

**Unsettling Citizenship: Movements for Indigenous Sovereignty and
Migrant Justice in a Settler City**

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Abstract

The central argument in this dissertation is that immigration and citizenship policies are integral to settler colonialism in Canada and that this has tremendous implications for alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements in the city of Toronto. Urban Indigenous sovereignty activists are focused on the regeneration and resurgence of Indigeneity, expressed as responsibilities to land and community. To the extent that migrant justice movements are compelled to engage primarily with and through immigration and citizenship policies, their struggles are incommensurable with those for Indigenous sovereignty (see Tuck and Yang). Yet, when migrant justice movements are able to expose the colonial investments of these policies, to contest the dominance of the settler state, and to decolonize relationships of identity, land, and belonging, important possibilities for alliance-building emerge. The urban context thus provides an important potential site for decolonization and alliance-building, yet it is not atomized from the state, nor from state practices. In unsettling citizenship, migrant justice and Indigenous sovereignty activists are also, to some degree, unsettling the city. Here, “unsettling” signals the simultaneous acts of disrupting the linkage between settler colonialism and citizenship, of asserting Indigenous sovereignty in the city, and of challenging the assumption that citizenship is the primary political subjectivity of the contemporary context. As Vaughan-Williams concludes, “The conundrum is how to think political community otherwise” (169). Although none of the activists I spoke with were prepared to dictate what decolonized relationships in the city should look like, many suggested that Indigenous approaches to identity, land, and belonging as interrelated responsibilities might provide important ways of re-imagining co-existence that respect autonomy and interdependence.

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Preface

This dissertation emerged over several years, but the roots of the questions explored in these pages go back even further in my own history. In my early childhood, I was raised in the Gatineau foothills, land of the Algonquin people (See Lawrence *Fractured Homelands*, especially Chapter 13). This was the place called “home” by my mother and her family, farmers in what used to be a small, predominantly English-speaking town in the midst of a larger Francophone community. Divisions of class, language and religion within this setting were stark, but my mother’s family expressed strong connections to the land and community, which were only partially shared by my generation.

As my family moved regularly, first to Montreal and then to Winnipeg, we watched from a distance as development and urbanization changed the landscape of my mother’s childhood home and farm, and our visits became less frequent. As a child I was raised to have a great sense of patriotism, but I saw that my mother’s connections to land and nation were substantively different than those expressed by my military father. I began to contemplate questions about home, community and place.

While Indigenous presence and claims to land are indisputably evident everywhere, my university years in Brandon, Manitoba forced me to consider questions of colonialism and Indigenous sovereignty more deeply. The boarded up former residential school sat on a hill just outside of the city and the history of displacement and residential schooling were frequent topics of discussion in and around the university. Throughout my time in Brandon, I worked closely with Indigenous community members on various projects (a community garden, a drop in centre for children and youth). I was introduced to Ojibway and Cree worldviews, taught how to participate respectfully in a smudge, and met a number of Indigenous activists and families. Over the course of my

studies I was introduced to the writing of Indigenous authors, artists, and scholars. I was prompted to consider more carefully the meanings of home and community, as well as my own place in the mess of colonial relations.

Moving to Toronto to pursue graduate studies, I became involved with anti-globalization and anti-war activism, which brought me into contact with passionate activists, community organizers, and scholars. I found myself preoccupied with questions about nationalism, militarization, and meaningful alliance. During my time in Toronto I was involved in Palestinian solidarity work, as well as feminist, trans* solidarity, anti-racist, and labour organizing. I participated in anti-poverty and anti-capitalist organizing in the city and joined radical migrant justice group No One is Illegal Toronto following a Consulta held in Montreal in the Spring of 2002. I was very active in the group's organizing from 2003-2008. The racial diversity of Toronto prompted new questions about racism, including my own, as well as displacement, difference, and oppression, but the seeming invisibility of Indigenous peoples in the city and in much anti-racist organizing contrasted sharply with my previous experiences. In the winter of 2003, I joined the nascent group No More Silence, a collective of Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists committed to ending the murders and disappearances of Indigenous women. Over the following years, I participated in a range of Indigenous solidarity events and groups, including the Northern Lights Collective, and the Coalition in Support of Indigenous Sovereignty.

As I completed course work, I encountered many activists and scholars who were similarly perplexed by the seeming invisibility of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous sovereignty in Toronto's urban context, and by the ongoing divisions among political movements, particularly those with shared commitments to decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty. Within No One is Illegal Toronto in particular, many activists were concerned with finding meaningful ways of supporting Indigenous peoples'

struggles for sovereignty, but struggled to build meaningful alliances. From these discussions it became evident that in addition to myriad other complications, there were historical and structural obstacles to solidarity, and that the history and spatial organization of the city also shaped the potential for new alliances. This is the context that motivated the research for this dissertation and shaped the fieldwork process.

Over the course of analysis and writing, my first child was born, rendering these questions both more pertinent and more complex. I found it almost impossible to reconcile parenting with the time commitment of intense political activism. Teaching became an important outlet, and conversations with students enriched, challenged, and invigorated my work on this project. With the arrival of my second child, I longed for the connection and support of family, and despite ongoing critiques and interrogations of concepts like home, came to realize that I felt increasingly out of place in Toronto. We returned to Winnipeg in the summer of 2012. Although Winnipeg may not be home to me, it is where all of my children's living grandparents reside, and a place from which I can continue to interrogate relationships of identity, land, and belonging.

Writing and revising this thesis from an old-new location (almost entirely in a public library named after Louis Riel, just a few kilometres from the revolutionary Métis leader's house) further complicates and compels this work, refocusing its central questions of home and connection, responsibility and alliance. In addition, ongoing revisions to policy and inspiring political activism stand as further evidence of the dialogical relationship between policy and political action, as well as the importance of not allowing state policy to limit the visions and scope of political movements. Like me, many of the activists interviewed for this research have come in and out of intense involvement in political action, including in the movements outlined in these pages. Some have had children, others have moved out of the city, and some have become even more involved in political organizing. Others have refocused their energies toward other

projects and movements. Some would no longer consider themselves or their work 'activist'. They have all taught me that we must remain vigilant in tracing the impacts of the state and related institutions, even as we continue the collective, individual, and at times deeply personal work of decolonization. Regardless of the divergent paths of individual activists, the movements discussed in these pages continue to unfold, growing and contracting organically. They persist in contesting the sovereignty and organization of the settler state, and in interrogating notions of home and belonging. They compel and inspire me to continue in this work.

Chapter 1: Citizenship and Settler Colonialism: Theorizing Identity, Land, and Belonging in Toronto

A number of powerful dynamics have converged in the making of the City of Toronto. The site now known as Toronto has a long history for Indigenous peoples. Haudenosaunee writer and educator Jamaia DaCosta explains, “The word 'Toronto' itself, originates from the Kaniienke’haka word 'Tkaronto' which translates to, 'the place in the water where the trees are standing.' The reference is said to come from Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat fishers posting stakes for fishing weirs in the narrows of the river systems, many of which are now mostly paved over with concrete.” DaCosta further explains that,

Tkaronto has a diverse history for *many* Nations (not just Haudenosaunee, Wendat, Anishinaabe, and Algonquin) due to its abundance of food sources and vast network of rivers which offered easy travel between portage narrows located along what is now known as Lake Ontario, Lake Huron, Lake Simcoe, and Lake Couchiching. These networks formed trade routes with particular stops along the way, and according to local Elders, Tkaronto was certainly one of them. Many Indigenous traders would meet in Tkaronto to network, trade, and form alliances, and then continue along the portage routes. (emphasis in original)

Although Indigenous peoples were actively displaced from the city in the years leading up to and following its incorporation in 1834, there remained a consistent presence of Indigenous people. Some stayed in the city because of long-standing relationships to the land, and others arrived through ongoing processes of colonial displacement outside of the city. The Mississaugas of the New Credit, who were present in Toronto at the time of settler encroachment and treaty-making, have an active land claim over the lands on which the city is now built. In addition, recent data suggests that the city's Indigenous population continues to grow. According to census data, the city's Aboriginal population was 23,950 in 2001, increased by 33 percent to 31,910 in 2006,

and increased again by almost 14 percent to 36,990 in 2011. (City of Toronto; Annie Turner et al.; Statistics Canada “Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, 2006”). Census data for these years consistently reports that the majority of Toronto's Aboriginal population is non-status (almost 65 percent of the population recorded in 2011, according to Annie Turner et al. 10). However, these figures are likely not entirely representative, given that many Indigenous peoples do not complete Statistics Canada surveys, and that many are excluded by the sampling methods employed (see City of Toronto). Furthermore, the 2011 figures are from the first year in which completion of the census was not mandatory, and are therefore likely not fully comparable to data gathered in earlier years because of what Annie Turner et al. describe as “higher non-response error” (23). Taken together, these factors all suggest that Toronto “has a lot of thinking to do about Indigenous peoples”, as one Indigenous participant in this study noted.

Urban Indigenous sovereignty movements both struggle against ongoing dispossession and disenfranchisement and assert Indigenous identity, inherent rights, and sovereignty within and beyond the city. As Indigenous scholar Joyce Green suggests, “The reality of large urban Aboriginal populations ...suggests that decolonization is not only about land claims settlements and ‘self’ governments: it also requires new formulae for sharing political and economic power within mainstream communities” (“Decolonization” 54). During my fieldwork, Indigenous sovereignty activists were mobilizing in opposition to the First Nations Governance Act (FNGA), strengthening connections with land-based communities (for instance, mobilizing Toronto-based support for the Six Nations land reclamation, and organizing through the Defenders of the Land Network), and engaging in city-based educational and awareness-building initiatives on issues of Indigenous sovereignty. They were also organizing around missing and murdered Indigenous women – including an annual vigil, march, and feast, as well as other events, and connecting this issue to ongoing settler colonialism. Indigenous

sovereignty, self-determination, and decolonization were the primary goals of these movements, which also drew directly from Indigenous cultures and practices.

Increasingly, these movements were also seeking to build meaningful alliances with the city's vibrant migrant justice, anti-poverty, and anti-war movements.

According to the 2011 National Household Survey, Toronto is the main destination for new immigrants to Canada, receiving 37.4 percent of all new immigrants to the country in that year (Chui et al. 10). The same survey finds that newcomers make up 46 percent of Toronto's total population (Chui et al. 10). The City of Toronto has long been a site of immigration and racial diversity, and this diversity has been a source both of pride and consternation. In recent years, local immigrant rights and migrant justice movements have increasingly challenged the exclusion of many racialized im/migrants from political and economic power within the city.¹

Large urban centres, such as Toronto, are increasingly vital sites for migrant justice organizing, particularly as more and more migrants find themselves living and working in cities, where their insecure immigration status often leads to considerable precariousness (see Berinstein, Nyers “Community without Status”). Estimates of the size of the non-status immigrant population in Toronto range from two hundred thousand to five hundred thousand and from 2001 onward this population has increasingly been targeted for surveillance, detention, and deportation. During the period of fieldwork, subways, malls, and neighbourhoods were the sites of what many service providers described as “unprecedented US-style immigration raids” (see Boyle; Keung). During the

1 While they share many features, in this dissertation, immigrant rights movements are conceptualized as those advocating for rights to citizenship and inclusion within a host society. In short, they are advocating for rights to settlement and integration. In contrast, migrant justice movements highlight the exclusions of increasingly restrictive citizenship and immigration rules, arguing that mobility should not be criminalized, and bringing attention to the colonial legacies of border control and the criminalization of some people's mobility (see Walia *Undoing*). While there are clear overlaps among these movements, this dissertation focuses primarily on migrant justice movements, arguing that these approaches hold greater potential for alliances against settler colonialism and with Indigenous sovereignty movements.

period surveyed here, migrant justice activists in Toronto were also mobilizing to oppose the new regulations imposed as part of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), and trying to counter the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA). Many groups were increasingly working with urban Indigenous sovereignty activists, trying to understand what it meant to be organizing for migrant justice, including access to city services and the regularization of immigration status, in a context of ongoing settler colonialism. This research project emerged from this context.

Unsettling Citizenship

My central argument in this dissertation is that immigration and citizenship policies are integral to settler colonialism in Canada, and that this has tremendous implications for alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements in the city of Toronto. To the extent that migrant justice movements are compelled to engage primarily with and through immigration and citizenship policies, their struggles are incommensurable with those for Indigenous sovereignty. Yet, in the moments when migrant justice movements are able to expose the colonial investments of these policies, to contest the dominance of the settler state, and to decolonize relationships of identity, land, and belonging, important possibilities for alliance-building emerge. The urban context provides an important potential site for decolonization and alliance-building, yet it is not atomized from the state, or from state practices. In unsettling citizenship, migrant justice and Indigenous sovereignty activists are also, to some degree, unsettling the city. Here, “unsettling” signals the simultaneous acts of disrupting the linkage between settler colonialism and citizenship, asserting Indigenous sovereignty in the city, and challenging the assumption that citizenship is the primary site of political agency in the contemporary context. As Vaughan-Williams concludes, “The conundrum is how to think political community otherwise” (169). Although none

of the activists I spoke with were prepared to dictate what decolonized relationships in the city might look like, many suggested that Indigenous approaches to identity, land, and belonging as interrelated responsibilities might provide important ways of re-imagining co-existence.

Although state constructions are unevenly adopted, they exert considerable influence on daily life and political action. At the outset, I asked participants what citizenship meant to them and how it impacted on their movements and alliances. These questions framed citizenship as both a subjectivity and a legal status. In their responses, participants clearly associated citizenship with settler colonialism and expressed considerable ambivalence about its decolonizing potential. This response was most pronounced among Indigenous activists, although racialized migrant justice activists were also skeptical of the transformative potential of citizenship, even as they noted that to some degree much of their organizing was concerned with immigration and citizenship policy. To some racialized migrant justice activists, these mobilizations around citizenship serve to further problematize the exclusions and violence of contemporary border control practices, and in this regard, work against both citizenship and settler colonialism. White activists had the least to say about citizenship, suggesting that even for those holding this “exalted” status (to use Sunera Thobani's words), citizenship was not seen as particularly relevant or useful to their organizing.

The relationship between citizenship and settler colonialism is also evident in some of the critical literature by citizenship theorists. For instance, Nandita Sharma asserts that citizenship constructs difference, saying: “Far from being a progressive force throughout the history of the national system (see Marshall, 1950), citizenship has constructed complex and layered levels of inequalities” (*Home Economics* 142). In his exploration of Jacques Derrida’s “protest against citizenship” and its totalizing and exclusionary function, Nick Vaughan-Williams argues that a deconstruction of citizenship

might “provide a glimpse of the possibility for genuinely alternative political arrangements to emerge” (169). While some scholars continue to assert the importance of a reformulated or redirected politics of citizenship,² others suggest that meaningful decolonization requires moving beyond the language of citizenship entirely, as well as assessing the impacts of such conceptions of land and belonging on political movements.³

Rather than the subjectivity or legal status of citizenship in the settler state, participants comments on the relationship between subjectivity and political action consistently turned to issues of identity, land, and belonging. Taken together, their comments demonstrate that their political action entails a re-thinking of subjectivity. The disjuncture between settler colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging, which participants associated with settler-citizenship, and their own approaches, often stemming from Indigenous and anti-colonial conceptions, emerged as a central tension in our conversations. Indeed, a number of tensions affect the possibility of alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements in the city of Toronto.

Tension is a useful term to describe the conversations analyzed in this dissertation. Here, the term tension is deployed not solely as conflictual (although some of these tensions are exactly that) but also as potentially productive. The central tensions examined here are established under settler colonialism; they can only be resolved by undoing settler colonialism and the structures and ideologies through which it is sustained – in short, through decolonization. Following a discussion of these tensions, this chapter outlines the theoretical framework and key concepts for the dissertation, outlining some of the existing literature that informs my approach, and concludes with an overview of subsequent chapters.

The first tension that affects the possibilities of alliances is the fundamental

2 See Linklater; Isin and Turner. Indigenous scholars advancing such a position include Dale Turner and, to a lesser extent, John Borrows (*Recovering Canada*).

3 For example, see Alfred Wasáse; Thobani *Exalted*; Sharma *Home Economics*; Hindess “Citizenship for All”; Ackelsberg.

tension of settler colonialism, which requires – yet seeks to eliminate – Indigenous peoples and their sovereignty (see Audra Simpson; Wolfe; Coulthard). The Canadian settler state has been established and maintained through genocidal violence; assaults on culture, identity, knowledge, and language; starvation and systemic poverty; displacement from land; destruction of family and community; and the imposition of foreign systems of governance (see Chapter 3). As is detailed in subsequent chapters, Indigenous peoples have consistently employed a range of strategies to negotiate and counter settler incursions, maintain connections to land and culture, and assert their rights to sovereignty and self-determination. Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson notes:

Settler colonialism is predicated on a territorial possession by some and, thus, a dispossession of others. In this model of colonialism, “the settler never leaves,” so the possession of territory requires the disappearance of the “native”... the condition of Indigeneity in North America is to have survived this acquisitive and genocidal process and thus to have called up the failure of the project itself. (Wolfe quoted in Audra Simpson “Settlement's Secret” 205)

The genocidal aims of settler colonialism can only be countered through the enactment of Indigenous sovereignty and the simultaneous undoing of colonial structures and systems of thought – through decolonization.

The second central tension examined in these pages is that between colonial structures and the subjectivities they engender. Although violence, and gendered violence in particular, remains a central practice of settler colonialism, as Yellowknives Dene scholar Glen Coulthard notes, “State violence no longer constitutes the regulative norm governing the process of colonial dispossession” (*Red Skin* 15). Instead, policies, practices, and ideologies related to identity, land, and belonging have been the central mechanisms of settler colonialism in recent decades. Although communities and individual members of the polity never entirely adopt the subjectivities advanced under settler colonialism, even when these subjectivities are rejected outright, their effects continue to be felt. Drawing on Frantz Fanon's seminal work, Coulthard suggests that the

tension between structure and subjectivity is a crucial aspect of the colonial relationship and therefore must be central to projects of decolonization: “This, then, is the problematic that Fanon sets out to address in the bulk of his work: namely, what forms of decolonial praxis must one individually and collectively undertake to subvert the interplay between structure and subjectivity that sustain colonial relations over time” (*Red Skin* 140). In order to meaningfully address this question, we must gain insight into the specific ways colonial relations structure subjectivity.

The third tension examined in this dissertation is produced by the different scales of government engaged by activists, namely between the city and the nation-state. Although the urban centre is frequently imagined as a site of autonomy from the nation-state, participants point to the many ways in which state power is currently exerted in and through the urban context. While the city may be a site of multiple contacts and potentially decolonizing encounters, it is neither a neutral nor an autonomous site. As noted at the outset of this chapter, representations of the City of Toronto frequently disavow, or carefully manipulate, the Indigenous history of this place, often attempting to further cover over the continued presence and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples through specific deployments of nationalism and multiculturalism. While urban political action can and should actively work to decolonize the city, meaningful alliances will only be possible when political action is informed by careful attention to the historical and contemporary iterations of settler colonial power in this city.

Although the City of Toronto is a site of multiple, overlapping, and ever-changing political movements, this dissertation focuses on the alliances between urban Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. Although most of the migrant justice activists who participated in this research describe their work as anti-colonial and many Toronto-based migrant justice organizations profess a commitment to advancing Indigenous sovereignty, there is a problematic tendency to equate anti-racism, anti-

colonialism and migrant justice organizing with the struggles of Indigenous peoples for sovereignty and self-determination (for instance, see Lawrence and Dua; Tuck and Yang). This tendency to conflate common socio-economic experiences with common political cause is symptomatic of what Indigenous scholar Eve Tuck and K. Wang Yang refer to as the deployment of decolonization as a metaphor: “Decolonization, which we assert is a distinct project from other civil and human rights-based social justice projects, is far too often subsumed into the directives of these projects, with no regard for how decolonization wants something different from those forms of justice” (2). Many Indigenous scholars suggest that decolonization must move beyond metaphor and equivocation and instead centre Indigenous sovereignty and futurity, drawing from Indigenous epistemologies. To the extent that migrant justice groups join in the active contestation of settler colonialism and the power of the settler state, there is the potential for real alliance. But as many individuals and groups are caught up in the web of settler colonial relations, particularly in the current redoubling of settler colonial practices of exclusion, containment, and surveillance, the contradictions and “incommensurabilities” (to use Tuck and Yang's conceptualization, as elaborated below) between these movements may increase. My aim here is not to dissuade potential alliances, nor to suggest that the state has total control, but rather to contribute to understandings of the ways that settler colonial power continues to impact on political action, and on the possibilities of anti-colonial alliances, in the settler city of Toronto.

A final tension running through this work is that of whiteness and the roles of white activists and researchers in the work of decolonization and in formulating alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. As a white settler activist and academic, I live this tension on a daily basis, and indeed, it is in part what inspired and motivated this work. While centring whiteness and citizenship would be deeply problematic, ignoring whiteness, particularly given my own subject location,

would further lend credence to the exaltation and normalization of this subject location. Instead, whiteness and citizenship status are also parsed for their engagements, interpellations, and potential refutations of settler colonialism.

Theoretical Framework and Key Concepts

In order to work through these tensions, this dissertation employs an anti-colonial and decolonizing feminist theoretical framework, heavily informed by Indigenous feminist theories. My aim is both to contribute to the project of decolonization and to subject feminist and other theoretical insights to a decolonizing analysis. Although much feminist theoretical work may have decolonizing potential, little of what Indigenous scholar Sandy Grande calls “whitestream feminism” focuses on settler colonialism or Indigenous sovereignty. In my framing of Indigenous feminist theories, I draw on Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck and Angie Morrill's discussion of Native feminist theories, which they describe as “those theories that make substantial advances in understandings of the connections between settler colonialism and both heteropatriarchy and heteropaternalism” (11).

There are many potential synergies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous feminist theories, including the interlocking nature of systems of domination and oppression, and the importance of critical solidarity and alliance. There are also some incongruities, primarily in their epistemological orientation and in their relationships to the nation-state. My intention here is neither to force a synthesis of Indigenous and non-Indigenous feminist theoretical positions, nor to draw too heavy a line between these insights. Indeed, much feminist theory is deeply informed by the work of Indigenous feminist theorists and vice versa.⁴ Rather, my aim is to outline the ways that these theoretical insights shape the analysis presented here.

4 For example, see Green “Taking Account of Indigenous Feminism”; St. Denis “Aboriginal Women on Feminism”; Smith “Indigenous Feminist Without Apology.”

A key theoretical insight put forward in this dissertation is that decolonization requires a clear understanding of the interlocking systems of oppression through which settler colonialism is constructed and perpetuated. As Coulthard argues, “colonialism, as a structure of domination predicated on dispossession, is not a 'thing,' but rather the sum effect of the diversity of interlocking oppressive social relations that constitute it” (*Red Skin* 15). Coulthard further explains that

[T]he colonial relation should not be understood as a primary locus or 'base' from which these other forms of oppression flow, but rather as the inherited background field within which market, racist, patriarchal, and state relations converge to facilitate a certain power effect – in our case, the reproduction of hierarchical social relations that facilitate the dispossession of our lands and self-determining capacities. (*Red Skin* 14-5, emphasis in original)

As a result, gender is not centred to the exclusion of other relations shaped by and constitutive of settler colonialism, rather, settler colonialism is subjected to intersectional decolonizing analysis. In this work, I am informed by the work of many Indigenous feminist theorists, who have detailed the processes through which settler colonialism constructs gendered, sexualized, and racialized relationships.⁵ In taking up this literature, concepts such as citizenship, nation, nationalism, and nation-state are also subject to decolonizing analysis.

The theoretical framework employed in this dissertation centres settler colonialism as the site of analysis. Following Patrick Wolfe, settler colonialism is understood not as an event but as a process and a structure (“Settler Colonialism” 388). The term settler colonialism is employed in these pages to signal the specific and ongoing processes of usurpation of land, identity, and culture central to the establishment of the Canadian nation-state, which remains deeply colonial and imperial in structure and intent. As Wolfe argues, a central goal of the settler colonial endeavour in this context is the elimination of Indigenous peoples, and hence of their sovereignty

5 For instance, see Monture-Angus *Thunder in My Soul*; Smith *Conquest*; Anderson *Recognition*; Lawrence *'Real' Indians*; Palmater.

(“Settler Colonialism” 388). Scott Lauria Morgensen further suggests:

Settler colonialism is naturalized whenever conquest or displacement of Native peoples is ignored or appears necessary or complete, and whenever subjects are defined by settler desire to possess Native land, history, or culture. Settler colonialism thus must be denaturalized not only in social and political spaces but also in definitions and experiences of subjectivity. By more fully understanding its naturalization, critiques may destabilize it within settler societies and all spaces that those societies inform. (*Spaces Between Us* 16)

The analysis presented here focuses on the construction of ideas about identity, land, and belonging through the colonial citizenship regime, and the impacts of these constructions on Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements, as well as on alliances between them. Although citizenship policy is merely one of the ways in which settler colonialism functions, it is a crucial means through which colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging are promoted, state sovereignty constructed, and Indigenous sovereignty subordinated.

The concept of sovereignty figures centrally in Indigenous feminist theorizations and in this dissertation. Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred notes that it is challenging and potentially dangerous to employ this concept outside of its association with the modern system of nation-states (see *Peace, Power* 53-69, 109-110). Yet, sovereignty has been employed consistently by Toronto-based Indigenous activists and by many Indigenous theorists to signal autonomy and the ability to shape lifeways and systems of governance. Indigenous peoples have been practising sovereignty for much longer than the word has been in existence, and certainly longer than this term has been associated with the Western nation-state. As late Haudenosaunee legal scholar Patricia Monture suggests,

Sovereignty is a word that has gotten Indigenous nations into a lot of trouble. It threatens states. This occurs simply because there is an assumption in western thought that there is a single form and system of knowing and therefore sovereignty must have a single meaning. And that meaning is now enshrined in international standards. This is not what I understand Haudenosaunee people to be saying when we talk about sovereignty. It is the power to not only determine your being but also the power to be responsible

to that identity. In Indigenous epistemologies, sovereignty means access to well-being for all our citizens. (“Women's Words” 122)

I will be employing Monture's conception of sovereignty in these pages, as it emphasizes both autonomy and interdependence and resonates directly with the alternative conceptions of identity, land, and belonging advanced in participants' comments.

The term decolonization has acquired increased attention and frequency in recent years. For some theorists, this lack of conceptual clarity is a cause for concern because of the problematic slippages and confluences that sometimes arise with broad usages of the term (see Tuck and Yang 2, 7). Oneida scholar Lina Sunseri defines decolonization as “the process by which the longstanding colonial relations between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals are abolished and new relations formed. These relations will be based on principles of mutual respect, sharing, and recognition of the inherent rights of Aboriginal peoples to follow their traditional ways of governance” (146). As noted above, many Indigenous scholars advocate for making Indigenous sovereignty central in projects of decolonization, arguing against the tendency to conflate decolonization with myriad other struggles against racism and inequity (see Lawrence and Dua; Tuck and Yang).

