

Permission  
to  
Participate

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Resource Governance in Alaska and  
*Incorporating* Alaska Native Participation  
through Alaska Native Corporations

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**Abstract**

Permission to Participate: *Incorporating* Alaska Native Participation on Resource Governance in Alaska through Alaska Native Corporations

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Modern urban and economic development within Alaska has depended heavily on the industrial development of its natural resources. This dependency has led to many conflicts and negotiations, geographically and historically, between Alaskan Natives, the State of Alaska, and the US Federal Government in regards to indigenous land claims. Through tracing the geographical evolution of these land claims and their settlements within Alaska, this paper seeks to understand how land claims settlements have impacted Alaska Native's *participation in further developing Alaska's natural resources*, such as oil and gas, fish and wildlife, and timber. This paper focuses on the historical and geographic struggle to settle indigenous land claims which culminated into the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) passed in 1971. ANCSA is a piece of legislation passed through congress that stipulates for Alaska Natives to construct, own, and operate newly conceptualized for-profit institutions called Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs) in order to receive any indigenous settlement land claims money. Since its passage, ANCSA has played a significant role in how participation in resource development is approached within Alaska, specifically in the construction of for-profit corporations heavily invested in resource extraction and development.

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“Our First Customer”  
Rug Displayed at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition  
Seattle, WA 1909<sup>1</sup>

“...For practical reasons in a hopelessly practical world”  
Arundhati Roy, *God of Small Things*, 2008

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<sup>1</sup> Advertisement for the Hartford Carpet Co., displayed at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, 1909.  
<http://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ayp/id/332>

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## Acronyms

AES	Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Energy Services
AFN	Alaska Federation of Natives
ANB	Alaska Native Brotherhood
ANC	Alaska Native Corporation
ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
AND	Alaska Dispatch News
ANILCA	Alaska National Interests Conservation Land Claims Act
ANS	Alaska Native Sisterhood
ANSEP	Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program
AOA	Alaska Organization Act
API	Arctic Pipe Inspection Inc.
ASRC	Arctic Slope Regional Corporation
AYPE	Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition
BBNC	Bristol Bay Native Corporation
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
DNC	Data Networks Corporation
GLACIER	Global Leadership in the Arctic: Cooperation, Innovation, Engagement, & Resilience
IEN	Indigenous Environmental Network
NARF	Native American Rights Fund
NPRA	National Petroleum Reserve Alaska
OCS	Outer Continental Shelf
REDOIL	Resisting Environmental Destruction of Indigenous Lands
RDC	Resource Development Council
SOA	State of Alaska
TAPS	Trans-Alaska Pipeline System
TSS	Traffic Separation Scheme
UAA	University of Alaska, Anchorage
UAF	University of Alaska, Fairbanks

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## Introduction Analyzing Participation in “The Last Frontier”

“It is impossible to meaningfully clean up spilled oil in the ice-filled Arctic Ocean...Arctic Ocean drilling will be among the riskiest and most costly in the world.”

*Alaska Dispatch News*, November 8, 2016

At 9:12 p.m. on the fateful night of Good Friday March 24, 1989, the *Exxon Valdez* dropped its last mooring line and backed from the Alyeska Pipeline Terminal at Valdez, Alaska. Bound for Long Beach, California on what was supposed to be a routine shipping voyage, the 987-foot shipping vessel was filled to capacity with 1,264,155 barrels (just over 53 million gallons) of crude oil that had travelled 800 miles south through the historic Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS).<sup>2</sup> According to the ship’s logs, after clearing the dock, the ship began maneuvering away from the berth and into the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) at 9:21 p.m. Then, just a few hours later, shortly after midnight, “the worst case had occurred,” the *Exxon Valdez* ran hard aground and ruptured its hull. Approximately 11 million gallons of crude oil was spewed into the pristine waters of Prince William Sound, marking it at the time as the worst environmental disaster.<sup>3</sup>

The mismanagement of the company responsible for the spill, Exxon, also was reflected in their response to it, and served to compound the extent of the disaster. For example, clean-up techniques that Exxon had determined to use in treating the oil-saturated waters were found to cause more damage than the spilled oil. Additionally, clean-up crews were left unprepared and unequipped for working within Alaska’s arctic and sub-arctic climate (Kelso and Kendziorek 1991b). At times, winds reaching up to 70-miles an hour had virtually halted all clean-up operations. News cameras captured clean-up crewmembers literally on their hands and knees on the rocky beaches of Alaska—covered

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix B: TAPS map

<sup>3</sup> Exxon-Valdez disaster was considered as the worst environmental disaster at the time in terms of number of wildlife killed (Kelso and Kendziorek 1991a; *The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill: Final Report, State of Alaska* 1993, p. 3).

and blackened in crude oil—using towels to soak up as much oil as they could. Images of fish and wild-life, also oil-drenched and suffering, helped stir public outcry and forced a larger public conversation of what is happening within Alaska. The Exxon-Valdez oil spill quickly became the quintessential example of the result of the unregulated overinvestment and overproduction of natural resources (Matthews 1990; Hayes 1989). In total, less than 15 percent of the oil was recovered, covering close to 800 miles of shoreline, and costing upwards of 7 billion dollars in damages (Nikiforuk 2016).

Despite the media coverage and public scrutiny, Exxon’s commitment towards continuing their exploratory projects in developing more of Alaskan oil remained unswayed. One month after the spill, the *Seattle Times* reported that Exxon’s “push for Alaska oil won’t stop” and described, Robert Young, a top executive in Exxon’s Exploration Department, proclaiming that “our national reaction to the Valdez spill does not revise the critical fact that *Alaskan oil is too valuable to leave in the ground*” and “the spill is being used by environmental groups in an increasingly aggressive phase of wilderness politics” (*Seattle Times* 1989, p. 12 emphasis added). This commitment towards natural resource development continues today. At the time of this writing, Exxon had already begun implementing facilities at Point Thomson, Alaska only 60 miles from Prudhoe Bay. The facilities at Point Thompson—according to Exxon’s website—is expected to generate up to 10,000 barrels of natural gas condensate and would require the construction of a 22-mile branch extension to TAPS.<sup>4</sup>

To fully understand the Exxon-Valdez oil spill, it is important to know that Exxon is not the only, nor even the largest, natural resource company who utilize TAPS. Nor is Exxon the only natural resource company with drilling facilities in Alaska. Natural resource companies such as Shell, BP, ARCO, work together in joint ventures and partnerships with the State of Alaska and the federal

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on Exxon’s Point Thomson project go to <http://corporate.exxonmobil.com/en/company/worldwide-operations/locations/united-states/alaska/point-thomson>

government in exploring and extracting Alaska's natural resources on a large scale. Within this environment, it should be no surprise that oil spills and accidents are extremely common. As environmentalist and economist Winona Laduke writes, "over 535 million pounds of toxic releases into the environment in 2000 alone," along with "1,534 oil spills in the state reported to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. That amounts to a reported release of 145,338 gallons of oil, or 30 oil spills a week, four a day" (Laduke 2003)

The practices and efforts towards continuously pushing to increase and intensify fossil fuel production, development, and consumption, as well as the consistent rate of environmental accidents, speak to how the American "free-market" system of resource governance operates within Alaska. There is, however, an aspect of this economic structure that receives little attention, and is uniquely Alaskan: the role in which the institutions known as Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs) play within this socio-economic and socio-political landscape.

This thesis will examine the social and economic geography in which ANCs, and Alaska Natives *participate* within, their geographic history, and the people that ANCs are meant to represent. ANCs were created in 1971, as a stipulation of the historic Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA).<sup>5</sup> Through ANCSA, ANCs gained full-title private ownership of over 44 million acres of land within Alaska along with \$1 billion. In the effort to settle long-standing indigenous land claims made by Alaska Natives, and that all future land claims are "hereby extinguish" (Thomas 1986).<sup>6</sup> The 44 million acres (roughly 10 percent) of Alaskan land, and the \$1 billion granted through ANCSA were not given directly to Alaska Natives, nor Alaska Native tribes, villages, or clans. ANCSA stipulated the creation of ANCs, for-profit corporations meant to manage the money and land through investment. This thesis sets out to examine how ANCs are *racially and geographically* defined state-

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<sup>5</sup> At the time, ANCSA was the largest indigenous land claims settlement in United States history (Thomas 1986)

<sup>6</sup> the actual terms used in ANCSA to refer to the settlement agreement is "extinguish" and "extinguishment" of all future indigenous land claims within Alaska (Thomas 1986)

sponsored for-profit institutions. My central goal in this thesis is demonstrate how ANCs serve as an institutional gateway, *permitted* through the state, for Alaska Natives to access and *participate as natives* within Alaska's—and by extension the United States'—larger capitalists' economy. Thus, this alludes to the title of my thesis, *Permission to Participate*. Another function of ANCs in which I set out to examine and analyze within this thesis, is that they provide a gateway for the state and federal government along with institutional corporate interests in accessing indigenous land for purposes of natural resource profiteering, through business practices such as land leasing agreements, partnerships, and joint-ventures with ANCs.

Since making their appearance in the political and economic scene in Alaska, ANCs have been heavily involved in the development of Alaska, for example leasing land and engaging in drilling partnerships with Shell, BP, Exxon, and others, at Prudhoe bay, Alaska. ANCs also engage independently in exploring and developing Alaskan natural resources for profit. Much of the land that was affected by the disastrous Exxon-Valdez oil-spill was owned by ANCs. Thus, one month after the Exxon-Valdez oil-spill, a lawsuit was filed by six ANCs suing Exxon for upwards of \$120 million in damages. It would take another 20 years of litigation and appeals before a final decision would be made, escaping media attention and the public eye. In 1994, a jury decided that the ANCs should be compensated for \$9.7 million (*The New York Times* 1994). Then, in 2009, a court decided that Exxon was to pay ANCs and Alaska Natives \$5 billion in punitive damages for recklessness, \$480 million more in interest on delayed punitive damages, an additional \$70 million in appeal costs (*LA Times* 1994). As this indicates, ANCs clearly play a significant role in Alaskan resource politics and economics, yet they have remained largely overlooked from the general public eye as well as within geographic scholarship as to what they do, how they were created, who they are, and what they represent. So, what exactly are ANCs? How does a corporation become identified as native? What role do they play within Alaska's socio-economic structure? And where exactly do they fit

within Alaskan resource governance? This thesis sets out to explain these questions to gain a better understanding and clearer picture of the realities of Alaska's socio-economic landscape.

Today, ANCs have grown to be involved within virtually all economic interaction within Alaska, particularly in relation to resource governance. As the Alaskan business magazine, *Alaska Inc* reported—the magazine that focuses on reporting on Alaska's Native-owned businesses—that

“Alaska Native corporations have been involved in oil and gas and oil support work since before the North Slope oil production began. The first support contract, between BP and a NANA (ANC) joint-venture, was signed in 1975 and is still in effect. Soon after, Doyon Ltd. (ANC) began its drilling business and Arctic Slope Regional Corp. (ANC) entered the support industry” (*Alaska, Inc* 2015, p. 39).

There are currently hundreds of ANCs operating within Alaska, many of whom are the state's leading employers (*Alaska Business Monthly* 2016). Additionally, many ANCs are now operating nationally, as well as internationally. Collectively, they have engaged in mergers and acquisitions of other corporations and businesses reaching several hundred in total. These activities, mergers, and acquisitions range from oil and natural resource development services, such as mining and fishing, but also information technology and military support staffing, real estate, and tourism, generating multi-billion dollar profits. Within this state-corporate landscape of large-scale investment activities, and multi-billion profit-making, is *the* space that I argue ANCs were granted the *permission to participate* in. Therefore, at its most general scale, this thesis examines the *geographies of access*. I seek to understand the structures of power and authority that become embedded within these spaces as Alaska has developed into modernity. My underlining goal is to understand how power is utilized within these spaces, who possesses the power to grant or deny access, and the power to set the rules of participation, and for what purposes.

Along these lines, my focus will mainly consist in analyzing through economic and political terms. Therefore, the permission to participate throughout this thesis is centered on economic and political participation in relation to Alaska and Alaska Natives. There is no doubt that a deeper

examination and analysis of ANCs would reveal a rich socio-cultural space of interaction and cultural exchange, but this deeper examination is indeed out of the scope of this thesis.

With my focus on economic and political participation, I examine, spatio-temporally, the scopes and limits of Alaska Native participation within Alaska, and use the concept of the “permission to participate” to point at the structural conditions of who defines the discourse of *participation*. This analytical framework will serve to adumbrate where the power and authority *to permit* lies. In short, in the context of Alaska’s state political-economy and Alaska Native interactions with the state, power, I argue, resides in the colonial-state and the corporate-state, and therefore permission to participate within Alaska’s political-economy is granted through that the state structure. Furthermore, I argue within these state structures, those who possess this authority to grant permission have consistently been state officials and the wealthy elite, influenced through representation and discourse, and use their assumed economic and political authority in setting the ground rules for the conduct of economic and political participation within Alaska. Lastly, I argue that the foundations of Alaska’s current modern corporate-state political-economic structure, in which ANCs operate in, is root rooted in colonialism. Therefore, I proceed throughout my analyses through the spatio-temporal transition from a political-economic structure based on colonial-state power, to a one based on corporate-state power. This provides a clearer picture of how power is employed and authority maintained.

As I mentioned, ANCs function as a two-way street (although uneven). They are, I argue, the smooth, fixed, central nodes that interconnects to other institutions and corporations within an even broader network of state and corporate entities. To best sketch how ANCs function as a gateway towards participation for Alaska Natives in one direction and state-corporate access to indigenous lands in the other direction within Alaska’s economic geography, I argue for an examination of the history and geography of Alaska Natives in relation to state power and authority. Each chapter in

this thesis, therefore, function as a geographical snapshot of the spatial manifestations and social interactions between the state and Alaska Natives. I maintain an analytical emphasis on the discourse of participation within the processes of Alaska's natural resource development. To this end, I have structured this thesis into three chapters using the following outline: 1) excluded from participation, 2) inclusion for participation, 3) political participation.

In chapter one, *Permission Denied*, I will examine the development of colonial Alaska beginning in the late-colonial Western expansion period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where Alaska Natives were excluded to participate, economically and politically, within colonial-state structure. Through exhuming formal government and public documents, alternative sources, and buried, abandoned, and discontinued magazines and newspapers, I am able to paint with a broad-brush Alaska Native exclusion through colonialism. I will analyze how American colonialists and capitalists through the commodification of colonized indigenous bodies and their objectifying their land had constructed representations of Alaska and Alaska Native. I follow these representations, along with the flow of capital, from urban centers such as San Francisco, Seattle, Vancouver, and Portland, as they entered Alaska. These representations were disseminated to the general public through the news, monuments, popular magazines such as magazines, scholarship, and public events such as world fairs. During this colonial period, these representations helped to produce an image of Alaska as a geographic space that is “majestic,” “grand,” “ours,” while inextricably folding within it representations that Alaska Natives are also “savage,” and “uncivilized.” Furthermore, the representation of Alaska as “ours” was coupled with representations of Alaska as “untapped,” which helped sparking the tremendous waves of migration into Alaska, and igniting what is known as the “the Great Alaskan and Klondike Gold rush.”

In tracing out how American expansionist and business elites, who were sympathetic towards the expansion of the American colonial empire and the development of early industrial capitalism,

interacted with Alaska Natives during this period, reveals the beginnings of a strong and weak relationship between American settlers and Alaska Natives, where Alaska Natives are placed into the role of subordinate to American colonial and capitalists' authority.

The interweaving of representation and discourse along indigenous and geographical lines, I argue, provided the justification for the logic of superiority over Alaska Natives in conjunction with the physical exploitation of their land. In this sense, we can better understand how later, in 1968, when the largest deposit of oil in the northern hemisphere was found, ANCs were constructed by the state, and how an institution such as an ANC is identified as native while simultaneously identifying as for-profit. My particular aim for chapter one, therefore, is to rethink the history and geographical movement of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Western expansion as it entered the northern regions by shedding on light these conceptions of representations and discourse.

