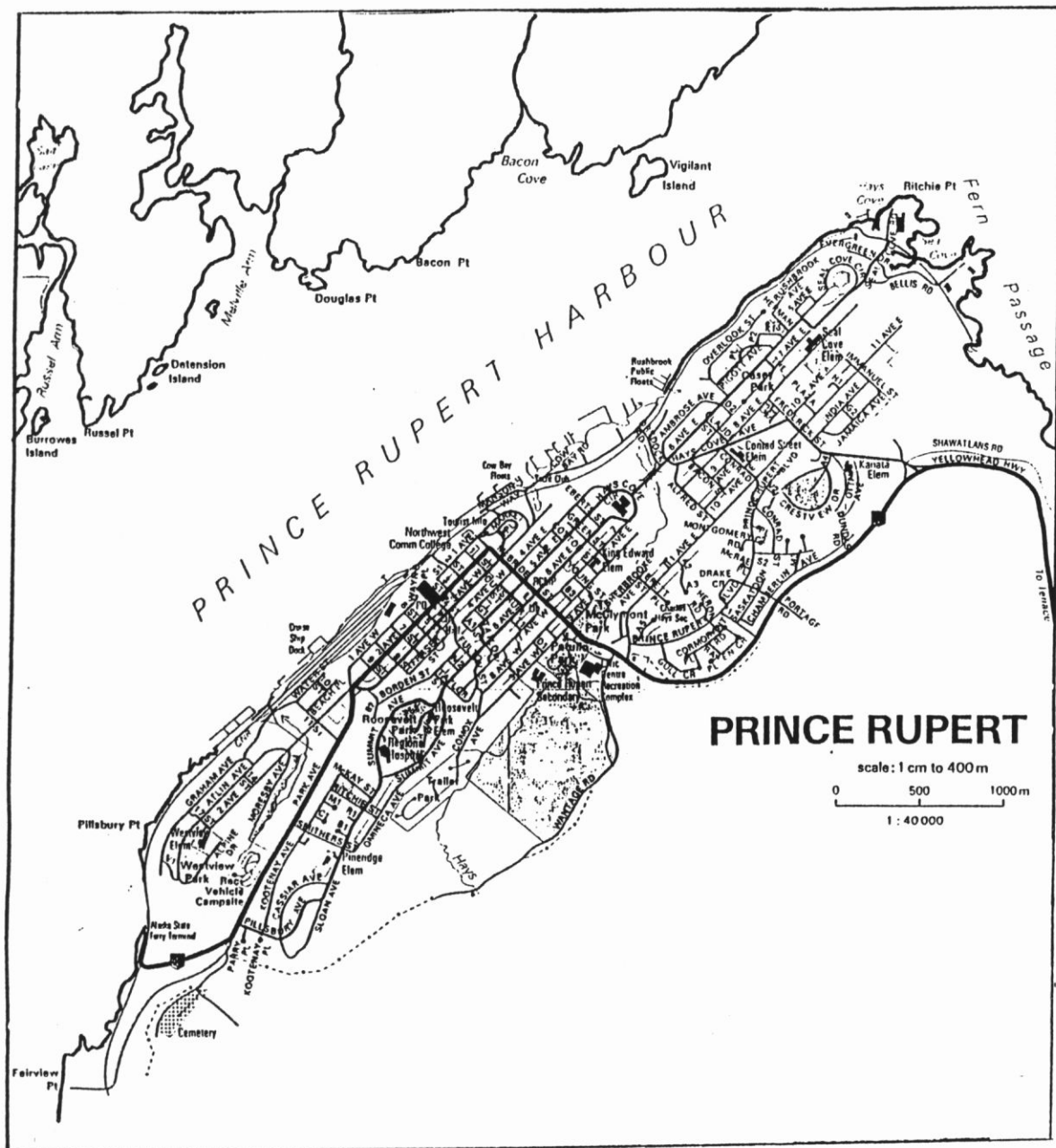
PRINCE RUPERT, B.C.  
Scale 400 feet to one inch



H  
A  
R  
B  
O  
R

<sup>2</sup> Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, *Prince Rupert, British Columbia, The Pacific Coast Terminus of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway* (Montreal: The Grand trunk Pacific Railway Co., 1909). This was the projected townsite designed by Brett and Hall.

MAP III--PRINCE RUPERT<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Canadian Cartographics Ltd, *Street Maps of B.C. Interior Cities* (Coquitlam: Canadian Cartographics Ltd, 1993). This map reveals the actual development based on the townsite plan.