Similarly, many Indigenous participants emphasized the importance of returning to Indigenous conceptions of identity, land, and belonging. Although they detailed the many ways in which settler colonialism continues to impact on their lives, families, and political action, they refused to focus solely on contesting settler colonialism. In their emphasis on Indigenous knowledge and tradition, Indigenous participants engage what many Indigenous scholars call regeneration and resurgence. Although these are not terms employed by participants, the words that they do use resonate directly with these conceptualizations. Leanne Simpson conceptualizes regeneration as comprised of both contention with settler colonialism and reclamation of Indigenous knowledge and practice. She writes that regeneration is a crucial aspect of the resurgence of Indigenous

nationhood:

Building diverse, nation-culture-based resurgences means significantly re-investing in our own ways of being: regenerating our political and intellectual traditions; articulating and living our legal systems; language learning; ceremonial and spiritual pursuits; creating and using our artistic and performance-based traditions. All of these require us – as individuals and collectives – to diagnose, interrogate and eviscerate the insidious nature of conquest, empire, and imperial thought in every aspect of our lives. It requires us to reclaim the very best practices of our traditional cultures, knowledge systems and lifeways in the dynamic, fluid, compassionate, respectful context within which they were originally generated. (*Dancing* 17-8)

As Leanne Simpson suggests, regeneration and resurgence are not simplistic processes of returning to the past, even though they emphasize the reclamation of traditional practices. As Omà̀̀winini (Algonquin) scholar Paula Sherman explains,

We are not working to find our way back to what we once were in the past, but are, instead, diligently struggling to bring forward those teachings, ceremonies, practices, and ways of relating that can help to rebuild a strong cultural base from which to resist contemporary colonialism and the cognitive elimination that accompanies the physical changes to our territories and bodies. (“The Friendship Wampum” 120)

Similarly, Alfred suggests,

Regeneration means we will reference ourselves differently, both from the ways we did traditionally and under colonial dominion. We will self-consciously recreate our cultural practices and reform our political identities by drawing on tradition in a thoughtful process for reconstruction and a committed reorganization of our lives in a personal and collective sense. This will result in a new conception of what it is to live as Onkwehonwe. (*Wasáse* 34)

This creative process of reclaiming Indigeneity is clearly evident in the comments of urban Indigenous activists and in their assertions and enactments of Indigenous sovereignty in and beyond Toronto. Reclaiming Indigeneity is the primary focus of the Indigenous activists I spoke with, who clearly express responsibility for regeneration and resurgence in the urban context.

To the extent that non-Indigenous activists are able to support and contribute to these struggles, Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants suggested that there are possible alliances among Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. Similarly, Andrea Smith draws on Indigenous knowledge about land, borders, and mobility to understand global migration and the potential for migrant justice movements to forge meaningful alliances with Indigenous sovereignty movements against ongoing settler colonialism. She regards the current obsessions with border control and free trade as extensions of settler colonialism (“Foreword” x-xi), rooted in attempts to limit the mobility and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, “who have long travelled widely across the hemisphere” (“Foreword” Smith xi-xii). In addition, she argues that the logic of settler colonialism privatizes and commodifies relationships to land in order to further land theft. In other words, settler colonialism and propertied and nationalized relationships to land make immigration problematic under settler colonialism. As Smith explains,

To begin with, for immigration to be a problem, people must live in a propertied relationship to land. That is, land is a commodity that can be owned and controlled by one group of people... A proprietary understanding of land is what settler colonialists used as the excuse to invade Indigenous nations. Because Indigenous peoples did not individually own the land, they were thought to not be properly developing the land, and hence land could become commodified by settlers. (“Foreword” x)

In contrast, Smith notes that Indigenous scholars

[A]rticulate not migration but the nation-state and its reliance on control and ownership of territory as the problem. They are arguing that immigration is an Indigenous issue because settler colonialism ultimately depends on an exclusivist concept of nation based on control and ownership of land and territory that is demarcated by borders. Thus, a liberatory vision for immigrant rights is one that is based less on pathways to citizenship in a settler state, than on questioning the logics of the settler state itself. (“Foreword” xiii)

Herein lies the potential for meaningful alliances: problematizing the logic of settler

nationhood and remembering alternative relationships to land, which take Indigenous sovereignty and worldviews seriously.

Yet, immigrants, refugees, and migrants also live in complex relationships to settler colonialism and the settler state. As Bonita Lawrence and Ena Dua note, “Much of Canadian antiracist scholarship has attempted to document the exclusion and marginalization of people of color from the emerging nations. However, this work does not examine the ways in which the entry of people of color into Canada put them in colonial relationships with Aboriginal peoples” (134). As noted above, Indigenous peoples' struggles for sovereignty and migrant justice struggles for access to the provisions of social and formal citizenship are, in many respects, incommensurable. Tuck and Yang conceptualize incommensurability as an uncompromising emphasis on undoing settler colonialism, and the refusal to subordinate this demand to other demands for justice and equality: “Incommensurability is an acknowledgement that decolonization will require a change in the order of the world (Fanon, 1963)... The goal is to break the relentless structuring of the [settler colonial] triad – a break and not a compromise (Memmi, 1991)” (31, emphasis in original). As they further elaborate,

Breaking the settler colonial triad, in direct terms, means repatriating land to sovereign Native tribes and nations, abolition of slavery in its contemporary forms, and the dismantling of the imperial metropole. Decolonization 'here' is intimately connected to anti-imperialism elsewhere. However, decolonial struggles here/there are not parallel, not shared equally, nor do they bring neat closure to the concerns of all involved – particularly not for settlers. Decolonization is not equivocal to other anti-colonial struggles. It is incommensurable. (31, emphasis in original)

Attending to incommensurability does not mean that all migrants or migrant justice movements are necessarily solely in a position of complicity with settler colonialism, but rather that these relationships must be carefully scrutinized for moments of potential alliance as well as complicity. While I argue here that Canadian immigration and citizenship policies are designed to uphold and advance settler colonialism, this does

not necessarily mean that all immigrants are necessarily colonizers. As Harsha Walia suggests,

While I believe that migrants of color are inevitably implicated in settler colonialism and I have a responsibility to ally with Indigenous struggles, I do not believe that migration as a process in and of itself, especially in this late period of capitalist globalization and global neo-colonialism, can inherently be understood as a form of settler colonialism. (*Undoing Border* 129)

As the analysis in subsequent chapters demonstrates, migrant justice activists are positioned in a range of different relationships with settler colonialism in Canada. Attending to these complexities is a crucial aspect of furthering decolonization; this is what is meant by my use of Tuck and Yang's conceptualization of incommensurability. Indeed, rather than imposing equivocations, or normalizing the subjectivities imposed through state policy and practice, the work of building solidarity – even if it is tenuous and largely elusive – lies in clearly understanding the ways that settler colonialism shapes relationships among identity, land, and belonging, and actively constructing and imagining different relationships that begin from and take Indigenous sovereignty seriously.

Contributions

With this dissertation I hope to contribute to research and writing on Indigenous movements for sovereignty, decolonization, analyses of settler colonialism, and feminist engagements with nationalism and citizenship. In particular, the dissertation contributes to policy-based studies of settler colonialism⁶, providing insight into the specific mechanisms through which settler colonialism is perpetuated in citizenship and related policy and discourse. In parsing the relationships between immigration, settler colonialism, Indigenous sovereignty, and citizenship, this study aims to provide clearer insight into some of the ways that settler colonialism functions today.

6 For example, Coulthard *Red Skin*; Thobani *Exalted*; Wolfe “Settler Colonialism.”

This research also contributes to analyses of the relationship between the structure of settler colonialism and the subjectivities it instantiates and seeks to eliminate. By combining qualitative research with historical and policy analysis, this study contributes to a small but growing approach to the analysis of settler colonialism.⁷ This study documents how the activists I spoke with engage with, reject, and protest against settler colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging, and how this activism impacts on individuals and on political movements. My research also provides an analysis of settler colonial policy grounded in the perspectives of those whose lives are differentially, yet deeply, impacted by it. It is my hope that such analysis is useful to ongoing movements and alliances toward decolonization.

In centring the insights of Indigenous activists and theorists, this dissertation begins from a valuation of Indigenous knowledges and an acknowledgement of the significant challenge that such a position makes to Eurocentric systems of knowledge. This centring of Indigeneity also counters the erasures of Indigenous peoples and perspectives in much of the literature on migration, immigration, racialization, and multiculturalism.⁸ Similar omissions are evident in anti-colonial feminist work which is often broadly conceptualized as transnational feminist theory, where theorizations of settler colonialism and Indigenous sovereignty are frequently under-represented.⁹ In many of the most seminal edited volumes on transnational feminist theory, the work of Indigenous scholars is often limited to a single chapter in the volume, with little impact on the theoretical insights taken throughout the volume (for example, Guerrero's article in Alexander and Mohanty). Although the anti-colonial and anti-imperial analyses forwarded in many of these volumes are potentially complementary to Indigenous

7 See Lawrence *'Real' Indians*; Mackey; Morgensen *Spaces*.

8 For instance, see Benhabib and Resnik; Gunew; Abu-Laban and Gabriel; Haque. For exceptions to this practice, see Thobani *Exalted*; Walia *Undoing Border Imperialism*.

9 For example, see Alexander and Mohanty; Grewal and Kaplan. A similar critique is advanced by Lawrence in Thorpe. For an exception, see Stasiulis ("Relational Positionalities") in Kaplan, Alarcon and Moallem, eds.

scholars' theorizations, attention to settler colonialism, particularly from the perspectives of Indigenous theorists is rarely central to the analyses presented, and this is an approach which I aim to remedy in my own work.

A further contribution of my research lies in complicating the binarist or dyadic focus that typifies much existing research. Reflecting on the absence of Indigenous peoples and Indigeneity in his own work, Ghassan Hage argues,

[The] academic division of labour is the product of a White governmental tendency to treat "White-Aboriginal" relations and "Anglo-Ethnic" relations as two separate spheres of life. In this process, the Whites relating to Aboriginal people appear as totally unaffected by multiculturalism, while the "Anglos" relating to "ethnics" appear as if they have no Aboriginal question about which to worry. (*White Nation* 24)

As Daiva Stasiulis and Nira Yuval-Davis note, these "binary and dichotomous (for example, indigenous/settler) analyses dominate in studies of settler societies, obscuring the complexity and interdependence of their social, economic, political and ideological relations" (30). Replicating these state strategies in knowledge production runs the risk of further normalizing and naturalizing white settler colonial power and sovereignty. Mi'kmaq scholar Bonita Lawrence suggests that this latent division in knowledge production also serves to limit potential conversations and engagements among theorists and political movements (quoted in Rutherford).

In documenting the insights of activists and their reflections on the political movements to which they are passionately dedicated, this dissertation also contributes to social movement theory, and specifically to approaches which question the colonial investments of political movements and theories. As Leanne Simpson writes, "Social movement theory is, for the most part, inadequate in explaining the forces that generate and propel Indigenous resistance and resurgence because it is rooted in western knowledge and a western worldview, ignoring Indigenous political culture and theory" (*Dancing* 16). This critique is applicable to much of the writing on social movements. By

contrast, my research is inspired and informed by the growing literature on resurgence and regeneration penned by Indigenous activists and scholars.¹⁰ This literature informs what I hope is a useful contribution to a growing body of work aiming to decolonize the political praxis of non-Indigenous activists and movements.¹¹

Dissertation Overview

Chapter 2 of the dissertation further outlines the epistemological and methodological orientation of the study, detailing the processes of data collection and analysis, and conceptualizing decolonizing research methodologies, a term employed here with a double sense of conducting research toward decolonization and subjecting research methodologies to decolonizing analysis. Three interrelated themes are discussed in this chapter: the importance of positionality; research for social change; and ethical commitments to consultation, collaboration, and informed consent. Together, these form the central elements of the decolonizing research methodologies employed in this study.

In order to provide a solid historical grounding for my research, Chapter 3 provides a genealogical study of the history of settler colonialism in Canada, with an emphasis on the historical accounts of Indigenous scholars and knowledge holders. Although by no means a complete account of Indigenous perspectives on settler colonialism, this chapter situates contemporary concerns around identity, land, and belonging within Indigenous peoples' accounts of the histories of settler colonialism and Indigenous assertions of sovereignty on their lands.

Chapter 4 begins from Indigenous activists' discussions of identity, land, and belonging, and their emphasis on practices of regeneration and resurgence from within Indigenous epistemologies. Their comments lead to a detailed discussion of the construction of identity-based legislation in the Indian Act, and the ongoing impacts of

10 See Amadahy; Simpson *Dancing*, "Our Elder Brothers"; Alfred *Wasase*; Coulthard *Red Skin*.

11 See Jafri; Patel; Walia *Undoing*; Regan; Morgensen; Fortier.

this legislation on individuals, communities, and movements for regeneration and resurgence, particularly in urban contexts.

In Chapter 5, my attention turns to the relationship between immigration and settler colonialism. This chapter begins with a discussion of the most promising possibilities for alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements, noting that although some alliances are possible, movements focused on settlement and citizenship are sometimes incommensurable with Indigenous sovereignty struggles. A discussion of the historical creation of immigration policy details the construction of immigration under settler colonialism, with specific attention to the management of racial difference in the city of Toronto. Drawing on the comments of participants, the chapter then turns to a discussion of the limits and contradictions of citizenship, multiculturalism, and colonial relationships to land. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the importance of continuing to complicate discourses of “home” in movements that target the city as a site for political action and belonging.

Chapter 6 continues the analysis of the triangulation of relations under settler colonialism with a focus on the insights of white activists with secure citizenship status. Despite possessing the status that is most vaunted in colonial and nationalized contexts, these participants suggest that citizenship means little to them or to the movements in which they are involved. Their comments reflect on the ways that whiteness is simultaneously exalted and normalized in settler colonial contexts, in part through citizenship policy and discourse. In unsettling this normalization, this chapter reflects on the implications of this positionality for meaningful alliance and decolonization.

The penultimate chapter analyzes participants' comments on decolonization, with a focus on Indigenous conceptions of autonomy and interdependence. Activists and Indigenous scholars suggest that Indigenous conceptions of governance, which emphasize sovereignty, nationhood, and self-determination present important non-statist

and non-colonial models of governance. Emphasizing relationality, the second part of the chapter advocates moving beyond colonial conceptions of citizenship and common usages of the concept of solidarity. Instead, I recommend a move toward a Relationship Framework, as advocated by Zainab Amadahy.

The final chapter returns to the question of the potential for the city of Toronto to become a “decolonizing space”. After briefly summarizing the lines of argumentation laid out in previous chapters, I turn to a discussion of actions from the winter of 2012 which focused on the urban context: the Idle No More round dance, and the Sanctuary City policies. The INM actions are regarded as examples of regeneration and resurgence within the urban context, while the Sanctuary City policies are framed as acts which might “make space” for decolonization. While the unsettling of citizenship in the urban context is by no means assured, these are important steps toward a future where meaningful alliances might be possible.

Chapter 2: Decolonizing Research Methodologies

In November of 2006 I ran into an Indigenous activist and potential research participant at a public forum. We had scheduled an interview for the following week, but all of our discussions thus far had taken place via email. In our last email exchange, she wrote that she had some questions she'd like to ask me in person, but before the actual interview. Taking advantage of the opportunity to have a quick chat while we were both in the same place at the same time, we agreed to speak informally after the forum.

In her characteristically generous way, she began by pointing out that as a local Indigenous activist she had been asked to participate in several interviews on related topics with a number of graduate students, many of them non-Native, most of them white. Although she used different words, she was asking me questions that had been posed by other research participants, and indeed, they were questions that had concerned me from the inception of this research project: Who are you to do this? What are your intentions? How will you use my words? Such questions come from a long-standing and well-documented legacy of research that does nothing to advance Indigenous sovereignty, and instead often bolsters settler colonialism.¹² These questions point to the potential paradox of a white feminist engaging in research toward decolonization from within the university setting. To paraphrase (and extend) Judith Stacey, “[i]s there – indeed can there be – a[n anti-colonial] feminist ethnography” (111)? Is it possible to do research with Indigenous participants in ways that do not merely replicate and advance colonial domination? This chapter focuses on the methodological concerns underpinning the project, outlining the process of attending to questions such as those posed by this and other Indigenous participants. The chapter

12 For example, see Linda Tuhiwai Smith *Decolonizing* Chapters 1-3; Kovach 156; Battiste and Henderson “Eurocentrism” 30-34.

begins with a discussion of the epistemological and methodological orientation of the study. Following a detailed discussion of the process of data collection and an introduction to research participants, the chapter then examines three interrelated aspects of the decolonizing research methodologies employed in this study: the importance of positionality; research for social change; and ethical commitments to consultation, collaboration, and informed consent. Together, these are the crucial elements of the decolonizing research methodologies employed in this study.

This study examines the impacts of settler colonialism on powerful ideas about identity, land, and belonging and hence on the potential for meaningful alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. The original research question was: How do land and citizenship figure in the development of anti-colonial alliances among differently situated groups and individuals (i.e. Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, immigrant, citizen, and non-status resident) in Toronto? To this end, I employed a decolonizing research methodology informed by Indigenous and feminist research methodologies, as well as approaches to political activist ethnography and institutional ethnography.

As noted by many Indigenous scholars, the relationship between research and colonization is fraught. Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues that “the term ‘research’ is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism” (*Decolonizing Research* 1). Tuhiwai Smith outlines the ways in which European researchers collected and appropriated knowledge of and about Indigenous peoples, using this information as part of their quest to establish colonial dominance and control, further land theft, and justify genocide (*Decolonizing Research* chapters 2-3).¹³ This legacy continues to be particularly problematic in research involving Indigenous peoples, and indeed, troubling connections between research and colonialism remain.

13 See also Battiste and Henderson “Eurocentrism”; Shawn Wilson 45-50.

As many Indigenous scholars suggest, the problematic relationship between research and colonization requires attention to the epistemological orientation of all research. Narungga scholar Lester Irabinna Rigney writes, “I want to place research epistemologies in the context of colonial racism for critique. More importantly, I want to gain an understanding of the role colonial history has played in constructing research epistemologies and if such constructions inform research practices today. Such critique and analysis enables further identification of factors within the methods of constructing new knowledge that may be colonizing or liberating for Indigenous Peoples” (111). This observation is echoed by Margaret Kovach, a Nêhiyâw and Saulteaux scholar, who notes that: “Indigenous epistemologies challenge the very core of knowledge production and purpose” (29). She further explains that “Indigenous methodologies prompt Western traditions to engage in reflexive self-study, to consider a research paradigm outside the Western tradition that offers a systematic approach to understanding the world” (29). Rigney and Kovach point to the importance of attending to the colonial epistemologies that underpin many kinds of research. In this study, their insights galvanize careful engagement with the epistemological and methodological insights of Indigenous, Indigenist, and feminist research methodologies.

A number of scholars have contributed to the articulation of Indigenous and Indigenist research methodologies.¹⁴ Rigney defines Indigenist research as “research by Indigenous Australians whose primary informants are Indigenous Australians and whose goals are to serve and inform the Indigenous struggle for self-determination” (117). In this conceptualization, Indigenist research is defined by its emphasis on political struggle for Indigenous sovereignty. While retaining Rigney's focus on praxis, Kovach argues that Indigenous methodologies draw from tribal epistemologies. She points out that this epistemological orientation is what distinguishes Indigenous research methodologies

14 See Linda Smith “Choosing the Margins”; Rigney; Russell Bishop; Kovach; Shawn Wilson; Absolon and Willett.

from other approaches to research, noting that “most significantly, tribal epistemologies are the centre of Indigenous methodologies, and it is this epistemological framework that makes them distinct from Western qualitative approaches” (25). There is a clear complementarity between Indigenous and Indigenist research methodologies, in that both are committed to upholding and advancing Indigenous sovereignty through a valuation of Indigenous epistemologies.

Rigney, Kovach, and a number of other Indigenous theorists note that Indigenous and Indigenist research methodologies share many features with critical research methodologies, including feminist research methodologies (Kovach 13; see also Rigney; Shawn Wilson). Indeed, Kovach situates Indigenous methodologies “within the qualitative landscape because they encompass characteristics congruent with other relational qualitative approaches (e.g., feminist methodologies, participatory action research)” (25). In particular, Kovach points to the emphasis on relationality, self reflection or critical reflexivity, the presumption of subjectivity, and attention to the politics of representation (32) as potential commonalities among methodological approaches. Rigney additionally points to the vision of social change and emancipation central to feminist and other critical social sciences as useful to Indigenist methodologies. He writes: “In rejecting positivistic scientific methods, critical theory and feminist praxis is committed to human emancipation through reforming society. While acknowledging that critical and feminist theory is a racialized epistemology, [un]like all other dominant forms it is overtly political in its intentions whereby it advocates for those most oppressed in society. This then suits the agenda of liberatory epistemology” (118). Despite these commonalities, feminist and other critical methodologies may also belie colonial investments, requiring further decolonizing scrutiny.

This project pursues a methodological approach which centres decolonization. Citing Maori scholar Graham Smith, Kovach notes that “a decolonizing approach, built

upon critical theory, is particularly effective in analysing power differences between groups” (80). Kovach outlines three decolonizing approaches to research: tribal methodology which centres Indigenous epistemology and does not employ decolonizing theory; decolonizing methodologies in which decolonization becomes the centring epistemology; and tribal methodology which centres Indigenous epistemology and incorporates a decolonizing analysis (80-1). Of these approaches, my methodology is closest to the second, in that it “utilizes a decolonizing epistemology as its centring epistemology, thus becoming easily associated with transformative research” (Kovach 80). Kovach further notes that in this approach “[i]t is possible to situate decolonizing methodologies as falling under the umbrella of an Indigenous research framework, but given its critical theoretical basis, it is more aligned with Western critical research methodologies” (80).

In my usage here, decolonizing research methodologies are pursued in a double sense. In the first sense, a decolonizing lens is applied to the process through which research is conducted and knowledge constructed; in other words, research methodologies and their related epistemologies are regarded as potential sites for decolonization. In the second sense, decolonizing research methodologies aim to contribute to the process, indeed the praxis, of decolonization. Combined, these decolonizing imperatives direct the formation of the research questions, preparation of research protocol, engagements with research participants, as well as data compilation and interpretation. Decolonization is approached as a process, and as a way of working through and beyond the myriad deep-seated impacts of colonialism and settler colonialism. Although the goal is transformation, the shape or direction of social change is not prescribed or imposed, but rather sought out through the research process.

Participants and Data Gathering Methods

Primary data for this project was gathered between 2005 and 2009, through four focus groups and twenty two one-on-one interviews, of which nineteen are analyzed for this dissertation.¹⁵ Overall, the data set for this project includes thirty-one different individuals, some of whom participated in both an interview and a focus group.¹⁶ Six participants self-identify as Indigenous. Of this group, two self-identify as Indigenous and of colour. All Indigenous participants are urban-based, two with sustained connections to land-based communities outside of the city. Most participants self-identify as being of colour (seventeen in total). Among this group, participants self-identify as Black, Philippino/a, Latin American, South Asian, and Palestinian. Eight participants were born outside of Canada, with formal status at the time of fieldwork ranging from permanent resident, to citizen, refugee, migrant worker, and non-status. Eight participants self-identify as white, citizen, or settler; one of these participants was born outside of Canada. The majority of participants (twenty-five in total) are women. Out of all participants, three self-identify as queer.

I began interviewing participants for this project in November of 2005. Beginning from activists I knew to have strong commitments to Indigenous sovereignty and anti-colonial migrant justice organizing, I employed a network or snowball sampling technique (Schensul et al.), and participants were asked to recommend additional potential research participants. By the end of fieldwork, saturation had been reached both in terms of participants referred, and in terms of topics and themes covered.¹⁷

15 Of the original 22 one-on-one interviews, 19 have been analyzed and included in this dissertation. One recording was of very poor quality and the data unusable. I was unable to confirm consent with two participants in the process of returning transcripts and therefore their interview data is not analyzed here. The process of confirming consent is discussed in greater depth below.

16 This information reflects participants' self-identification either on information forms completed before interviews and focus groups, or in their discussions during our meetings. There is some fluidity in these self-identifications, and information presented here reflects knowledge about participants' self-identification at the time of fieldwork.

17 Although there are certainly more participants that I would have liked to interview, participants began referring me to people I had already approached, and common themes or suggestions in terms of areas

The participation of Indigenous activists was a priority in the selection and recruitment of potential research participants. Rigney notes that Indigenous perspectives and insights must be centered in the project of decolonization:

What must be emphasized here is that, from an Indigenous perspective, my people's interests, experiences, and knowledges must be at the center of research methodologies and the construction of knowledge about us. Incorporating these aspects in research we can begin to shift the construction of knowledge to one that does not compromise Indigenous identity and Indigenous principles of independence, unity, and freedom from racism. (119)

Indigenous participants provided important insights into the ways that settler colonialism functions, and the potential and limitations for alliances. Following Rigney, this does not suggest that Indigenous participants are homogenous, that they will say the same things, or that they are necessarily unified in their perspectives and visions of decolonization and sovereignty (117-8). Rather, it is a recognition of the distinctiveness of Indigenous knowledges, and of the myriad attempts to further colonialism and genocide through the appropriation, devaluation, and destruction of Indigenous knowledges. Furthermore, the centering of Indigenous voices and perspectives is a crucial means of acknowledging the distinct positionality of Indigenous peoples in this context. As Kovach writes, “[I]f the academy is going to seriously consider Indigenous knowledges, there must be recognition of the distinct status of Indigenous people as unique from other minority groups. This is not to diminish other groups, but to point out that the relationship between post-secondary education and Indigenous people is distinctive and so must be the responses” (157). This is a concern articulated by many Indigenous participants, as indicated at the outset of this chapter.

In recognition of the importance of Indigenous knowledges and of the practices of many Indigenous peoples around the sharing of knowledge, Indigenous participants were offered tobacco. As Wilson and Restoule explain, the sharing of tobacco activates

for research began to emerge.

many relationships (29). They also note that there is considerable debate about who can use tobacco and how (31). In offering tobacco to Indigenous research participants, I followed the teaching of Indigenous trapper, activist, and educator Kaaren Dannenman, who taught me that offering tobacco before asking questions and seeking knowledge was a necessary aspect of conducting ethical research with Indigenous participants (personal communication). As Kovach notes,

Ethical protocols in research work hand-in-hand with cultural protocols. Ethical protocols in research respond to the political dimension of research within Indigenous contexts and protect against previous extractive approaches to research... Overall, protocol is about respect. From that perspective, it applies to all aspects of the research process, and the researcher needs to be aware of protocol for the particular context and/or tribal epistemology being used. (127)

Kaaren explained that the offering of tobacco is a sign of respect, the beginning of a research relationship, and a demonstration of the researcher's commitment to act responsibly in the research relationship and in sharing the knowledge of Indigenous participants. My practice of offering tobacco to Indigenous participants served as a demonstration of my commitment to conduct ethical research that values and respects Indigenous knowledge, and as a reassertion of my commitment to conduct research that was useful to Indigenous struggles for sovereignty and self-determination (see also Kovach 116, 102-3). As I encountered the inevitable doubt and frustration of writing and analysis, I was often reminded of the exchange of tobacco and the responsibility I had undertaken to persist in this work.

All of the Indigenous participants were active, or had recently been active, in relation to Indigenous sovereignty. This included organizing with communities involved in land-based struggles outside of Toronto (blockades, reclamations, land claims processes); public and educational events related to decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty within the city; organizing around the issue of murdered and missing

Indigenous women including providing support to family members, organizing events, conducting research, and mobilization around the issue; research and mobilization around resource extraction activities and companies headquartered in the city; conducting archival and historical research in support of specific cases. Many of the Indigenous participants also participated in anti-war, anti-poverty, anti-capitalist, and Palestinian solidarity organizing.

Most of the Indigenous participants were also active cultural workers, drawing on traditional cultural practice and forwarding cultural reclamation and resurgence through film, art, dance, theatre and performance, music, poetry, and prose. After early conversations and interviews which emphasized the importance of cultural practice to Indigenous sovereignty and decolonization, I revised sampling practices and research protocol to further attend to this dimension.

Non-Indigenous participants were selected on the basis of their engagements with Indigenous solidarity and anti-colonial organizing. This included support for land reclamations and blockades, primarily through fund raising, gathering needed supplies and organizing physical support at reclamations, as well as organizing and participating in educational events. Non-Indigenous participants also articulated a connection between Indigenous sovereignty and anti-poverty, immigrant rights, Palestinian liberation, anti-racism, anti-war and anti-violence movements. As is often the case among social justice activists, many of these issues overlap, and many activists take active roles on a range of issues, and work in more than one activist group simultaneously.

A number of non-Indigenous participants are also cultural workers. Several non-Indigenous and Indigenous activists are active in community social service and non-profit agencies, in a range of capacities: as volunteers, on boards of directors, and as paid staff, professionals or consultants. Although most non-Indigenous participants self-identify as having personal and political commitments to anti-colonialism, this was less the case

among those engaged primarily in service provision. These participants were approached because of their engagement with directly affected communities, their knowledge of the ways that various policies impact on access to vital services, and because of the close relationship between service providers and grassroots activism in the city.