With chapter one providing the historical and geographical background of Alaska Native exclusion and marginalization, and of Alaska exploited as a limitless reservoir of natural resources, I proceed to chapter two, *Permitting Economic Participation*. Chapter two will focus on the shift in discourse to that of inclusion of Alaska Natives into the state-corporate structure. I will examine the *permissible* economic boundaries—or limitations—of Alaska Native economic participation, that I argue, is a constrained and narrow framework of economic interaction towards investing capital into natural resource development. I trace out in this chapter the events and interactions that led to the construction and ultimate passage of ANCSA, as well as its implementation, and ANC corporate practices.

ANCSA introduced layers upon layers of state bureaucracy, which up to today, still produces considerable confusion among courts and Alaska Natives. One such example is the “enrollment” process. Simply known as “the Roll,” Alaska natives had a limited time to enroll to become a shareholder of a specific regional ANCs, missing the enrollment date would mean exclusion from ANCSA’s financial benefits and indigenous lands granted. I also examine in chapter two the structural conditions that led to ANCSA and ANCs, and how money and land is selected and

distributed to specific ANCs, and how land is legally defined through ANCSA within its constitution. Understanding these events and processes helps to provide a clearer picture of Alaska's current political-economy, as they ANCSA and ANCs still play a significant role in Alaska Native interactions with corporate and state entities.

### *The Essential Native and The Last Frontier*

Theoretically and analytically, within my analyses in chapters one and two, I seek to understand the relationships and interactions between the State and Alaska Natives by drawing on the work of Edward Said (Said 2003; Said 1993; Said 2001). Specifically, I employ the analytical framework of “othering,” “orientalism,” and “orientalizing.” As Said's asserts, under the guise of a dominating authority, *discourse* and *representation* are apparatuses used by those in power to exert their power and maintain their authority. These processes shape the basic categories and assumptions, within the dominate authority, of *The Other* and *The Orient*. Thus, the Other and the Orient become *essentialized*, and *fixed* objects that are “*contained* and *represented* by dominating frameworks.” (Said 2003, p. 40, emphasis in original). In the case of Alaska and Alaska Natives, I argue similar processes have taken place since the Alaska Purchase of 1867. Fundamentally, then, I argue that the relationships between the state and Alaska Natives are relationships of power and authority and varying degrees of resistance and compromise.

I find using a Saidian framework to analyze these relationships appropriate towards gaining a better understanding of Alaska's development. Seeing chapter one and two together, we can see how both the geographic space—Alaska—and indigenous peoples—Alaska Natives, become *fixed* through the work of representation and discourse. In this sense, I intend to tease out how these representations are created through a dominating framework of authority and power, which serve to justify and rationalize the authority of those in power. In chapter one, I argue it is the colonial-state that maintains this authority, and in chapter two I argue it is the corporate-state. Thus, as I mentioned, the *permission to participate* is granted through these authoritarian structures. This is not to

say that these representations are constructed unilaterally, and that there is *real* Alaska or a *real* Alaska Native, but that it is, as Said put it, “the whole network of interests” which are “inevitably brought to bear” when the Other is in question. How this happens, and what sorts of concentrations of power can be identified is the intention of thesis.

As I proceed through chapter one, I will discuss how Alaska is romanticized by the colonial-state and colonial-settlers as “majestic,” “rugged,” “grand,” “The Last Frontier.” As Alaska historian Haycox has argued, “the principal paradigm which had been used to explain Alaska, past and present, is the territory’s assumed *uniqueness* from the rest of the United States, and in some ways, the rest of the continent” (Haycox 1990, p. 64, emphasis added). These representations, I argue, served to produce a geographic space of untapped and pristine land, ready for development. At the same time, as colonial settlements grew in population within Alaska, we begin to see representations of Alaska Natives as ‘rude,’ ‘child-like,’ and ‘savage,’ that has served as a way of marginalizing Alaska Natives and in justifying the dispossession of Alaska Native land. Within my discussions in chapter one will be mainly to focus on the *simultaneity* of the work of representation and discourse.

In chapter two, I argue that similar processes that I discussed in chapter one are extended—reproduced—as Alaska’s state structure transitioned from a colonial-state to a corporate-state. Thus, the discourse of Alaska as a repository of untapped natural resources served to advance and intensify natural resource production. Furthermore, under the guise of the corporate-state structure, Alaska Native identity and culture is essentialized into the *native corporate shareholder*.

Following my discussions in chapters one and two, of how Alaska Native identity and culture have curated into essential objects through a state-colonial structure and the state-corporate structure, I proceed to chapter three in analyzing the ways in which Alaska Natives have participated politically towards their own interests and concerns. Thus, the title of chapter three, *Political Participation*, I examine the *intersections* within Alaska Natives’ efforts to politically challenge, resist,

and expand outside the colonial and corporate orthodoxy that has become deeply embedded within Alaska's socio-economic structure. I analyze how Alaska Natives have struggled against discrimination and indigenous self-determination and sovereignty. I also examine and discuss the rising visibility of the discourse of climate change in relation to Alaska Native climate justice activism. In the context of intersectionality, I discuss how some Alaska Natives have described the warming of the Arctic as a new market opportunity for natural resource exploration and development, and on the other end, a complete resistance and repudiation of natural resource development. A second aim in chapter three will be to analyze Alaska Native political participation and cultural resiliency through resistance. Chapter three will help in gaining a better understanding of how legislative acts are negotiated, contested, and agreed upon through Alaska Native political participation, for example, the enactment of the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945, the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) of 1972, and the Alaska National Interest Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980. These legislative acts may come into direct conflict with Alaska Native subsistence living and culture, where Alaska Natives, at times, have overtly rejected or refused to recognize its legitimacy. By examining Alaska Natives' refusal to recognize the legitimacy and processes of corporatization of indigeneity, the degradation of the Alaska's physical environment, as well as the protection of sacred indigenous lands, we will have a better understanding on how Alaska Natives navigate through Alaska's dominant political-economy.

The major task for this thesis, then, is intended to gain a deeper understanding of how structures of authority, in relation to the institutionalized colonial-state and corporate-state, have persisted and are reproduced their authority, and their spatial manifestations, through indigenous interactions and relationships. This thesis also maps out the ways in which space is transformed under two different forms of governance and how Alaska Natives navigate and negotiate within these landscapes. As environmental politics, discourse, and critical indigenous scholarship becomes more visible, Alaskan

politics is rapidly becoming less of a periphery—physically and meta-physically—and its importance and urgency is beginning to be taken seriously, something this work hopes to contribute to.

Chapter I  
Permission Denied:  
Early Colonial Representations of Alaska

“Tomorrow we will reach out to claim our birthright; we will rendezvous with our dreams.”

*Speaking on the Alaska Land Auction*, Alaska Governor Keith Miller, 1969



Fig. 1-1 (Photograph taken by A. Romero 2016)

Seattle, Washington has many faces. Each sharing its own inner histories and internal geographies. An attentive visitor may notice however some of the common threads which are revealed throughout Seattle’s urban landscape, one being Native American history. Indeed, this seems to be a significant source of pride within Seattle. As Seattle historian Coll Thrush (2007, p. 3) writes, “every American city is built on Indian land, but few advertise it like Seattle,” and walking within the Seattle’s city limits, it would be hard to miss the many unique works of Native American art,

symbols, names, and imagery weaved into the industrial and modern urban landscape. One of these works of indigenous art is a 60-foot-tall totem pole, standing unmarked in Seattle's Pioneer Square district (see fig. 1-1), conventionally known as the "Seattle's original neighborhood."<sup>7</sup>

An even more attentive visitor might notice the totem pole's gaze *facing north*, towards Seattle's historic business center, 1<sup>st</sup> avenue downtown. In this context, it would be understandable to assume that this particular totem pole takes part in the general theme of incorporating indigenous aesthetics into Seattle's urban landscape. Among Seattle's many faces, not many would readily know that Seattle was at one point in time and space the face of Alaska, or as it has been termed, "the Gateway to Alaska" (Judd 2016), or the "Gateway to the North" (Thrush 2007, p. 117). This particular totem pole, then, I find as an appropriate prelude to analyzing colonial Alaska, and the relationships between colonial settlers and Alaska Natives, as the history behind this totem pole speaks to many of the aspects of Alaska's early American development after Alaska was purchased by the United States in 1867. It provides the context towards extending the map of Alaska where capital flows and colonial migration flows into Alaska from places other regions of the United States growing its population. By understanding how this totem pole was acquired—appropriated—and for what purpose, and the decisions that were made on how this totem pole was to be *re-placed* in its current location provides the basis in understanding the distributions of power in relation to Alaska's development, historically and geographically. Even details such as deciding which direction this totem pole faces, reflect the colonial mindset of how Alaska and Alaska Natives are to be defined.

Furthermore, as I discussed in the introduction, I proceed within this chapter with the concept of the *essential native* in mind. Colonial representations of Alaska and Alaska Natives that I argue served in providing the justification for colonizing Alaska. I will trace out the ways Alaska was

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.pioneersquare.org>

represented through colonial mechanisms and economic determinism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Through a romanticizing discourse of Alaska's land and a marginalizing discourse of Alaska Natives, colonial settlers had the necessary moral foundation in which to settle, develop, and exploit Alaska's natural resources. In this context, we can gain a better understanding of early American migration into Alaska that is the historical and geographic background of Alaska's current form of resource governance: the perception that Alaskan natural resources are "too valuable to leave in the ground," which I discussed in the introduction.

Using the Alaska Native totem pole that stands in Pioneer Square as a jumping off point then, I proceed throughout this chapter in tracing how the ideas about Alaska were constructed, represented, and disseminated. These processes served to exclude Alaska Natives from the colonial society that settled on their land. The title of this chapter, *Permission Denied*, alludes to the Alaska Native exclusion and marginalization, in relation to land development, through the work of representation. The early colonial representations that I will discuss within this chapter denied any power to Alaska Natives in representing themselves. A central theme throughout this chapter is recognizing the dominant influence of generating profit within these representations: the power and influence of the *representers*. I focus on mediums such as newspapers, popular magazines, and events within the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, leading the way towards a tremendous wave of migration into Alaska. This ultimately led to Alaska becoming a state in 1959, and influenced the relationships with Alaska Natives. Theoretically, I draw on Hall's (Hall and Whannel 1965, p. 20) discussions on societal exchange of knowledge through the media, where he asserts the use of the media provide people "information and ideas about society [and] provide imaginative experiences through various forms of art and entertainments." I define here "the media" as any form of curated information for presentation, or representations, to the general public, which are intended to have a modifying impact on social interaction. I argue that wrapped up in these

representations of Alaska and Alaska Natives are the roots of today's resource governance within Alaska.

In the context of colonizing Alaska, this has mainly consisted of the wealthy elite, state officials, and entrepreneurs who are heavily invested within the natural resource development. As Said (2003, p. 7) argued in *Orientalism*, "the relationship between the Occident and the Orient is a relationship of power, of domination." With this analytical understanding, I find that the relationships between those with privilege and power, within Alaska, with Alaska Natives virtually indistinguishable to the processes of Orientalism. In many instances throughout my research, Alaska is depicted and described as being part of the Orient, and Alaska Natives being perceived as Oriental. Much of the historical interactions and events that occurred in regards to Alaska's early colonial history overlaps with the processes of Orientalism, and therefore explains why Said's work has proved crucial in my analyses. I therefore proceed in this chapter by tracing out how Alaska and Alaska Natives are created, discussed, and decided upon much in the same way as Orientalism.

#### *Unveiling Alaska: Colonial Representations of Alaska and Alaska Natives*

In 1899 in Seattle, within the midst of The Great Alaska and Klondike Gold Rush (Berton 1958), the Seattle-based newspaper the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* sponsored a group called the "Good Will Committee" composed of some of Seattle's leading and wealthy elites to tour up north to Alaska (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1899; Wilma 2000). The purpose of the tour was in large parts propagandistic. The committee was tasked to tour up north to Alaska and return to provide useful information about Alaska to the general public, particularly investors, not just within Seattle but of the rest of the United States. Coined as "The Great Land," Alaska during this time was the source of the tremendous influx of capital wealth in terms of gold that flowed back into the United States, and a

tremendous outflow of people towards Alaska, reaching conditions that is popularly referred to as having “feverish” tone (Berton 1958).

Upon the committee’s return, they had in their possession seventeen Alaska Native totem poles which they claimed was found within an abandoned Alaskan village. Being sponsored by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, it was decided that one of these totem poles be placed within Seattle as a way to usher in the new millennium, a ceremonial event was therefore scheduled for one of these totem poles to be unveiled. After distributing the other totem poles to colleges across the country, allegations began to surface that the Good Will Committee had stolen these totem poles, yet the event for the unveiling in Pioneer Square remained as scheduled.

On December 19<sup>th</sup>, 1899, a front-page article in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* headlined *Totem Pole Stands at Last Unveiled*. The article described the “impressive ceremonies” dedicated to the unveiling of “a rude, strong piece of sculpture, carved by a savage, but steady hand—the shadow of the wilderness in its deep, rugged lines...greeted by the cheers of a multitude of people and roar of the busy streets.” The totem pole, raised and unveiled in the heart of Pioneer Square, in Seattle was described as

“emphatically unique, startling, barbaric, bizarre [with] each fantastical figure facing resolutely up first avenue, northwestwardly, in the direction of its ancient home, lending wonderful color and interest to the *business heart of the city*, lifting it forever out of the commonplace.” (Seattle Post-Intelligencer 1899, p. 1 emphasis added; fig. 1-2).



Fig. 1-2, "Seattle's Proudest Possession" (AYPE cartoon, 1909)

Although it seems that Seattle's citizens have successfully established the exclusive rights in the capitalization of Alaska, my point here is less about this relationship between Seattle and Alaska, but as a way to examine how Alaska was represented as natural resources were beginning to be extracted and developed. Within the case of Seattle, it illustrates the material capital invested in Alaska, and the cultural capital necessary to legitimize their efforts. The totem pole in discussion symbolizing a competitive effort to own the distant northern territories through the simultaneously marginalizing the indigenous peoples. Alaska Native identity and culture here thus becomes an essential object, unmovable, and static. Therefore, the foundation and groundwork of a racialized superiority of colonial whiteness is revealed, that draws on and is conformed to Alaska's geographical distinctiveness. These efforts helped to inculcate into the mind the American white expansionist or investor a perspective of superiority.

In this context, the totem pole is a monument that serves as an example of the how the other is simultaneously destroyed and re-constructed for the future. As geographer Mitchell (2003, p.443) suggests in her analysis on the spatial politics of monuments, it is a site that reflects "an act of building the collective memory of the recent past, but also producing that memory's future through

a highly particular form of aestheticized, spectacularized politics...a practice of representation that enacts and gives social substance to the discourse of collective memory.” As such, through this Alaska Native totem pole I’ve been discussing, it can be seen as a part of the performance of constructing a collective identity, an American Western colonial identity in relation to Alaska, which plays a role in how to collectively American citizens move forward as a social group in developing Alaska. Moreover, in this case, it involved the destruction or marginalization of another’s collective identity—Alaska Native.

Since the Alaska Purchase of 1867, Alaska’s economic structure is foundationally exploitative in regards to resource developments and remains, significantly, to be the case. This legacy of Alaska as a resource-rich space meant for exploitation is so deeply ingrained into Alaska’s social, political, and economic fabric, that socially liberal and democratic programs which arise become dependent on- and incorporated into- this apparatus of exploitation. The outcomes of such schemes, however, have not been wholly negative. But because Alaska’s political and economic foundation rests firmly on these socio-economic formations, collective sociality and collaboration are limited to this primary organizational mode of operation and ensures that this conduct of developing Alaska are constrained to conform to a narrow market-oriented state-capitalist framework.

Through understanding how this natural resource dependent culture operates through the use of representation connects my discussion from the realm of the nation to the local state. As I will discuss, business oriented and motivated individuals show a keen understanding of the potentiality in the development of Alaska and motivated their practices to mobilize capital and moral support in this task. The early colonial development of Alaska is built around the romanticization of land and the exclusion and marginalization of Alaska Natives.

Within popular literature, Godey’s Magazine (1898, p.5,6), an influential American magazine which targeted the general colonialist population and focused on American high-fashion, wrote an

article in 1898 titled “*Our Distant Colony*.” The article’s opening paragraph extolled Alaska’s coastline and archipelagos as “a web of silver lace studded with emeralds...from Washington to Alaska stretches the sinuous channel lined with beautiful scenery,” and after determining that “the value of our distant colony is no longer a mooted question,” the article takes the reader on a tour of two developing colonies in Alaska: New Metlakatlah and Sitka. The article described New Metlakatlah, where missionary William Duncan had settled, as a “thriving settlement with frame cottages, town-hall, churches...under the guidance of missionary Mr. Duncan”, where

“incoming steamers are greeted with intelligent, well-clothed, happy-looking Indians that flock to the wharf to welcome tourists who wish to visit their village. They speed the traveler on his way as the time of departure draws near by strains of music, for they boast a brass band that discourses in joyous notes ‘My Country’, ‘Hail Columbia’, and ‘Yankee Doodle’” (see fig. 1-3).

In regards to appealing to the notions of physical landscape, the Godey’s article describes the “crowning glory” of Sitka, Alaska—the first official capital after 1867—is its “beautiful bay”, and where “one side of the street is the Protestant church, stores, and a school-house, [while] straggling away from this...is the squalid Indian village, with its ‘ancient and fish-like smell’ not inviting to fastidious visitors” (11).



Fig. 1.3, “Indian Brass Band, New Metlakatah” (*Godey’s Magazine* 1898, p. 1898)

As we can see, wrapped up in these depictions of space, is the overt contempt for indigenous culture but acceptance of American acculturation. Being that Godey's magazine whose center audience was the American colonialist and capitalist population, these representations of land and indigenous culture suggest a *respatialization* of Alaska through relationships of power and privilege (Mitchell 2004). This *redentifies* space and explains how groups *outside* of Alaska absorb, integrate, and create meanings of racial hierarchy and class hierarchy as they entered and settled within Alaska. Through this cultural marginalization of Alaska Native culture and the self-assertion of American culture, space for American settlers expanded through the shrinking of Alaska Native space. However, the actual demographics of Alaska after the purchase was estimated as only 900 non-indigenous individuals. This included Russians who by then considered it their home, American homesteaders, fur-traders, fishing and timber companies invested Alaska's natural resources, and frontiersmen and pioneers. Included in their company was a small United States military base put in place to deter further British-Canadian expansion from the east. In contrast, an estimated 30,000 Alaska Natives inhabited Alaska during the time that Alaska was "sold" to the United States. Actual interactions with the Alaska Native population and colonial settlers were limited to assimilationist methods of social interaction such as Christian and Presbyterian missionary conversion and cheap labor (Shiels 1967).

### *Competing to be the "Gateway to the North"*

Immediately after the first shipment of gold arrived on the shores of San Francisco and Seattle that we begin to see the sharp rise in interests and large-scale international campaigns on Alaska and the Yukon. "The Great Alaska and Klondike Gold Rush", as it has often been labeled in both scholarship and popular literature. The late nineteenth century has been described as a time of "feverish" excitement and "a stampede unequalled in history" (Berton 1958). American and British newspapers, popular literature, and scholarship during the gold rush sought to intensify these

representations and thus solidified the practices of racial and class hierarchy and land exploitation for profit into Alaskan resource governance.

Beginning in San Francisco, a competitive battle to be labeled “The Gateway to the North” began to take place (Binns 1941). Through an intensive nation-wide advertising campaign, journalists and businessmen coined Seattle as “The Gateway to Alaska” (Binns 1941, p. 291). In fierce competition with San Francisco, but also other coastal cities such as Victoria, Vancouver, and Portland, Seattle state officials, investors, and entrepreneurs worked together in partnerships to package and market Seattle as the best port to the North, (Haycox 2002b; Haycox 2002a; Berton 1958). What was represented as a romantic relationship between Seattle and Alaska by the *Seattle Mail and Herald*, the newspaper wrote that “as Alaska pours its gold into our banks...our tide of power will rise until we shall be a recognized factor in the commercial world.”

One example of what Alaska historian Jeannette Nichols called “The Alaska Complex” (Nichols 1924, p. 145), where statesmen and investors worked together to battle for their city’s interests in Alaska’s resources, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* hired Harvard graduate, psychologist, and veteran journalist Erastus Brainerd as the Secretary for the Special Committee on Advertising. They collaborated in a bitter fight between San Francisco, Victoria, and Portland to be the best jumping off point for those wishing to travel north. Brainerd flooded newspapers across the United States with ads promoting Seattle as well as used forms of corporate espionage to quietly inform Seattle merchants the names of potential customers and other rival city’s plans. By 1898 Seattle had garnered twenty-five million dollars in trade compared to only five million through other ports (Berton 1958).

Although gold and oil had always been suspected to be available in large amounts in Alaska, political elites did not immediately begin investing into large-scale industrial production after the Alaska Purchase of 1867. In parts because of the vastness in size, difficulties in transporting raw

materials, and general ignorance of the physical land on the part of United States, urban and industrial economic development in the newly acquired territory, colonization started rather slowly and incrementally. Through the early representations of Alaska as resource-rich, optimism for its future development remained consistent, including the prospects for its physical location in relation to becoming a hub for commerce across the Pacific and as a wedge in British colonial expansion in North America through Canada (Shiels 1967).

During this early period, fur, fish, and timber remained the major natural resources to be exploited within Alaska after 1867, while the discourse around Alaska developed. As *New York World* wrote in 1867, “Russia had sold us a sucked orange...[yet] looking to the future, we must regard the purchase of the Russian possessions as wise...It is an advancing step in that manifest destiny which is yet to give us British North America” (qtd. in Shiels 1967, p.2), while the *Philadelphia Inquirer* conjectured, “a time may come, when the possession of this territory will give us command over the Pacific, which our extensive possessions there require” (qtd. in Hinckley 1972, p.2). Russian officials in charge of negotiations were also reluctant to “sell” to the United States the territory but felt it necessary as Russian power was receding in Russian North America, and in the event of war, “Russia would be hard put to defend Alaska” (Shiels 1967, p.1; Hinckley 1972). As Alaska historian Bolkhovitinov (Bolkhovitinov 1996, p. 90) suggested in his historical analysis of the Russian sale of Alaska, Russian officials were strategically hoping that the sale would “force a collision between the United States and the British Empire.” Furthermore, although there was some opposition to the purchase in the United States, many Alaska historians agree, that the story of “Seward’s folly” is a mixture of herofication, myth, and propaganda meant to prop up Alaska as a hidden treasure and market its “Last Frontier” appeal (Haycox 2002b; Drinnon 1980). In brief, the general consensus at the time of purchase, particularly among annexationists, colonialists, capitalists, and entrepreneurs,

was that the purchase of Alaska, finalized in the spring of 1867 for \$7,200,000 was indeed a bargain and “seemed to promise wealth to those hardy enough to seek it” (Hinckley 1972, p.24).

Although there was the appeal for Alaska strategic location as a gateway to trans-Pacific commerce, representations of Alaska’s natural resources remained the major focus in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. As I’ve noted, these representations were constructed in the interest to attract capital investments, and as we have seen these ideas intersected with the discourse of racial hierarchy and authority, colonialist expansion, nationalist jingoism, and class hierarchy. As Finney argues in her research on the intersections of racism and the environment, these forms of representations are “informed by a legacy of eurocentrism and the linkage of wilderness to whiteness, wherein both become naturalized and universalized” (Finney 2014, p. 28). Thus, as the new citizenry of the United States migrated into the northern territories of Alaska and settled into colonies, we see what gold rush historian Pierre Berton (1958, p. 6) calls “a northward osmosis that had been going on since the rush to California”. These early colonial-capitalist representations and their manifestations were most visible during the world fair of the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition (AYPE) in 1909, which I will discuss in the next section.

### *Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition*

“It is in the Alaskan exhibits, its showing of the Orient, its wonders from the south seas and Straits settlements that the [Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition] finds its greatest excuse for being. Never before at an Occidental port has there been so mixed a gathering of strange people.”

*New York Times*, May 30, 1909

By 1909, the discourse around American colonial ownership of Alaska had been solidified. The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (AYPE) held in the summer of 1909 in Seattle, WA a to celebrate this colonial acquisition and generate more investment in developing Alaska.<sup>8</sup> As Seattle historian

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<sup>8</sup> The fair also had exhibits of other American colonies such as the Philippines and Hawaii, using similar forms of racist marginalization

Coll Thrush (2007, p.119) described, “the AYPE was intensely didactic, brazenly ambitious, and thoroughly racist”, while former mayor of Seattle noted, that the AYPE “put Seattle on the national map when most of the country still considered the Pacific Northwest frontier country” (Stein and Becker 2009, p.7). Throughout my archival research of the AYPE, I have encountered countless examples of both racist propaganda coupled with representations of Alaska as a majestic space. The authority over Alaska was also woven into the AYPE’s atmosphere.

As world’s fair historian Rydell (1984, p. 199) described in his research on the AYPE, directors of the AYPE planned for “the largest Eskimo village ever presented at a world’s fair” that included illustrations of Alaska Natives at the lowest “stage of civilization,” and gathered thirty four Siberians to be present at the exhibit to represent Alaska Natives who were “partly educated” and Alaska Natives who “can conduct business affairs, operate mills and canneries and who have reached an advanced state of civilization.” Furthermore, as Rydell writes, the Eskimo Village exhibit when seen in conjunction with other exhibits of Alaska’s natural resources on display was built

“to show the world that Alaska is no longer a place where only the Eskimo and Indian can live?—the Eskimo Village created the impression that for these people progress would be judged by their racial attributes and by what and how much they contributed to the economic growth of Americans commercial empire (Rydell 1984, p. 99).

The AYPE was indeed an extravaganza. On what is now the campus of the University of Washington, the fair opening on June 1<sup>st</sup> 1909, lasting five months. On its opening day, the fair admitted nearly 80,000 totaling an estimated 3.7 million visitors, and attracted visitors from across the world (Stein and Becker 2009). The AYPE provided spectators an in-person experience of the representations I have described throughout this chapter, ultimately generating over 10 million dollars at closing.

### *Jim Crow in Alaska*

These exclusionary representations of Alaska Natives which I have been manifested spatially through Jim Crow policies in Alaska. Racial segregation and discrimination was standard practice throughout Alaska in its early twentieth century development, despite Alaska Natives prior to the 1930's outnumbering the white settlement population (Cole 1992). A time commonly referred to as "Jim Crow in Alaska" by many Alaskan historians, it is a time described as widespread racial discrimination perpetrated by white colonial settlers against Alaska Natives (Cole 1992; Lloyd 2009). Larger urban communities within Alaska's during this time required separate schoolrooms for Alaska Native children, legally enforced through a "dual-system" of educational legislation called the Nelson Act of 1905. The colonial administration also required an "English-only" policy for all schools (Cole 1992; Barnhardt 2001). Additionally, bars, restaurants, and hotels owned by whites openly displayed discrimination with posted signs stating "No Natives Allowed," and "No Dogs, No Natives," while movie theaters required a native only section in the back of the theater. Furthermore, Alaska Natives who migrated to mining and fishing communities dominated by whites, were forced to settle in ghettos on the outskirts of the town. The marginalization of Alaska Natives was met with resistance, leading to the passage of the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1964, predating the federal Civil Rights Act by nine years. Chapter three will discuss this resistance by Alaska Natives in more detail.

### *Conclusion*

As we have seen within this chapter, colonialism within Alaska was advanced through constructing and disseminating representations of Alaska and Alaska Natives, the former as a space of great untapped capital wealth, the latter were represented as "uncivilized" bodies. I traced out the various forms of representations that entail the shaping of geography and disconnects Alaska Native culture and identity from space that led to a racially segregated pattern of spatial development. The

underlying theme of this chapter was to sketch out the various phases of development through the discourses of colonialism and capitalism.

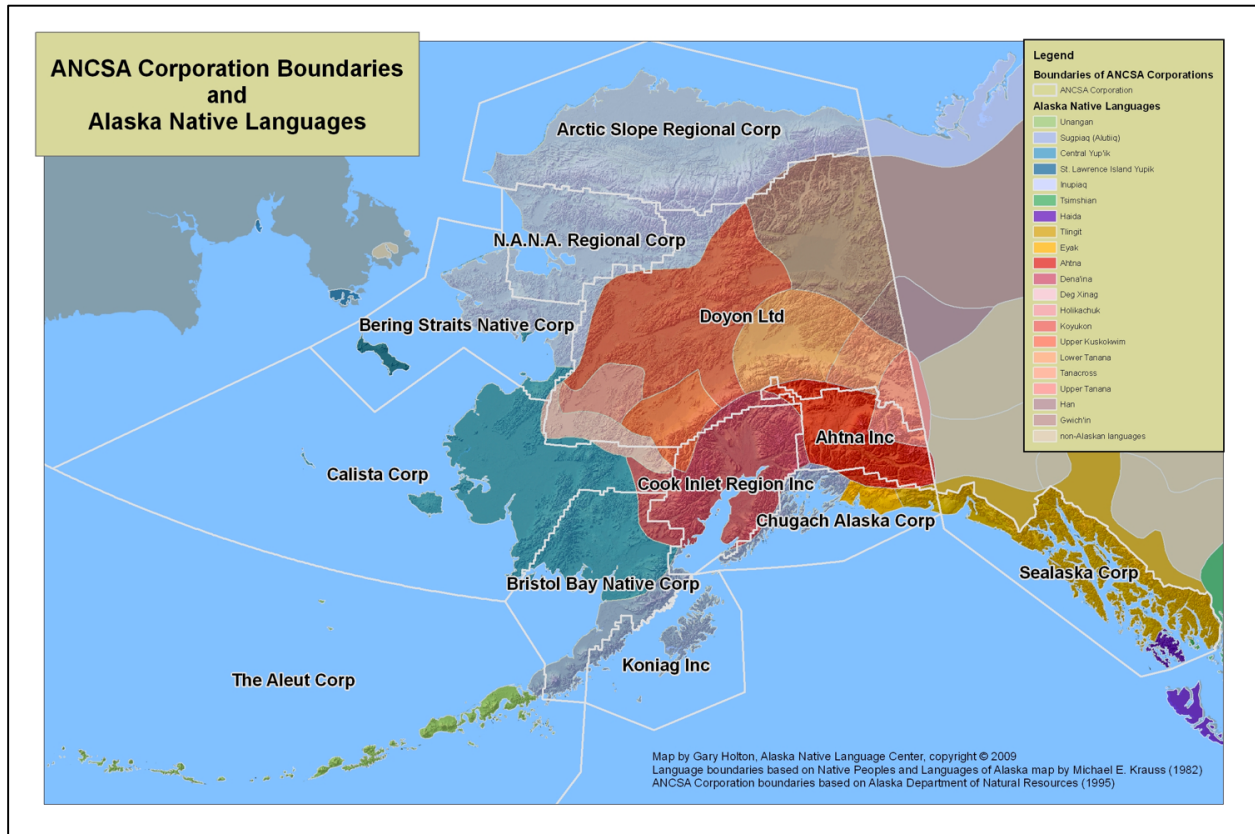
The geographic development I have discussed stands behind the Alaska's urban and modern development, which I will discuss in the next chapter. Alaska's development cannot be understood without accounting for the geography of colonialism and capitalism within Alaska. The landscape of a colonial-settler society and ethno-centric forms of citizenship that developed in Alaska combined to create a specific logic of capital flow that manifested spatially and led to the Alaska's modern development. The cultural and economic mechanisms of representation that were introduced for the purposes of natural resource development within Alaska were thus also used to racialize Alaska Native bodies and culture from American colonial settlers, spatially marginalizing them. As I discussed within this chapter, the system of colonial land development and ownership, along with the geography of frontier expansion and development reinforced the idea of superiority over land and indigenous peoples, which was based on the principal of generating wealth.