Data gathering began with three focus groups, held at the beginning of the research project (November 9, December 8, and December 14, 2005). These focus groups were created to record and encourage focused conversation among activists on the importance of identity, land, and belonging in their work and their attempts to support and advance struggles for Indigenous sovereignty. The first group interview was held in a community centre, with the next two conducted in my home. These group interviews were 2-3 hours long. All participants in focus groups were provided with informed consent documents (Appendix B), and a copy of the sample research questions (Appendix C) in advance. Each of the three focus groups began with the (de)colonizing autobiography exercise, discussed below. A fourth focus group was held toward the end of the initial phase of fieldwork (June 2006), with members of a local anti-colonial migrant justice group. This fourth focus group served more as a facilitated discussion, directed by the interests and needs of the group, rather than being solely dictated by my research interests (discussion questions are included in Appendix D). As with previous focus groups, all members read and signed an informed consent agreement. All four focus groups were audio-taped, and the first three were also video-taped. All focus group participants were reimbursed for travel expenses, and provided with a meal and refreshments during the focus group interview.¹⁸ As is discussed in greater depth below, transcripts of focus groups were forwarded to participants, in accordance with the informed consent agreements.

¹⁸ Audio and video recordings were destroyed following transcription, as outlined in the Informed Consent Document (please see Appendix B). Only one participant opted to have a copy of the recording sent to them.

One-on-one interviews were held between November of 2005 and April 2007. The interviews flowed from discussions and insights gained through the focus groups and ongoing informal discussions with participants and local activists. Similar themes were explored and the (de)colonizing autobiography was used in a slightly modified form (see Appendix E for sample interview questions). The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to upwards of 2 hours; all interviews were audio-taped. Participants were provided with the informed consent documents (Appendix B), a synopsis of the project, and a copy of the interview questions (Appendix E), tailored to participants' interests, in advance of our meetings. As was the case with focus groups, transcripts were returned to interview participants in accordance with informed consent agreements.

Following the focus groups and interviews, my attention turned to secondary sources. Activist publications, websites, brochures, leaflets, posters, and related materials provided further contextual information on the kinds of work being undertaken in Toronto, and on the ways that relationships among identity, land, and belonging were being formulated.

The final stage of data collection turned to an examination of relevant policies, including the Indian Act, the First Nations Governance Act, the Immigration Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Citizenship Act, and the Multiculturalism Act, as well as the City of Toronto Charter and the Anti-Terrorism Act. This analysis was shaped by my conversations with research participants, many of whom indicated precisely which aspects of the legislation were the most pertinent, and often the most troublesome, in their daily lives and political organizing.

Throughout the research process, I engaged a commitment to reflexivity and attention to my own positionality. I reflected on my notes and transcripts from discussions with participants, and tried to remain open to new insights and new directions in the research. Although I began with an interest in citizenship policy and

discourses of land and belonging, and with a commitment to contributing to decolonization, I was led in my research by the insights and recommendations of participants. In reflecting on the research process, I identified positionality, the unique challenges (and possibilities) of research for political change, and issues of collaboration, consent and consultation as significant areas for further investigation.

Positionality

The goal of situating ourselves in our work and acknowledging our limited perspectives is not to overcome these limits – an impossible task – but to reveal to readers how our research agenda, political commitments, and personal motivations shape our observations in the field, the conclusions we draw, and the research reports we write... Of course, no amount of situating oneself or one's research guarantees more thoughtful and sensitive work. But it remains a critically important step in pursuing ethical research. (Kirsch 14)

There is a wealth of literature in Indigenous and feminist research methodologies on the importance of self-positioning and self-reflexivity in the research process. Locating oneself in relationship to land, community, and Indigenous peoples is a central facet of Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies.¹⁹ Indigenous scholars Cathy Absolon and Cam Willett note that in Indigenous research methodologies “location is about relationships to land, language, spiritual, cosmological, political, economical, environmental, and social elements in one's life” (98). Opaskwayak Cree scholar Shawn Wilson, argues convincingly that positionality in Indigenous epistemologies is a crucial aspect of relationality (80-95). In Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies, attention to positionality goes far beyond listing aspects of identity, toward relationality, responsibility, and accountability. Danard Wilson and Jean-Paul Restoule make the important observation that “A recurring theme in literature on Indigenous research methodology is the significance of who is doing the research... What is their location?”

19 See Kovach, Chapter 6; Wilson and Restoule 32; Absolon and Willett; Shawn Wilson; Monture *Journeying Forward*, Introduction and chapter 1).

Where are they from and who are their relations?” (32).

Absolon and Willett observe that reflecting on positionality is a key element of ethical research, and a means of making the researcher's intentions transparent (103). As Absolon and Willett explain: “To locate is to make a claim about who you are and where you come from, your investment and your intent” (Absolon & Willett 112). Feminist scholars also emphasize positionality as a means of signalling relationships to privilege and oppression and as foundational to the development of meaningful solidarity and alliance (i.e., Kaplan “The Politics of Location”). As Diane L. Wolf notes, locating oneself in privilege can lead to political paralysis, ‘navel-gazing’, or it may further centre the Imperial subject and her authority (35). Locating oneself may not contribute directly to social change, as Patai asserts (quoted in Wolf, 35), but it is important to considerations of precisely how one might make meaningful contributions to such struggles (see Kirsch 14).

An important aspect of positionality includes specifying the institutional location of the researcher and the research project. The deep-seated and often well founded mistrust of academic researchers among Indigenous peoples and community-based activists requires both transparency and accountability. On this topic, Jacinthe Michaud draws a connection between Gramsci's work on the role of the intellectual and Spivak's investigation of the discursive limits of subalternity: “Gramsci and Spivak both insist on the responsibility of the intellectual, not as a single individual, but as embedded in a collective order. They both recognize the subaltern's ability to develop a political consciousness and highlight the danger of its erasure during the process of being represented to an historical and critical inquiry” (“The Politics of Representation” 171). Michaud makes a clear demand that the institutional location of feminist researchers form part of the practice of self-reflection, and this process leads directly to consideration of the epistemological and discursive investments of the researcher and the academic

institution. This aspect of self-location is often under-theorized, as are the potential politics of instrumentalization, incorporation, appropriation, and deployment of research for intellectual and related projects of domination, regardless of the aims of the researcher or their project.

While much of the literature on Indigenous research methodologies is focused on Indigenous researchers, as well as those conducting research within a specific Indigenous community or nation, these insights point to the importance of positionality in determining how one might approach a research project and how they will represent the insights and claims of participants. As a non-Indigenous researcher, my positionality shapes the ways that I approach this research, as well as my responsibility to it and to the communities and issues from which it draws. Although his reflections are specific to non-Maori researchers engaging in Maori research projects in a different geopolitical context, Maori scholar Russell Bishop suggests that “for Pakeha [white] researchers to leave it all to Maori people is to abrogate their responsibilities as Treaty partners” (18). This responsibility shapes both the impetus for and the approach taken to research.

Drawing on the above insights into the importance of positionality, an emphasis on transparency and positionality was built into the practices surrounding this research in the informed consent and related documents, and in discussions with participants. In the interest of transparency, I made it a point to include a brief description of this research project in the round of introductions that typically began activist meetings, although my participation at such meetings was largely as an ‘activist’.²⁰ Although at times these declarations led to difficult conversation and discomfort, such practices were crucial to maintaining even the semblance of a balance between my roles as activist and researcher.

²⁰ To be more precise: these engagements do not form part of the ‘data’ analyzed in subsequent chapters, although they were important for deepening my understanding and for building relationships with potential interview participants.

Rigorous attention to positionality was also built into the research protocol. A (de)colonizing autobiography activity was included as part of the research protocol in focus groups and, in a modified form, in interviews. Critical autobiography has also been used in work on white anti-racist activism,²¹ and among anti-colonial theorists (V. Freeman *Distant Relations*; Watson and Smith). Of her use of this approach in a graduate class on decolonizing research methodologies, Celia Haig-Brown writes:

I ask people to think first about their relation to the land they are on at the moment. It exists as a material entity. There are many footprints on that land. The first human ones are those of Aboriginal people – some are made recently; some longer ago than most of us can imagine. Since that time, other sets of footprints have walked in the same spaces. Through colonization, diaspora, [forced displacement], and immigration they have arrived in traditional First Nations territories. In the layers, somewhere, our prints and perhaps those of our ancestors are lying. Regardless, we are all here now walking around in relation to one another and to the land. (“Decolonizing Diasporic Studies” 9)

In focus groups, I often began with my own narrative or autobiography, using this as an opportunity to talk about why I had chosen this research project and how I understood myself as a researcher, activist, and academic committed to decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty. This provided participants with an understanding of my own relationship to the topics being discussed. Each participant was then invited to share their narrative in as much or as little detail as they felt comfortable. This exercise provided each of the participants, as well as myself, with an uninterrupted opportunity to share how they came to be in this room, orienting themselves historically, politically, spatially, and in relation to settler colonialism, Indigenous peoples, and other participants. These deeply personal stories provided the opportunity for deeper collective understandings of our complicated but unequal relationships to colonization, settler colonialism, and Indigenous sovereignty, and the impetus for political action and alliance building. The narratives served as a foundation for the discussions that followed, with

²¹ See Segrest; Frankenberg “When We are Capable of Stopping”; Thompson and Tyagi, eds; Levine-Rasky “Introduction”; B. Thompson *A Promise*.

participants building on each others' stories, considering new aspects of their own autobiographies, finding points of commonality and difference, and reaffirming the collective commitments that had brought us together. In this way, they can be seen as fostering what Russell Bishop calls a “participatory connectedness”, which “promote[s] a means of knowing in a way that denies distance and separation and promotes commitment and engagement” (23). This understanding of interrelationship is both historical and contemporary, but also may expand and potentially complicate activist conceptions of coalition and solidarity in some important ways.²² In this way, the (de)colonizing autobiography exercise also centres praxis and encourages reflection on praxis.

Research and Praxis

A commitment to social transformation is central to feminist, Indigenous, Indigenist and decolonizing research methodologies. In the spirit of transformation, these methodologies are oriented toward creating knowledge for, rather than about, social and political action (Kovach; DeVault 48). As Kovach suggests, “Critical theory and a decolonizing approach have assisted in providing an analysis for making visible the power dynamics within society, as well as developing the tools to think, write, and be in a way that furthers social justice” (Kovach 92). Rigney highlights the importance of research that contributes to liberatory movements and emancipation:

A critical feature of feminist research from an Indigenous perspective is that the feminist liberation movement adapts, borrows, and modifies significant research to advance their struggle, which need not originate from female researchers. If we begin to understand the need to borrow these strategies and adapt them to suit a feminist agenda, we then begin to understand liberation struggle and its complex tactics. It is these complex tactics that I wish to employ in my research for Indigenous liberation struggle. (116)

²² The (de)colonizing autobiographies of participants are examined in greater depth in subsequent chapters.

On the topic of praxis, Kovach writes, “We can call it decolonization, we can call it Indigenous praxis, or we can call it resistance. The point is that Indigenous research needs to benefit Indigenous people in some way, shape, or form – that is the bottom line” (93). In developing a research project that aimed to contribute to movements against settler colonialism and for Indigenous sovereignty, I drew from these insights and from writing on political activist ethnography.

Caelie Frampton and her co-authors describe political activist ethnography as “an approach to producing a reliable knowledge of the social in order to facilitate transformative aims” (6). Drawing from Dorothy Smith's institutional ethnography, which she describes as “a sociology for women, for the oppressed, and – ultimately – for people” (Frampton et al 6), political activist ethnography is largely associated with the work of activist and scholar George Smith.²³ In keeping with the feminist and critical orientations of these approaches, political activist ethnography begins from the lived experiences of activists, movements, and those situated in marginalized relationships to power.²⁴ This emphasis on lived experience stems from an understanding of positionality rather than an essentialism, and recognizes that those most directly impacted by oppressive practices and policies are those best suited to diagnose and dissect them. As Frampton et al. suggest, “[S]ocial experience is taken to be the starting point for investigation, a place to start investigating the social world from outside the frameworks for ruling discourse. This offers a concrete grounding for a critical interrogation of ruling relations” (7). In this approach, participants are seen as knowledgeable subjects, because “Through confrontation with ruling regimes, activists are able to uncover aspects of their social organization... Through an analysis of the institutional relations movements are up

23 See also Dorothy Smith *Institutional Ethnography, Institutional Ethnography as Practice*.

24 Of course, in the present research context, activists occupy a range of relationships to power, although most are marginalized on account of their involvement in radical action, a marginalization which became increasingly evident in the targeting and incarceration of a number of activists over the course of this research project.

against, more effective forms of activism can be developed” (Frampton et al. 3). As Frampton et al. detail, George Smith's work

aimed to develop an 'insider's' knowledge of ruling regimes based on the daily struggles and confrontations that social movements are already engaged in. His premise was that, even though most social movements are to some extent 'outside of' (or in rupture with) ruling relations, political confrontation provides a means for activists to investigate the organizing logic of the ruling regimes they oppose. By providing a concrete practice of mapping out the social relations of struggle – both the dynamics of ruling regimes and of movements themselves – political activist ethnography enables a grounded social knowledge for more effective forms of activism. (Frampton et al. 9)

There are, of course, a number of complexities that require attention when attempting to conduct research in support of political change.

Although I am certainly not alone in combining activist and academic work, the balance between academia and activism is often a challenging one to sustain. Much has been written about the challenges of each location for researchers, as well as the potential advantages and disadvantages that come with being a trusted member of your research community and the social norms that govern such complicated relationships (see Gluck and Patai, eds. for example). DeVault suggests that a “division of labour” between activism and academic work is a necessary feature of institutional ethnography, highlighting the different skills that activists and researchers use, and suggesting that movements are well served by such collaborative relationships (53). Over the course of my research this back-and-forth relationship sat uneasily with me at times, as it marks the activist researcher as somewhat of a “border-dweller”²⁵ (Haig-Brown “Choosing Border Work”), neither fully inside nor entirely outside the various activist cultures in the city. It also highlights the relative privilege of institutional location as outlined above, as well as the potential precarity of some activists and organizations. As is discussed in

²⁵ I use this term with some hesitation, noting that the border that the activist-researcher negotiates is one which is policed with much less violence and material consequence than the territorial and other borders that many negotiate daily.

greater depth below, relationality and reciprocity are the ethical responses to such concerns. These concerns were addressed in sustained attempts to balance consent and input from participants with careful attention to the time constraints and importance of activists' projects.

Given stated commitments to research for social change, activist researchers must also be wary of the modernist legacies of research connected to liberatory movements, perhaps particularly when that research seeks to empower or liberate participants or members of a specific community. As many scholars note, such promises are difficult to fulfil without slipping into modernist rescue narratives, in which a more Enlightened subject (i.e., the researcher) will bring insight and salvation to participants (see Tuhiwai Smith *Decolonizing Research* 55; Russell Bishop 238-40). Susan Strega likewise notes, "The roots of feminism, like those of many emancipatory struggles such as the civil rights movement, lie in an Enlightenment discourse of rights, equality, freedom, and justice" (210). Indeed, feminist approaches to participatory action research (PAR) and empowering research sometimes also echo modernist conceptions of liberation, positioning the researcher as liberator. As Gesa Kirsch suggests, "Some have cautioned that arrogance and ignorance hide within the desire to empower. We think we have all the answers, these scholars say; we think our training and life circumstances mean that we know what's best for others..." (46; see also Tuhiwai Smith *Decolonizing Research* 2). Such insights lead both Russell Bishop and Haig-Brown to suggest that researchers invested in social change must ensure that their work does not prescribe equally imperial solutions to the oppressions they research against (Russell Bishop 241; Haig-Brown "Continuing Collaborative Knowledge Production" 29). Russell Bishop explains:

My stance goes beyond the attempts of critical theorists to design a pedagogy of resistance. Such a pedagogy must eventually become another grand narrative of how the world should be for others, despite its altruistic motives of achieving social justice. From this perspective, the focus on emancipation as empowerment becomes a further attempt to recreate the world in terms

defined by the critical theorists rather than in terms defined by their subjects. Maori people are struggling to live in a world which they are able to define for themselves. (241)

These concerns require ongoing reflexivity and attention and were addressed in the research design through a rigorous ethical commitment with an emphasis on practices of consultation, consent and collaboration.

Consultation, Consent, and Collaboration

Indigenous research methodologies emphasize the importance of consultation and collaboration in research with Indigenous communities. Indigenous and feminist researchers attentive to relations of power and exploitation in the research process have suggested that collaboration, consultation, and consent are central strategies for lessening the potential of exploitation (Ristock and Pennell), valuing the insights and knowledge of participants (Russell Bishop), and ensuring that research findings are valid and appropriate (Lather). While this project was not 'participant-driven' to the extent advocated by Russell Bishop and practitioners of participatory action research (Ristock and Pennell; Lather),²⁶ I worked carefully with many participants in the conceptualization of the research project and this collaborative spirit was maintained throughout fieldwork. The main factors limiting greater participant involvement were the time that such an approach would take away from activism and the fact that the research was being conducted toward my dissertation, and therefore, by necessity sole-authored.

Numerous scholars note that fully collaborative research projects demand a tremendous investment of time and energy from participants, while potential benefits to participants may be difficult to determine (Kirsch 36; see also Wolf). In recognition of

²⁶ Although there are some important differences in the methodological approaches of these scholars, they all emphasize collaboration to the extent that participants play an important role in the conceptualization and execution of the research project, as well as the analysis and dissemination stages.

the time constraints of collaborative projects, Kirsch recommends that “[W]e need to develop realistic – and perhaps more limited – expectations about collaborating with participants when we design qualitative research. We must recognize that collaborative efforts do not always work out as planned and learn to respect those participants who lack time or interest in our research or who fall silent when we expect them to engage in dialogue with us” (Kirsch 36). In this project, a commitment to consultation, alongside a degree of collaboration was furthered with this in mind.

From its inception this project was significantly shaped through formal and informal consultations with local activists. In particular, the project grew out of my work as a member of No One is Illegal Toronto and the early development of the project was inspired by the group's commitments to, and struggles with, Indigenous solidarity. As the project was being developed I consulted with Indigenous activists, with several members of No One is Illegal Toronto, as well as other activists. In May of 2005, the research proposal developed out of these consultations was presented to a meeting of No One is Illegal Toronto, and hard copies were circulated. Feedback from this group discussion and subsequent one-on-one conversations with Indigenous activists were further incorporated into the dissertation proposal before it was submitted to my dissertation committee and the University's ethics review committee.

This spirit of consultation and a degree of collaboration was also sustained during the fieldwork process. In conversations before, after, and sometimes during interviews and focus groups, participants made valuable suggestions regarding interview questions, themes to pursue, and ways to make this research useful. Often, such suggestions ran along the lines of “It would be really useful if you could...” Or, “We've often struggled with...”. Many of these suggestions prompted new directions in the research. In particular, Indigenous participants emphasized the importance of attending to cultural practice, a number of participants emphasized an analysis of identity, and many stressed

the importance of attending to specific policies that have been central to the establishment and perpetuation of settler colonialism. The impacts of these insights are in clear evidence throughout this dissertation.

The open-ended format typical of most feminist qualitative research (Hammersley and Atkinson) was also conducive to a general sense of collaboration. As Kirsh notes, open-ended interviews facilitate quick rapport and empathy, and the possibility of finding commonalities (25). In most interviews, the prepared questions sat on the table unnoticed until the end of our meeting, when I would quickly skim through them to see if anything had been missed over the course of the discussion. At this point, I also invited participants to share things that they thought had been missed or under-emphasized, as well as the names of additional individuals or activist groups to approach.

Positivist researchers (and some who consider themselves non-positivist) sometimes worry that such open-ended formats may result in distractions, that discussions may roam too far from the central concerns of the research project. Frequently, interviews did veer off into areas of interest to participants. Rather than a distraction from prepared interview questions, such discussions enriched the data as they reflected issues of current interest to participants, many of whom were also actively researching, writing, and thinking about similar issues in academic and activist contexts. Rather than distractions or extraneous data, these open-ended interviews served as excellent “checks” over the course of fieldwork, shaping the direction of the research and ensuring that it remained relevant.

This sense of collaboration and consultation was particularly evident in focus group discussions which generally provided the opportunity to bring activists from different groups and perspectives together. Focus group questions were organized by theme (see Appendix C and D), and used as a guide for discussion, which largely unfolded organically. Questions and prompts were used only when necessary and they

were open-ended in nature. For the most part, focus group discussions followed the specific interests of those present, and discussion topics varied significantly from one focus group to another. Beginning from questions such as: “What are some of the obstacles to building greater solidarity among Indigenous activists and migrant justice groups?” or “How would you define solidarity?”, participants engaged in the co-construction of meaning, challenging one another, and engaging in lively conversation about issues to which they were passionately committed. In many cases, participants directed the focus group discussions, posing questions to one another and building on conversation as it unfolded. As we talked about the meanings of words like solidarity and coalition, and even anti-colonialism, “a 'community of interest' between researchers and participants or among participants” (Russell Bishop 28) was advanced.

Rather than sitting back and observing such conversations, I usually engaged in discussions as I would in any other group discussion.²⁷ Without negating my role as researcher, my participation in focus groups contributed to a sense of reciprocity, implicating me in the “community of interest.” Indeed, Patti Lather and many other feminist researchers suggest that reciprocity and self-disclosure build a sense of mutuality into the research process (Lather 60-1; see also Haig-Brown “Choosing Border Work” 104). As Robert Everhart and other researchers have noted, in reciprocal research “the researcher moves from the status of stranger to friend, and thus is able to gather personal knowledge from subjects more easily” (quoted in Lather 57). Susan Parkinson Stern similarly argues that “conversation-based research builds on ordinary friendship conversations in which exploration of the personal realm grows to include investigation of shared social conditions” (110).

Such conversational approaches were well-received by most participants, but some participants indicated that they would feel more comfortable beginning with a

²⁷ Of course, as in any conversation, I tried to be mindful of the amount of space I was taking up and cautious about dominating the discussion.

standard interview format where I posed slightly more pointed questions (i.e., “Could you tell me about your work with X organization?” rather than “Could you tell me about your activism?”). To these participants, open-ended questions were too non-specific, “like psychoanalysis”, according to one participant, and a more conventional, although still conversational approach, was preferred. These participants' discomfort was a further reminder to be attentive to the power relations of the interview process, even when the form taken was more akin to conversation. As Hoy suggests, the metaphor of conversation may at times “ignore issues of power and access... Whose favorite topics predominate? Who keeps being interrupted? Whose conversations are heard only when paraphrased by someone else? Who is too strident, beside the point, political, incomprehensible? Who is even permitted in the room?” (Hoy 14). Other critical scholars also note that a focus on collaboration in research reliant on open-ended conversational interviews does not necessarily do away with the potential for exploitation (Wolf 19). As Judith Newton and Judith Stacey note, conversational approaches may “easily elide questions of power” (297). And, drawing on Judith Stacey's work, Wolf notes that “the friendship that may develop between a feminist researcher and her subject could end up being more manipulative than traditional positivist methods in which there is no guise of solidarity, empathy, or friendship. Friends end up knowing more about each other than do conventional researchers and their subjects....” (20).

As these important cautions demonstrate, issues of power and exploitation must be attended to regardless of (or perhaps especially in the case of) reciprocity and collaboration. This is further complicated by the long-standing relationship between research and projects of colonial domination, particularly when the goals of the research project are to contribute to projects of decolonization. As Wolf suggests, “The problems of hierarchy, exploitation, appropriation and empowerment do not end with the fieldwork encounter – in some sense, they only begin there” (Wolf 32). While such

tangled issues are no less in evidence in this research project, ensuring that participants had a degree of input into the direction of the research project, the form of their participation, and the representation and use of their words governed my attempts to negotiate such ethical dilemmas.

Although the research ethics board at my University reviewed my research proposal and found it to be of minimal potential risk to human participants, ethics review bodies often adhere to a definition of risk rooted in medicine and the natural sciences (see Kirsch 41), and primarily concerned with protecting the academic institution from liability (see Kovach 147). In contrast, numerous scholars suggest that there is a degree of risk in all research projects, and this one is no exception. Given the crackdown on dissent which characterized the political climate while I was conducting fieldwork,²⁸ I wanted to ensure that all participants were protected, particularly those who were at greater risk of being criminalized because of their citizenship status, Indigeneity, and/or political activity.²⁹ This was addressed in part through the interview questions and interview topic. I was not seeking intimate personal information about specific activists, activist strategies, or plans for actions, and anything that could potentially violate the confidentiality of activists (whether they were participants or not) was struck from transcripts. In addition, audio and video recordings were destroyed once the interviews and focus groups had been recorded and participants had had sufficient time to review their transcripts.

In obtaining informed consent I assured all participants that I would do my

28 As one example, even in the relatively safe space of the ivory tower, riot police were employed by University administration on January 20, 2004 to break up a demonstration of anti-imperialist activists protesting the Bush inauguration and a range of university policies on the use of campus space for political activity. Five protestors were arrested, and many were physically injured – one to the point of hospitalization – in the ensuing fracas. For more information, see http://auto_sol.tao.ca/node/1119

29 Activists are well aware of the degree of surveillance of political actions throughout North America, as well as the fact that activists of colour and Indigenous activists are often singled out for particular scrutiny. For those without immigration status, the repercussions of participation in political action are also of concern.

utmost to protect their confidentiality, removing identifying information, identifying their comments by pseudonyms, and using composites if necessary. Confidentiality ensured that participants could speak freely and without fear of repercussions in their relationships with other activists or in other aspects of their lives (i.e., employers or potential funders, particularly for those working in service provision).

While most participants were comfortable with my approach to confidentiality, a couple of people were ambivalent about this commitment, and one person challenged my intentions in this regard. Her argument was that anonymity does not provide protection for activists, and that instead, from her experience as a student activist during the Iranian Revolution, anonymity merely makes it easier for state authorities to target dissidents. Instead, she suggested that she would rather have her name and face known, that this would provide the most protection to her in case of repercussions or retaliation. I was persuaded by these arguments, as well as by her gentle suggestion that my urge to protect participants was in part maternalist and that participants were more than capable of making this decision on their own.

I applied for a review of my informed consent process through the University's research ethics board and was granted permission to re-visit the confidentiality clause of the informed consent document with each of my participants. The revised consent document was sent to participants along with their transcripts, and they were given the choice of remaining anonymous or having their names used. This extra bit of paperwork was at times onerous to manage, but it did make for some interesting conversations with participants about transparency, anonymity, the benefits to me and the research project of having highly respected activists openly participate in the research project, the rights of participants to “own their own words,” and the likelihood that in identifying one participant by name, others might become more readily identifiable by association, or

through a process of elimination.³⁰ At the least, this process provided the opportunity to confirm consent with participants (on confirming and renegotiating consent, see Kirsch 41, 91-3). The process of confirming consent further provided participants with the opportunity to remove or edit parts of their transcripts in accordance with their decisions whether or not to remain anonymous.

These discussions about anonymity significantly impacted the analysis and writing up stages of the research project as well. Although my initial intention was to use pseudonyms, as writing proceeded the words of Indigenous participants and others whose insights figure prominently in certain chapters seemed easily identifiable to me, particularly within the relatively small activist communities in Toronto. In consultation with a small set of participants, I decided to remove all pseudonyms in order to ensure confidentiality for all participants. This is a decision with which I struggled, even as I determined it was the best way to honour my commitments to my research participants. As Kirsch notes, complete anonymity for all research participants and the use of composites (even when in accordance with the most ethical of intentions) may raise questions about the completeness and accuracy of the representation of participants and their words, and the accountability of the researcher for the whole of her data (52-3). While Kirsch notes that it would be impossible for any researcher to do justice to every bit of data collected (53), her cautions are bound up with concerns about truth, validity, and the opportunities presented to participants to “check” the data. Returning drafts and discussing the findings served as a means of ensuring that the data was reliable formed the final phase of the research process.