## Chapter II

### Permitting Economic Participation: *Incorporating Alaska Natives and Corporate Remapping of Alaska*

“At NANA we remind people we have been doing business in Alaska for 10,000 years. Our ancestors were entrepreneurs.”

*NANA Development Corporation<sup>9</sup>*



Map 3-1 (Map retrieved from “Alaskan Native Corporation Links” 2015.)

As economic development within Alaska entered the 1970’s, the forms of discourse and the relationships between the State and Alaska Natives began to shift from the marginalization of Alaska Natives to one that included them economically. The previous chapter discussed the structural forces of representation that previously shaped the economic geography of Alaska towards natural

<sup>9</sup> <http://nana-dev.com/about/>

resource development, while the nature of the colonial project manifested through the exclusion of Alaska Natives from participating within Alaska's larger society. In this chapter, I shift my analytical analysis to that of Alaska Native inclusion into the institutional economic structure.

In the 1970's this shift in discourse and representation was enframed as *inclusivity through corporatization*, leading to the enactment of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971. ANCSA stipulated the creation of twelve for-profit regional corporations known as Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs). ANCs were granted through ANCSA full ownership rights to specific slots of Alaskan land (see fig. 2-1). I argue that the discourse of Alaska's natural resources as "too valuable to leave in the ground," which I discussed previously has permeated into Alaska's modern development and was a source of influence in the enactment of ANCSA. Thus, the title of this chapter, *Permitting Economic Participation*, alludes to this socio-economic inclusion of Alaska Natives into the economic system of natural resource development. My analysis in this chapter is focused on the events that led to the enactment of ANCSA and its spatial manifestations. I will trace out how through ANCSA state hierarchy, corporate influence, and bureaucracy has manifested spatially

In 1968, large deposits of oil were found in Alaska's North Slope prompting the state of Alaska to begin preparations for large-scale oil production. In reaction to this, Alaska Native activism towards land appropriation and dispossession began to rise (Zellen 2008; Dombrowski 2001; Arnold 1976). As a way to access the lands for natural resource development, we begin to see Alaska Natives becoming incorporated into Alaska's political and economic system as a way to legitimize natural resource development. I will trace out this history and geography and how it has transformed Alaska's physical landscape into privately owned corporate territories.

ANCSA and ANCs, I argue, serves a double function 1) they served as mechanisms of the State as a way to justify and legitimize the exploitation and development of Alaska Native land 2) provided a doorway for institutional access for Alaska Natives to participate within Alaska's

dominant economy based on free market capitalism that is highly dependent on natural resource development. It is necessary, I argue, to understand what exactly is ANCSA, what led to its enactment, and what ANCs do if we are to fully understand Alaska's modern economy and ecological landscape. Furthermore, I seek to understand how a corporate entity that is identified as native, is constructed and operates within—and also creates—cultural, political, and economic spaces. Thus, I proceed in a discussion on *the work* of ANCs, their forms of representations, and their activities. How is an ANC made, and for whom? What are its characteristics and internal structure? What activities do ANCs perform? And how do ANCs reflect the ethics and values of the communities that made it, as well as the communities it represents? Through answering these questions, provides a better understanding of the dynamics of Alaska's political-economy, and the relationship with the environment, from the institutional level to the scale of the individual.

It is precisely what aspects of an ANC should be included, and how and why, are crucial to understanding the role of the ANC and its operations within Alaska's socio-economic structure. I identify mainly privileged sectors of society, particularly wealthy business elites and their private interests, and state and federal government officials, set the boundaries of Alaska's dominant state-sponsored-corporate framework, where the ideology of Alaskan resource development is front and center, and where Alaska Native identity is an inseparable and essential aspect of it (Thornburg and Roberts 2012).

ANCSA and ANCs have led to specific economic modes of conduct and inter-relational exchanges that are preconditioned on the terms of sustaining and accelerating the exploration and exploitation of Alaska's physical resources. These geographies of ecological commerce are primarily within natural resources energy (i.e. fossil fuels, natural gas, timber, etc.), fish, wildlife, and—increasingly—tourism spaces. Analytically, I examine ANCSA and ANCs through the processes of “corporatization of Alaska Natives,” as Thornburg et. al (2012, p. 212) have argued, however, I

argue that these processes are an extension of—or rather a reproduction—colonial and capitalist economic determinism.

It is more encompassing in understanding Alaska's political economy is including this more nuanced spatio-temporal approach. One that seeks to incorporate the deeper layers of socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural interactions that accompany ANCSA and ANCs, and have now become the essence of the State of Alaska's and Alaska Natives' modern identity. My analysis, therefore, is an analysis with the intention not to exclude or marginalize the significance of the State (the State of Alaska and the U.S. Federal government), corporate and business influences, and Alaska Natives. In this direction, I am able to tease out the limitations within Alaska Native political, economic, cultural, and environmental participation while providing a clearer picture of Alaska's political-economic geography and political-ecologic landscape. The uniqueness of Alaska's political geography and political ecology necessitates this type of discussion, that includes multiple analytical frameworks in order to adumbrate configurations of power within Alaska, and in order to fully grasp how we, as a society, come to create such a complex entity as an ANC.

To fully understand the performance, activities, and behavior of an ANC, it is important first to describe their provenance and its corporate and cultural representation. ANCs are comprised of a network of interests and designed and implemented through historical and geographic circumstances. These circumstances have not only determined what encompasses the native corporate vision, but who envisioned it and how they operate. By first tracing the birth of the ANC, it provides the necessary context in understanding Alaska's geography and Alaskan resource governance.

*Drawing Corporate Borders Through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act*

Within the decade leading up to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) that passed in 1971, a public sense of urgency to settle Alaska Native land claims was becoming evermore present. The Statehood Act of 1959, which made Alaska a state, as explained by the Native American Rights Fund (NARF),

“granted the new state the right to select from the public domain of more than 103 million acres...despite the fact that Aboriginal title had never been extinguished, the state considered lands used by Alaska Natives for subsistence to fall within the public domain” (Zellen, 2008, p. 31).

Thus, immediately following statehood, state officials within Alaska began selecting and disposing land that was traditionally used for Alaska Native subsistence living. The new state of Alaska began invested in resource exploration and extraction through land leasing agreements and partnerships with natural resource development companies. At the same time Alaska Natives also began state-wide organizing around the issues of indigenous land claims.

In 1962, Alaska Natives had already begun holding regular community meetings to discuss their concerns on issues of dispossession as well as political tactics that may stymie further land appropriation by the state. By 1966, several Alaska Native associations were formed across the state and met as a group known as the Alaska Federation of Native Associations. These organizing efforts helped in significantly increasing Alaska Native’s political visibility, and eventual incorporation into Alaska’s political economy. This can be evidenced by the election of seven members of these Alaska Natives associations to the state legislature. Three of these Alaska Native legislative officials then went on to become presidents or directors of regional ANCs: Willie Hensley became director of NANA Regional Corp, John Sackett became president of Doyon Ltd., and Carl Moses became president of the Aleut Corporation (Arnold 1976). Within one year, the Alaska Federation of Native Associations had consolidated into an official group known as the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) and elected Alaska Native Emil Notti as president. The AFN worked across the state with

local Alaska Native communities to lay a formal claim over 337 of Alaska's 375 million acres and thus bringing formal legal attention of the State of Alaska's continued land appropriations under federal law (Arnold 1976; Berger 1985; Zellen 2008). While the state of Alaska continued in their land selection and land leasing practices, the Alaska Organic Act (AOA) of 1884 prohibited the state of Alaska from selecting or appropriating any land that has been formally claimed by an indigenous people. Until a settlement was reached, per the AOA, the state would be in violation of federal law if it continued in selecting and leasing land.

Alaska Native organizing and activism towards making indigenous claims on land played a significant role in the rising tension between the State of Alaska and the U.S. Federal Government. In 1966, in response to Alaska Native land claims, Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall imposed an immediate state-wide "land freeze" until Alaska Native land claims were settled. This halted any further state and corporate expansion under the provisions of the Statehood Act and "brought an immediate and angry response from State [of Alaska] officials" (Arnold, 1976 p. 118; Zellen, 2008). Already established leasing contracts with resource development companies and smaller-scale exploratory activities were, however, still permitted to continue working with the state of Alaska and federal government.

The newly appointed Alaska state governor, Walter Hickel, committed to the continued industrialization and urbanization of Alaska, complained that the land freeze denied the State of Alaska the right to select land entitlements granted by the Statehood Act which stifled the development of Alaska's vast and untapped natural resources. Hickel, who has been described as "a firm believer in the notion of the Arctic is a national storehouse of raw materials" (Zellen, 2008, p. 15), reflects the deep-seated perception among business elites and state officials which I described in the onset of this chapter: that of Alaska's natural resource being "too valuable to leave in the

ground.” It is at this point that we begin to see the shift in discourse from exclusion to the rhetorical discourse of “working together for Alaska’s development.”

Governor Hickel, along with state administrators, proposed that “the state and the Natives should go into partnership” (Hickel, 2002, p. 141), to draft a proposal for settlement. Following his lead, in late 1967, the Governor’s Special Task Force on Native Claims was established under state sponsorship and supervision, and chaired by Willie Hensley—who as I mentioned, was an Alaska Native elected to the state legislature and later became the president of NANA Regional Corp. The legislative drafting committee for this Special Task Force was also made up of members from other Alaska Native organizations, for example AFN president Emil Notti. The Task Force, as Governor Hickel described, “was charged with producing a solution that the Natives, the State, and the Interior Department could all agree”. In these “partnership” meetings, Governor Hickel emphasized,

“I wanted the Natives to receive enough land so they could carry on their way of life and advance economically. They also needed to receive subsurface rights so they could share in Alaska’s oil and mineral wealth. And they should be paid cash for dropping their claims to the remaining millions of acres in Alaska. We needed to allow for a combination of traditional Native lifestyles and economic opportunities. The Native people themselves would decide the final mix over generations to come” (Hickel, 2002, p. 142).

As Senator of Alaska Ted Stevens extolled in a public letter entitled *ANCSA was my baptism of fire*, that Alaska Native land claims

“threatened to divide us...ANCSA assured for Alaska’s Natives the opportunity to *participate fully* in determining our State’s future during a period of rapid development and increasing world recognition” (*A scrapbook history: ANCSA 1991*, p. 4, emphasis added).

In 1968, when large oil deposits were discovered in Alaska’s Arctic region, Prudhoe Bay, the urgency for a settlement increased exponentially. Through the continued activities in exploration during the so-called “land freeze,” particularly in petroleum exploration, and the addition of \$900 million to the State’s treasury for the anticipated construction of the Trans-Alaska pipeline system, pressure to settle Alaska Native land claims had produced an atmosphere of instability within the

state to settle Alaska Native land claims as soon as possible (*Proposed Beaufort Sea Neashore Petroleum Leasing*, 1975, p. 355). Traditionally at odds with each other, the state and federal government, oil development companies, such as Richfield, ARCO, and Exxon, and organized labor such as Alaska's Miner's Association all formed an alliance in applying pressure for the State of Alaska and Alaska Natives to settle as quickly as possible in order for large-scale resource development to take place (Arnold 1976). What emerged out of this political expediency was ANCSA, an act that stipulated the creation of twelve regional and over 200 village corporations which were to be identified as Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs). At the time of passage, ANCSA was the largest land claims act in United States' history. Passing through Congress and signed by President Nixon on December 18, 1971, ANCSA, as Zellen described in his research on tribal sovereignty and land claims, "marked a turning point in Native politics—and the beginning of the 'Age of Land Claims'" (Zellen, 2008, p. 40).

It is important to note that ANCSA is a *law*—not a treaty—that was passed and enacted by the United States Congress. It is a legal document meant to, as written within the text of ANCSA, "extinguish" and for the "extinguishment" of all future Alaska Native land claims. These are literal terms used within ANCSA, which, I argue, are meant to emphasize the legal finality of land claims between the State and Alaska Natives. As I will discuss along with creating corporate geographic boundaries, temporality within ANCSA becomes an important aspect to Alaska Native land claims. ANCSA includes key dates that stipulate which Alaska Natives are to be included into its legal constitution. As I noted, as the largest native land claims settlement in United States history, Congress promised through ANCSA full private ownership of 44 million acres of land, roughly 10 percent of all of Alaska through ANCs, and nearly \$1 billion cash, to be distributed over the span of 11 years (Arnold 1976; Shallit 1981).

Under the guise of stimulating maximum economic participation of Alaska Natives, the cash settlement was to be funneled through the newly constructed ANCs and not directly to the local communities, tribes, or clans of the estimated 78,000 Alaska Natives living at the time (see appendix E). Additionally, Alaska Natives were provided the choice for ANCs to be for-profit or non-profit corporations, however, if an ANC was opted to be a non-profit corporation, that ANC would not receive any of ANCSA's settlement money. Unsurprisingly, all twelve of the regional ANCs were selected to be for-profit corporations. Since its passage, ANCSA and ANCs have proved to be the basis of virtually all Alaska Native and state politics up to today. As AFN President, Emil Notti forecasted in 1975, "no Alaskan—Native or non-Native—is unaffected by the settlement...whatever the future holds, assuredly there will be change, brought about by the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act" (Arnold, 1976, p. v).

Less discussed in policy formation for the settlement of Alaska Native land claims were the perceptions from communities at the village level. In his critical landmark study of local village perceptions post-ANCSA, Thomas Berger traveled across Alaska into rural villages to hear and record testimonies from Alaska Natives about the impacts of ANCSA and ANCs. According to Berger, many Alaska Natives claimed they were not consulted nor even participated in the voting process for ANCSA. Moreover, as Berger revealed, many Alaska Natives had rejected ANCSA completely and acknowledged that it had created a disparity among Alaska Natives, particularly between those born before and after December 18<sup>th</sup> 1971, but also between those enrolled in different ANCs. Moreover, aside from the twelve regional ANCs already formed, applications needed be submitted at the village level and approved by several government agencies to be considered a recognized village and thus eligible for village ANC status.

Per ANCSA, only Alaska Natives born before December 18<sup>th</sup> 1971 are eligible to enroll as stockholders of an ANC, and also mandated that village level ANCs must interact with regional

ANCs in land selections and money distributions (see Appendix E). This has created a multi-tiered corporate class hierarchy within Alaska Native cultural and social interactions where those born after December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1971 are considered “new natives” or “afterborns” (Berger, 1985 p. 107; Dombrowski, 2001), and has served to perpetuate the idea of the “rich native” among both Alaska Natives and the general population. What may have been seen as an enormous sum of money, Berger (1985) calculated that the trans-Alaska pipeline that began official development immediately after ANCSA, had accelerated national inflation and decreased the purchasing power of the dollar by one-third. By the time ANCs received ANCSA’s cash settlement, it amounted to approximately \$12,000 for each shareholder, while many village shareholders received a total of \$375.

Berger’s conclusion was that ANCSA was “unapologetically, though ineffectually, assimilationist” (qtd in Dombrowski, 2001, p. 70). The passing of ANCSA, despite local community perceptions, sheds light on how Alaska Native land claims are used as an economic and political tool to further empower and embolden state and business elites in their course of exploiting Alaska’s natural resources. This can also be further evidenced by the number of passengers prior to 1971—much of whom were from outside Alaska—en route to Prudhoe Bay, which increased from 116 percent in 1969 to 460 percent in 1970, before the enactment of ANCSA. Additionally, during this time air cargo traffic had increased 800 percent (*Proposed Beaufort Sea Neashore Petroleum Leasing*, 1975, p. 358). Thus, within the midst of a so called “land freeze”, capital flows into the practices of natural resource extraction and exploitation into Alaska Native land had no signs of slowing down despite indigenous land claims issues.

The political movement to settle Alaska Native land claims reflect the enduring continuities and structural pressures of the perception that Alaska’s natural resources as under-exploited and in need of production. The sense of responsibility in settling Alaska Native land claims for Alaska Natives, however, was not the exclusive focus, nor was it a central influence, as Flippe (2000) in

*Nixon and the Environment*, “the bill officially eliminated the ‘land freeze’ that Stuart Udall had issued three years before and explicitly provided for a federal oil pipeline corridor” (Flippen 2000, p. 154).