Although few participants had the time or inclination to read full drafts of the dissertation, a concerted effort was made to ensure that draft chapters were forwarded

³⁰ And indeed, this also raises questions about the currency research may be granted through name-dropping. As one Indigenous participant wryly (and correctly) noted, “It might be of more benefit to you to identify me by name.”

to those who expressed an interest in this degree of involvement, and with those whose words figured prominently in the analysis. While some scholars suggest that concerns with validity are remnants of positivist research paradigms which seek essential truths, most critical theorists suggest that there must be some means of evaluating findings for relevance and accuracy, though there are divergent suggestions about how this might be accomplished. Triangulation suits many feminist scholars well. Janice Ristock and Joan Pennell define triangulation as “using multiple methods in order to obtain more thorough coverage of a subject by viewing it from different angles” (51). In this project, the use of focus groups, interviews, and policy analysis examined the relationships between citizenship policy and anti-colonial activism in such a way. Many researchers’ approaches to triangulation emphasize flexibility, and the importance of keeping the research process and analysis open to directions that may emerge over the course of the investigation. In this vein, Ristock and Pennell draw on Lather’s work and their own research to argue for “flexibility and creativity” in approaches to analysis, noting that “we have to be willing to shift our original intentions and come up with new ways of allowing voices to come forward” (63). Lather further recommends a number of overlapping validity checks: construct validity, face validity and catalytic validity (66-68). While Lather argues that none of these checks would be sufficient in and of themselves, combined they provide a means of checking the data with participants, existing literature and communities of interest.

While it is impossible to predict how useful the current research project will be in the long-term, ongoing discussions with some participants served as such an ongoing check once the formal fieldwork had come to an end.³¹ This fits with Kirsch’s assertion that

31 Of course, I continued speaking with participants and participating in demonstrations and political action for much of the period immediately following fieldwork, and remain in sporadic communication with many participants.

one way to face the responsibility of representing others is to include them actively in the analytical and interpretive stages of research. This means not only asking for feedback from participants during the interpretive process, but also negotiating interpretive conflict, textual representations, and the use of personal or sensitive data. Of course, this is only possible when participants have the time and interest to engage in negotiation. (59)

In addition to informal ‘checks’, which sought ‘face validity’, or a ‘click of recognition’ (Lather 67), a subset of participants (largely self-identified as interested in ongoing communication throughout the research process) were also sent what Lather describes as “a preliminary description of the data” (53). In addition, a preliminary report on research findings was presented to a closed NOII Toronto meeting, and members were invited to provide feedback and suggestions at that stage.

The chapters that follow are shaped by this process of ongoing reflexivity on positionality and praxis, as well as commitments to consultation, collaboration and consent. These interrelated aspects of my decolonizing research methodology were not only engaged at the stage of data collection, but also shaped my approach to data analysis, policy analysis and writing. The insights of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants shape the engagements with policies around identity, land, and belonging in the tradition of institutional ethnography and political activist ethnography. Rather than beginning with concepts which I sought to verify against the data (Lather’s conception of construct validity), the narratives shared by participants were used as the basis for policy analysis, drawing on Russell Bishop’s conception of narrative inquiry:

the traditional position of the researcher has been that of the storyteller, the narrator, the person who decides what constitutes the narrative... Narrative inquiry is aimed at uncovering the many experiences and ‘voice’ of the participants, emphasizing complexities rather than commonalities... This focus on complexity is in opposition to the traditional notion of research as analysis for synthesis, analysis for simplicity, essence, kernels of truth. Stories increase the range of interpretation, knowledge and experiences available to the potential researcher and reduce the tendency to use reifying metaphors current in research discursive practice.... Stories are a way of representing

truth. (24)

While the process of integrating these stories with the theoretical data and relevant literature is not necessarily tidy, my overall concern was to allow participants' voices to direct the inquiry, and to represent their insights as accurately as possible. I am not certain that I was always entirely successful in each of these regards, but the process of working toward decolonization through attention to positionality and praxis, and with an emphasis on consultation, collaboration, and informed consent form the ethical foundation for this research. Whether or not it is possible to achieve non-exploitative, anti-colonial research, it is crucial that such concerns continue to govern our attempts. This is both the intent and the promise of decolonizing research methodologies.

Chapter 3: Genealogies of Settler Colonialism

Ironically, many tribes regard history as more acceptable to them than ethnography because they believe history has nothing to do with what they consider important to their identity as Indians... History is so distorted it is irrelevant. (Pueblo historian Alfonso Ortiz, quoted in Sioui *Histoires* 19-20)

Despite Prime Minister Stephen Harper's assertion to the contrary (Wherry), the Canadian state has a well-documented and ongoing history of colonialism; indeed, attempts to mask or negate this history are symptomatic of settler colonialism. Despite the persistent and continued assertions of sovereignty and self-determination by Indigenous peoples, this history is continually elided, particularly in urban sites. As a result, many non-Indigenous people in Canada, including those engaged in anti-colonial action, know little about the history or ongoing practices of settler colonialism in Canada, or of the Indigenous peoples on whose lands the nation-state and key metropolitan centres are literally constructed.

Many participants addressed this problematic reality and its impacts on alliances among Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. One Indigenous activist said,

To even begin to have those conversations... it's hard to just start talking about [decolonization and alliance] without even knowing the history. There was so much that people didn't know about.

Speaking to her own experience, a Latin American activist said,

Throughout my high school and even university, I was never taught about Canada. There's a history of Canada that is never taught. Only recently I think that that's been changing and I've been talking to people and "Oh yeah, we get some of the history of that." Or, you know, I've been invited to speak in high schools about [these] issues. In my time, I never got that story. Like I knew because I used to live in the South, and I knew about the conquistadors and how many Indians they killed, and about the States. I realized that probably that was the same thing here. But that kind of information is not available.

A white Palestinian solidarity activist pointed out that many non-Indigenous activists were more familiar with the history of Palestine than of settler colonialism in Canada,

...a progressive person probably knows the significance of 1948 [the *Nakba*], but what about 1924? Is that significant? And why isn't it an important date – it's [the date that the Indian Act instituted] band councils! So that should be a really important date to people here. And there are others, like the origins of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]. There's so much stuff, and progressives need to know that history like the back of their hands. It just struck me the other day, at [Israeli] Apartheid Week, when Indigenous speakers would speak... they had to give this very 101 history lesson, that would make sense if you were talking about Palestine or Iraq because that's not the context people are operating in.

Like these activists, Indigenous and anti-colonial scholars repeatedly stress the importance of a thorough examination of the history of settler colonialism, as well as the importance of beginning such an endeavour from Indigenous peoples' historical perspectives and accounts. As Audra Simpson suggests, projects to uphold Indigenous sovereignty and advance decolonization require historicized accounts of the construction of the settler state which “center Indigeneity in their analysis and offer critiques of state power, force, and occupation” (“Settlement's Secret” 212). Although by no means a complete account, this chapter aims to situate contemporary engagements around identity, land, and belonging in Toronto and Canada within Indigenous peoples' accounts of their histories and those of settler colonialism.

Indigenous Histories of Settler Colonialism

Mi'kmaq scholar Daniel N. Paul suggests that it is crucial to begin from an Indigenous historical perspective because “[t]he subjugation of the Northeastern North American Native American Nations by the English Crown was accomplished with much barbarity. Not surprisingly, these actions have been studiously ignored or downplayed by most White male historians” (9). In addition, Sa'ke'j Youngblood Henderson, a

Chickasaw scholar who has worked and written extensively on Indigenous knowledge and history in the Canadian context, argues that “Many issues in Aboriginal worldviews and consciousness challenge [Eurocentric] assumptions and their usefulness in reconstructing Aboriginal past” (*Mikmaw Concordat* 21). Mi'kmaq scholar Bonita Lawrence further points out that when Native histories are written primarily by non-Indigenous scholars, “colonization is normalized. 'Native history' becomes accounts of specific intervals of 'contact,' accounts which neutralize processes of genocide, which never mention racism, and which do not take as part of their purview the devastating and ongoing implications of the policies and processes that are so neutrally described” (“Rewriting Histories of the Land” 24). She goes on to note that “Most important, however, is the power that is lost when non-Native 'experts' define Indigenous peoples' pasts – the power that inheres when oppressed peoples choose the tools that they need to help them understand themselves and their histories” (25). These observations and the erroneous assumptions taken as fact in many European-authored histories, lead Wendat historian Georges Sioui to advocate for an Amerindian autohistory (“For an Amerindian Autohistory”; *Histoires*). In this vein, this chapter begins from the insights of Indigenous scholars who recount the history of settler colonialism from Indigenous perspectives.

The accounts of many non-Indigenous historians begin with the arrival of European explorers, merchants, and missionaries rather than with the sophisticated political cultures within and among Indigenous nations that preceded these arrivals. In contrast, many Indigenous scholars begin by pointing out the diversity of distinct Indigenous nations, and describing their highly complex and distinct political, economic, social, and epistemological systems. For example, Patricia Monture writes “Each of the distinct First Nations, such as the Mohawk, Cree, Dené, Métis, Sauteaux, Mi'kmaq, Gitksan and so on, have their own languages and traditions. These distinct peoples each

have their own knowledge systems. There are similarities but care must be taken not to make unitary that which is rich and diverse” (Monture “Women's Words” 118).

Many Indigenous historians begin from detailed, nation-specific discussions of the distinct epistemologies of Indigenous nations. For example, Paul and Henderson both begin by describing the worldview and political systems of the Mi'kmaq.³² Mohawk scholars Douglas George-Kanentiio, Audra Simpson and Taiaiake Alfred detail the histories of Mohawk nations and the Confederacy.³³ Sioui undertakes a similar project in his book on the Wendat (*Huron-Wendat*). These accounts emphasize the distinct political cultures that shaped how Indigenous nations governed themselves and entered into relationships with other Indigenous nations, long before the arrival of Europeans. It was these cultures that Indigenous nations drew on in their political and diplomatic negotiations with one another and with European newcomers.

A number of scholars document the long-standing agreements among Indigenous nations that underpinned Indigenous politics. As Métis scholar and lawyer Aimée Craft explains, “The concept of Indigenous political diplomacy existed long before the arrival of Europeans, and was widespread among tribes” (24). Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson notes that precolonial treaties among Indigenous nations were constructed on the understanding of shared territory within a recognition of the sovereignty of nations (“Looking After” 37):

Indigenous nations had their own processes for making and maintaining peaceful diplomatic relationships, such as Gdoo-naaganinaa, with other Indigenous nations prior to colonization. These “treaty processes” were grounded in the worldviews, language, knowledge systems, and political cultures of the nations involved, and they were governed by common Indigenous ethics of justice, peace, respect, reciprocity, and accountability. Indigenous peoples understood these agreements in terms of relationship, and renewal processes were paramount in maintaining these international agreements. (“Looking After” 29)

32 See Paul, chapters 1-3; preface by Battiste in Henderson *Mikmaw Concordat*.

33 George-Kanentiio *Iroquois on Fire*; Alfred *Heeding the Voices*; Simpson *Mohawk Interruptus*.

A number of Indigenous scholars have recorded extensive practices of treaty and confederation among Indigenous nations. In the eastern part of the continent, Sioui notes that “roughly half a millennium before the European accident, the Wendat consciously and strategically placed themselves at the centre of what soon became a multinational, multi-ethnic, multilingual governmental arrangement that was to produce rich intercultural life, prosperous commerce and formidable political alliances for quite a numerous and populous society of nations” (*Histoires* 153). In her introduction to Henderson's *Mikmaw Concordat*, Mi'kmaq scholar Marie Battiste points to the agreements among districts and villages, as well as the formalization of alliances between Mi'kmaq and neighbouring Indigenous nations (17). Although each of these alliances and agreements is distinct, they all uphold the sovereignty of Indigenous nations within a framework of relationship and responsibility. For instance, Leanne Simpson details the Gdoo-naaganinaa (Dish with one Spoon) agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Nishnaabeg:

Both political entities assumed that they would share the territory, that they would both take care of their shared hunting grounds, and that they would remain separate, sovereign, self-determining, and independent nations... our dish was meant to preserve their nationhood, protect their territory, and maintain their sovereignty. At the same time, both parties knew they had a shared responsibility to take care of the territory, following their own culturally-based environmental ethics to ensure that the plant and animal nations they were so dependent on them carried on in a healthy state in perpetuity. Both parties knew that they had to follow their own cultural protocols for renewing the relationship on a regular basis to promote peace, goodwill, and friendship among the Nishnaabeg and the Haudenosaunee. (Simpson “Looking After” 38; see also Craft 24)

These long-standing practices of sustained alliances and treaties were crucial to the survival of Indigenous nations and to the maintenance of a stable political order. As Craft notes of the Council of Three Fires which maintained alliances among the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomi, “The relationships of peace between the Anishinabe and their

neighbouring nations to the east and west were essential for their sustenance and survival” (24). Alliance-building, shared responsibility, and mutual recognition of sovereignty were important resources for Indigenous nations as they encountered the first Europeans to arrive on their territories. As Craft explains, “After centuries of interconnection between Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island, it was a natural extension of Indigenous diplomatic principles to enter into peace, alliance, and sharing relationships with newcomers” (25).

As Paul and Henderson note, the complexity and sophistication of Indigenous epistemologies, which in turn shaped national and international systems of governance and trade were closely observed by the first European newcomers. Henderson notes that “Neither the European adventurers nor the missionary priests of the seventeenth century who travelled to Mík máki found a society that lacked organization” (*Mík maw Concordat* 34). This leads Henderson to suggest that “On the shores of Mík máki, European thought and its concepts of order and control received a stiff test. Confronted with a well-populated land, an organized government and an elegant economic order, the Europeans were forced to develop new concepts of law and rights to deal with the allied people of Mík máki and their Níkmaq allies” (*Mík maw Concordat* 34).

Diplomacy and Trade with European Newcomers

Although Indigenous historians document a long history of visitors from other lands, in terms of sustained contact in the period of European imperialism, “the Míkmaq earned the dubious distinction of being among the first North American Natives to come into major contact with Europeans” (Paul 44). Paul notes that John Cabot's 1497 claiming of the land now known as Newfoundland for England and his discovery of rich fish stocks “soon led to a full-scale European invasion of northeastern North America” (44). As Paul explains,

In retrospect, the speed at which the news of the wealth of the Newfoundland fishing grounds spread around Europe in an age without mass communications seems incredible. This news spread so fast and proved so alluring that within a very short period of time European fishermen began arriving en masse. By 1506, only nine years later, the fishery was so large that the Portuguese government was taxing it. (44)

Paul suggests that these ventures were driven by European greed and the need for new access to vital resources and goods for trade (44; see also Henderson *Mikmaw Concordat* 30). Battles on the ocean between the Basques and Portuguese provide evidence of attempts to gain and maintain control of this vital resource (Henderson *Mikmaw Concordat* 30). Henderson notes that “The Europeans' struggles to control the nourishing summer fisheries around Terra Nova (or New Founde Land) eventually created trading monopolies and fostered private wars between fishing companies. Then, in their attempt to control strategic harbours and points along the coast of America, the European fleets encountered the Aboriginal people” (*Mikmaw Concordat* 30).

As Paul suggests, “This uncontrolled and largely unpoliced foreign fishery would prove to be extremely bad news for the region's Amerindian peoples” (44). He points to aggressive attacks on the Beothuk nation, in the form of outright policies of extermination and abduction into slavery, as evidence of the devastating impacts of these initial intrusions (44-5). As Paul notes, “One can only speculate about what the Mi'kmaq were thinking about the intrusion. Assuming that their fishing and trading activities would have made them aware of the horrors being suffered by the Beothuk, one can conclude that they probably had a strong premonition of bad things to come” (45).

In addition to the lucrative fishery, the fur trade attracted considerable attention from early merchants, traders, and colonists, particularly as they moved westward. Drawing on long-standing trading practices and protocols among Indigenous nations, the Great Lakes fur trade ran from 1650-1815, while the first trading post with the western Anishinabe was established at Fort Maurepas near Lake Winnipeg in 1734 (Craft 27).

Craft explains that in the Great Lakes region “Trade relationships were conducted in large part in accordance with Indigenous protocols, to which the fur traders became accustomed and which they found to be necessary in solidifying their trade alliances” (Craft 26). While much has been written about the fur trade and its social, political and economic impacts (van Kirk), Craft emphasizes that these trading relationships nonetheless began from and operated within Indigenous legal and diplomatic practices: “Throughout the fur trade era, the relationships between the fur traders and the Anishinabe were in large part based on Indigenous legal traditions. Over the course of two centuries, a culture of trade treaties, based in part on Anishinabe laws, developed into a template for interaction with Europeans” (28).

In response to what was clearly and correctly seen as a tremendous oncoming threat, many Indigenous nations and confederacies turned to well-established practices of diplomacy, rooted in the political cultures of their nations. Initially, many nations focused on strengthening alliances with neighbouring Indigenous nations and renewing existing diplomatic processes as well as entering into new agreements with traders and eventually with the Crowns of European nations. As Craft notes, “Treaty relationships between and among Indigenous people, as well as treaties with fur traders, served as important precedents for treaties between the Anishinabe and the Crown. The use of Anishinabe laws, both procedural and substantive, informed the earlier treaties and infused the relationship with the Crown” (31).

The Mi'kmaq Concordat is likely the oldest agreement between a nation indigenous to North America and a European power. In the face of steadily increasing European presence and in their knowledge of the violence with which other Indigenous nations were being treated, Henderson recounts that the Mawiómi (the council of families) focused on strengthening alliances among Indigenous nations through the Law of Níkmanin (*Míkmaq Concordat* 80) and negotiating a Concordat with the Holy See.

Formalized in 1610, the Concordat was named the “Beautiful Trail” by Mi'kmaq scholar and visionary Messamouet. Henderson explains that “Messamouet's vision was that the allied people must avoid, at all cost, any involvement with the Holy See's district chiefs, the European monarchs” (*Míkmaq Concordat* 83). Instead, Messamouet advised the Mawiómi “to unite directly with the Holy See” (84). As Henderson explains:

Messamouet dreamed that this action would diminish the authority of any European monarch in Míkma'ki... Following this trail, the Mawiómi would become a Christian government allied with the manitu of Catholic Europe. Thus allied with the Holy Roman Empire, under the Law of Nations, the Mawiómi would be considered equal to any of the European monarchies. (*Míkmaq Concordat* 84)

Negotiated in the tradition of precolonial treaties and Mi'kmaq diplomacy, the Concordat affirmed the sovereignty of the Mi'kmaq. Moreover, as Henderson notes, “While their asserted rights stopped short of giving the European Holy See or monarchs any valid political authority over or ownership of Míkma'ki, they legitimized their presence” (*Míkmaq Concordat* 83). Over the first decades of the Concordat, Henderson suggests that the agreement provided vital protections to the Mi'kmaq and shaped relationships between the Mi'kmaq nation and the Holy See, as well as with other nations: “The Míkmaq Concordat was and is still held sacred by the Mawiómi and by almost all of the Míkmaq. It is the fundamental agreement of the Míkmaq Nation and it has shaped the people's thoughts and actions” (*Míkmaq Concordat* 101). Despite the realignment of powers with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, Henderson suggests that the Concordat remains in force in international law, and that it “has again become an important constitutional issue” (*Míkmaq Concordat* 101).

The Haudenosaunee also drew on their own legal and political frameworks in negotiating agreements with newcomers, in particular, the Two Row Wampum or Gus Wen Tah, and the Silver Covenant Chain. Anishinabe/Ojibway legal scholar John Borrows explains that “[t]he fundamental principles of the Two Row Wampum became

the basis for agreements made between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch in 1645, with the French in 1701, and with the English in 1763-4” (*Canada's Indigenous Constitution* 76). Borrows's description of the Two Row Wampum is worth citing at length:

The belt consists of two rows of purple wampum beads on a white background. Three rows of white beads symbolizing peace, friendship, and respect separate the two purple rows. The two purple rows symbolize two paths or two vessels travelling down the same river. One row symbolizes the Haudenosaunee people with their laws and customs, while the other symbolizes European laws and customs. As nations move together side by side on the river of life, they are to avoid overlapping or interfering with one another. (*Canada's Indigenous Constitution* 76; see also *Recovering Canada* 126-7)

As Borrows, Craft, and George-Kanentiio demonstrate, the principle of autonomy and sovereignty is further evidenced in the Silver Covenant Chain exchanged later between the Haudenosaunee and the British. George-Kanentiio writes: “The covenant chain was indicative of a formal Haudenosaunee-British treaty relationship dating from 1677... The chain not only binds the nations together but represents an acknowledgement of the political sovereignty of the Haudenosaunee” (16). George-Kanentiio explains that the Silver Covenant Chain agreement was crucial to ensuring the alliance between the Haudenosaunee and the British, without which access to vital territories, resources, and allies would have been lost to the British.

Agreements and treaties became more common and numerous as settlers pushed further west, and they were consistently negotiated following Indigenous legal and political practices. For instance, Craft explains: “The Anishinabe had direct relationships with the British Crown as early as the 1700s. Treaties were concluded between the Great Lakes Anishinabek and the French, according to Anishinabe ceremonies, protocols, and wampum” (32). In addition, Craft notes that these treaties, like those discussed above, recognized and protected the sovereignty of the Anishinabe, and that they further shaped negotiations with the British after the surrender of the French in 1763. As a result, she

argues that these agreements form the foundation for ongoing relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers.

Responses to Genocide and Assimilation

Despite the clear evidence that these treaties were negotiated in accordance with the diplomatic and political practices of Indigenous nations, there is also insurmountable evidence of violations of these agreements by settlers, government officials, and colonialists. Although the Concordat was effective in forestalling the incursion of missionaries into Mík máki (*Mík maw Concordat* 93), Henderson also notes that it was undermined by the greed of settlers and colonialists, the ongoing battles of conquest between the French and the British, and the Treaty of Westphalia which limited the power of the Holy See in 1648 (*Mík maw Concordat* 101-2). Ultimately, the Concordat did not sufficiently protect the Mi'kmaq from British settlers or from the dangers that the newcomers brought with them.

Paul describes the impacts of British genocidal action on the Mi'kmaq, and argues that “[t]he cruelty the British used to subjugate and then degrade the Mi'kmaq vividly demonstrates that their policy of ridding the province of them never deviated from 1713 to Canada's founding in 1867” (165). Paul details a litany of deplorable strategies undertaken by the British, including germ warfare in the form of poisoned blankets (165, 181); poisoned food (181) and attacks on the food supply (76); scalping proclamations in 1744, 1749, and 1756 (55, 71, 182); persecution (61-76); hostage taking (76); attacks and murders of civilians (78); and outright political assassination (77-8). Paul also observes that these policies were underscored by systematic land theft. Although some lands were eventually returned to the Mi'kmaq in the form of land grants (Paul 173-4), Paul explains that these lands were then almost entirely encroached upon by white settlers with complete impunity. The Mi'kmaq contested these deplorable practices

throughout, using all of the measures at their disposal.

To the west of Mi'kmaq territory, George-Kanentiio notes that although the “Akwesasne region has long been Iroquois territory” (12), the diseases brought by European missionaries and traders led many Mohawk people to move from the territories now known as Akwesasne to what is now central New York State at the end of the sixteenth century, returning to build communities in Kahnawake in 1669 and in Akwesasne by 1747 (13). He also demonstrates that the creation of reserves was a central means of advancing settler colonialism through land theft and genocide. As George-Kanentiio argues,

Once the Mohawks had hunted, fished, and camped over millions of acres of pristine forests and fertile river valleys, as free to move about as any people had ever been. After 1796 they were bound to the marshes, islands, and rock-strewn fields of small reservations, where they were numbed by an alien faith and subdued by government officials. (19)

As had been the case for other Indigenous nations, George-Kanentiio notes that virulent epidemics significantly reduced the population between 1820-1850 (21), as did the food crisis of 1812. As was the experience of the Mi'kmaq, lands granted as reserves by the British were also whittled away by encroaching settlers (George-Kanentiio 23).

Throughout these territories, the active recruitment of settlers from Britain was a central mechanism of land theft and genocide (Paul 173-5). In Ojibway territory, the recruitment of non-Indigenous settlers was augmented with a strategy encouraging the immigration of Indigenous peoples fleeing repressive measures being undertaken in the United States (Borrows “Wampum at Niagara” 165, 159). Settler officials hoped that this immigration would solidify the alliance between Indigenous nations and the British Crown in case of invasion by American forces, but it also served to destabilize and overwhelm local Indigenous communities. As Lawrence explains, “This influx of refugees, while welcomed by their relations to the north, threw many Ojibway communities into disarray at the precise moment when their lands were being taken

from them” (Lawrence “Rewriting” 40). Despite assurances of sovereignty and self-determination and the presence of Indigenous protocols in most treaty relationships, land theft, genocide, and the disruption of the daily life and practices of Indigenous nations all stand as clear evidence of settler violations of treaty in practice. Given these violations, it is not surprising that Indigenous nations responded using a range of diplomatic, political, and military strategies.

From the first instances of violence and land theft through to contemporary violations of relationships of sovereignty and self-determination, Indigenous peoples persist in rejecting settler colonialism and in asserting sovereignty over their lands. In response to the assaults of British settlers, the Mi'kmaq and their allies deployed astute political and diplomatic action in the form of treaties, agreements, and petitions to the Holy See and the French Crown; strategic alliances with neighbouring nations, Acadians, and the French Crown; and military action in defense of their territories and sovereignty including the seizure of British ships (see Paul 60, 82, 98; Henderson *Mikmaw Concordat*). As European power shifted with the surrender of the French at the Treaty of Paris in 1763, and as encroachment and conflict with settlers continued, many nations redoubled their efforts to maintain land and sovereignty.

In Ojibway territory around the Great Lakes, this defense culminated in the armed resistance of united Ojibway nations under Pontiac in 1763 and 1764 (Borrows “Wampum at Niagara” 158). Lawrence explains that Indigenous leaders were well aware that “one unchallenged European power was far more dangerous to deal with than a group of competing Europeans... [and so] a number of Indigenous nations attempted to form broad-ranging alliances across many nations in an effort to eliminate the British presence from their territories, culminating in the Pontiac uprising of 1763” (Lawrence “Rewriting” 37). The Pontiac uprising was tremendously successful, reclaiming – if only for a short period of time, “most of the territory in the Great Lakes region from European

control” (“Rewriting” 38) within the space of a few months and leading to a peace negotiation. As Lawrence notes: “The British had no choice in the matter; the Pontiac uprising was the most serious Native resistance they had faced in the eighteenth century” (“Rewriting” 38). Lawrence further notes that “[t]he Pontiac uprising demonstrated the power of Indigenous nations organized in armed resistance to colonization” (Lawrence “Rewriting” 39), leading to the Royal Proclamation and the subsequent Treaty of Niagara.

The Treaty of Niagara and the Royal Proclamation

The Royal Proclamation codified a number of existing agreements between Indigenous nations and the British Crown. As George-Kanentiio explains, “At the urging of the Iroquois, and as a direct result of Pontiac's War in the Great Lakes region, the British enacted the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which outlawed the sale of Native land to anyone, except the central government in London” (15; see also Tobias 128; Borrows “Wampum at Niagara” 159). As Borrows and other Indigenous scholars have noted, the Royal Proclamation can only be fully understood when placed in the context of ongoing diplomacy between Indigenous peoples and the British Crown.

Borrows argues that the context and terms of the Proclamation are frequently misunderstood as consolidating British dominance and establishing Indigenous subordination. Instead, he points out that “First Nations were not passive objects, but active participants, in the formulation and ratification of the Royal Proclamation... In these early confrontations with the Crown, First Nations possessed their own power and a range of choices to which they could bring their own considerations and alternatives” (“Wampum at Niagara” 155). Indeed, the Proclamation includes strong statements in recognition of Indigenous sovereignty, as well as contradictory expressions of Crown sovereignty. As Borrows explains,

The Proclamation illustrates the British government's attempt to exercise sovereignty over First Nations while simultaneously trying to convince First Nations that they would remain separate from European settlers and have their jurisdiction preserved... These competing policies between and within the parties' objectives were not resolved in the wording of the Proclamation because the Crown privileged its understanding of how land would be allocated. The effect of this privileging was to limit First Nations' ability to freely determine their land use, despite Aboriginal non-agreement with such a result, as evidenced by the Treaty of Niagara. ("Wampum at Niagara" 161)

Indeed, Borrows suggests that from an Indigenous perspective, the Royal Proclamation only received diplomatic force when affirmed at the Treaty of Niagara.

The Treaty of Niagara was enacted through the gathering of two thousand chiefs and twenty-four Indigenous nations in the summer following the Royal Proclamation. While the Royal Proclamation was incorporated into the Treaty of Niagara, this gathering also included the exchange of the Wampum and Covenant Chain of Friendship, both symbols of Indigenous nationhood, and of a nation-to-nation relationship. In the context of this diplomatic encounter, Borrows suggests that "the written text of the Proclamation, while it contains a partial understanding of the agreement at Niagara, does not fully reflect the consensus of the party. The concepts found in the Proclamation have different meanings when interpreted in accordance with the wampum belt" ("Wampum at Niagara" 165). Through the Treaty of Niagara, "a nation-to-nation relationship between settler and First Nation peoples was renewed and extended, and the Covenant Chain of Friendship, a multination alliance in which no member gave up their sovereignty, was affirmed" (Borrows "Wampum at Niagara" 161). As Borrows asserts, to privilege an interpretation of the Royal Proclamation based solely on its text, and absent of the context of Indigenous diplomacy, is to severely misrepresent the spirit and intent of the terms of the relationship being constructed. Combined, the Royal Proclamation and the Wampum at Niagara committed to "respect for the sovereignty of First Nations, the creation of an alliance... free and open trade and

passage between the Crown and First Nations... permission or consent needed for settlement in First Nations territory... the English provision of presents to First Nations, mutual peace, friendship, and respect” (Borrows “Wampum at Niagara” 169). As Borrows further demonstrates, ongoing references to the Wampum at Niagara and the Royal Proclamation provide further evidence of the nation-to-nation spirit of these agreements in the eyes of Indigenous peoples and several colonial officials (“Wampum at Niagara” 165-7).

Despite these strong political and diplomatic recognitions of sovereignty, land theft, displacement, and subordination of Indigenous peoples continued in daily encounters between colonists and Indigenous peoples. As Paul notes, “The proclamation... declared that many colonists were guilty of land theft; however, the theft of Amerindian land did not abate, nor did anyone try to stop it” (176). As European immigration and settlement continued, so too did the encroachment and attacks on Indigenous territories. Displacement by colonialism and ongoing attempts to consolidate settler colonial power continued, and urban centres like Toronto became increasingly important in this regard.

Toronto's Indigenous History

The City of Toronto was founded in this context of ongoing resistance to ever-expanding colonialism along with continued attempts to consolidate and expand British power over the continent. However, the city also had a long and diverse precolonial Indigenous history, and the force of this history continues to this day, as is outlined at the outset of Chapter 1. This Indigenous history is often obscured in contemporary representations of the city and its history.

References to Toronto as the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit³⁴ recognize only the history of this land as it was at the moment of contact with

³⁴ This is the name used by the descendants of the Mississauga of the Credit River, who were displaced

the French, and later with the British.³⁵ As noted by the Mississaugas of the New Credit, Mississauga peoples arrived on the land now known as Toronto at the end of the 1600s, seeking resources and trade (“Toronto Purchase” 4). Their presence and dominance in the region at the time of contact with Europeans is often dehistoricized, and the connections of other nations to the territory are minimized. DaCosta and the Mississaugas of the New Credit point out that the displacement of other Indigenous nations, and the arrival of the Mississaugas, can only be fully understood in the context of expanding settler colonialism, which implicated many Indigenous peoples in defense of their nations and territories and in ongoing wars between European powers. By only remembering the connection of the Mississaugas to this land, the history of Toronto is said to begin with contact and conquest, rather than with hundreds of years of gathering, fishing, settlement, and diplomacy by Indigenous nations that long predate the arrival of French traders.

This truncated history also undermines the continued existence of Indigenous diplomatic and political agreements, which challenge the very principle on which this land was transferred to British authorities. DaCosta points out that this territory is part of the Gdoo-naaganinaa, the Dish with One Spoon Wampum between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabe (discussed above), which “is an agreement to peaceably share resources of territories in vast regions of the Great Lakes which were in close proximity to each other” (DaCosta). As she further explains, “This treaty agreement is still acknowledged by both Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee people to this day. This inclusive acknowledgement embraces diverse Indigenous history as told by Indigenous people

from the lands now known as Toronto. In order to provide some consistency, I will only use the name Mississaugas of the New Credit here, even though this is the more recent name used to identify the nation.

³⁵ DaCosta points out that this historical acknowledgement has become part of the opening of monthly Toronto City Council meetings, writing on April 11, 2014 that: “[a]s of last week, the Speaker (Frances Nunziata) announced that following the singing of the national anthem, the Speaker will acknowledge that Toronto is traditional Indigenous territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit.”

when recognizing our deep connection to the land” (DaCosta). Adherence to this treaty in Indigenous political and diplomatic practice certainly would have shaped the engagements of the Mississaugas with French traders and British colonists.

French traders were well aware of the region's resources and strategic location. In 1750, the French established a fur trade fort, Fort Rouillé near the shore of Lake Ontario, close to where the Exhibition grounds are currently located (Methot). The Mississaugas had settlements along the shore of Lake Ontario, further inland, and on the Toronto islands, which were important spiritual sites (Mississaugas of the New Credit “Toronto Purchase” 12). Following the French surrender and the Treaty of Paris, the Mississaugas continued to hunt, fish, gather, and trade throughout the region. After the American revolution, loyalists and Haudenosaunee who had been pushed south of the border returned to the region (Methot), significantly increasing the population as well as pressures for land. Ongoing fears of an American invasion led the British Crown to negotiate a number of land transfers and treaties in an attempt to secure control over this strategically important region (Mississaugas of the New Credit “Toronto Purchase” 5). While attempting to maintain control of their vital land base, the impacts of disease, the decline of the fur trade, and ongoing colonial hostilities severely reduced the population of the Mississaugas of the New Credit.

The transfers leading to the creation of Toronto ostensibly took place under two separate negotiations: the Toronto Purchase of 1787 and 1805. Both agreements have been mired in dispute and contestation since their inception. The Mississaugas of the New Credit maintain that the 1787 council meeting in which presents were exchanged was not a treaty or land transfer:

In 1787, Sir John Johnson, head of the Indian Department, called a council of the Mississaugas at the Bay of Quinte to distribute “presents” (trade goods such as blankets, kettles and gunpowder) to reward the Mississaugas for their loyalty to the British during the American Revolution. In total, £1,700 worth of trade goods were distributed to all of the various Mississauga groups at three

different locations across southern Ontario. At that Council, Sir John Johnson discussed a number of potential land sales along the north shore of Lake Ontario and in particular they discussed a potential purchase of the “carrying place” from Toronto to Lake Simcoe. Although these discussions were later characterized as the “sale” of Toronto, and the £1,700 worth of presents were later characterized wrongly as payment for the Toronto Purchase, in actual fact, nothing was sold at that Council in 1787. The deed to the land that was “found” many years later was blank, with the marks of three Chiefs from the Toronto area on separate scraps of paper wafered onto the blank deed. (“Toronto Purchase” 6)

The Mississaugas of the New Credit continued to contest both the status and scope of the land transfer when a surveyor arrived the following year, intervening in his work to the extent that the survey could not be completed: “As the year before, no valid transaction took place in 1788” (Mississaugas of the New Credit “Toronto Purchase” 7).

Under John Graves Simcoe, appointed Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada in 1791, the trade and military settlement that came to be known as Toronto was named York, becoming the capital of Upper Canada in 1793 (Benn 59). Nearby, other settlement projects were afoot, also displacing Indigenous peoples. For example, Lawrence notes, “A territorial marker was driven through the heart of the Algonquin homeland, as the *Constitution Act* of 1791 divided Algonquin territory into Upper and Lower Canada, with the Ottawa River as the dividing line” (“Federally Unrecognized Indigenous Communities”, 75). Realizing that the British legal claim to the land remained insecure, the British Crown renewed efforts to reach an agreement with the Mississaugas in a second Toronto Purchase in 1805. This meeting and negotiation is described by the Mississaugas of the New Credit as follows: “By that time all of the Chiefs present at the meeting with Sir John Johnson at the Bay of Quinte in 1787 were dead... By this time the Mississaugas had realized that the Crown's promises regarding the Indians' rights to hunt and fish on surrendered or sold lands were worthless as settlers moved in and prevented them from exercising their Treaty rights” (“Toronto

Purchase” 10). The Mississaugas relay the two parties' very different aims on the 1805 transfer, noting that the Mississaugas were

...focused on securing a reserve at the Credit River and fishing rights in the Credit and Etobicoke Rivers and the Sixteen and Twelve mile Creeks. These negotiations were about survival, not fair payment for land that had been effectively taken in 1788. The Crown, on the other hand, was very interested in securing legal title to the Capital of the Colony, Toronto, along with securing the last of the Mississaugas' land on Lake Ontario. (“Toronto Purchase” 10)

The Toronto Islands – never included in any of these discussions – were included after the fact, in the deed for the 1805 purchase.

Over the course of these negotiations, the non-Indigenous population of the area had grown considerably, even as the land base and treaty rights of the Mississaugas were steadily eroded. In 1834 York was incorporated as a city by the province of Ontario, and renamed Toronto (Freeman “Toronto” 22). Henceforth, 1834 became the date celebrated to mark the founding of the city (some of these celebrations are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5). As was the case for Indigenous peoples living near many other settler cities, the land base of the Mississaugas of the New Credit was steadily eroded as the city grew, and their ability to exercise rights to hunt and fish, as promised in treaty, were increasingly constrained. They were eventually pushed out of the city entirely in 1847, “landless and greatly reduced in numbers and influence, relocating to land purchased from the Six Nations (near Hagersville and Brantford), and renaming themselves the Mississaugas of the New Credit” (“Toronto Purchase” 5).

As is discussed in greater depth in subsequent chapters, the City of Toronto was an important site for attempts to consolidate settler colonial power. These efforts entailed both literally and symbolically supplanting Indigenous history and ongoing Indigenous presence from the settler city. Similar practices took place in newly established settler cities across the Dominion. As evidenced in the case of the

Mississaugas of the New Credit, the physical relocation of Indigenous peoples to reserves was a central part of this endeavour, with most reserves located far from urban centres (see Peters “Developing Federal Policy”). Federal and municipal officials implemented a range of measures to further demarcate and differentiate urban from Indigenous spaces. Reserves located in proximity to growing urban centres were regularly relocated.³⁶ In addition, pass systems, curfews, and bans on the presence of Indigenous peoples – and of Indigenous women, in particular – in certain quarters of settler cities and at certain times further constructed the city as settler space.³⁷ In constructing and maintaining these spatial divisions, Indigenous peoples were characterized as pre-modern and the settler city as civilized. This construction provided the ultimate cover for settler colonialism, masking Indigenous history and ongoing sovereignty over the lands on which settler cities were constructed and concealing the savagery and duplicity with which such cities were created. Rich in resources and political importance, the creation of the City of Toronto proved strategically, symbolically and materially important to the advancement of settler colonialism on a national scale.

36 See Lawrence *Real' Indians* 36; Tobias; Wood “A Road Runs Through It”; Edmonds 8-9.

37 See Razack “Introduction”; Mawani; Stasiulis and Jhappan.

Confederation and the British North America Act

The 1867 British North America Act (BNA, also known as the Constitution Act) aimed to establish the sovereignty of the settler colonial state and to consolidate British power over North America. This legislation established “internal self-government in Canada by European settlers” (Erasmus and Sanders 4) and marked a new phase in the relationship between Canada and the British Empire, with Canada making the shift from colony to nation-state. Relationships to Indigenous peoples were necessarily reimagined in the process. Under the BNA, the responsibility for relationships with Indigenous peoples was transferred from the empire to the nation-state that was created through this same legislation. As Erasmus and Sanders suggest,

First Nations were not a party to the Confederation that was established, nor to the drafting of the British North America Act. Nevertheless, subsection 91(24) provided that the federal Parliament would have the authority to legislate for “Indians and lands reserved for the Indians” to the exclusion of the provincial legislatures. By virtue of that subsection, the First Nations were placed under the legislative power of the federal government as agent of the Crown, but not under its territorial jurisdiction. (4)

Mi'kmaq legal scholar Pamela Palmater points out that this legislation marked a clear subordination of Indigenous sovereignty, beginning the now entrenched practice of employing identity-based measures to usurp the authority of Indigenous nations to determine membership. She explains:

Without input from Aboriginal nations, the federal and provincial governments divided jurisdiction over key governance areas in the Constitution Act, 1867, through section 91(24), Canada assumed the power to legislate the identity of individual Aboriginal people. Federal control over Indianness and membership has become the primary filter through which government, society, and even some Aboriginal groups have come to view Aboriginal peoples. (39)

The BNA must therefore be understood as an attempt to subordinate Indigenous sovereignty and autonomy over their lands, in part through identity-based legislation, and to consolidate settler colonial power. This motivation is evident in subsequent

legislation passed by the settler state, including the Act for the Gradual Enfranchisement of Indians (1869) and the first Indian Act (1876), as well as in ongoing practices of displacement, violence, and disenfranchisement. Indeed, much of the legislation passed since the creation of the settler nation-state demonstrates a unitary focus on the assimilation of Indigenous peoples and the disavowal of preexisting legislation and treaty relationships. As Borrows and Craft suggest, these prior treaties remain in force, as do the Indigenous practices of governance and international diplomacy through which they were negotiated. Indigenous peoples persist in asserting their sovereignty and control of their lands. They continue to insist that the full meaning of the treaties be honoured according to the indigenous political practices through which they were negotiated. As Borrows explains,

The Constitution Acts and other Imperial legislation partially created Canada, but First Nations laws also created the country. The Constitution Acts transplanted British institutions onto northern North American soil, while First Nations laws significantly modified their operation and force through treaties. The Constitution Acts and First Nations laws continue to construct our countries as they develop through time; but treaties also continue to construct them as new agreements are signed and historic treaties interpreted. Without treaties, the so-called reception of the common law remains an act of forced dispossession. The doctrine of reception alone, without Indigenous participation, is antagonistic to peace, friendship, and respect. Imperialism wanes when the Constitution Acts are seen as consistent with the preservation of Indigenous legal traditions and the creation of inter-societal norms in their relationship with the common law and civil law. (*Canada's Indigenous Constitution* 21)

The BNA marked a decisive move toward the legislative usurpation of Indigenous sovereignty and authority. While Indigenous peoples continued to assert sovereignty over their lands and political systems, state legislation increasingly turned toward the displacement and disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples, advanced in urban and reserve spaces in a multitude of ways to eliminate the viability of Indigenous communities and to reduce the numbers of people federally recognized as “Indians” (this

process is further detailed in Chapter 4). While Indigenous legal practices and precedents remain in force and Indigenous peoples have consistently upheld the relationships forged through the Royal Proclamation, the Treaty of Niagara, and other Indigenous legal traditions, state legal processes have increasingly been deployed as mechanisms of assimilation and subordination. Indigenous conceptions of identity, land, and belonging have been countered by those imposed in settler colonial legislation and practice, but they have never been eliminated.

Conclusion

This necessarily brief genealogy of settler colonialism in Canada demonstrates the importance of Indigenous historiography. Such a perspective provides a very different accounting of the deceit and violence through which the settler state and the settler city have been constructed and of the ongoing investment in colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging. Perhaps more importantly, however, this genealogy also demonstrates that Indigenous peoples have consistently asserted and enacted a very different set of relationships, established in Indigenous legal and political systems. As the participants quoted at the beginning of this chapter note, more needs to be known about these practices and the history of settler colonialism in order to comprehend the ways that settler colonialism persists in the contemporary context and to imagine the possibilities for a different future.

Chapter 4: Identity, Land, and Belonging: Indigenous Sovereignty from the Urban Context

The regulation of Native identity by settler states can only be effective once Native peoples have been dispossessed of their lands to the extent that they must rely on some form of negotiated coexistence with settler governments, coexistence that always demands that Native peoples conform to government legislation about who is Indian. (Lawrence *'Real' Indians* 16-17)

This chapter begins from Indigenous participants' comments on identity and the importance of urban Indigeneity, relationships to land, and forms of belonging to Indigenous sovereignty. As the epigraph indicates, identity-based legislation and forcible enfranchisement have been central mechanisms of genocide under settler colonialism. The struggle for the regeneration of Indigeneity for Indigenous participants entails the assertion of mixed-blood urban Indigenous identities, relationships to land which include and exceed the urban context, and the strengthening of connections between urban and land-based communities in accordance with Indigenous forms of governance. In these ways, Indigenous activists challenge the genocidal project by contesting state power, unsettling citizenship, and asserting Indigenous sovereignty. Although Indigeneity and Indigenous sovereignty are often rendered invisible in the urban context, this chapter demonstrates that urban Indigenous activism plays an important role in strengthening Indigenous sovereignty movements from within the urban context, while also nurturing other potential alliances against settler colonialism.

The urban Indigenous women of mixed ancestry (i.e., Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who participated in this research project emphasized the centrality of identity to enactments of Indigenous sovereignty from the urban context. As is outlined in the first part of this chapter, participants argued that urban Indigenous sovereignty

movements contest state-based conceptions of identity, land, and belonging, while also reclaiming and reasserting Indigenous conceptions of these relationships. Although their own sense of Indigenous identity stems from Indigenous worldviews and practices, participants noted that colonial identity-based legislation continues to have negative impacts on their lives, communities, and political movements. The historical processes through which legislative categories of status Indian and urban Indian have been constructed and imposed are detailed in the second part of this chapter with an emphasis on the gendered dimensions of these constructions and their ongoing impacts on urban Indigeneity. With this historical context firmly established, the final section of the chapter reflects more deeply on the ways that Indigenous activists conceptualized urban Indigeneity as a specific set of responsibilities to land and community. Their insights suggest that the urban context is a crucial site for decolonization and the advancement of sovereignty, with important implications for other urban movements seeking to act in alliance with Indigenous sovereignty struggles.

“Being Indigenous”

Indigenous participants spoke at length and with little prompting about the importance of identity to urban movements for Indigenous sovereignty. At the beginning of one interview, an Indigenous participant said, “I think my activism has *a lot* to do with identity” (her emphasis). Another Indigenous participant explained that identity is important in part because of the legacy of identity-based legislation including the Indian Act:

We’re dealing with – I mean in terms of racialized peoples, racialized settlers, and Indigenous peoples – we’re talking about people who are really struggling to maintain their identity and maintain their culture. We’re looking at genocide in one way or another. And so identity is huge, right? It’s a huge component of the work that they do, and the way that they identify and so forth and so on, and I think it’s necessary.

Indeed, many Indigenous participants spoke about the importance of engaging with the impacts of settler colonialism on widely-held ideas about what it means to be Indigenous, while also asserting that according to Indigenous worldviews, identity stems from relationships of land and belonging. Participants spoke to the importance of decolonizing conceptions of Indigeneity and of undoing the impacts of colonial policy and practice, while also drawing on Indigenous knowledge and practice. For instance, one participant explained that “state-imposed identities and state-imposed definitions all impact us. And, of course, I would advocate for getting rid of all of that stuff, and going back to Indigenous ways of thinking.” Another Indigenous participant noted that the Indigenous-led and -directed group she worked with drew from Indigenous worldviews to define Indigenous identity:

We've talked about what does Indigenous mean to us. It shifts and fluctuates, depending on where you are and how you situate yourself. But I would lean towards the most inclusive definition and I would say... It used to mean people of that land and that was whoever was living on the land and whoever was adhering to those principles of those values of being in unity with the land and the four-legged ones and all of creation, that worldview.

For this participant, relationships to land and principles of interconnectedness were central to Indigenous conceptions of identity:

So that it would have nothing to do with where you came from, or what your blood quantum was. And I think that's the way the paradigm shift will go. And I think if you talk to traditional healers, the ones that I'm most comfortable with, medicine people, they have that view and they don't exclude people from their ceremonies based on what their race is and where they're from. So then being Indigenous would refer to someone that practises that worldview. That people of the land means someone who's a caretaker of the land and that's somebody that values [the land]...

Indigenous scholars also stress the importance of identity to Indigenous sovereignty and the simultaneous rejection of settler colonial conceptions of Indigenous identity. For instance, Monture and McGuire point out that “identity is one of the core

components required for the stable structuring of social, political, legal, and knowledge systems in Aboriginal nations” (3). Alfred and Corntassel explain that this assertion of sovereign conceptions of identity must continue to contend with the constructions of Indigeneity set out in state policies such as the Indian Act, policies which ultimately seek the elimination of Indigenous peoples:

The struggle to survive as distinct peoples on foundations constituted in their unique heritages, attachments to their homelands, and natural ways of life is what is shared by all Indigenous peoples, as well as the fact that their existence is in large part lived as determined acts of survival against colonizing states' efforts to eradicate them culturally, politically and physically. (597)

Before detailing the ways that participants engage in this crucial work in the urban context, further explanation of the ways that settler colonial policy continues to advance genocidal practices through identity-based legislation and enfranchisement is necessary.

Constructing and Imposing “Indian” Identity

Donna Patrick argues that “state-controlled definitions of indigeneity tell us far more about the government and the colonial ideologies governing state actions than about indigeneity itself” (53). This observation is amply evident in the Canadian context, where policies constructing and regulating “Indian” identity are clear assertions of settler colonial dominance, promoting practices of assimilation and genocide to facilitate land theft. As Lawrence suggests, “the primary reason for the categorization and regulation of Indigenous populations was to ensure not only that the bulk of their lands were smoothly transferred to whites with a patina of legality but that the process of dismembering and recasting Indigenous identities would permanently subordinate captured populations” (*Real Indians* 28-9). The material presented in this section demonstrates that identity-based legislation attempted to remove Indigenous peoples from their nations and communities, thereby reducing Indigenous land and population

bases. Forcible enfranchisement, gender-based exclusion, and the construction of the settler city as a civilized and civilizing space all played important roles in advancing the project of settler colonialism.

Prior to Confederation and the first Indian Act, imperial and provincial lawmakers concerned themselves with the gradual construction of a legal category through which distinctions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations could be created. The first legal definition of “Indian” was found in legislation titled, “An Act for the Protection of the Indians in Upper Canada from Imposition, and the Property Occupied or Enjoyed by Them from Trespass and Injury” (Cannon 90). Passed in 1850, this legislation initiated a fairly broad definition of “Indian”. As Lawrence explains, the legislation “simply contained the statement that the act was applied to ‘Indians, and those who may be inter-married with Indians’” (*Real' Indians* 32). Despite its breadth, the legislation nonetheless asserted colonial control in assuming the power and authority to impose such a legal definition (See Lawrence *Real' Indians* 27). This legislation also served to homogenize distinct Indigenous nations into a common legislative category, thereby undermining each nation's sovereignty as well as the nation-to-nation relationships established in treaties with specific nations and confederacies (as outlined in Chapter 3). As Palmater explains, “The term 'Indian' lumps all the different Indigenous individuals and nations into one group, and ignores the fact that they all have their own cultures, histories, languages, traditions, customs, and practices” (23). Serving to create a manageable legislative category, the initially broad definition of “Indian” was further defined and delimited in the interest of advancing assimilation and settler colonial dominance.

Similar legislation enacted in Lower Canada in 1850 began from a relatively broad definition of “Indian” but further implemented a gendered mechanism for limiting the conferral of Indian status. As Lawrence notes, this legislation, which aimed “to define

who should be granted reserve land, was the first in Canada to establish a definition of an Indian, albeit loosely, so that Indian status thus depended on Indian descent or marriage to a male Indian” (*Real' Indians* 32). This practice of gender-based exclusion was both an indication of the power and importance of Indigenous women in many of the eastern nations³⁸ and an early iteration of what was to become a consistent strategy of gender-based exclusion in the Indian Act, the effects of which persist to this day, as will be discussed below. Subsequent legislation ostensibly aimed at “enfranchisement” and “civilization” further defined and deployed Indian status as a mechanism of forcible assimilation.

The 1857 Gradual Civilization Act employed enfranchisement as a mechanism of assimilation and land theft. As Oneida scholar Martin Cannon explains, “The premise behind this policy was simple: upon meeting certain criteria, Indian men who were literate, free of debt, and of good moral character, could (along with their 'dependents') give up legal status and become non-Indians” (91). This legislation entrenched the division between Indian and settler-citizen. In asserting that one cannot be both Indian and enfranchised, the subordinate position of Indigenous peoples was legally enforced, as was the dominant position of the settler-citizen. As Cannon notes, this legislation also imposed patriarchal understandings of gender, as it “assumed that, like other women, Indian women were to be legally subject to their husbands” (91), which was not previously the case in many Indigenous nations. Finally, the legislation also proved an effective mechanism for land theft. As Lawrence explains, an enfranchised Indian “would receive twenty hectares of land, freehold tenure, from his former reserve. This last provision violated the terms of the Royal Proclamation, by asserting that colonial governments could parcel out reserve land to individuals without band permission” (Lawrence *Real' Indians* 31). Over the decades following the implementation of this

38 See Lawrence *Real' Indians*; Anderson; Monture-Angus *Thunder*; Palmater.

legislation, both voluntary and involuntary enfranchisement were pursued, the former with much less success (see Lawrence, *'Real' Indians* 31). Whether voluntary or involuntary, enfranchisement legislation encoded the notion that one could not be an Indian and a citizen at the same time, enforced patriarchal family organization, and forwarded the related aims of land theft and assimilation.

As Palmater notes, post-Confederation determinations of Indian status were increasingly based in the racial logic of blood quantum: “The common thread was that Indians were defined by whether or not they had Indian blood and were affiliated with a tribe or body of Indians who lived on lands over which they had an interest. It was a combination of racial attributes and connection with one's community that equated with Indian identity for legislative purposes” (40). This emphasis on the racial logic of blood quantum was made more explicit in the 1869 Gradual Enfranchisement Act, where it was formally introduced as a determination of status (Lawrence *'Real' Indians* 32), albeit alongside other approaches to identity and membership. As Palmater explains, “While this Act was consistent with previous definitions based on blood or intermarriage, it did not completely displace traditional forms of individual identification and communal belonging. The focus of the legislation was on individual identification; it did not provide rules for how tribes could determine who was a member” (41).

This legislation also marked a turning point in the reshaping of gender relations, “beginning the process of removing the Indian status of Native women who married non-Natives and indeed of forcing Native women to become members of their husbands' communities upon marriage, reversing the matrifocal practices common in many of the eastern nations” (Lawrence *'Real' Indians* 33). The Indian Act subsequently entrenched this gender-based exclusion and deployed enfranchisement as a means of forcible assimilation (see Anderson 68-9).

The Gradual Enfranchisement Act also contained measures which drastically

altered traditional forms of governance and decision-making and which provided unprecedented powers to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs (or his agent) with regards to governance and determinations of Indian status (see Palmater 41; Lawrence *'Real' Indians* 33). Through the creation of the band council system, this legislation served to “undermine and replace Indigenous governments with a municipal-style elected system of band governance” (Lawrence *'Real' Indians* 33). This legislation thus subverted existing confederacies and practices of collective landholding. The creation of this colonial system of governance also implicated chiefs in exclusionary practices of belonging rooted in notions of blood quantum. As Palmater explains, “The amount of Indian blood one was thought to have was therefore directly tied to one's entitlements, and with this Act the government directly involved the chiefs in the exclusion of their citizens in sharing the resources provided by Canada” (41). The imposition of a racial logic of blood quantum, the elaboration of gender-based exclusion, and interference in traditional governance systems and practices were all integrated into the first Indian Act.

Palmater notes that the first Indian Act of 1876 “consolidated previous legislation and created detailed provisions for the management of Indian Affairs” (41). Although the definition section of the Indian Act was shorter than in previous legislation, it “had a more detailed list of individuals that could be excluded from membership in the band” (Palmater 42). As Palmater further explains, the first Indian Act “made it illegal for anyone other than a member of a band to reside on the reserve. It provided for the election of chief and council, and tax protections for Indians” (42). Several Indigenous scholars have documented the intensity of gender-based exclusion furthered in this legislation (see Jamieson; Kim Anderson; Lawrence). The Act also included provisions for enfranchisement, as laid out in prior legislation (Palmater 42). Despite frequent amendments to the Indian Act, many of these provisions remained intact until 1985, although the exclusionary provisions of the legislation were significantly amplified in the

1951 amendments.