In a 1983 report prepared by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, they asserted in the introduction of the report that

“Native corporations not only were established overnight, but also were created in a ‘vacuum’. The requisite managerial capability did not exist in the 200 Native villages. Native corporations were not set up to make a profit by filling a particular need in an established market through a product or service. They are not so-called ‘natural’ corporations. Native corporations were set up *de facto* by the federal government in response to political necessities, one of which required regional corporations” (Grabinska, 1983, p. 18, emphasis in original).

As can be drawn from the comment above, ANCSA emerged as a way to ensure a stable production of natural resources and to advance private power over federal power over land was by far the dominant reasons in settling Alaska Native land claims. ANCSA partitioned Alaska Native villages and communities into corporate territories which would allow for “business investment diversification,” and strengthen relationships with those involved in the energy resource industry. As Alaska governor Walter Hickel recounted the events that led to ANCSA in the chapter *Opening the Arctic Frontier* of his memoir that

“as governor, it was obvious to me that finding wealth and getting it to the market would be key to our freedom from Outside control. As far as the oil industry was concerned, Prudhoe Bay State Number One was our best and perhaps last shot” (Hickel, 2002, p. 97).

ANCSA emerged through the logic of market-led policies and indigenous land claims and towards an effort of territorial profiteering and aggrandizement. To further emphasize this point, in negotiating ANCSA some Alaska Natives had proposed for the creation of a single ANC called the Alaska Development Corp, but as the *Anchorage Daily News* wrote, this “would have put Natives in control of the most potent political and economic force in Alaska, and non-Native politicians who crafted the settlement weren’t about to let that happen” (Shallit, 1981, p. 30).

Although ANCSA was constructed under the structural pressures of natural resource profiteering, the act of recognizing indigenous land claims through a state-corporate structure has re-essentialized Alaska Native identity into a fixed concept, similar to what I discussed in chapter one. At the same ANCSA expanded the boundaries of the market of natural resource production, transforming indigenous land into privately owned corporate territories. Settling indigenous land claims within Alaska became the essential aspect of capital flows within Alaska's economy. As Alaska Natives struggled for self-determination and land, state officials and business elites recognized "Alaska Native" as an essential, idealized, and static economic object; a new managerial class who are managed through state-capitalist practices. This fixed economic object is represented as both native and corporate. This unique piece of legislation transformed Alaska Native identity into the doorway required to continue resource exploitation and profit. Thus, indigeneity, geography, and politics became inextricably intertwined within the modern representation of Alaska Natives and Alaska's economy.

#### *Constructing the Alaska Native Corporate Shareholder*

Creating the Alaska Native *shareholder* was the critical first step in the processes of implementing ANCSA. As with conventional corporate hierarchy, the shareholder is at the bottom on the hierarchy, who is in the position to receive the profit revenues from the investment practices of corporation.<sup>10</sup> Along with applying a specific geographic region to Alaska Natives, temporality was also a key factor in ANCSA. One deadline that many Alaska Natives found themselves caught up in was the enrollment deadline to become a native corporate shareholder. The regulations governing the application processes for enrollment were set on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1972, with the deadline that all applications to be submitted no later than March 30, 1973. This left only eight and a half months to

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<sup>10</sup> See Appendix (F) for sample of ANC corporate organizational hierarchy

complete the enrollment process of the nearly 80,000 Alaska Natives and over 200 villages (Arnold 1976). The enrollment process required several complicated layers of bureaucracy in order to verify an individual's indigeneity.

As I mentioned, the enrollment to become an ANC shareholder is a process that is deeply tied to specific geographic regions within Alaska (see Map 3-1). At the individual level, to become a shareholder of either a regional or village ANC, a person must be

“at least one-quarter Alaska Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut living on December 18, 1971, [and] would be eligible to share in this settlement *IF and When* his or her name was entered in the Alaska Native Roll. The Secretary of Interior was given the responsibility of preparing the roll” (Ruddy, Rowan, Harvey, & Dodson, 1977, p.1, *emphaiss in original*).

After an application to become a shareholder was submitted, the BIA and BLM receives and reviews these applications and, if approved, were eligible “for land and money benefits” (Arnold, 1976, p. 164). Referred to simply as the “the Roll”, this enrollment list (or table) was a way of enumerating bodies—racially and geographically—through government bureaucracy. Under the guise of searching for Alaska Natives and urging them to apply for enrollment before the expiration date, companies such as Kish Tu, Inc. as well as state and federal agencies worked together on an international advertising campaign to call for Alaska Natives who may be eligible to enroll into one of the twelve regional ANCs and, additionally one village ANC. If an Alaska Native passes through this enrollment process they would receive 100 shares of stock from a village of regional ANC (*Implementing the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act 1972*, p. II-10). In the absence of proof of the minimum blood quantum, “any citizen of the United States who is regarded as an Alaska Native by the Native village or group” will be acceptable.

At the village and regional level, ANSCSA mandated that tribes, bands, clans, groups, villages, communities, or associations which were comprised of twenty-five or more “eligible Natives” and “not modern or urban in character” would be permitted to organize a village ANC (ANCSA 1985 study page II-10). Of the 217 applications filed, 203 villages were deemed eligible to

establish village ANCs. Village ANCs have a more local role in selecting and managing land titles while regional ANCs. Village ANCs work in collaboration with the larger regional ANCs in distributing cash through to Alaska Natives who are enrolled as a stockholder an ANC through profit dividends (Arnold 1976). The initial \$1billion cash settlement and 44 million acres of land was not to be distributed evenly among all ANCs but, only directly to regional ANCs and varied depending on each region's physical size and Alaska Native population (see appendix D). In addition, regional ANCs were not required by any timetable to distribute the cash settlements to village ANCs, which resulted in village ANCs receiving money irregularly, both in timing and in amount.

Under the supervision of the Secretary of Interior, two federal agencies: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), were primarily responsible for the implementation of ANCSA. These state-corporate bureaucracies and the ambiguities of ANCSA had produced considerable confusion in regards to land ownership and exactly how Alaska Natives were expected to participate within Alaska's economy. By 1983, it became evident that the lack of clarity within ANCSA had consumed significant amounts of energy and resources in litigation simply in pursuit of clarification on specific issues. As one example, ANC shareholders were prohibited from selling, transferring, or trading their stock for 20 years, raising critical concerns among Alaska Native and communities on the future of their ownership rights. In a 1983 report prepared by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, they revealed that "44.4 percent of the 81 general respondents in the seven selected Interior villages said they didn't understand the Act [and] 40.7 percent who felt they understood the Act, could give no detailed explanation" (Grabinska, 1983, p. 9)

## *Shaping the Future*

Implementing ANCSA necessitated an educational system that focused on the logic of the free-market. One such example was a 1976 teacher's guide intended for educators within Alaska, produced by the Alaska Native Foundation. The teacher's guide included a board game entitled the *Land Settlement Game* (Hays 1976, p.99). The game was placed within the section entitled *Shaping the Future* and under the subsection named *Goals of Corporations*. The teacher's guide in which I found this particular game, is meant to assist teachers within rural Alaska "in helping students learn how there came to be an Alaska Native claims settlement, what the settlement is, and what the settlement means in the lives of Alaskans" (5). Sharing a resemblance to the layout of the popular board game *Monopoly*, the *Land Settlement Game* consists of squares that wrap around the board, as well as a deck of question-cards placed in the middle. As indicated within the learning objectives of the game, the primary purpose of playing is to

"to understand the process of selecting goals and objectives and the necessity of having to pursue them in the order of their importance... [and to] discuss the problems encountered by having to prioritize what a person values and having to make decisions based upon those choices". (79)

Through playing the *Land Settlement Game*, students should be building the necessary decision-making skills by discussing

"the importance of defining 'the Native way of life'", and "to explain why profits are important to preserve the land base given [to] Natives in the settlement act [as well as] to discuss the problems encountered by having to prioritize what a person values and having to make decisions based upon those choices" (79).

The game itself contains squares with phrases that made for an audience familiar with Alaska and to appeal to their senses of generating material profits: "Bad business investment – Lose a turn", "Your corporation pays dividends – Move forward 3 spaces", "Take a hunting trip – Move forward 3 spaces", "Lost in the Tongass Forest – Go back one space", and "Go forward 2 spaces – Won the Iditarod sled dog race" (99). Finally, in another learning objective for the chapter entitled *Corporations*

as *Land Owners*, the teacher is tasked with ensuring that students are able name at least three ways in which Alaska Native land can be “put to use”, of which there are only five possible correct answers: “1) sell it, 2) do nothing with it, 3) develop the resources 4) use the land for subsistence, or 5) plan for a combination of any of the first four” (73).

In another educational document written in 1975, just four years after ANCSA, titled *Stock, Corporations, & the Native Claims Settlement Act*, which was produced jointly with the Alaska Department of Education and the Center of Northern Educational Research at the University of Fairbanks, Alaska (UAF), didactically explains for an Alaska Native student why *for-profit corporations* are used in settling indigenous land claims. The example used was that of hunting whales in a village. It describes that a single man cannot hunt a whale on his own in a boat, but within a boat “there are many different jobs” and it “costs a great deal to outfit a crew,” and that, “there must be one man who is rich or several men with money and gear who are ready to furnish the boat with gear”. Furthermore, it suggests that most importantly that

“you need to know how to work together to get a whale. You need to know the rules. Crew members look to their whaling captain to organize them and their work. And there are rules that these people know for dividing up a catch. Once again, it isn’t just any group of people and their money, but trained people and special equipment used in the right way to get a whale” (5).

Under the subheading *Corporations Protect People*, the document explains that that if a man from Seattle was to invest in whale hunting without using a corporate entity and the boat was to sink, killing those on board, “the court might ask for all of his money to pay the widows and children—including money that he had saved for his own family (Conn 1975, p. 10). Furthermore, it suggests corporations can also be regarded as people, by poses the scenario

“you may say, ‘you talk about a corporation just as if it were a person like you or me.’ In a way, you are right. Do you have a social security number? A corporation has a number too, to use on its tax returns. It pays taxes too. It has to obey the law. The people who own a corporation, called the stockholders, and the people who work for the corporation, employees, are see by the law as different from the corporation. But sometimes they can do things that the corporation can be blamed for, and made to pay for (Conn 1975, p. 10)

To bring this to current times, on the front page of the Fall 2015 issue of the Alaska Native business magazine *Alaska Inc.* includes a photo of two young children with the headline “Meet the Future of ANCSA.” In the subsequent article, it describes the educational program of Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP), a program “in educating a new generation of professionals and potential leaders of Native regional and village corporations” that have helped Alaska Natives students in all stages of education” (Bradner 2015, p.6). The main source of funding for ANSEP ANCs such as ASRC, Doyon, Calista, and private companies such as Shell, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Udelhoven Oilfield services as well as other private donations and foundations. In total sixty percent of funding for ANSEP is from the private sector, while twenty percent from the University of Alaska, and another twenty percent from foundations and federal grants.

#### *Participation through the Alaska Native Corporation*

Within my research on how ANCs participate and where they fit within the larger network of corporate interests within Alaska’s socio-economic structure, I have found it useful to examine the archives of the Resource Development Council (RDC) annual conferences held in Alaska. These conferences help provide a glimpse of the state-corporate structure within Alaska. Organized in the 1970’s the RDC is a non-profit, member organization “comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska’s oil and gas, mining, timber, tourism, and fisheries industries,” whose “purpose is to link these diverse industries together to encourage a strong, diversified sector and grow Alaska through responsible resource development.” At the 36<sup>th</sup> *Annual Alaska Resources Conference* held from November 18-19 of 2015, in Anchorage, Alaska, speeches were giving by a wide array of companies and state officials, for example resource development corporations such as ExxonMobil, BP

Exploration, ConocoPhillips, banks such as Northrim Bank, state officials such as the Mayor of Kenai, Alaska, and ANCs such as ASRC, and NANA.<sup>11</sup>

Under the heading *It's Still North to the Future: Moving Ahead in the Arctic*, president and CEO of the ANC NANA, Wayne Westlake, along with ANC ASRC chairman and president, Rex Rock Sr., were invited to talk as keynote speakers in regards to future opportunities of Alaska's natural resources. These two speeches come after talks from companies such as Conoco Phillips Alaska and Alaska Liquefied Natural Gas, under the headings *ConocoPhillips Alaska: Positioning for the Future*, and *Global LNG Market Update and Framing the Opportunity for Alaska*. In his keynote speech, Westlake begins by describing that NANA Regional Corporation is a

“for-profit corporation with a social responsibility, our ultimate aim is to leverage emerging opportunities as part of our goal in delivering maximum benefit to 13,800 Inupiat shareholders. Our region is rich in many of the minerals that used to fuel and make our modern world. We view the continued development of our lands our core competence and our business strategy. There is no doubt that the world is looking north” (Westlake 2015)<sup>12</sup>

With this preface, Westlake continues in a discussion on NANA's business activities, such as shipping minerals from arctic ports for more than 25 years.<sup>13</sup> He also describes 2015 as “a great year at Red Dog,” a NANA subsidiary, with more than 1.1 million metric tons of Zinc, and 230,000 metric tons of lead that had been extracted and shipped for development around the world. In regards to emerging and future opportunities for Alaska, Westlake conservatively estimated that Arctic business activities will increase one hundred percent due to the main reasons of “business as usual demand,” “diversion through Arctic shipping lanes,” and “natural resource development, independent of off-shore [oil] development,” and that

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<sup>11</sup> Full conference plenary can be found at <http://www.akrdc.org/assets/Conference2015/conference.program.pdf>  
Wayne Westlake RDC talk can be found at <https://vimeo.com/146402527>

Rex Rock Sr. RDC talk can be found at

For a full listing of RDC members go to [www.akrdc.org](http://www.akrdc.org)

For RDC conference videos go to <https://vimeo.com/akrdc>

For a full listing of RDC prior events and newsletters go to <http://www.rdcarchives.org/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.akrdc.org/about-rdc>

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix (E) for Red Dog Mine Map

“anticipated changes in climate will also push west coast marine species from sharks to salmon northward an average of thirty kilometers per decade, according to a new study published in *Progress in Oceanography*. This will shift fishing grounds further north. There are possibilities associated with this migration. As the ice continues to change, the Northwest passage and Russia’s northern sea route will become more accessible decreasing shipping times by an estimated twenty-two percent.” (Westlake 2015)

In Rex Rock Sr.’s talk, he discusses the main lines of business that ASRC operate in: energy support services, resource development, in-state petroleum and refining, construction, industrial services, and government services and contracting. ASRC, as Rock describes, has been “ranked number one for the past twenty-one years as Alaska’s locally owned and operated business” with revenues topping \$2.6 billion in 2014, and since 1972 has distributed \$890 million directly to their shareholders through dividends (Rock 2015).<sup>14</sup> ASRC’s future, he describes, is to focus on the continued growth and diversification of the corporation, he cites several recent ASRC acquisitions and investments that follows the line of “diversification.”

Just to name a few of these acquisitions: the acquisition of Data Networks Corporation (DNC), an information technology support company, headquartered in Virginia, that focuses on federal government contracts. This acquisition, Rock states, “expands our position in key federal IT markets, most notably, health IT.” The \$250 million investment by ASRC in Quintillion Networks LLC. that gives ASRC a stake in the telecommunications industry (Falsy 2015; Rock 2015). The acquisition Arctic Pipe Inspection, Inc. (API), headquartered in Houston, Texas, that provides “electromagnetic, ultrasonic, weldline and mill inspection services to oil and gas producers and service providers.” (*Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Announces New Acquisition 2015*; Rock 2015). And the acquisition of Little Red Services, “a company that helps to boost production from existing oil wells” (DeMarban 2014). He goes on to cite several more acquisitions, investments, and

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<sup>14</sup> All twelve regional ANCs were listed in *Alaska Business Monthly’s* “Top 49ers” most profitable business in Alaska. See Appendix (E) for adapted list.

partnerships stating that “as you can see, it’s pretty clear, ASRC is committed to the future of Alaska’s oil and gas industry as well as the state economy.” (Rock 2015).