The amended Indian Act of 1951 further excluded significant numbers of people from Indian status and band membership, particularly through the Indian Register, “in which those entitled to both registration and band membership were recorded on a band list, and those entitled to be registered but not entitled to band membership were recorded on the General List” (Palmater 42). The amended legislation maintained and expanded the process of gender-based determinations of Indian status. As Palmater explains, “This Act solidified the privileged position of male Indians in regard to registration and band membership. Even if women married Indians from other bands and did not lose their status, their band membership was automatically transferred to their husband's band” (42; see also Lawrence *Real' Indians* 53; Kim Anderson 69).

As Lawrence notes, compulsory enfranchisement for Indigenous women had dire consequences for them, their families, and their communities: “Individuals who enfranchised, voluntarily or involuntarily, had to have sufficient resources to survive off-reserve. No such condition was considered necessary for Indian women compulsorily enfranchised” (*Real' Indians* 54; see also Kim Anderson 69-71). As a result, Indigenous women's loss of status had drastic and immediate impacts. In many instances, women were no longer able to live on reserve lands. As Lawrence explains, “Indian women were generally denied access to personal property willed to them, evicted from their homes, often with small children and no money (especially when widowed or separated) and generally faced hostile band councils and indifferent Indian Affairs bureaucrats” (*Real' Indians* 55). While Lawrence points to the devastating personal and cultural repercussions of this loss of status (55), she also explains that ultimately the “bleeding off” of Indigenous women and children enacted in this legislation had far-reaching consequences for Indigenous nations and communities: “The phenomenal cultural implication hidden in this legislation is the sheer numbers of Native people lost to their

communities” (*Real Indians* 55).

Indigenous women have actively and consistently struggled against the gender-based exclusions embedded in the Indian Act, in a number of ways (see Kim Anderson). This organizing gained new visibility in the courts during the 1960s, leading to the Supreme Court of Canada case of Lavell and Bédard in 1973 and Sandra Lovelace’s successful case at the United Nations Human Rights Committee in 1981 (see Lawrence, *Real Indians*; Palmater). Ultimately, these struggles resulted in the 1985 revisions to the Indian Act, frequently referred to as Bill C-31. Of course, as many Indigenous scholars demonstrate, although 127,000 individuals regained their status with Bill C-31, almost as many were denied reinstatement; moreover, the Bill “created new divisions among Indians with respect to who can pass their status on to their children, and made it impossible for non-status women to regain status through marriage” (Lawrence, *Real Indians* 64; see also Cannon; Palmater). As Palmater further explains,

While the Bill C-31 amendments were meant to address discrimination against Indian women under the Indian Act, 1951, all they did was delay the disenfranchisement process by one generation. It also preserved the preferential entitlement for the descendents of male Indians over female Indians and created new discrimination between the descendents of the double mother clause and section 12(1)(b) reinstates. (Palmater 43)

For the current generation, Cannon points out that rather than undoing prior gender-based exclusion in the policy, the revised legislation simply extended this exclusion to Indigenous men. As he explains, “The only difference is that now men also involuntarily enfranchise their children and grandchildren when marrying non-Indians” (92). Palmater further notes that litigation continues around a range of exclusions which persist in the revised Indian Act, including: cousins (gender) discrimination, siblings discrimination, unstated paternity, and the second generation cut-off rule (43-4). She concludes that “[n]ot only does the Indian Act, 1985 not eliminate gender discrimination, its residual and new forms of gender discrimination result in the

exclusion of thousands of descendants of Indian women” (44). The ongoing effects of these exclusions continue to be felt by Indigenous women, their families, and their nations.

The policy history traced to this point demonstrates the many ways in which settler colonialism was furthered through enfranchisement and identity-based legislation such as the Indian Act. Enfranchisement legislation reinforced the supposed distinction between “Indian” and “citizen” in establishing that Indian status would be renounced upon enfranchisement. Through this and related legislation, “authentic” or “real” Indigenous identity was thus associated with federal Indian status, residence on reserves, and requisite blood quantum. As a corollary, reserves were constructed as “Indian spaces”, and all other sites as settler spaces. The creation of reserves also sought to limit the land base of Indigenous communities, to convert landholding practices to capitalist-friendly conceptions of private property, and to maintain a spatial separation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Settler cities assumed a prominent place in the spatial organization of settler colonialism, and the related processes of exclusion and assimilation marked Indigenous peoples' experiences of urban spaces in particularly gendered ways. The gradual construction of the legislative category of urban Indian is a further reflection of attempts by settler state officials to further manage these relationships among identity, land, and belonging in the settler city.

Constructing the “Urban Indian”

Indigenous peoples have always lived on the lands now marked as urban centres, including in dense populations, as Anishinaabe scholar Brock Pitawanakwat points out (169). Moreover, many Indigenous peoples have long made their homes in settler cities. Yet, the construction of Indigenous peoples as out of place in urban contexts served to delineate settler space from Indigenous space, separating urban centres from the

violence of colonial settlement and obfuscating the centrality of land theft to the creation and growth of settler cities. As Pitawanakwat explains, this relied on

the false notion that “indigenous” and “urban” were mutually exclusive. This incongruity existed in the minds of settlers because of their own artificial attempts to remove Indigenous people from lands desired for European settlement. Many Canadian cities were founded on Indigenous village sites whose inhabitants were removed to make way for settlers. Similar removals occurred in the prairie provinces when Indian reserves in close proximity to settler communities were relocated. The false dichotomy between “urban” and “Indigenous” has been difficult to dispel. (169)

Indeed, as Pitawanakwat explains, the creation of the reserve system was a central means of perpetuating land theft and distancing Indigenous peoples physically and metaphorically from growing settler communities. In addition to settler violence and the threat of such violence, pass systems were implemented from 1885 until 1951 to further regulate the mobility of Indigenous people between urban and reserve spaces (Razack “Gendered Racial Violence” 130). As Pitawanakwat explains, these pass laws “prevented status Indians from leaving their reserves without the written permission of the local Indian agents” (169). Razack points out that these controls on mobility were deeply gendered: “One rationale was that the system would limit the numbers of Aboriginal women 'of abandoned character' entering the towns” (“Gendered Racial Violence” 130; see also Anderson). Therefore, the exclusion of Indigenous women from their nations, particularly alongside the effects of residential schools, assaults on cultural practice, and the endemic and systemic underfunding of vital services provided on reserves can all be directly linked to the growing Indigenous population in urban centres (Peters “Aboriginal People and Canadian Geography” 49).

Nancy Janovicek notes that Indigenous women with Indian status were slightly more likely to live in urban centres than Indigenous men as early as 1966, and that this disparity increased dramatically over the next two decades of increasing urbanization. Although urban residence was higher among Indigenous women regardless of status

(i.e., both status and non-status Indigenous women were more likely to live in urban centres than Indigenous men), Janovicek further notes that loss of status, and hence of housing, was a central factor contributing to urban migration for many Indigenous women (56). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the systemic underdevelopment and resource scarcity on reserves, combined with ongoing state surveillance and scrutiny of reserve communities, prompted increasing urbanization among Indigenous women and men (see Pitawanakwat 169; Heather Howard 107).

Whether or not urban migration of Indigenous peoples was actively promoted through state policy, Peters notes that state officials regarded urbanization as a solution to “the depressed social and economic conditions of Indian Reserves”, and that it was “represented as a more permanent solution to unemployment than community development” (Peters “Developing Federal Policy” 61). Here, there are clear assumptions that urban residence would bring about an eventual “civilization” and assimilation of Indigenous peoples. Despite this, Peters notes that “at the same time, it is clear that the presence of First Nations people in urban centres was seen as extremely problematic” by settlers (“Developing Federal Policy” 61). Peters cites a number of reports and studies describing “the intense hostility and discrimination which greeted First Nations people in towns and villages” (“Developing Federal Policy” 63). This hostility often translated into barriers to accessing housing and employment, health care, and other services, as well as outright violence and continual threats of violence. These exclusions were further exacerbated by confusion and a pass-the-buck mentality over responsibility for providing services to Indigenous peoples not residing on reserves, thus using “the differentiation of Reserve and city to organize ways of limiting the responsibilities of Indian Affairs” (Peters “Developing Federal Policy” 79). In recent years, such confusion has further increased with the continued downloading of responsibilities for delivery of many social policies to the provincial and municipal governments. Some responsibilities have also

been redistributed to Aboriginal (reserve-based) governments, further limiting access for those living off-reserve. Furthermore, as Lawrence notes, “rights for off-reserve status Indians continue to be withdrawn by the federal government” (*Real Indians* 222).

The classification of some Indigenous people as “urban Indians” beginning in 1962 provided a way of differentiating Indigenous city dwellers from other urban residents and from reserve-based Indigenous people; moreover, this classification offered a way to avoid responsibility to change systemic conditions of poverty and inequality. Responding to a dramatic increase in the urban Indigenous population throughout the 1960s, Peters explains that in 1962 the Citizenship Branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration (DCI) defined an “urban Indian” as “anyone who is living off the Reserve in a setting where there are industrial and commercial job opportunities, and who identifies himself as an Indian” (“Developing Federal Policy” 69). She goes on to explain:

[T]he changing location of First Nations people was seen to represent a changing identity from the one they had held on the Reserve. Linked to these ideas was the implication that adaptation to city life meant that the linkages between urban and reserve populations were severed, as urban First Nations people took on different qualities, perspectives, values and behaviors from Reserve residents. (“Developing Federal Policy” 69)

Through this process, the city was marked as a civilized and civilizing space, where Indians were literally made into citizens. As Peters explains, “In the city, First Nations people were viewed as integrating into modern society, citizens like other urban residents, under the responsibility of municipal or provincial governments or federal departments other than Indian Affairs” (“Developing Federal Policy” 82). Once removed from the purview of the federal state, Indigenous peoples’ entitlements to specific rights could be further constrained and eroded.

Rather than signalling the systemic underpinnings of settler colonialism, poverty, homelessness, and other indicators of the extreme marginalization of Indigenous peoples

in the urban context were frequently chalked up to “culture clash” and blamed on the supposed inability of Indigenous peoples to adapt to the urban environment, rather than the outright racism of other urban dwellers or systemic discrimination (Peters “Developing Federal Policy” 68-9). Indigenous cultural organizations were proposed as a means of addressing this marginalization (see Mackey 62). Cultural organizations such as Friendship Centres were very important for sustaining some sense of Indigenous community within the often hostile urban sphere.³⁹ However, as Peters suggests, state agents’ emphasis on the formation and scope of such organizations ethnicized urban Indigenous people: “They could participate in the Friendship Centre as an ethnic group and be involved in cultural programming, narrowly defined” (“Developing Federal Policy” 81). These measures constructed urban Indigenous people as yet another ethnic group within the city, differentiating between urban Indigenous people and reserve-based communities while negating the connections among them, undermining claims to sovereignty and demands for self-governance, normalizing settler dominance, and omitting the history of settler colonialism. As will be shown in the following section, these omissions continue to shape struggles for sovereignty from the urban context, even as they have been consistently rejected by Indigenous organizations and activists.

Of course, Indigenous people and organizations, even those founded as primarily cultural organizations, challenged this de-politicization. A number of scholars have documented the innovative work of urban Indigenous organizations. Heather Howard argues, for instance, that “Native people also utilized and maximized the 'tools of the oppressors' to resist assimilation and to organize their struggles to strengthen and assert Native cultural identity, self-determination, and inherent rights within the urban context” (107-8). In addition, connections to home territories, particularly for those with Indian status and band enrolment, were often maintained from the urban context. As a

³⁹ See Heather Howard “Women's Class Strategies”; Kim Anderson 123-4; Lawrence *'Real' Indians* Chapter 8; Janovicek.

case in point, Peters notes that a “1976 proposal by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians to conduct a survey in urban areas clearly rejects the assumption that urbanization reflected a rejection of the Reserve community of origin and an attempt by migrants to adopt a new cultural identity” (“Developing Federal Policy” 71). In the view of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, urban Indians were “treaty Indians who belong to the different bands in the province” (“Developing Federal Policy” 71). The importance of urban Indigenous organizations and communities – and their connections to land-based communities – in assertions of Indigenous sovereignty are also reflected in the insights of Indigenous participants, which are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

The historical development of identity-based legislation demonstrates that the settler state has persisted in deploying practices of exclusion and assimilation as key strategies of genocide. Palmater notes that Indigenous identity, as defined in settler colonial legislation, is under profound threat: “A review of current population figures, together with future indicators, shows that the continued use of the Indian Act, 1985 and certain membership provisions to determine Indigenous identity in Canada will have drastic effects on Indigenous communities now and into the future” (47). Palmater further observes that “eventually, according to current demographic studies, all Indians will be legislated out of existence, as will their communities” (47).

This reality is not lost on Indigenous activists who note consistent aims by settler state officials to legislate Indigeneity out of existence. This form of legislative genocide is at the root of their critiques of policy measures including the First Nations Governance Act (FNGA) and related legislation. But most also note that the incursion of colonialism into the lives of Indigenous peoples also constrains struggles against it, at least to some degree. For example, despite their criticisms of the Indian Act as a tool of colonialism, none supported a simple removal of this legislation, such as that proposed in the White

Paper, and they all shared staunch criticisms of the FNGA and subsequent related policy changes implemented under the Harper government. As Lawrence suggests, “To treat the Indian Act merely as a set of policies to be repealed, or even as a genocidal scheme that we can simply choose not to believe in, belies how a classificatory system produces a way of thinking – a grammar – which embeds itself in every attempt to change it” (*Real Indians* 25). The implications of identity-based legislation on relationships among Indigenous peoples and on enactments of Indigenous sovereignty are still evident, even as Indigenous activists draw directly from Indigenous worldviews in conceptualizing urban Indigeneity as a responsibility to land and community. Indigenous activists do so in ways that encompass urban and non-urban sites.

Indigenous Sovereignty, Responsibility, and the Settler City

Identity-based legislation remains a central mechanism of settler colonialism, facilitating the displacement and disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples from their lands and communities over generations. Indigenous participants explained that identity-based legislation continues to impact on their personal and collective struggles for Indigenous sovereignty. Their understanding of identity-based provisions of the Indian Act and of the implications of forcible enfranchisement are evident in their near-complete rejection of Canadian citizenship as a personal identification. As one participant said, “I do not identify with Canada, in a sense of an identity – of national identity, at all. I can relate to it, I can see it, but I don't want to be part of the Canadian national identity. And I think it's a big, huge sham, really.” Another participant explained: “Yeah, well I guess, basically, as a sovereigntist, by definition, [laugh] you challenge citizenship policies of the state, and the right of the state to dictate to Indigenous people who they are, and who they're not, and what their national boundaries are, and all that kind of stuff.” Another Indigenous participant noted that

many Indigenous people “don't believe they're citizens of Canada, so that impacts their struggle in that they don't recognize the Canadian rule of law.” Thus, instead of claiming or reformulating Canadian citizenship, or mobilizing for “belonging” within the settler state polity, Indigenous participants were more invested in Indigenous conceptions of identity, as rooted in responsibilities to land and community; they realize that annihilation is the very real consequence of failing to attend to these responsibilities.

Identity and/as Responsibility

For urban-based Indigenous peoples, the assertion of Indigenous identities rooted in Indigenous epistemologies and nation-centered practices is of central importance. For many Indigenous participants, this is deeply personal work. As one participant explained, “It's one thing to talk about injustice and about its effect on culture, but you also need to figure that out for yourself and take the time to learn, decolonizing your own self, your own spirit, and facing all of the effects of colonization in all the nuanced ways they impact your own life.” For Indigenous participants, this work requires direct contestation of the colonial emphasis on racial appearance, blood quantum, reserve residence, and federally-determined Indian status, as well as a refusal of the continual erasure of Indigeneity.

Several participants recounted ways that family members and friends ignored, downplayed, or denied their Indigeneity. One participant spoke about how her non-Indigenous mother avoided talking about her Indigeneity: “She was a very loving mother, however, she did not really address any identity issues... [she] just kind of let us be happy and glossed over [our Indigenous identities].” Other Indigenous participants shared experiences of having their Indigeneity denied, downplayed, or silenced by family members or questioned by friends and other people. Two participants shared experiences of being told that they “didn't look Native,” by non-Indigenous friends. Such denials and erasures of Indigeneity are frequently based on the racially constructed notion of the

authentic Indian, as embedded in federal legislation. As Lawrence notes, “Urban Native people are, on a regular basis, surrounded by white people who routinely expect them to look Native – and who often challenge their Nativeness if they don't” (*Real' Indians* 174). For many Indigenous participants, the assertion of urban mixed-blood Indigeneity is a refusal of this erasure and exclusion.

All of the Indigenous participants in this study spoke to the complexities of mixed-blood urban Indigeneity. Several recounted their experiences of light-skin privilege and the resulting denial of their Indigeneity. One participant explained: “Where I grew up there's a lot of racism but... just being of mixed ancestry, [I] was able to pass as a light-skinned person that can kind of blend in. I was witness to a lot of racism. People felt safe that they could say certain things in my company. I would always speak up, but people would just say, 'Oh, you're different.’” For this participant, the trauma of being exposed to this racism while simultaneously having her Indigeneity denied was compounded by her sense of disconnection from local Indigenous peoples. She explained, “I had relationships with Native people, but it was very obvious I was not from that community either.” As a result, she explained that it was hard not to internalize powerful racial constructions of “authentic” Indigeneity: “I had an idea of what Indian was because I was so disconnected from it. It had to be dark-skinned people, or this [stereotype].” She explained that the reclamation and revaluation of her own Indigeneity entailed deconstructing the colonial origins of this identity construct and asserting urban Indigeneity:

I think that, as well, how colonialism has progressed or happened in Canada, that, in central Canada, it's very different than on the West [Coast]. There are differences, just in things like there's been a lot more intermarriage here, there's a lot more lighter-skinned Native people. Even issues around race: light skinned, dark skinned. It was the first time that I met light-skinned Indian people, being here. It just seemed like I felt more – I had more people I could identify with... Maybe I just didn't see other things that were happening, but definitely here I felt like there's a lot more diversity within the Native

community and a lot more people are dislocated here in Toronto that... people are more open to outsiders, to newcomers, because that's what they are themselves. Whereas where I was living on the West Coast, people – their families were there, their communities were there. They're a lot more close-knit. So I just felt when I came here, this is where I should be.

A number of Indigenous participants echoed this participant's reflection on the importance of validating and accepting mixed-blood Indigeneity. As Lawrence suggests, discussions about the boundaries across which Native identity is determined are complex and ongoing: “On a practical basis, for individuals to see their identities as hybrid is to allow their individual identities their diversity and specificity without dismissing them as Native identities” (*Real' Indians* 188). Leanne Simpson further points to long-standing practices of inclusivity in her nation: “Pre-colonial citizenship policies reflected this belief [in inclusivity] with 'mixed blood' Nishnaabeg readily accepted into our nation if they chose to honour our relations, or they were free to seek citizenship elsewhere if that was their desire” (“Our Elder Brothers” 73-4).

For many Indigenous participants, decolonized relationships among identity, land, and belonging were articulated as responsibilities. For instance, one participant said, “Black Indian is how I've often described myself. I come originally from the States... and, in a sense, I am both Indigenous and settler.” She was unequivocal in her conception of her own identity, saying: “I'm a Native person first,” and going on to explain, “My life is forfeit if needed to defend the land.” Although the precise form of political action varied, Indigenous participants clearly situated identity and Indigeneity as responsibilities to land and community.

Many Indigenous scholars also emphasize responsibility, and this directly contrasts with Lakota scholar Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's assertion that urban mixed-blood narratives of Indigeneity demonstrate “excesses of individualism” (69). Indeed, as Pitawanakwat explains, “Cook-Lynn accuses urban mixed-bloods of individualism but it is precisely this sense of colonial alienation that is its root cause... The ironic result is

that alienated Indigenous people are criticized by their kin for being alienated – an analysis that obscures rather than reveals the genocidal impact of colonization” (162-3). Like the Indigenous participants mentioned above, Pitawanakwat conceptualizes Indigeneity as responsibility, rather than individuality: “Although the responsibilities I have to my Nishnaabeg family and community are often unclear, I refuse to succumb to a century of assimilation policy that has almost succeeded. It would be unconscionable to relinquish millennia of accumulated wisdom that our ancestors have handed down to us by abandoning our ceremonies, communities, land, and language” (163). As is further detailed in the pages that follow, this sense of responsibility is enacted through supporting, and building connections with land-based communities, as well as in the creation of strong urban Indigenous organizations and communities.

Relationships to Land

Although relationships to land are often obscured in the urban context, Indigenous participants spoke about land and territory in a range of ways, emphasizing complex relationships to territory which include the city. Many spoke about the importance of understanding whose land they are on when they are in the territories of other nations and of maintaining connections to land and the territories of their communities. The legacies of settler colonialism, including displacement and disenfranchisement, complicate connections to land, territory, and knowledge for many participants. As a result of these policies, many participants do not live in or near their communities, and indeed some have limited knowledge of or connections to their territories and nations. Despite this, they all spoke very clearly about the importance of connections to land and territory. These connections are evident in one participant's story of returning home. She began by explaining the importance of connections to family, culture, and language:

I started to get physically ill in Vancouver. I was living in Vancouver at that

time and just feeling a lot of anxiety in my life. And what I realized for me was that I had to go home. That my anxiety was [because] I was in the wrong place and I had to come back to Ontario and go and really for me the activism evolved into that concept of home... So in my relationship with my father, my grandmother, not being on [my] land, or hearing my own language, or meeting my grandmother. All of those things... I realized what I had to do in terms of my own activism and who I was. In that sense, it's very connected to my identity.

She went on to explain the ways that these connections were rooted in relationships to land:

I really felt like when I came here I belonged here, I just felt a difference being on this land and being with other Anishinaabe, meeting other Anishinaabe people. I always felt so – as I said – very different from the Native people [on the West Coast]. On Vancouver Island, it was so obvious, but here I just felt like I was the same. People looked like me, people could recognize my last name. It wasn't something completely foreign.

Kovach shares a similar insight about the connections among language, identity, and land in her reflection on the process of learning Nêhiyawêwin. Writing of her conversation with Cree scholar Michael Hart, she explains:

As he spoke, I thought about my desire to learn the Cree language and the resistance that I felt while living on Vancouver Island. It was not that I had any philosophical problems with the notion of learning Cree on Coast Salish territory. Instead, I just could not get into it – I am not sure why, but maybe this helps to explain. When I returned to Saskatchewan and began Nêhiyawêwin instruction, one of the first phrases my classmates and I learned was to introduce ourselves. It goes like this: Tânsi, Maggie, nitisiyihkâson, Kovach, nitaspiyikasôn, Pasqua iskonikanik nipê-ohcin. The iskonikanik, identifying the community of belonging, loosely translated means little piece of land that the white settlers didn't want. This one word has so much connection to Plains Indigenous people, the relationships with white settlers, treaty lands, farmland, and buffalos – it is a single word loaded with the history of my homeland. My conversation with Michael helped me understand why learning this word, from a Cree instructor amid other students who were Cree, Saulteaux, and non-Indigenous Saskatchewanians, fit... Each nation has its iskonikanik that tell a big story in a little word, and I believe that is what Michael was saying. (Kovach 73)

The connections to Indigenous identity, language, and knowledge forged through

relationships to home, land, and territory are reflected in the writings of many Indigenous scholars. Monture and McGuire write, “The land is who we are as peoples” (3). Monture further explains that, “Identity, as I have come to understand it, requires a relationship with territory and not a relationship based on control of that territory” (*Journeying Forward* 36). As is evident in the comments of participants above, land is crucial not simply as a material base but also because of its centrality to Indigenous epistemologies and cultural continuity. As Arvin, Tuck and Morrill explain, “land is knowing and knowledge” (21).

Several Indigenous scholars point out that urban Indigenous people often do not have strong connections to their home territories as a direct consequence of colonialism (see Lawrence; Pitawanakwat; Denis). Sherman suggests that even those who live on reserve may suffer from this loss of knowledge: “The lack of understanding about our relationships with the land and waterways within our own territory speak to the larger issue of cultural and linguistic loss that plagues this community and many others as a result of colonialism and Canadian policies of assimilation and elimination” (Sherman “The Friendship Wampum” 120). In a footnote at the end of her chapter, Sherman further explains:

The point being made here is that there is a difference between knowing the land intellectually within your mind and feeling the history of that connection in your heart. The knowledge that one develops over time from that historical connection within the land and waterscapes results in positive identity development as Omà̀̀winini people. Solid identity makes it possible to fully understand the importance of maintaining Omà̀̀winini relations, which is in keeping with traditional Omà̀̀winini ontology. (n1 124)

This ontological connection to land and territory is what the participant quoted above nurtured in her relocation from Vancouver to Toronto.

Indigenous participants spoke to the importance of cultivating and maintaining relationships to land in the urban context. One participant explained how she meets this

responsibility:

It's hard to feel connected to the land in a big city, but I don't feel disconnected. I always find my ways to relate. I live down here for a reason, so I'm close to the lake. I go there everyday. It's interesting... And maybe it's something that Native people are more aware of and more in tune with, and I totally feel that about Toronto: the underground waterways that travel through the city, about the trees here, the amount of wildlife in the city. There's a strong sense of the land, actually, here.

Other Indigenous participants spoke about the importance of maintaining connections to land-based communities located outside of the city as well. One participant spoke of the connection she is building to her territory outside of the city, despite residing primarily in Toronto:

Now I'm even building a cabin. I have some land with my dad, and we're building a cabin together. Just going back to learning about living off the land and rejecting this – not completely rejecting modern, urban society but having an escape from it and a connection that exists without that.

In actively seeking out and maintaining connections to her nation and territory, this participant is also nurturing Indigenous identity, culture, community, and family relationships. In keeping with the material outlined in Chapter 3, she is also drawing on Indigenous conceptions of territory as expansive and directly countering the colonial construction of reserves as marking the boundaries of Indigenous land (see Hunt; Harris *Making Native Space*). In claiming urban and non-urban spaces as Indigenous territory, she is engaging in a direct contestation of settler colonialism and regenerating Indigenous relationships among identity, culture, land, and belonging. Pitawanakwat explains that “As urban Nishnaabeg, our ancestral legacy is to reconnect with the natural landscape and live honourably and sustainably – wherever we reside” (171). For Indigenous participants, this claiming of Indigenous space is a central aspect of their own responsibilities and crucial to movements against ongoing settler colonialism.

In many instances, participants explained that Indigenous sovereignty begins from

acknowledging historical and ongoing relationships to land, including in the urban context. One participant noted,

Without a doubt Native people have been here, without a doubt. Toronto itself is known as the gathering place, and the place of the fish weirs. Do you know about the fish weirs? ...“Where the fish gathered”. That's the Ojibway word for gathering. So it's also to do with all the weirs that Native people used in all of Ontario, almost. There's all kinds of ancient burial sites throughout Toronto.

This participant went on to note that Toronto's Indigenous history is not only a matter of ancient connections, but of ongoing claims and existence: “At the time of contact here, there were a huge community of Ojibway people living here and they have a claim. There's an active land claim and it's very defined and it obviously has been broken in treaties. Toronto has a lot of thinking to do about the First Nations here.”

The assertion of historical and ongoing Indigenous connections to the land and the city is also evidenced in a number of initiatives mentioned by other Indigenous participants. For instance, one participant spoke about the Ogimaa Mikana project, which is described as “an effort to restore Anishinaabemowin place-names to the streets, avenues, roads, paths, and trails of Gichi Kiiwenging (Toronto)” (*MUSKRAT Magazine*). Participants pointed to other initiatives to re-map urban space and referenced now-covered waterways and hunting trails. Another example that was mentioned repeatedly was the “Great Indian Bus Tour” (which has since been re-named the “First Story Toronto Bus Tour”), initiated by the late Rodney Bobiwash, a well-regarded and deeply missed Indigenous activist and scholar, and offered upon request by the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT). Although the tour is currently only offered to those able to book the entire bus at least two weeks in advance (see Native Canadian Centre of Toronto), it provides an important Indigenous narrative of the city, making urban Indigeneity visible both historically and in the present moment, and unsettling narratives of the city which attempt to conceal settler colonialism and ongoing Indigenous

presence. Such actions illustrate Nicholas Blomley's argument:

Indigenous people continue to enact their own claims to urban places, in part through other mappings and other stories designed to challenge both dispossession and displacement: these can include challenges to white emplacement, the remapping of an enduring native presence, and the contestation of dispossession ...Many of these challenges seek to contest dispossession, by insisting that the creation of the settler-city entailed an unjust dislocation of others. (127-8)

The ongoing battle to assert that urban space is Indigenous land counters active attempts to re-map and re-make relationships in keeping with settler colonial ideas about land and belonging. It also challenges non-Indigenous urban residents to consider their relationships to the land and the ongoing project of settler colonialism.