Rock also expressed his disappointment in Shell’s recent relinquishment of their lease-agreement in continuing to explore for oil and gas off of Alaska’s coast. The relinquishment was a result of the huge demonstration of environmental activism and resistance, which included Alaska Natives and Alaska Native environmental and climate justice organizations at Seattle’s port, where “kayaktivists” blocked Shell shipping vessels from leaving the port en route to Alaska (Schleeter 2015).<sup>15</sup> Despite his disappointment on Shell’s decision, Rock expressed optimism towards Alaska’s resource development, as he stated that

“by reading the headlines after Shell’s decision to suspend its Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) operations you’d think Alaska’s best days were behind us, however, to quote Yogi Berra, ‘it ain’t over until it’s over’ and I’m here to tell you, it ain’t over. For example, ConocoPhillips just had its first production of first oil from its CD5 Pad located on native lands inside the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPRA). I’m excited to see CD5 come online and congratulate ConocoPhillips and Anadarko (oil and gas company) for the perseverance and hard-work to make this project happen (Rock 2015)<sup>16</sup>

Just within these two speeches of ANC presidents and CEOs, much can be understood in regards to business practices, partnerships, and perspectives on resource development. We are also able to see the vast network of corporate interests involved within Alaska’s natural resource industry.

### *Conclusion*

As we have seen throughout this chapter, ANCSA has fundamentally transformed Alaska’s physical and economic geography into Alaska Native corporate territories. Unlike like Native American treaties used in the continental United States in relation to Native American and state interactions, ANCSA is a law, that was passed, signed by the president, and enacted in 1971. ANCSA came as a

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<sup>15</sup> A more detailed discussion of social movements of activism and resistance can be found in chapter III

<sup>16</sup> For more information of ConocoPhillips oil production at drill site CD5, see <http://alaska.conocophillips.com/who-we-are/alaska-operations/Pages/CD5.aspx>

result Alaska Native organizing from across the state of Alaska on the topic of land dispossession. The urgency to settle land claims in Alaska was exacerbated after the discovery of large oil deposits in Alaska's North Slope region in 1968. Just three years later, ANCSA was enacted. Its intentions were to stop the further land dispossession of Alaska Native but also, as Alaska economist Colt described, "a way for one America's poorest minority groups to escape from poverty on a self-determined path" (Colt 2005, p.5; Bigart 1966).<sup>17</sup> Thus, it was through the discourse of "the will to improve" and "the will to empower" in which ANCSA was enacted (Li 2007; Cruikshank 1999)

ANCSA, as I have discussed here, through the powers of the legislative process, permitted Alaska Natives to participate, significantly, within Alaska's socio-economic structure using the the power of the corporation. Although his is in complete contrast from the exclusion and marginalization of Alaska Natives I discussed in chapter one, the discourse of natural resource governance has persisted and been reproduced. Through this process Alaska Native identity becomes institutionalized within a corporate orthodoxy and free-market ideology; a merging of the cultural identities of Alaska Natives into a corporate identity of the shareholder. The corporation, therefore, became a repository for Alaska Native indigenous property rights. As one Inupiat Eskimo described, the corporation can be seen as the "New Harpoon" (Colt 2005, p.99), and as I discussed, whale hunting was the conceptual tool educating Alaska Natives of the corporate system.

As we have also seen in this chapter, although ANCSA and ANCs provided the institutional doorway in which Alaska Natives are able to participate *as natives* in resource development and other business practices, they activities were narrowly limited towards maximizing profits. At the same time, as I discussed, ANCSA and ANCs, also served as the doorway for the state and other non-

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<sup>17</sup> A front-page New York Times article in 1966 reported that "the worst slums in the United States are not in the racially turbulent quarters of New York, Cleveland, Chicago or Los Angeles. By All available indices of poverty, they are sparsely strewn, like garbage on an ice floe, along the nation's desolate sea frontier with the Soviet Union" (Colt 2005; Bigart 1966)

native corporate institutions to legitimize corporate-state and advance natural resource development in Alaska. Thus, we see the concept of the *essential native*, that I have discussed in the introduction. As I explained, chapter one examined how through colonialism *essentialized* Alaska Native identity in order to justify Alaska Native marginalization and exclusion, thus the *essential native through the colonial-state*. Here, in this chapter we see again that Alaska Native identity is an essential concept through the corporatization, thus the *essential native through the corporate-state*.

Chapter III:  
Political Participation:  
Alaska Native Struggle for Social Justice and Spaces of Dissent and Resistance

“**In the white man’s society, we need white man’s tools**, to preserve and protect the dignity and respect of our traditional cultures and inheritance.”

*Alaska Federation of Natives Newsletter, Don Wright - President, 1981 (emphasis in original)*

“We reject the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act as an illegitimate infringement on our right to sovereignty and self-determination.”

*Statement of Principles, Resisting Environmental Destruction of Indigenous Lands (REDOIL)*<sup>18</sup>

Within this chapter I use the concepts and tools of political resistance to assess the ongoing complex realities and *intersections of struggle* found within Alaska Natives’ call for social justice. The epigraphs provided above, then, are not meant to indicate a binary within Alaska Natives’ tactics of resistance, but to suggest them as points on a spectrum of positions. As I will discuss, these points of contestation can intersect and arise simultaneously as a *reaction to* marginalization and as a *strategy for* social justice. At one point, there is a recognition of the dominant culture’s authority—the State—and a recognition back through legislation, and thus a call for Alaska Natives to adapt to these Westernized institutional processes, as a strategy for resisting or staving off further social and cultural marginalization, and to preserve and protect the future of Alaska Native culture and identity.

As we have seen in chapter two, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), along with its subsequent institutions known as Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs), arose through this type of struggle in regards to indigenous land claims. Since its enactment in 1971, ANCSA and ANCs are indeed Alaska’s most visible and far-reaching articulation of Alaska Native struggle within this context. The institutional implementation of ANCSA was viewed by those who supported it as a way of “incorporating” Alaska Native participation, literally and figuratively, into the United States’

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.redoilak.org/>

free-market capitalist economy, in the name of recovering Alaska Native land ownership, preservation of cultural identity, and to increase socio-economic security (Thornburg and Roberts 2012). This act had come after over a century of dispossession, marginalization, and exclusion of Alaska Natives.

At another point within this spectrum of resistance, there is the complete rejection or delegitimization of external and imposing authorities by means of refusing to recognize policies that are viewed as an infringement of Alaska Natives' sovereignty and self-determination. As I will discuss, this positionality is visibly apparent within organizations such as Resisting Environmental Destruction of Indigenous Land (REDOIL).

With these points in mind, I suggest and will discuss within this chapter the various way in which Alaska Natives engage in dissent and resistance. I argue for a consideration of the politics of Alaska Native dissent and resistance as *on a spectrum*, rather than through a reductive framework which forces a choice between one of two sides: “embracement or rejection,” “integration or separation,” “adaptation or death,” or “assimilate or resist,” as way to gain a better understanding of the complexities of Alaska Natives' positionality on the subject of physical and cultural survival, particularly in the context of external pressures (i.e. colonialism, corporatization). Such a binary masks indigenous struggle as a static contestation between “traditionalism” and “progressivism,” rather than highlighting the dynamic relationship among social justice, culture, and economic development (Rosier 2004; Ybarra 2011). Alaska Native concerns are much too varied to have a unitary approach towards social justice. As noted within the Alaska Native Review Commission in 1984, the issue of land claims for some Alaska Natives were that

“traditional use and occupancy of the land was the main concern. For others, the economic potential of the land was an important concern. For yet others, cultural integrity and maintenance of traditional values was a primary concern. For others, education of the younger generation was a primary concern.” (*Alaska Native Review Commission Overview Hearings*, 1984, p. 18) .

Throughout this thesis I have framed the notion of the *permission to participate* as a way of understanding theoretically how the State constructed and assumed authority over Alaska and Alaska Natives through colonization and free-market capitalist ideology. I have argued that through this assumed authority, the State grants permission to participate, through policies such as ANCSA, and the institutional access and mechanisms which have provided Alaska Natives “full participation in the future,” and “the continuity of use and occupancy of land” (*Alaska Native Review Commission Overview Hearings*, 1984, p. 19; Creed, 1988). In this context, ANCSA was a form of permitting economic participation, intertwining economic development with indigenous cultural values. As I briefly discussed in chapter two, ANCSA arose as a result of Alaska Native resistance and struggle for physical and cultural survival beginning in the late 1960’s, and through ANCSA Alaska Natives have been able to both participate within Alaska’s natural resource dependent economy while at the same time promoting cultural expression. Here I expand on this notion of cultural production through a discussion of *political* participation. By expanding this discussion from the previous chapter, we can better understand the resiliency of Alaska Native cultural identity and how, collectively and individually, policies and decisions are negotiated and shaped by traditional indigenous values, notions of redistributive justice, land governance, and market ideology.

I will examine the array of Alaska Native political participation and cultural reproduction beginning with a discussion of the development of a legal consciousness within Alaska Native spaces. These experiences within the legal sphere, I argue, laid the foundation for the future development of ANCSA, which I discussed in more detail in chapter two, as well as the implementation of amendments twenty years after its passage in 1991. I will examine the dynamics of how Alaska Natives have mobilized for the purposes of social justice within the institutional legal landscape, and analyze how policies have been constructed, contested, re-interpreted, and transformed with active Alaska Native participation. This serves in reformulating the seeming

“contradiction” between Alaska Native traditional culture and political and economic integration within the dominant culture. Next, I will discuss and examine how Alaska Native culture is reproduced through the institutional educational structure. I then shift to a discussion of Alaska Native political participation through grassroots organizing, and will conclude with examination of the practices of Alaska Native self-governance through a dual-economic structure and through tribal sovereignty.

### *Struggle from within the Institutional Legal Structure*

As I discussed in chapter one, racial segregation and discrimination through Jim Crow policies was standard practice throughout Alaska in its early twentieth century development, despite Alaska Natives prior to the 1930’s outnumbering the white settlement population (Cole 1992).

The social, educational, and economic discrimination and marginalization experienced by Alaska Natives at this time gave rise to political protests such as Alberta Schenck, an Alaska Native from Nome, Alaska arrested for daring to sit in the “white-only” section of a theater. It also gave rise to Alaska Native political organizations such as the Alaska Native Brotherhood in 1912 (ANB) and Alaska Native Sisterhood in 1926 (ANS), who fought for United States citizenship, equality, and educational reform for Alaska Natives (Metcalf 2008; Cole 1992). Alaska Native civil rights and legislative involvement during the time of “Jim Crow in Alaska” culminated to the passage and enactment of the Alaska Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945, pre-dating the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 by 19 years (Metcalf 2008).

Along with the struggle for equal rights, Alaska Native participation in political resistance through the legislative process has also extended towards the fight for the legal recognition and the rights to practice traditional indigenous cultural activities. For example, the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) of 1972 that was created for the main goal of conserving and protecting marine mammal populations through a moratorium of hunting, harvesting, and importing marine

wildlife. If passed with its original text, the MMPA would have significantly restricted and prohibited Alaska Natives from their traditional lifestyle of subsistence (Ray and Potter 2011; Walsh 1999). It would have additionally had severe physical effects on Alaska Natives' health. The MMPA led to Alaska Natives participating in Congressional testimonies such as Margaret Nick Cook, an Alaska Native from Bethel, Alaska (Fienup-Riordan 2000), where she exclaimed that

“our immediate area does not have seals, that is why we buy seal meat and seal oil from the coast. And believe me, my body must have oil...I have never been in jail or arrested in my life, but if this bill passes in its present form, I will become a criminal. My body is used to seal oil and must have seal oil. I will continue to buy seal oil no matter what.” (*A report on Subsistence and the Conservation of the Yupik Life-Style*, 1974, p. 20)

and Guy Mann of Hooper Bay, Alaska, who testified in the same senate hearing that

“every time when we eat we take a seal oil. Please, please help us. We need help. We don't want to stop seal hunt. And when we eat something without seal oil, our stomachs kind of sick” (*A report on Subsistence and the Conservation of the Yupik Life-Style*, 1974, p. 28)

Testimonies such as these helped to amend the MMPA which provided the exemption for Alaska Natives “with respect to the taking of any marine mammal [for subsistence purposes] by any Indian, Aleut, or Eskimo who resides in Alaska and who dwells on the coast of the North Pacific Ocean or the Arctic Ocean” (Walsh, 1999, p. 99)

This example highlights the complexity of Alaska Native subsistence culture in relation to federal environmental protection and conservation, which can restrict the practices of Alaska Native subsistence living. had it not been for their involvement in the Congressional process of legislative production. This reflects the mindset of Alaska Natives who contest the legitimacy of policies that they believe to have failed in legally recognizing their Alaska Native traditional ways of life and the legal consciousness to utilize the available avenues for resistance.

I have argued in chapter two that the most visible example of Alaska Natives taking part in the legislative process and the drafting legislative acts is the creation and enactment of ANCSA. Although my argument in chapter two argues that ANCSA only permitted a narrow form of

economic participation, which was influenced by corporate institutions, thus alluding to the *permission to participate*, it is important to remember that ANCSA arose as a reaction to—and has been become a major source of—Alaska Native political engagement. It reflects the evolving and adapting nature of Alaska Native interests in relation to subsistence and sovereignty. Since its enactment, it has spurred innumerable interpretations and involved the creation of numerous Alaska Native organizations whose focus are not solely geared towards profit maximization. Additionally, as I have discussed previously, although ANCSA was originally created to “extinguish” all future aboriginal rights within Alaska, it was amended six times from 1971 to 1987 (*Alaska Federation of Natives Newsletter*, 1987), and still remains the nexus for virtually all Alaska Native relationships with the State and corporate sector.

Some of the major amendments to ANCSA was a result of what was called the “1991-time bomb” (Zellen 2008; Creed 1988). In ANCSA’s original text, it allowed after a period of 20 years, for the potential loss of Alaska Native ownership of the original lands where were stipulated by ANCSA. Alaska Native shareholders of ANCs could opt out of ANCSA in 1991 and sell their shares to the open market. The fear among many Alaska Natives was that land would soon be sold and become owned by external entities and actors. Furthermore, *all* Alaska Natives born after 1971 were excluded from the original cash and land settlement and did not include benefits for Alaska Native elders. Lastly, ANCSA did not include any benefits for Alaska Natives born before 1971 if they had missed the initial enrollment period. These fears were addressed with Alaska Native testimonies in Congressional hearings and led to the “1991 amendments” (Wolf 2003) and has commonly been referred to as a “living document” (cite).

Another form of legal recognition and representation of Alaska Native identity and culture I want to examine in this context is the Alaska National Interests Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980. ANILCA was created as a supplement to ANCSA. Within ANCSA, Alaska Native subsistence

living was only limited to ANC owned land and did not extend to portions of Alaska in which many rural Alaska Natives still practiced subsistence living. In her study of the relationships between Alaska Native and the federal government, Shearer (2005, p. 36, 37) asserted that Alaskan Natives were “domestic dependent sovereigns without territorial reach, separated from the land by ANCSA.” This to end the enactment of ANILCA extended the territorial practices of subsistence living from the original 44 million acres permitted in ANCSA to 104 million acres (*ANILCA*, n.d.)

In brief, what we can see through the processes of amending ANCSA and through the construction of legislation such as ANILCA are the constant working and re-working—or molding—of policy with Alaska Native engagement and interests. It reflects the ways in which Alaska Natives attempt to preserve what they perceive as beneficial in legislative acts and to the practices in trying to overcome problems within them, and a way of gaining institutional power.

#### *Intersectionality of Alaska Native Climate Justice and Economic Development*

In addition to the struggle for legal representation, Alaska Natives have been involved in organizing around the topic of climate justice. During a time of a rapidly warming Arctic, climate change discourse is becoming more visible in regards to Alaska Native struggle. As a 2013 Brookings Institute report indicated, “Alaska has warmed twice as fast as the global average during the past half century,” and that communities across Alaska “need to relocate in their entirety” due to flooding and erosion from melting permafrost (Bronen, 2013, p. 1, ii) Another major news source has reported, “86% of all of indigenous Alaskan villages—184 communities— were experiencing consequences from climate change” (Goldenberg, n.d.). With this increasing visibility, discourse in this regard has been placing Alaska at “ground zero” of climate change (Reiss 2010), and has prompted high level figures such as United States President, Barack Obama, to hold an historic three-day visit in to Alaska 2015 to help “shine a spotlight on what Alaskans in particular have come to know” (*Here’s Why He Traveled to Alaska*, 2015).

A network of Alaska Native grassroots organizations has been steadily growing within Alaska around this topic of climate change and indigenous social justice. Many of these organizations have been critical towards Alaska's natural resource dependent economy, including the institutional policies such as ANCSA and ANCs. The Alaska Native environmental organization REDOIL, for example, openly rejects ANCSA "as an illegitimate infringement on our right to sovereignty and self-determination" and are "committed to a moratorium of new exploration for oil, gas and coal" (*Statement of Principles*, n.d.).

In 2015, during the 49<sup>th</sup> annual Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) convention—the state of Alaska's largest annual convention (DeMarban 2015a) and the largest gathering of indigenous people in the U.S. (DeMarban 2015b), demonstrators from REDOIL dressed as a salmon, a caribou, and a walrus as a protest to offshore oil development off of Alaska's coast that threatens Alaskan wildlife and Alaska Native subsistence diet. The protest came after an earlier panel discussion in which Alaska Native Crawford Patkotak, chairman of the ANC, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), had called for more development and less government regulations in regards to natural resource development. When interviewed after the demonstration, Faith Gemmill, executive director of REDOIL, had said the "AFN is too controlled by corporate groups and that tribal members need a larger voice to balance for-profit views with 'subsistence rights.'" Patkotak, on the other hand said that "Native corporations are required to enhance the lives of their shareholders culturally and economically" (DeMarban 2015a).

On the national scale, Alaska Natives have also mobilized in solidarity with environmental groups and Native American leaders and organizations from across the United States. One such example is the announcement by the oil giant Royal Dutch Shell on September, 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015, that it will abandon its exploratory initiatives on the northwest coast of Alaska as a result of massive environmental resistance, which included individual Alaska Natives activists and Alaska Native

organizations such as REDOIL and the Indigenous Environmental Network of Alaska. As Allison Akootchook Warden, an Alaska Iñupiaq community organizer, stated after Shell’s announcement, “today, Shell pulled out of our waters, hopefully never to return. This is a huge victory for our People and our traditional ways of life” (*Native Leaders Remark on Shell & Arctic Drilling Announcement* 2015). In contrast, however, just over a year later however, on November, 22, 2016, it was announced that the Alaska Native Corporation ASRC had acquired from Shell a total of 21 offshore Arctic leases for natural resource development. After reviewing the acquisition, the Department of Interior restricted two areas of Alaska from development due to “the fragile and unique Arctic ecosystem and the recent demonstrated decline in industry interest” (Kershaw 2016) ASRC responded with the statement,

“this plan ignores the needs and voices of the Inupiat who support responsible Outer Continental Shelf development... This plan cripples our ability to answer the mandate from Congress under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 which requires us to return benefits to our people.” (Torres 2016)

In agreement in with this statement, Wayne Westlake, president and CEO of the ANC, NANA, expressed his disappointment in oil-companies relinquishing their lease agreements in natural resource development in Alaska. In his keynote address at the 36<sup>th</sup> annual RDC conference,<sup>19</sup> “Shell’s announcement [in relinquishing their lease agreement] had a direct impact on our region.” He described the Alaskan village of Kotzebue during the time of the lease to Shell that

restaurants were full, lots of people were hiring, the city received tens of thousands of in bed tax, many NANA shareholders were hired as marine mammal observers, and in positions throughout the city of Kotzebue that were supporting crews. Businesses were busier, and the opportunities before us seemed bright. I want to thank Shell for working with us as they explored and I want them to know that when they are ready to kick it in gear again, we’ll welcome them back. You see, at NANA, we don’t believe subsistence and development are mutually exclusive” (Westlake 2015)<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Chapter two discussed this RDC conference in more detail.

<sup>20</sup> For more detailed discussion on Wayne Westlake’s comments, see chapter two page 50

Through these brief examples, they reveal the intersections of Alaska Natives struggle for climate justice and economic and financial security and development. The choice between intervention or investment is not always clear. Institutional policies like ANCSA, as we have seen, has been a device in which it has strengthened some Alaska Native modes of interaction, and marginalizing others.

### *Conclusion*

Within this chapter, I aimed to provide a critical perspective on Alaska Native resistance and political thought. As we have seen, geographically and historically, Alaska Native political thought moves on a spectrum, and at times these points intersect. I've located several points of political movement and thought within this chapter in terms of the extent Alaska Natives embrace or reject Westernized institutions and policies.

At one point, a complete rejection of policies, ideological discourse, and resource development practices as seen as destructive, and the social movement to change direction. At another point, a political approach that considers using the tools available to facilitate change. And at another point, a resistance to change and a desire to keep the status quo. At any one of these points, or at intersections, brings discussions in regards to cultural interpretation and express in relation to economic security and sovereignty and self-determination. Within this political and economic landscape Alaska, as this chapter has discussed, reveals the complexities of the internal and external struggle of cultural identity.

Conclusion:  
The Inevitability Reproduction of a New Frontier

“Include us in decisions that affect us”

*Speaking to US President, Barak Obama*, Melanie Bahnke, President and CEO of Kawerak, Inc. (Bahnke 2015)

“Our community has immense power in Alaska politics...However, every individual in our community should take charge of our own political power”

*First Alaskan Magazine*, Fall 2016, Cindy Allred (Allred 2016)

Within this thesis I have examined the various forms of *participation*, and how participation can be framed, represented, engaged, rejected, denied, or *permitted*, and for what purposes. In this context, I used these notions of participation to tease out the relationships of power and authority, as well as movements of dissent and resistance against this authority. As I set out to analyze how these aspects of participation manifested spatially, in relation to Alaska Natives and the state interactions, my specific focus was located towards examining economic and political participation, and how they are defined under the discourses of indigenous rights, private property land ownership, natural resource development, and social justice.

Furthermore, this thesis examined that, although forms of participation may shift within a changing society, elements of authority, domination, environmental degradation that had previously existed may be reproduced as a historical and geographic residue, that can be examined and identified. Thus, in conclusion, I end my thesis with a brief discussion of recent political and economic events within Alaska at the time of this writing (2016). As the title implies, *The Inevitability Reproduction of a New Frontier*, points to the reproductions of the themes I have outlined for each chapter within this thesis: the notions of exclusion, inclusion, and resistance. Within each notion, there is drawing of the past to attempt to influence the future, within an “inevitably” changing Arctic. My intention throughout my discussion here is to emphasize the rising visibility of the Arctic

and Alaska, as a result of climate change, which I argue, intensify as the physical geography of Alaska rapidly changes.

*Recent Intersections of Development, Climate Justice, and Indigenous Rights  
in a rapidly Changing Arctic*

In late August of 2015, US President, Barack Obama had an historic three-day visit to Alaska,<sup>21</sup> to attend the Conference on Global Leadership in the Arctic: Cooperation, Innovation, Engagement and Resilience (GLACIER). The conference, held in Anchorage, Alaska, will “highlight international and domestic priorities in the Arctic,” such as raising the visibility of climate change, the impacts of climate change in the Arctic, as well as the “Arctic’s unique role in global climate change” (*Conference on Global Leadership in the Arctic: August 30-31, 2015* 2015). In explaining the visit to Alaska, he stated that it is because “Alaska is on the front lines of the greatest challenges we face this century: climate change” (Conley 2016; Leonard 2015). The next day, however, after announcing his plans to visit Alaska, he gave his final approval to Shell for drilling operations in the Arctic ocean (Leonard 2015).

Aside from the GLACIER Conference, while in Alaska Obama visited rural villages within interior Alaska. As Obama stated in one roundtable discussion that included Alaska Native tribal leaders, ANC shareholders and CEOs, “one of the things that we’ve been focused on is how can we work together and improve communication, consultation, collaboration, and *participation* in dealing with the issues that face Native communities” (Bahnke 2015; Obama 2015, emphasis added). It is at this meeting that Melanie Bahnke, CEO of the Alaska Native Corporation Kawerak Inc., made the statement provided at the onset of this chapter.

As can be indicated by Obama’s presidential visit to Alaska, the Arctic’s visibility is growing rapidly, nationally and internationally. And this rising visibility, is in conjunction with a rapidly

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<sup>21</sup> US President, Barack Obama is the first sitting President of the United States to visit Alaska (Hirschfeld 2015)

changing Arctic landscape. As the EPA indicates, in the last 60 years, average temperatures within Alaska has increased an estimated 3°F, and an average increase of 6°F during the winter, rates more than twice the warming rate in the rest of the United States (EPA, n.d.). In one press conference on the shores of Seward, Alaska, Obama explained that “these changes are already happening and *its inevitable*” therefore,

“It’s important that we are prepared so that—whether it’s for search and rescue missions, whether it’s for national security reasons, whether it’s for commercial reasons—that we have much greater capabilities than we currently have. So one of the things I’m announcing today is a proposal to accelerate the construction of at least one additional heavy icebreaker and to work with Congress to make sure that we are producing a sufficient fleet to be able to meet our economic, commercial, maritime, and national security needs” (*Whitehouse.gov* 2015).

The purchase of a new heavy icebreaker,<sup>22</sup> will cost upwards of \$1 billion, with an expected ready date of 2020 with the new accelerated timetable, rather than 2022, (*Al Jazeera* 2015). As I discussed in chapter two, this perception of an *inevitably* changing Arctic that Obama expressed, can be identified within the ANC community. As can be seen in these interactions with the Obama administration and Alaska Natives the negotiation of political and economic inclusion that intersect around the conceptions of economic development and sustainability. As Wayne Westlake, CEO of the ANC ASRC, stated in an RDC conference a month after Obamas trip,<sup>23</sup> “there is no doubt that the world is looking North” (Westlake 2015), as a result of climate change. It seems that Westlake is on track with his forecast in which he described maritime activity will increase upwards of one hundred percent, and that these are “anticipated changes,” that presents “possibilities” (Westlake 2015). Through the lens of the for-profit corporation, these possibilities are “business possibilities,” where the “ultimate aim is to leverage *emerging* opportunities [towards] delivering maximum benefit to [our] shareholders” (Westlake 2015, emphasis added).

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<sup>22</sup> A special-purpose shipping vessel meant to provide a safe waterway passages in heavily iced waters

<sup>23</sup> For more detailed discussion on Wayne Westlake’s talk, see chapter two, page 50

In regards to political resistance, Obama's GLACIER attendance was met with by a group of hundreds of people who rallied outside of the conference to demonstrate against oil drilling in Alaska (Hillman 2015; Mellino 2015).<sup>24</sup> Among those demonstrators, Alaska Native Carl Wassilie, from Western Alaska, who also took part in "kayaktivism" in Seattle's demonstration to block Shell from departing the port towards Alaska. Wassilie that he rejects to offshore drilling off Alaska's coast, as "the oil industry has not helped Alaska Natives and infringes upon their rights" (Hillman 2015)

Through these recent events that occurred during the time that this thesis was written, and in the context of the entirety of this thesis, we can identify a constant negotiation, compromise, and resistance, towards how participation is engaged and discussed. The recency of these events, along with their growing intensity, rapidly changing landscapes point to the need for further scholarship within Alaska.

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<sup>24</sup> The rally was hosted by Greenpeace, Northern Alaska Environmental Center, Alaska Rising Tide, RedOil, Idle No More, Idle No More Washington, Alaska Climate Action Network, NAACP Youth Chapter AK, Chukchi Sea Watch, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action, Sierra Club Alaska, ShellNo Alaska and Center for Biological Diversity (Mellino 2015)

Appendix (A):  
Alaska Natural Resource Revenues from 1867 to 1931

(Source: Adapted from Shiels, 1936, p. 19)

The total output from all of Alaska's resources plus the taxes collected by the Federal and Territorial Governments, including license fees:

<u>Minerals</u>	\$648,000,000.00	
<u>Fish</u>	\$898,000,000.00	
<u>Furs</u>	\$128,000,000.00	
<u>Timber</u>	\$2,000,000.00	
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	\$7,000,000.00	
<u>Reindeer Exports</u>	\$400,000.00	<b>Total Revenue:</b>
<u>Federal Taxes and License Fees</u>	\$31,000,000.00	\$1,727,400,000.00
<u>Terr. Taxes and License Fees</u>	\$13,000,000.00	



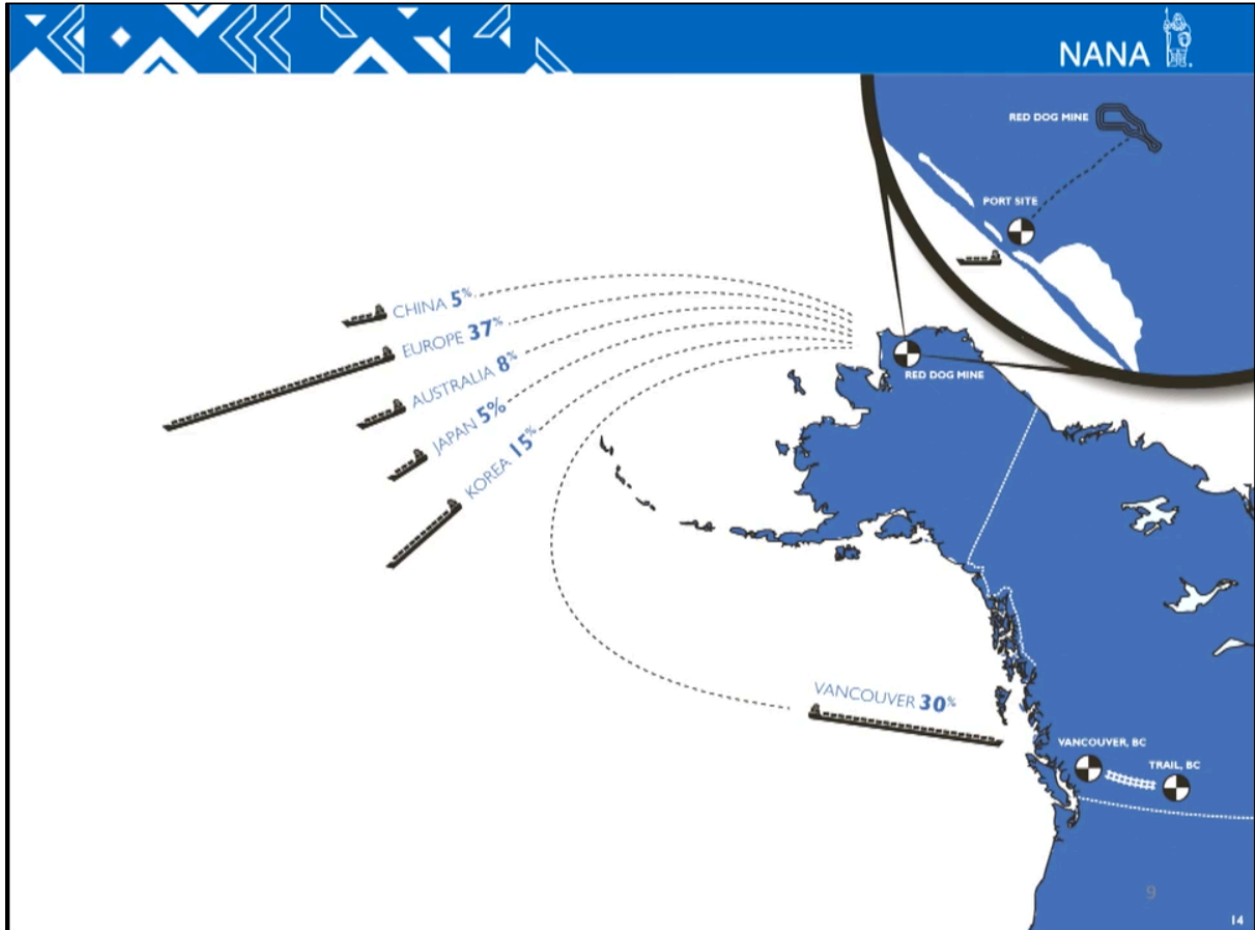
# Trans-Alaska Pipeline System

(Source <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/pipeline/map/>)