Belonging: Indigenous Communities and Nationhood

Rather than accepting colonial narratives that equate urban residence with assimilation, Indigenous participants regard the urban context as an important potential site for the maintenance of connections to land-based nations and cultural practices. Many Indigenous participants spoke about the importance of the Toronto Indigenous community to their own sense of belonging and community within the city, and their resistance to pervasive racism and the perceived invisibility of Indigeneity within the city (see above). But they also spoke about the structural and systemic divisions within the urban Indigenous community. As one participant explained:

They say there's 60,000 Native people in the Greater Toronto Area. But there's no real community... or there's no community of housing like Vancouver, or probably Winnipeg. So everybody's scattered. Everybody's coming in from different nations, dislocated for different reasons. And there are huge class differences, too. Some people are working for the banks, and some people are on the streets. There's so many different scenes and realities. People aren't as – we're not a unified – not that they are in Winnipeg either, I don't know. It's not like a clear, unified, cohesive group. ...it's too bad. I wish there was a little Native-ville. [laughter] Hopefully, there will be one day.

In addition to strengthening connections among members of the urban Indigenous

community, Indigenous participants consistently emphasized the importance of solidifying relationships with land-based nations. For most Indigenous participants, personal connections to nation and land-based communities were tenuous, largely as a result of loss of status, displacement, and colonial dispossession. The one Indigenous participant who spoke about a sustained connection to her nation described her relationship in this way:

I'm from [name removed] First Nation, which is... north of Toronto. I didn't live on my reserve, so I grew up actually in over fifteen towns and cities across Canada. I spent my early childhood in Alberta, both small town and urban [settings]. And then I spent ten years on the West Coast. And I would come back to [my nation] and visit for summers and spend time there, but really haven't come back to there until I was an adult. Probably eight years ago now.

Although two Indigenous participants spoke about their connections to land-based communities, most Indigenous participants did not have direct and sustained contact with their nations, nor did they have formal band membership. For most, relationships to community and culture reflect the history of displacement from nation. Thus, as Lawrence explains, “even as mixed-blood Native people insist on the primacy of a tribal identity, being legally disqualified from the life of their Indigenous nation through loss of Indian status makes a thorough reclaiming of a tribal identity very difficult” (Lawrence *Real' Indians* 11). As a result, it is not surprising that most participants spoke directly to the importance of regenerating these connections to nation and territory. As one participant explained,

Well, I think what first has to happen regarding urban Indigenous people is that the nations have to reclaim them, or make space for them again. And that's what's been happening with the two – the parallel governance thing that's happening with bands, and so forth and so on. And the whole colonial set-up is that so many people have been – they called it enfranchised, right, when you enfranchise into [Canadian citizenship]. But I call it disenfranchise. The majority of Aboriginal people don't have band membership, don't have status. So, I think that nations themselves, and it's interesting because... there are places where Indigenous communities are starting to do this. Non-status

communities are starting to assert themselves and status communities are beginning to look beyond the definitions that were given to them by the Feds, and are looking at the broader membership and community that they want to serve.

Attending to this legacy of settler colonialism is a crucial step toward the assertion of Indigeneity for urban-based non-status Indigenous peoples, and for solidifying their relationships with land-based communities. As the Indigenous participant quoted immediately above explained,

So that for me is what has to happen first. [laugh] And I think that's going to – if and when that happens – I'd like to say when it happens [laugh] that's going to resolve a lot of issues around the urban stuff because, for the most part, most urban Indians really look for that, and really want that. And it's funny, we always want what we don't have, right, [laugh] but the grass is always greener. And what the implications of that would be, I don't know. I mean the transferability of treaty rights would be important and that kind of thing. So, I guess, for me, that's a starting place.

Other participants also emphasized the importance of recognizing Indigenous sovereignty in and over the city of Toronto, namely the sovereignty of the Mississaugas of the New Credit. One Indigenous participant explained:

There should be a government institution that – well, one would be the Mississaugas of the New Credit, the ones that signed the treaty, they should have more presence here, and an institution, an embassy, something.

She went on to talk about some of the ways she has attempted to advance this recognition of Indigenous sovereignty in the city:

For example, simple things like different events I've been involved in, we've had different protests and stuff like that and people would get – the organizers of the protest, a Native-run protest, would get the Mississaugas of New Credit to give them permission and permits to set up their tipis or have a fire. And city officials come and they're like, "What the hell are you doing?" and they're like, "Well, we have permission to be here from the government. Here it is. Look at it." And they just kind of go, "Oh, okay." <Laughter> So, in ways like that, you can start to make connections, and just doing the right thing, acknowledging their territories and turning to them for their leadership, to start making those connections.

Furthermore, in her estimation, there should also be clear recognition of the rights of urban Indigenous people who have been disenfranchised from their nations and territories:

There should also be another organization that represents the non-status Indians. There's so many people that are dislocated that have every right also to rights and to be represented, to be able to express themselves culturally, access to services, and then beyond that also have rights to land as well. There needs to be space for those two governance groups in Toronto... with the Indian Act, so many people lost their status. That's why they're in the city. They have to be – that has to be addressed.

These insights are reflected in much of the literature on urban Indigeneity.⁴⁰

While many scholars emphasize the importance of strengthening connections between urban and land-based communities, Lawrence further suggests that this might be advanced through a return to the confederacies, such as the Gdoo-Naaganinaa (discussed in Chapter 3 and above). She writes:

reviving the political confederacies that existed at the time of colonization – as well as creating new ones as a response to specific conditions created by colonization – is probably the most effective means for Native communities to overcome many of the weaknesses imposed by the Indian Act system. With respect to urban Native people, it also represents one of the only possible means by which truly effective political alliances can be created between on-reserve and off-reserve communities, in that the ancient confederacies are built on older ways of understanding Native identity that preceded the Indian Act system and the maze of divisions between Native peoples that it has created. (*Real' Indians* 239-40, see also 239-42)

Thus, as Indigenous participants and Indigenous scholars suggest, the regeneration of Indigeneity and the resurgence of nationhood require direct attention to the complexities of Indigenous conceptions of identity, land, and belonging in and on the urban context.

Conclusion

The City of Toronto is a challenging site for the assertion and enactment of

⁴⁰ For examples, see Lawrence *Real' Indians*; Pitawanakwat; Anderson and Denis (esp. 64-5).

Indigenous sovereignty, but as Lawrence and Pitawanakwat suggest, it is also a site of tremendous anti-colonial potential. For instance, Lawrence notes:

In some respects the cities represent a space where status has already been uncoupled from the position it occupies in reserve settings as a crucial signifier of Indianness... Urban centers, in fact, increasingly represent spaces where boundaries between Native people and dominant society are maintained neither by appearance nor Indian status but primarily by cultural orientation. In this respect they represent a unique place to observe what happens to Native people who lack legal protection of their rights as Indians and who are flexible about the racial boundaries of Indianness. (*Real' Indians* 231)

In a similar vein, Pitawanakwat says,

We need to start thinking about urban communities as legitimate communities, rather than as depositories of poverty and pathology. Urban Native communities are real, they endure, they are growing, and it is long past the time when we can make the mistake of perceiving them as vestiges or missives of some more legitimate land-based community. Moreover, these Native communities both include and transgress existing bureaucratic categories, and they are the source of new forms of culture, association and self-perception – both individual and collective – about what it means to be Aboriginal. That is to say, urban Native communities produce chains of meaning – cultural forms – that adhere specifically to the mental and physical geography of the city and as such may, from time to time, produce political projects that conflict with those issued by land-based Aboriginal communities. (385)

As Pitawanakwat suggests, and as is amply demonstrated in the comments of Indigenous participants above, the decolonizing potential of urban Indigenous activism runs up against many of the divisions created, enforced, and perpetuated by settler colonialism, even as it presents important possibilities for regeneration and resurgence.

Many participants further suggested that the racial diversity of the urban context might present the opportunity to foster fertile alliances against ongoing settler colonialism, and this is the central focus of the next chapter. As one Indigenous participant noted,

But I also see that negotiations, again, have to occur with settlers, and that we can't look at settlers as being homogeneous. And I don't know the extent to

which racialized settlers really look at municipalities, for example, or local governments as representative of their aspirations. And I think in a just society that would have to be addressed.

The next chapter focuses on the possibilities of these alliances, while also attending to what Tuck and Yang conceptualize as incommensurability between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. As one participant cogently argued, Indigenous epistemologies provide important lessons for those seeking to support Indigenous sovereignty movements:

Since we're on Turtle Island, our lead has to be Indigenous worldviews, and ideologies and values of this land. But I'm really – I would really challenge everybody from whatever ethno-cultural background they have, to look at those Indigenous roots, and learn from those knowledges what they can, and what can be applied in today's understanding.

This comment suggests that non-Indigenous people must consider their own histories of identity formation, relationships to Indigenous peoples, land, and belonging, paying close attention to the ways that state policy has attempted to shape these relationships in the interests of settler colonialism, often through citizenship and immigration policies and multiculturalist discourses.

Chapter 5: Alliance and Incommensurability: Indigenous Sovereignty and Migrant Justice

It's a very recent phenomenon where people really, really understand the difference between racialized settler issues and Indigenous issues and yet still find grounds to come together, and to struggle together. (Indigenous participant)

Despite its founding as a white settler nation, racialized migration has been crucial to the construction and maintenance of settler colonialism in Canada. This chapter draws on the insights of Toronto-based migrant justice activists to understand the connections between settler colonialism and immigration and their implications for alliances between migrant justice and Indigenous sovereignty movements. In this chapter, I argue that immigration legislation and hegemonic discourses of multicultural diversity perpetuate settler colonialism, and that as a result, migrant justice movements are positioned in complex and potentially contradictory relationships to Indigenous sovereignty movements. As Tuck and Yang argue, the aims of these movements are incommensurable. While possibilities for alliances exist, these are constrained by the necessity of engaging, at least to an extent, with colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging, particularly as they are enshrined in immigration and citizenship legislation. Despite their reluctance to claim Canadian citizenship as a valuable personal identification, or as the primary aim of their political movements, migrant justice activists point to the many concrete ways that citizenship status (or lack thereof) impacts on their day-to-day lives and their political action, shaping the possibilities of and obstacles to alliances with Indigenous activists against settler colonialism.

The majority of participants in this research project self-identify as people of colour or as racialized immigrants. Of the seventeen migrant justice activists whose interview and focus group data is analyzed in this chapter, eight were born outside of

Canada with citizenship status ranging from full status to permanent resident, refugee, temporary foreign worker, and non-status. Of the nine born in Canada, most are the children of immigrants, while three belong to families who immigrated to Canada two or more generations ago. Of all of the participants born outside of Canada, five self-identify as Indigenous or as having some degree of Indigenous ancestry and heritage in their countries of birth. These participants are grouped together in this chapter because of the ways that state policy and discourse mark non-white bodies as outsiders to the settler state, often conflating immigration, racialization, and Indigeneity in discourses of cultural diversity.⁴¹ My intention is not to reproduce or reify these problematic racializations, but rather to group the insights of these participants together to further examine myriad relationships to settler colonialism and the possibilities and obstacles to meaningful alliances.

The first section of this chapter details participants' insights on the possibilities of alliances between migrant justice and Indigenous sovereignty movements. Participants noted there was tremendous potential for alliance among transnational Indigenous solidarity movements, specifically noting connections between Indigenous sovereignty movements in Canada with some forms of Latin American solidarity action, and with Palestinian liberation struggles. In these instances, connections were facilitated by congruent conceptualizations of identity, land, and belonging, often located in Indigenous worldviews, as well as similar experiences of displacement and the opportunity to challenge the connections among settler states. In contrast, participants identified more tenuous connections with movements seeking some form of inclusion in the Canadian settler colonial polity through the regularization of immigration status or access to Canadian citizenship status.

41 For instance, see Thobani *Exalted*; Lawrence and Dua; Dua, Razack and Warner. For a historical example, see Bohaker and Iacovetta. This conflation of racialization and Indigeneity is discussed in greater depth below.

In order to further examine the complexities of the relationship between immigration and settler colonialism, the second section of this chapter turns to a historical examination of immigration policy. Immigration legislation constructs the immigrant as one who serves settler colonialism and, as a result, is offered some (albeit often provisional) form of belonging within the settler state. Although immigration is positioned as a tool of settler colonialism and as allied with the settler state against Indigenous sovereignty, at other times, particularly in urban contexts, Indigenous peoples and racialized immigrants are similarly positioned as racialized minorities requiring further instruction toward assimilation and citizenship, effectively “making Aboriginals immigrants too” (Bohaker and Iacovetta). Two examples from Toronto are employed to examine these relationships as they were constructed in this settler city and the ramifications of these relationships for further alliance-building under contemporary immigration legislation.

The third section returns to the comments of migrant justice activists, who are well aware of the historical and ongoing complexities of immigration and citizenship policy in the context of settler colonialism. Their reflections on citizenship demonstrate that they are well aware of its importance to settler colonialism, even as they also note that it remains crucially important in their daily lives, and to an extent, for their political movements. They suggested that unsettling colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging, particularly as they are enshrined in citizenship and immigration policy, ought to be a more integral aspect of migrant justice mobilizations. The chapter concludes with participants' reflections on the decolonizing possibilities of complicating the concept of home.

Im/migration, Indigeneity and the Possibilities of Alliance

When asked about potential alliances between migrant justice and Indigenous

sovereignty movements, Indigenous participants consistently responded that the main commonality was in experiences of displacement from land as a result of colonialism.

One Indigenous participant said,

Where do I see commonality, common experiences that would make people want to support each other? I guess the main one is displacement. People who have been forcibly displaced. That's what they both have in common, right? I mean, if we're talking about people who have been forcibly displaced and are seeking refuge here, or who've had to migrate because their countries can't provide for them because of what we're doing over there. Well then, they should have an understanding of what it means to First Nations people to have been displaced onto these reserves, right. Because the reserves aren't – rarely are they the traditional territory in size, or – and many many Native people were nomadic, or migrated, so that no longer happens. So you'd think that would be the most shared experience. That would be one, the main one.

Indeed, several Indigenous participants suggested that ongoing colonial displacement is of concern, noting that many racialized migrants are Indigenous peoples experiencing displacement directly connected to global systems of imperialism and colonialism, rooted in land theft and conquest.

Many participants highlighted hemispheric connections among Indigenous peoples from the Americas and the potential strengths of transnational Indigenous movements. Two participants suggested that the Quebec Summit of the Americas and anti-Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) mobilizations were important moments of transnational collaboration among Indigenous peoples. One Latin American activist noted that these connections stretched back further than this: “Around 1992, there was kind of an upsurge of alliances between Native people in North America and in Latin America and there was a big conference or encounter that took place in Guatemala that was sort of [called] '500 years of Indigenous, Black, and Popular Resistance.’” He went on to note that Indigenous activists from Oka were connected with this organizing, and suggested that this and several other moments could be understood as transnational Indigenous solidarity. In particular, he and other participants spoke about the

importance of the connections forged by late Indigenous activist Rodney Bobiwash, who was instrumental in building alliances between Indigenous peoples in Canada and in Colombia. As this participant noted, “When you have those kinds of links, I think that the divide can be bridged and those mutual complexities of experience... When you go there you're dealing with dynamic movements as well as here, but you need those links, individuals like that, and then after that hopefully more organizational links.” This participant spoke very clearly about the important transnational connections among these movements:

There was an organic link with an Indigenous movement in southern Colombia in Cauca, which is a very powerful movement that has mobilized to consolidate a land base, and at that time, a few years ago, we did organize various educational tours where both Afro-Colombian and Indigenous leaders came and there was a lot of discussion around land, Indigeneity and land issues and sovereignty issues but also around land issues for Afro-Colombians. So in our discourse and the words that we used, issues of Indigeneity and Indigenous rights [were] more prevalent.

Palestinian activists also spoke clearly about the commonalities between settler colonialism in Canada and in Palestine, identifying Palestinians as Indigenous peoples who have been displaced from their lands as a result of settler colonialism. As one Palestinian activist explained,

Yeah, there's a natural connection with Palestinians in Palestine. They immediately recognize – whenever a Palestinian comes here, there's an immediate need to meet the Indigenous population on Turtle Island. I've experienced this with [our organization]. A lot of [our] work involves bringing people as speakers, things like this. And almost always, one of the first things that comes up is, “So where's the Native fighters? Where's 'us' here? I need to meet them.” Whenever we've been able to arrange meetings like this it's been extremely gratifying. Always people will say things like, “When I stand here with Indigenous sovereignty activists, I feel like I'm fighting the occupation in Palestine.”

Indeed, Palestinian activists spoke about relationships among identity, land, and belonging in ways that echo the statements of Indigenous activists. In their comments, it

is clear that the severing of relationships to land and culture brought about by the Israeli occupation of Palestine are at the heart of their political struggle. As one Palestinian activist explained,

In the sense that my belonging is tied to the political struggle, and the political struggle is largely about land, it's about land and people. So the land in that sense is a very strong part of my connection with Palestine. But at the same time as a refugee, I didn't grow up on that land the way that my grandparents would have. So it's not like I know what it smells like, or know what it feels like to plant an olive tree on the land, or these kind of now romanticised notions of what would be a very real thing for a Palestinian peasant who was expelled. For me, land is a political issue more than it is a romantic attachment, or personal attachment, or based on memories, or this kind of thing. But at the same time, when I talk about my family, they're more and more restricted on smaller and smaller pieces of land, and their ability to move between different parts of the land is completely restricted, because they live in what is much like Bantustans in South Africa, or open-air prisons, essentially. So land is a big part of it that way, as well.

This comment echoes the conceptualization of land articulated by Indigenous participants in Chapter 4, particularly in the persistence of relationships to land and community despite displacement and dispossession. In fact, one Indigenous activist suggested that she felt drawn to support the Toronto-based Palestinian movement because of her recognition of this commonality: “It was something that resonated with me because as an Indigenous person, and the whole notion of being thrown off of your land – you know, it was like Turtle Island happening all over again, kind of thing, right? So, it really resonated with me.” In addition to similar relationships to land and displacement, participants also spoke about the transnational connections between the Canadian and Israeli settler states.

As was the case with many Latin American activists, Palestinian and Indigenous activists regarded the corporate and state agents of ongoing colonialism as common enemies. This included multinational corporations, resource extraction and exploration companies, militaries, police forces, and arms traders. One Palestinian activist noted that

there are many systemic and institutional connections between Canadian and Israeli states and corporations, particularly around diamond mining.

With Kashechewan there was a very clear connection. A lot of what's happening in Northern Ontario is actually based on looking for diamond mines and diamond mining, which is spearheaded by De Beers, the South African apartheid corporation. But also the state where most diamond processing happens is Israel, which has a documented connection to the effort to mine the diamonds on Native communities' lands. The spearhead of the diamond discovery operations is largely Israeli companies as well. The diamonds are a very clear connection, where it's Israeli corporations and Israeli entities that are very much a part of the diamond mining industry in Canada, and some of the main beneficiaries of the diamond mining industry in Canada. As a result of the diamond mining, there's this massive displacement of people, and so these links are clear.

Another participant, a white activist with experience in transnational solidarity movements, also pointed to the connections between resource extraction and settler colonialism in different states, and the potential for alliance-building:

[I]f you're going to defeat imperialism globally, you have to watch how much of the wealth and power of these states is dependent on the exploitation of the lands of Indigenous peoples, and if you want to end the colonization of your country where you come from, then you'd better support Indigenous sovereignty struggles here, because otherwise you're never going to be able to achieve it. And that really stuck for me.⁴²

These participants see tremendous potential for alliances between Indigenous sovereignty struggles in Canada and those in other sites. In particular, they highlight the transnational intertwining of projects of settler colonialism and the connections among settler states and multinational corporations. As one Palestinian activist explained,

In terms of other links, it's finding more, like the diamond [mining]: finding out more about how Israeli corporations are part of the genocide project on Turtle Island. There's a lot of collaboration that isn't necessarily that an Israeli corporation is spearheading the diamond mining operation on the land that's being occupied. There's things like Ontario [Provincial] Police a couple of

⁴² This participant explained that this insight was inspired in part by a recent talk by Ward Churchill. A similar position is outlined in Churchill's article "Self-Determination and the Fourth World: An Introductory Survey".

years ago were sent over to Palestine to do counter-terrorist training. And a lot of people saw this as in preparation for things that are happening in Six Nations now, or operations against Indigenous people. How to set up checkpoints, how to deal with people who are completely tied to the land, how you break these people.

The importance of understanding the transnational links that perpetuate settler colonialism in Canada and in Palestine was also noted by an Indigenous participant who suggested that working transnationally against settler colonialism may prove mutually beneficial:

I came to realize and to be – or at least to recognize that – and this sounds trite but I'll explain it – our liberation is tied up with their liberation because Canada and the United States are benefactors of the Israeli government. And our colonizers are weakened by that struggle to the degree that it can be successful, right? So, there's a concrete benefit as well as, you know, that spiritual connection that we feel, and a historic connection as well. So, again, I don't want to sound trite because I said our struggle was their struggle with other people, and I think that people read that as something that's very simplistic... But it isn't. It's a much deeper understanding of our liberation and our issues being intimately connected.

This participant cautiously qualifies her comments, underscoring the importance of avoiding simplistic equivocation. Indeed, several Palestinian and Indigenous activists pointed to the complexities of building these alliances in the Canadian context.

Palestinian organizers suggested that because of their intimate familiarity with the workings of settler colonialism, they were well aware of the complexities of organizing as racialized migrants or racialized settlers in a context of ongoing land theft and genocide. As one organizer explained,

The activism and solidarity work that [our organization] does is essentially work to support a national liberation movement where Indigenous people were colonized and the Israeli apartheid system was imposed on us. But we're doing it from a place, or in a place, here in Turtle Island, that experienced something not identical but similar in the sense that it was a colonization project.

In his attention to the commonalities between Indigenous sovereignty organizing in

Canada and Palestinian liberation movements, this participant also reflected carefully on responsibility and accountability when engaged in anti-colonial organizing from within a deeply colonial context. An Indigenous participant relayed her discussions with Palestinian activists about how they might meet such responsibilities and address such complexities:

In the process of working with them, and being pressed to help them understand sovereignty issues as well, something very interesting happened... which was that a number of the activists in [the organization] were talking about the struggle being here first. That if you're living here, and you're working here, and you're benefiting from the genocide, then you have a responsibility to be an activist on Indigenous issues here. And so there were all kinds of discussions, and they're still ongoing, about balance of time that you devote to one or the other, whether [the organization] should be re-mandated, all this kind of stuff.

Although she did not feel that this degree of re-orientation was called for, this Indigenous participant clearly appreciated that relationships of complicity and commitments to Indigenous sovereignty were being taken seriously by Palestinian activists. In turn, Palestinian activists spoke about the complexity of their relationships to land and belonging in Canada, including their citizenship status. This led Palestinian activists to assert that meaningful alliances must begin from Indigenous knowledge and leadership, and must continue to make meaningful contributions to Indigenous sovereignty struggles here, where and as possible.

One participant further suggested that this work of solidarity also extended to spreading the word about settler colonialism and Indigenous sovereignty outside of Canada: "I think there needs to be more education in Palestine or more awareness-raising in Palestine of the specifics of what's happening in Turtle Island. It's something that we as Palestinians could and should do more of." Indeed, many participants proposed that targeting the tourism industry and international reputation of the Canadian state were viable strategies to pursue. Their comments point to the importance

of challenging settler colonialism in all of its guises and the potential for alliances among activists who possess an intimate knowledge of the ways that settler colonialism functions.

Participants suggested that alliances with immigrant-rights and anti-racist movements in Canada were somewhat more complicated than those who actions focused on the liberation of – and eventual return to – their home countries (this is a theme to which I return below). While readily acknowledging the importance of supporting Indigenous-led struggles for sovereignty, many participants suggested that there was a dearth of historical and contemporary knowledge about Indigenous peoples among newcomers. As one Latin American participant explained,

I think a lot of immigrants and refugees who come here don't realize there's colonization... They don't realize that that's happening here... And it's happening now. So I think that for refugees and immigrants, it has to be an active learning, unearthing from the history of Canada, because it's not being told. And the mainstream has maintained that mythology of Canada as good, as benevolent, different than the [United] States, and as a nation involved in peacekeeping missions. You know, all this kind of mythology – that we live in a state of law, all of those things. I think that needs to be actively deconstructed, especially on how it relates to people who are Indigenous.

Several participants pointed out that immigrants' historical and contemporary understanding is deeply shaped by citizenship and immigration systems. As one Indigenous participant explained, “One of the guys I worked closely with, he was becoming a Canadian citizen at that time, and I remember him studying. And I was like, ‘Okay, well I'll help you study.’ And I'm reading [the citizenship guide] and there's not a mention of any Native anything here!” A white participant similarly suggested that the process of gaining citizenship status deeply shapes understandings of relationships to the state, and to Indigenous peoples:

And you know the process of becoming a citizen of Canada, too. The things that people have to stand up and say and what they're supposed to learn about the history of the country, and what official definition of what it means to be a

Canadian, how grotesquely that clashes against radical visions of the way the community could be built and how we should be living on this land and so on and so forth.

Indeed, many participants suggested that citizenship policy and discourse shape relationships to the state, to land, and to Indigenous peoples for newcomers and people of colour. As Lawrence and Dua explain: “Marginalized by a white settler nationalist project, as citizens [peoples of color] are nonetheless invited to take part in ongoing colonialism” (133). Many of the migrant justice activists that I spoke with were well aware of this tension, and of the contradiction between struggles for citizenship, regularization and access to the provisions of social citizenship, and their stated commitments to Indigenous sovereignty. They also pointed to the recent potential and the limitations of renewed attempts to build substantive alliances across these very different positions.

Many participants spoke about the emergence of new alliances between 2002 and 2004. As one Indigenous activist explained, “What happened was that the [anti-]FNGA movement here in Toronto coincided with the bombing of Baghdad. And so we thought, okay, it never happened before but we’ve got these connections now.” Over the ensuing months, Indigenous activists invited migrant justice, Palestinian rights, anti-war, and anti-racist activists to attend Indigenous sovereignty demonstrations and also made efforts to attend their events. As one Indigenous activist explained,

We kind of took them at face value and we started participating in their activities and infusing our stuff in there. And it seemed to do the trick. I mean not everybody that came to us initially really had a deep understanding of what the issues were but through working with us, they came to an understanding, so much so that, as I say, they put their lives on the line, [laugh] which is pretty remarkable.

For Indigenous activists, the link among these movements was that they were opposing settler colonial state action in Toronto, in Canada, and internationally. As the Indigenous

activist cited above explains, “We did both. I mean I’m just as concerned – I was just as concerned at the time about the Baghdad thing.” Many participants suggested that this was an unprecedented coming together across movements, although these connections were not always easy to sustain, as is discussed in greater depth below.

The other important moment that many participants spoke about was the Six Nations reclamation of land under intensive suburban development near Caledonia, Ontario (which is taken up in greater detail in Chapter 6). In particular, a number of participants suggested that this issue led to unprecedented alliance-building between Indigenous and racialized migrant justice activists. Two Indigenous participants wondered to what extent meaningful connections had been created through organizing around Six Nations, and to what degree this kind of crisis-emergency organizing facilitated meaningful connections between urban and land-based Indigenous communities, as well as with racialized settlers. They wondered whether these high intensity moments of mobilization might further stretch activists, organizations, and communities.

Several Indigenous participants spoke specifically about the roles of non-Indigenous settler activists or allies in the land reclamation, and this is also a discussion that has surfaced in several progressive publications.⁴³ One Indigenous participant suggested,

I’m not sure how much being involved in Six Nations has really furthered settler awareness of Indigenous issues. What I kind of suspect is that the majority of settlers that have been involved on the ground at Six Nations were people who were already aware and had already done a fair bit of work, first of all. I do believe that there are many people that have grown and learned through the process. But I think the people who have been majorly, majorly involved... were already there to begin with across the board.