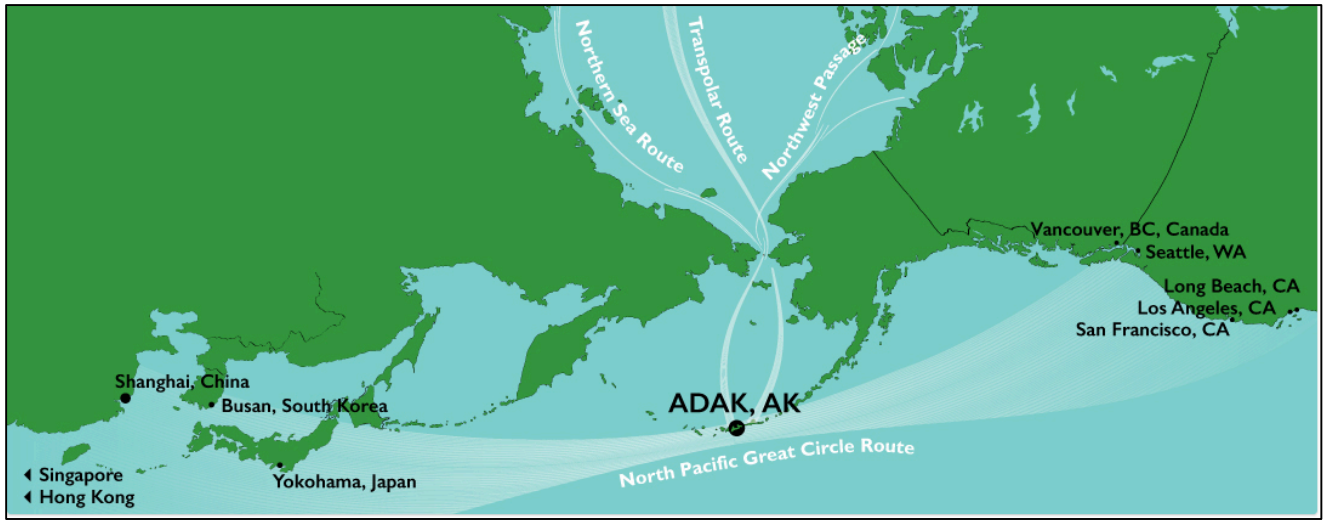
# NANA Red Dog Mine Export Map

(Source: <https://vimeo.com/146402527>)



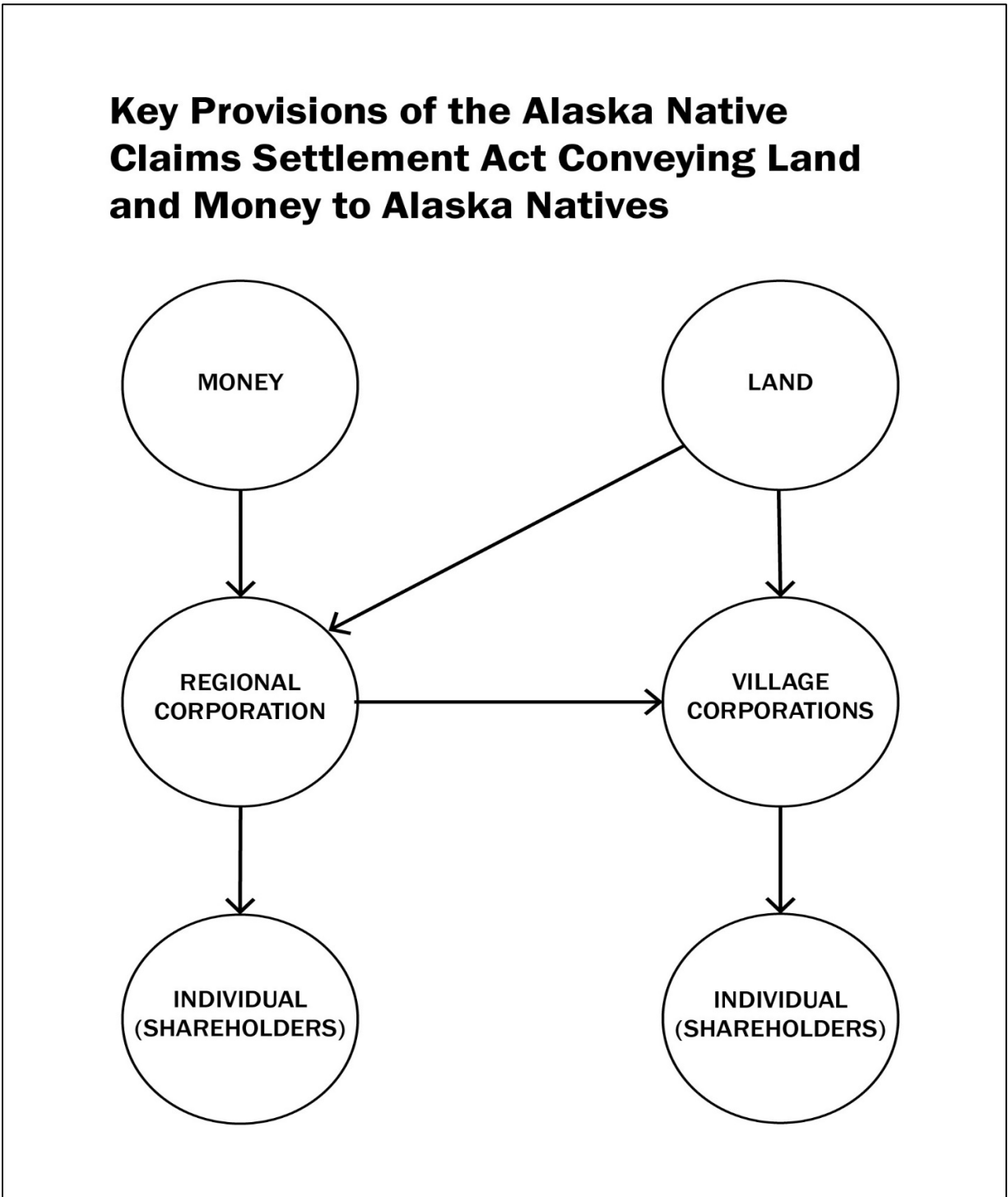
The Port of Adak, owned and operated by ANC Aleut Corporation  
Proposed Shipping Routes for “The Gateway to the Arctic”

(Source: <http://www.portofadak.com/gateway-to-the-arctic/>)



Appendix (C):  
ANCSA Settlement Money and Land Distribution

(Source: Adapted from Arnold, 1976)



## ANCSA Settlement Money and Land Distribution

(Source: Adapted from *Alaska Daily News* Special Report, 1981)

Alaska Native Corporation	Land Entitlements	Money Entitlements	Investments	# of shareholders	# of villages	Net Worth (1980)
AHTNA, INC.	1.7 million acres	\$13.3 million	Maintenance of pipeline, investments	1,074	8	\$7 million
The Aleut Corp.	1.25 subsurface rights; 52,000 surface rights	\$40.1 million	Money market funds, freight, fishing	3,429	14	\$13.7 million
Arctic Slope Regional Corp.	4.6 million acres	\$46.5 million	Oil field service, construction	3,738	8	\$24.3 million
Bering Straits Native Corp.	2.9 million acres	\$79.5 million	Native resource development, real estate	6,333	20	\$4.6 million
Bristol Bay Native Corp.	2.2 million acres, 2.9 million subsurface	\$67.0 million	Hotel, banking, drilling, food process., mineral extraction	5,400	29	\$34.1 million
Calista Corp.	5.9 million acres	\$165 million	Sheraton Anchorage, Settlers Bay, Fisheries	13,308	56	\$57.8 million
Chugach Natives Inc.	1 million acres	\$24 million	Tiber, fisheries	1,912	5	\$8.8 million
Cook Inlet Region, Inc.	1.2 million acres surface & subsurface rights, 1.3 million subsurface	\$77.2 million	Natural resource development, real estate, construction, drilling	6,264	8 villages 2 groups 1 historical village	\$46.1 million
Doyon, LTD.	9 million acres surface & subsurface rights, 3.5 million acres subsurface only	\$112.3 million	Securities, real estate, Banking, oil, construction	9,061	28	\$54.1 million
Koniag, Inc.	1 million acres	\$41.3 million	Timber, oil, fisheries	3,344	9	\$15.5 million
NANA Regional Corp	2.3 million acres	\$59.9 million	Oil field service,	4,828	11	\$44 million

			construction, hotels, tourism, reindeer			
Sealaska Corp.	2.3 million acres	\$196.9 million	Sealaska timber, AK Brick Co., banking, seafood, oil & gas	15,819	12	\$198.9 million
13 <sup>th</sup> Region Corp.	None	\$45.6 million	Fishing	4,435	None	Unavail.

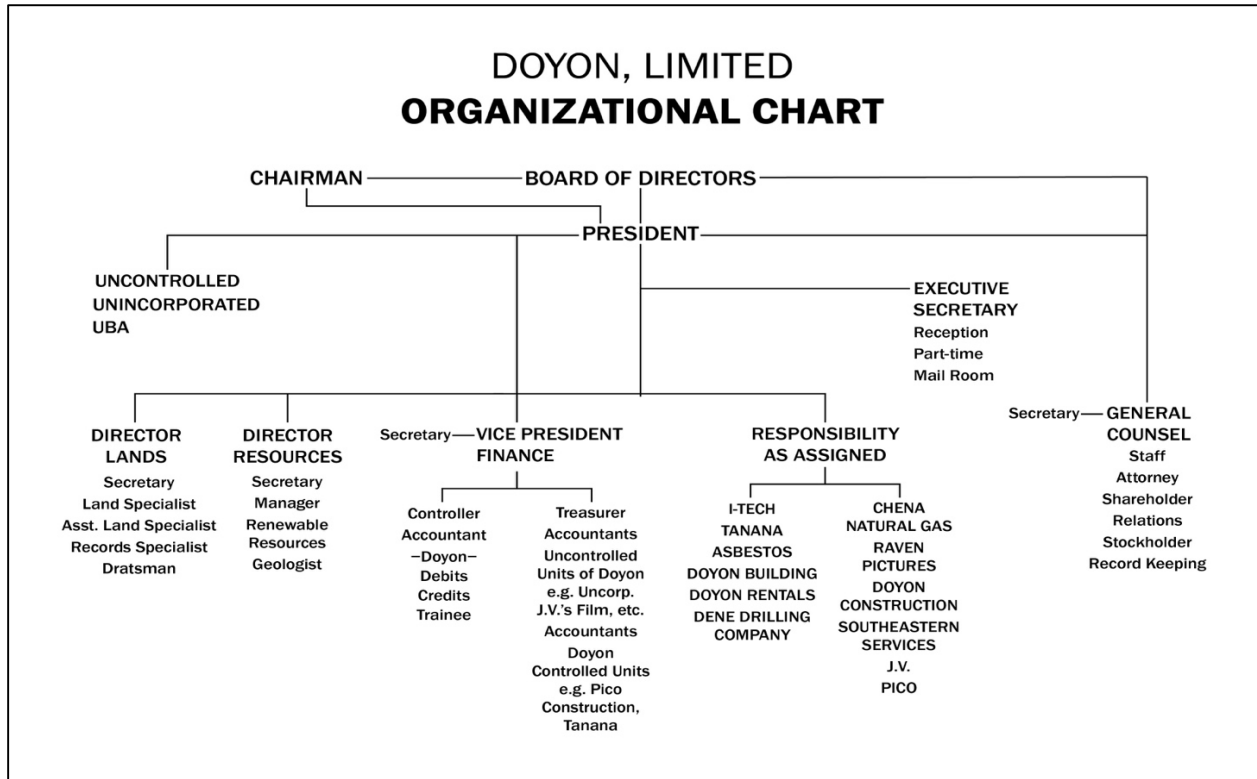
Appendix (D):  
 Alaska Business Monthly Magazine:  
 Alaska Native Regional Corporations listed in “Top 49ners” of 2015

(Source: Adapted from Alaska Business Monthly 2016 Power List, 2016, p. 6-8)

<b>Regional Alaska Native Corporation</b>	<b>Top Executive</b>	<b>Worldwide/Alaska Employees</b>	<b>Revenues (2014)</b>
Arctic Slope Regional Corporation	Rex Rock President/CEO	11,115 4,988	\$2,663,540,000
Bristol Bay Native Corporation	Jason Metrokin, President/CEO	4,348 1,236	\$1,736,084,000
NANA Regional Corporation, Inc.	Wayne Westlake, President/CEO	15,282 5,726	\$1,600,000,000
Chugach Alaska Corporation	Gabriel Kompkoff, CEO	5,000 600	\$626,000,000
Calista Corporation	Andrew Guy, President/CEO	1,500 400	\$401,900,000
Doyon, Limited	Aaron Schutt, President/CEO	2,787 1,722	\$362,816,481
Cook Inlet Native Corporation	Sophie Minich, President/CEO	2,083 1,270	\$304,421,000
Bering Straits Native Corporation	Gail Schubert, President/CEO	1,204 407	\$304,000,000
Koniag, Inc.	Elizabeth Perry, Ph.D/Ceo	1,065 155	\$211,493,000
Ahtna, Inc.	Michelle Anderson	1,209 285	\$185,000,000
Sealaska	Anthony Mallott/CEO	256 53	\$121,540,000
Aleut Corporation	Matt Fagnani, CEO	760 190	\$120, 307, 293

Appendix (E):  
 Alaska Native Corporate Organizational Hierarchy  
 (Doyon, Limited)

(Source: Adapted from *Proposed Beaufort Sea Neashore Petroleum Leasing*, 1975)



Appendix (F):  
ANC Advertisements

**Ahtna**  
**INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE**

Using the wisdom and knowledge of our Elders and ancestors, Ahtna plans to grow and prosper, to preserve and teach our culture, to impart the richness of our way of life on those around us, and to continue to find ways to improve upon our lands and the lives of our people as much as we possibly can.

We are committed to investing in our future.

Learn more about Ahtna at [www.ahtna-inc.com](http://www.ahtna-inc.com)

Guest Ahtna Regalia Chief Fred Swan  
Back: Ahtna Regalia Owners Isiah Swan & Daniel Peter

The advertisement features a photograph of an elderly man, Fred Swan, wearing glasses and a patterned shirt, with a yellow regalia vest over his shoulders. He is flanked by two young boys, Isiah Swan and Daniel Peter, who are also wearing yellow regalia vests and appear to be on a boat. The background shows a scenic view of a lake, mountains, and trees under a warm, golden light.

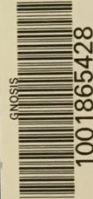
# Our company doesn't attend team building seminars, it just comes naturally.

The Inupiat of the Arctic have long known the importance of team spirit. For centuries, whaling crews have succeeded by working together toward their common goal.

Today, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, owned by the Inupiat of Alaska's North Slope, uses this same approach to conduct our business operations. Our employees, our elders, our officers and our shareholders work closely together — each contributing unique talents and skills — to ensure success

for the entire corporation.

On the 20th anniversary of ANCSA, we recognize the contributions of ASRC employees and the dedication of our shareholders. Through our team spirit — and our commitment to the traditional values of the Inupiat people — we have made the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation one of Alaska's most successful businesses.





LEADER In All We Do

Oil Field Services  
Government Contracting  
Natural Resources  
Tourism



The well-being of our shareholders—and a respect for our history in this place—is topmost in mind as we continually enhance our strong financial position.

[WWW.DOYON.COM](http://WWW.DOYON.COM)

© FIRST ALASKANS • FALL 2015



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