However, this participant observed an important distinction in the support that racialized

43 For instance, see Amadahy “The Role of Settlers”; Keefer “Contradictions” and “The Politics of Solidarity.” The roles of white settler activists in supporting the reclamation are also examined in Chapter 6.

activists provided for the reclamation:

What I did notice, in terms of differences – and I’m going to generalize because it’s not going to apply to everybody – but again, in terms of the racialized settlers who went out on the ground to support Six Nations, that support was very... let me say strategic, very, well, strategic might be the word. And I think the reason is that they were there specifically when they were called, specifically to respond to immediate threats and crises. They responded in specific ways that they were asked to respond. And they always, always worked with the Indigenous caucus here in Toronto around that stuff. And the reason that I think that that was – that it was done that way, which I think is the model way to do it, because Six Nations has to be – the reclamation has to be sustained by first of all the community and secondly by Indigenous people. And it doesn’t matter whether settlers are out there or not. I mean there might be key moments when settlers being there matters for other reasons, but if they’re going to hold onto that territory, it has to be they that hold onto it... I think they also brought with them a certain kind of understanding about the fact because they’ve experienced themselves... an understanding and an awareness that the struggle had to be Indigenous-led, that their role was not to infiltrate decision-making, and that they had a very limited and specific role to play... in terms of their solidarity.

This participant also suggested that the urgency of anti-deportation, Palestinian liberation, and other movements also forced racialized activists to think strategically about how they could effectively support the reclamation while also attending to these other pressing issues. But beyond the issues of time and strategy, many activists noted that very different relationships were possible between racialized and Indigenous activists, both in the city and at Kanonstaton. For instance, one white settler activist observed that while at Kanonstaton,

I listened to a lot of incredible conversations about land. It happened almost right away when people met, after the initial [introductions]... and the suspicion and mistrust went away a lot faster... There were a couple of conversations that I will never forget, for sure, where people had a back and forth, minor history lessons exchanged about Palestine and about the Six Nations community in particular. And then this immediate understanding of a common enemy and a shared struggle.

These connections were most evident among Indigenous, Palestinian, and Tamil activists

– those who might be identified as racialized migrants, rather than racialized settlers. In other words, these activists were focused primarily on organizing around their countries of birth and affiliation, not primarily on gaining rights and inclusion within the Canadian settler state, even if some of them did have some form of Canadian citizenship (the complexities of this position are explored in greater depth below). This distinction between anti-colonial or national liberation movements and migrant justice or anti-racist organizing, which might be more appropriately conceptualized as racialized settler organizing is important. In many regards, participants suggested that relationships to land and the understanding of relationships to land, beyond those embedded in settler colonial policy and discourse, were the most important sites of potential alliance across these complex positions.

Many participants suggested that there was still much work to be done to forge meaningful alliances among Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. Reflecting on some of their attempts to attend to the complex relationships between settler colonialism, immigration, and racism at a Toronto demonstration targeting the FNCA, one participant recalled:

That was an event where there were a lot of blank looks among the Native people in the crowd... Some of the allies did a really good job of presenting the links and others didn't at all. Unfortunately, I think it was [a migrant justice organization] that didn't do a good job at all. And people were like "What the fuck are they doing here and what has it got to do with us?"... And I think there was a Palestinian or an Arab person who was really getting it. It was like yeah, this is why we're allies. But [an Indigenous activist in a leadership position] was saying to me that there are people who aren't getting what the connection here is at all. We have to be more explicit in how we delineate that.

As this participant noted, the complex and potentially complicit positioning of racialized migrants and racialized settlers in the settler colonial context of Canada requires careful theorizing and analysis. As another Indigenous participant noted,

If there's no analysis of sovereignty issues in Canada then who's to say that immigrants won't come here and just replicate everything that's already been done. I think that if we can make connections, meaningful connections, because we do have a lot of commonalities – a lot of immigrants are from countries that have been colonized. We do face a lot of the same social issues, and we can be allies and strengthen each other's movements, or not movements, but interests.

Indeed, the most promising moments of alliance noted by participants were those in which settler colonialism was regarded as the “common enemy”, but simplistic equivocation was avoided. The possibilities for meaningful alliances were located in asserting Indigenous sovereignty, acknowledging the ways that the settler state continues to attempt to eliminate Indigenous peoples and their sovereignty, and attending to the ways in which immigration and citizenship policies advance settler colonial dominance. This approach was favoured over others which conflate myriad anti-racist, anti-colonial and migrant justice struggles with those of Indigenous peoples. According to participants, fruitful alliances require some understanding of the role of immigration in settler colonialism and the displacement of Indigenous peoples, theft of their territories, and subordination of Indigenous cultural and political practice, as well as attention to the processes through which immigrants were and are made into settler-citizens, and the complex role of racialization in this process. As Andrea Smith suggests, building meaningful alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements requires understanding and questioning “the settler-colonial logics that make 'immigration' an issue to begin with” (“Foreword” ix). Smith further explains that careful and critical work is needed:

Solidarity work between immigrant peoples, nonimmigrant people of color, and Indigenous peoples must go beyond coalition politics based on the assumption that we are all 'oppressed.' Rather, Harsha asks us to look at how anti-immigrant xenophobia, white supremacy, and settler colonialism are mutually reinforcing in ways that actually prevent us from seeing how these logics are fully connected. Only by doing the kind of careful intellectual and activist work needed to understand how these logics are interrelated can we

be in a position to dismantle them. (xiii)

Toward this end, the next section of this chapter examines the historical construction of immigration policy in Canada as a central aspect of the project of building the settler state. These policies have entrenched a complex racial hierarchy that continues to shape relationships to identity, land, and belonging for racialized subjects and immigrants, with direct implications for the possibilities of alliance with Indigenous sovereignty movements.

Racialization, Migration, and Settler Colonialism

Although racialized migration has long been a central facet of settler colonialism in Canada, not all racialized migrants are or were settlers. In this section, I argue that immigration policy must be understood in historical relationship to settler colonialism and Indigenous sovereignty in order to consider the ways that relationships to and positions within the settler state shape the possibilities of alliance. I am not suggesting that state policy determines all aspects of life or social movements, but rather that it has a significant impact which must be accounted for in attempts to build alliances.

The historical material presented in this chapter demonstrates that before Confederation, immigration was conflated with settlement, although it quickly became a way of differentiating between the exalted national subject and the racialized immigrant. Both of these positionalities were constructed against the figure of the Indigenous person. Moreover, the construction of the legal category of immigrant throughout the first decade of the twentieth century must be understood as positioned against both the settler-citizen (which was only defined in immigration policy at this point) and the status Indian.

These divisions were further enforced in urban contexts, including in the City of Toronto. Early measures sought to maintain spatial separation between Indigenous and

immigrant communities, and to exclude Indigenous peoples from settler cities. By contrast, later measures attempted to manage racial differences while maintaining white settler colonial dominance through the language of cultural diversity, in which Indigenous peoples came to be constructed as yet another culture within the settler domain. While the genealogy presented here is admittedly partial, it provides some historical insight into the contemporary possibilities for and obstacles to alliance, and positions the settler city as an important, albeit not utopian site for different enactments of identity, land, and belonging.

Thobani points out that immigration policies were central to establishing, maintaining and normalizing white dominance within the nascent settler state (*Exalted* 74-5). Indeed, in the years before Confederation there was little initial concern with legislating immigration. Immediately following the British North America Act, immigration was regarded as an important way of building the nation and replicating the British social order. After Confederation and well into the 1880s, immigration was explicitly regarded as a form of settlement, and newcomers recruited from the north of England and from Scotland were called “settlers” in official correspondence (Sifton quoted in Thobani *Exalted* 288 n44). As Thobani notes, this group was not homogenous in terms of ethnicity or class, but “their classification as preferred race and, hence, as future citizens, provided them with significant opportunities for land ownership and upward socio-economic mobility” (*Exalted* 83). Future citizenship, or suitability for future citizenship, was the primary principle that conferred status as a settler (Thobani *Exalted* 83). This criterion was increasingly contested as the racialization of newcomers changed. As a result, state policy began to construct the legislative category of immigrant, in contrast to definitions of alien, and citizen.

The need to balance the white settler agenda with the labour demands of industrial and agricultural expansion meant that “the exigencies of settling the country

soon required the immigration of other Europeans, as well as non-Europeans” (Thobani *Exalted* 83). As Europeans from non-preferred countries and non-Europeans increasingly migrated to Canada, Thobani notes that the legislative category of immigrant became increasingly racialized and gradually detached from its presumed association with settler citizenship. In other words, the terms settler and immigrant were no longer synonymous, and the distance between them was marked primarily by racial difference (*Exalted* 91). This racialization served both to homogenize racial differences among newcomers and to entrench white superiority and supremacy. Most importantly, it also rendered the settler “native,” an authority crucial both to assertions of state sovereignty and to the ongoing dispossession and violent subordination of Indigenous peoples.

The differentiation between immigrant and settler-citizen was further elaborated through legislation that sought to limit the arrival and subsequent access to the benefits of settlement of Chinese men. Although their work was crucial to the establishment and expansion of settler colonialism, Chinese labourers were never regarded as potential settler-citizens, and settler violence combined with exclusionary legislation in the latter 1880s – once the national railway had been completed – stand as clear evidence of this circumscribed position. This is most evident in the 1884 Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration, which was called in part to balance the economic need for cheap and exploitable labour with the increasing racist sentiments of white settlers (Li *The Chinese in Canada* 28-9). As Peter Li notes, neither the timing nor the outcome of this legislation were incidental. In addition to the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, 1885 was marked by the explosive uprising of the Métis in the North-West Rebellion. Combined, these events bolstered demands that Chinese immigration be curtailed, and legislators sought to increase the immigration of more “desirable” settlers, particularly those regarded as suitable to further claim and settle on Indigenous lands. Subsequently, immigration policy throughout the first decade of the twentieth century focused on

creating and enforcing categories of exclusion, often employing gender as a mechanism of differentiating between immigrants seen as potential future settler-citizens, from those marked for temporary migration.

As Thobani points out, “In the first decade of the twentieth century, immigration accounted for 44 percent of the growth in the population. The restrictions on non-white immigration ensured that the majority of this growth remained white” (Thobani *Exalted* 92). The 1906 Immigration Act provided the first full legal definition of the term immigrant.⁴⁴ Although this lengthy definition is fairly broad, this Act also increased “the government's power to deport certain classes of immigrants... [and] decree[d] the amount of 'landing money' immigrants needed to have in their possession on arrival” (Knowles *Forging Our Legacy* 32). While previous legislation had governed such matters, Valerie Knowles suggests that this legislation “differed in degree, significantly increasing the number of categories of prohibited immigrants and officially sanctioning the deportation of undesirable newcomers” (*Forging Our Legacy* 32).

Passed with little debate, the 1910 revisions to the Immigration Act further conferred “on the Cabinet the authority to exclude 'immigrants belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada’” (Knowles *Forging Our Legacy* 33). Hence decades of explicitly racialized exclusion were established in the first legislation governing immigration, and immigration was gradually differentiated from settler citizenship.

These revisions introduced one of the first definitions of citizenship in Canadian policy, decades before the first Citizenship Act. In this legislation, care is taken to

⁴⁴ The full definition from section 2(a) of the legislation reads, “Immigrant means and includes any steerage passenger or any 'work-a-way' on any vessel whether or not entered as a member of the crew after the vessel has sailed from its first or last port of departure, any saloon passenger or second class passenger or person who having been a member of the crew has ceased to be such who upon inspection is found to come within any class liable to exclusion from Canada, and any person arriving in Canada by railway train or other mode of travel; but it does not include any person who has previously resided in Canada or who is a tourist merely passing through Canada to another country” (Canada *Immigration Act 1906*).

differentiate between an alien, or a person who is not a British subject, according to Article 2(e), and a Canadian citizen, who is identified as a person born in Canada, a British subject, or a person who has been naturalized (see Article 2(f)). The immigrant is identified as “a person who enters Canada with the intention of acquiring Canadian domicile” (3). Hence, the immigrant is granted provisional access to the Canadian state and settlement project, under the assumption that they will seek Canadian citizenship. In turn, the immigrant becomes literally invested in the project of settler colonialism and the displacement and subordination of Indigenous peoples upon which the project is predicated.

Gender was a central mechanism through which immigration policy sought to differentiate between future settler-citizens and those regarded as unassimilable racial outsiders. Thobani notes that specific immigration campaigns focused on the recruitment of European women, while “women of the non-preferred races were constituted as morally degenerate, sexually depraved, and endowed with a fecundity more animalistic than human. Keeping them out of the country was considered a special priority of immigration policies” (*Exalted* 92). Chinese and South Asian women were regarded as particularly threatening to the settler order.⁴⁵ While the head tax and related exclusionary legislation served as effective checks on the immigration of racialized women, it was hoped that their relative absence would further limit the settlement aims of South Asian and Chinese men. Gendered discourses of purity were linked to fears of miscegenation (see Mar; Backhouse) and became effective fodder for immigration reform, assimilationist programs aimed at women (as detailed below), and discussions about the expansion of the franchise (see Chapter 6).

The identification of “undesirable newcomers” initiated in immigration legislation reflected growing societal unease with racialized migration during this time period. At

⁴⁵ For example, see Mar; Backhouse; Dua.

the same time, immigration was also part of the settler colonial strategy, emphasizing industrial production and the expansion of the colonial project. Amendments to the Indian Act throughout this period continued to enact assimilation and containment. The creation of residential schools, bans on cultural practice, and interference in systems of governance, traditional land-based practices, including hunting and fishing, and ongoing violent reprisals by state officials and settler-citizens all marked this period of settler state consolidation (see Chapter 4). There is little historical material on the day-to-day relationships between Indigenous peoples and racialized newcomers.⁴⁶ It is quite possible that then, as now, these groups were each focused on their own struggles to survive and resist. It is equally possible that, in many instances, newcomers adhered to the existing colonial discourse which constructed Indigenous peoples as outsiders to the nation and saw assimilation as the only possible future. In this regard, immigration and citizenship policy served as effective conduits for ongoing settler colonialism, shaping newcomers into settlers to the extent that they were granted inclusion in the settler polity, even if the benefits of being a settler were delimited by racialization. As Thobani suggests, “[a]s racially excluded immigrants sought to expand the institution of citizenship to accommodate their own demands for inclusion, they left largely unchallenged the role of this institution in the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples” (*Exalted* 76). Ongoing revisions to the Indian Act and the Immigration Act perpetuated these relationships of complicity, as did many of the programs designed to shape newcomers into settler-citizens. These tensions were particularly pronounced in urban settings. As Edmonds suggests, “settler-colonial cities were often the greatest sites of Indigenous-newcomer contestation” (4). Toronto was no exception.

⁴⁶ Some material can be found on Chinese-Indigenous relations in British Columbia (see Chung; Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia). There is also a growing body of literature on Black-Indigenous relationships, particularly on the East Coast (see Madden; Chung; Tiffany King).

'Toronto Welcomes All!': Settling the City

Victoria Freeman explains that “In 1884, Toronto was the capital of Ontario and a rapidly industrializing lake port and railway hub, a regional centre on its way to becoming a national metropolis, as the Canadian Pacific Railway lines linking it to the west would be completed the following year” (“Toronto” 22). Of the city's population, she further notes that “In 1882, its population had been 86,000 but was rapidly increasing... More than 93 per cent of the population was of British heritage and a majority were Canadian-born; according to the 1881 census there were also about 2,000 Germans, 1,200 French, 124 Jews, 103 Italians, and smaller numbers of people of other origins. Indigenous peoples were not listed as a distinct category” (“Toronto” 22). In her discussion of the events held in 1884 to commemorate the anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Toronto, Freeman outlines the careful manipulation of racial and cultural differences.

Freeman notes that the event's speakers and the subsequent parade celebrated the modernity of the city and the nation, carefully manipulating the intertwined colonial histories of city- and state-building. She observes that many of the commemoration's speakers employed the “oft-repeated trope that the site of Toronto was a virtually empty, virgin land or terra nullius when the British arrived and the Mississaugas were purely ‘nomadic’” (Freeman “Toronto” 25). Freeman goes on to explain: “This discourse suggested that the pre-urban past of Toronto was not history because it was not civilized; it was instead only the timeless moment of savagery” (“Toronto” 30). The spatial narrative of settlement mobilized at this event was that European (British, in particular) colonizers took the land “from savagery to settlement; from no property to private property; from waste to improvement” (Blomley 17).

Freeman notes that in obfuscating the colonial history of the founding of the city, settler officials took great care to account for the ongoing presence of Indigenous peoples

and to re-write the history of relations between Indigenous peoples and colonizers. As Freeman explains, “The underlying attitude seems to have been that ‘while an Indian might be of the land, he/she was not worthy of it, and had no legitimate, or respectable claim to it’, and that the British, by virtue of their evident cultural and moral superiority, deserved to be its rightful owners” (“Toronto” 28). Yet the presence and claims of Indigenous peoples could not be easily dismissed. Freeman notes that city officials also employed a narrative of Indigenous people as “good helpers,” and that Indigenous people were represented as “uniformly welcoming British rule and the founding of the city” (“Toronto” 27). Relations were presented as cooperative, despite clear historical and ongoing assertions to the contrary.⁴⁷

Given the difficulty of reconciling Indigenous presence and sovereignty over the land being urbanized, practices of settler colonialism sought to spatially and discursively mark urban spaces as distinctly non-Indigenous. The circumscribed representations of Indigenous peoples in the 1884 commemoration can be seen as attempts to symbolically and spatially maintain the separation between Indigenous people and the settler city. Having somewhat reconciled the place of Indigenous peoples as helpers and supporters of the city, but not of or in the contemporary city, the commemoration concluded with a gesture toward the growing diversity of the city. Describing the final tableau in the parade, Freeman recounts:

“Toronto Welcomes All” offered a representation of inclusivity that included everyone but First Nations, prefiguring the city’s later discourse of multiculturalism... The narrative arc of the parade tableaux was that Native people of the Toronto area, recognizing the superiority of British culture, had

⁴⁷ Freeman notes: “It was true that early relations between settlers and Indigenous people in the Toronto area had rarely been overtly violent, but, for several years after the founding of York, settlers had feared that the Mississaugas would join a threatened alliance of Western Indians and attack their isolated settlement. An uprising very nearly did occur in 1796 when Mississauga chief Wabakinine was murdered on the waterfront by a British soldier who had tried to prostitute Wabakinine’s sister, a far cry from the happy relations depicted in the tableaux [mounted for the civic commemoration in 1884]. The tableaux also entirely ignored the role of local settlers in the dispossession of the Mississaugas. According to Mississauga petitions, the settlers had not helped them with farming as promised, but had run them off the land” (“Toronto Has No History” 28).

voluntarily made way for a virtuous and lawful British society, which in turn offered unprejudiced opportunity to multicultural immigrants. ("Toronto" 28)

The enforced invisibility of Indigenous peoples and the careful manipulation of narratives of inclusion are evident in this early gesture toward the discourse of cultural pluralism which has come to be a distinctive feature of Canadian nationalism, particularly as articulated in Toronto.

The gesture of welcoming serves to maintain the discursive inscription of the city as a settler space, normalizing the power of settler city officials to welcome various guests and newcomers. Similar discourses of hospitality are critiqued by Thobani (*Exalted* 150-5), foreshadowing the ways that urban multiculturalist discourses would later be employed to mark urban space as white, and various others as out of place in the urban setting. In addition to the displacement of Indigenous peoples and ongoing assertions that Indigeneity was irreconcilable with urbanity (see Chapter 4), immigration policy and urban settlement programs further served to differentiate among variously racialized subjects and to carefully manage their relationships to settler power.

Turning Indigenous Peoples and Immigrants into Urban Citizens

Thobani notes that the postwar context was one in which state officials increasingly needed to secure settler dominance, suggesting that as a result of successful anti-colonial and national liberation movements, as well as international Indigenous rights organizing (*Exalted* 151), "the previously secure sense of whiteness became deeply destabilized, haunted by its associations with colonial genocides and Nazi policies of extermination" (*Exalted* 148). As Sourayan Mookerjea, Imre Szeman, and Gail Faurschou suggest, postwar Canada was a nation "without a clear cultural identity, even if desperately in need of one" (21). Federal policy during the postwar era demonstrated an ongoing concern with identity, land, and belonging, as evidenced in legislation on citizenship. The first Citizenship Act was implemented in 1947, and important changes

were made to both the Indian Act and the Immigration Act in the early 1950s. As racialized immigration continued during the period of significant industrial growth from 1950 to the 1970s (see Li *Destination Canada* 97), citizenship was increasingly regarded as the solution to the perceived threats of cultural diversity and to the underlying tensions of the settler colonial order. Much of the attention to culture, difference, and citizenship during this period focused on the urban context.

The increasing emphasis on citizenship as a mechanism of assimilation is evident in the 1950 creation of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration (DCI), a combination of Indian Affairs and the Canadian Citizenship Branch (Bohaker and Iacovetta 428). As Prime Minister St. Laurent stated at the time, this move sought “to make Canadian citizens of those who come here as immigrants and to make Canadian citizens of as many as possible of the descendents of the original inhabitants of this country” (quoted in Bohaker and Iacovetta 428-9). Heidi Bohaker and Franca Iacovetta argue that although Indigenous peoples were treated differently under the programs developed by this merged department, “the DCI’s dual mandate was part of a deliberate policy to deal with two populations perceived by the federal government to be potentially threatening” (430). In particular, the initiative focused on Indigenous people holding federal Indian status and living on reserves. Those living in urban areas, regardless of their formal status, were regarded as falling outside of the purview of the DCI.

The initiatives of the DCI demonstrate an attempt to “target both groups with similar citizenship programs that would foster an explicit sense of Canadian identity” (Bohaker and Iacovetta 435). In particular, the discursive construction of Canada as a “nation of immigrants,” coupled with references to Indigenous peoples’ migrations from reserves to cities (constructed as a “culture shift”) and reiterations of the Bering Strait theory, served to construct Indigenous peoples as migrants too, albeit “ancient” migrants

(see Bohaker and Iacovetta 435). In this way, violent colonial processes of displacement and dispossession were overwritten with a nationalist narrative that neatly curtailed the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples and the instability of the settler colonial state.

In their discussion of the DCI's programs to make immigrants and Indigenous people into Canadians, Bohaker and Iacovetta describe the gendered, middle-class, capitalist order being advanced by state managers. In particular, culture was regarded as a means of fostering national unity while furthering ideas about the benevolence and tolerance of the settler state. For newcomers, programs focused on celebrations of food, dance, and other narrowly defined aspects of cultural tradition. As Bohaker and Iacovetta explain, "such strategies for celebrating individual talents or mounting cultural performances did not challenge existing structures of mainstream society" (438). Notably, programs designed for Indigenous people "were characterized by a more marked policy of racial assimilation into white society" (Bohaker and Iacovetta 443), a seeming indication that Indigenous cultures were seen as particularly irreconcilable with the Canadian culture being actively constructed. Bohaker and Iacovetta note that the initiatives designed for Indigenous people focused on "specific educational programs: formal schooling for children, and leadership and vocational training for adults" (443), along with such programs as job training and apprenticeships, recreational and cultural programs, and youth leadership training courses.

Many of the programs created by the DCI focused on the development of gender-appropriate engagement in capitalism. For immigrant and Indigenous women, training in domestic labour was particularly emphasized. Bohaker and Iacovetta note that "As in the case of immigrant domestic schemes, the job training was also expected to equip these young women for eventual marriage and modern homemaking" (443). The emphasis on homemakers' clubs is particularly instructive of the racial divisions underpinning such citizenship initiatives. As Bohaker and Iacovetta explain,

The reserve-based clubs for Aboriginal women remained entirely separate from the main organization, despite the latter's stated interest in encouraging Indian integration into white society... By contrast, the immigrant mothers' clubs and related programs in major cities created comparatively more opportunities for cross-cultural conversations among Canadian volunteers and newcomer women and among different groups of newcomer mothers. (445-6)

Moreover, despite the stated aims of such programs to ensure the adoption of middle-class gender relations, there was no attempt to transform class status through vocational or other training (see Bohaker and Iacovetta pages 446-7). This limitation was particularly the case for programs designed for Indigenous people (Bohaker and Iacovetta 447).

Finally, while many of the DCI's programs were designed specifically for Indigenous people living on reserves, Bohaker and Iacovetta remark that beginning in the 1950s, there was a marked focus on providing training programs to encourage the "urban immigration" of Indigenous people, with the hope that "those trained in a trade or service would relocate to urban settings and establish themselves as 'property-owners and wage earners,' albeit at the bottom end of the socio-economic spectrum" (449). In addition, Bohaker and Iacovetta note that "beginning in the 1950s, but accelerating rapidly in the 1960s, the Citizenship Branch of the DCI was involved in sponsoring, funding, and monitoring the activities of voluntary groups (such as church organizations) and volunteer agencies and academic experts dealing with Aboriginal people in urban settings" (452). According to these same scholars, such measures stand as evidence that "in order to be considered citizens, Aboriginal Canadians had to 'immigrate' from peripheral reserves to mainstream Canadian communities in a manner metaphorically similar to the journey taken by the refugees who left Europe's DP camps and immigrants who fled its impoverished regions" (453). Once located in cities, state officials also took care to manage potential encounters between Indigenous peoples and immigrants, with a focus on cultural encounter, emphasizing dance and "multi-ethnic"

folk festivals, in particular (Bohaker and Iacovetta 453-4). As Bohaker and Iacovetta note, such “cultural spectacles!... had the effect of reducing Native peoples to one of Canada’s many ‘ethnic groups’ and both groups to primitive ‘folk’ bearing quaint customs” (454).

Bohaker and Iacovetta regard the joint programs of the DCI as extensions of previous programs of assimilation and cultural genocide, noting that the express goal was the termination of Indian status and the complete assimilation of Indigenous people into Canadian society, albeit as one piece of a colourful “mosaic” (see pages 455-6). Citizenship, immigration, and multiculturalism policies were thus all constructed in the interests of perpetuating settler colonialism. In addition to the DCI's initiatives, settler state officials were also actively reworking the citizenship regime along the lines of immigration, Indigeneity, and racialization. This re-working is evident in the intertwining of liberalized immigration policy, official multiculturalism policy, and proposed changes to the Indian Act, all taking place in the 1970s.

As the policy history traced in this section demonstrates, immigration and multiculturalism legislation were mapped onto one another, both invested in upholding settler colonialism and, therefore, in the displacement of Indigenous peoples and the subordination of Indigenous sovereignty. These new policies must be read alongside the revisions of the Indian Act proposed in 1969 with the Hawthorne Report and the Federal White Paper on Indian Affairs, both of which recommended the elimination of the Indian Act and of Indian status and their replacement with state citizenship. Through the conflation of immigration with racialization, the gradual conflation of immigration and Indigeneity, and the depoliticization of culture alongside the exaltation of citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism policy are central to historical and ongoing settler colonialism, with direct implications for Indigenous sovereignty and anti-colonial organizing in cities like Toronto. As Amadahy and Lawrence note:

While debates on multiculturalism are considerable, multiculturalism as a policy can be considered to have had three primary effects. First of all, it has contained insurgent diasporic communities in subordinate positions to the two so-called founding races (British and French). Secondly it has enabled those diasporic communities to make limited claims on the state in the name of multiculturalism, for services and support, and often in the process, to engage in antiracist resistance. Finally, the multiculturalism policy profoundly strengthened Canada's attempts to divest itself of any formal recognition of Indigenous peoples, by creating a playing field where Aboriginal peoples could potentially be reduced to "just another cultural group" within a multicultural mosaic. (115)

As participants suggest, these changes demonstrate the ways that state policies and discourses continues to attempt to reconcile diversity with white settler dominance and state-building. Multiculturalism policy and discourses may have done tremendous damage to the insurgent potential of anti-racist and anti-colonial movements, weakening their potential to effectively counter the next wave of proposed changes to citizenship, immigration, and Indian Act policies.

Indigeneity, Precarious Immigration, and Terrorism

As is evident above, historically, amendments to immigration and citizenship legislation often simultaneously targeted Indian Act legislation, and recent history is not exception. Beginning in 2001, changes to the Indian Act, Immigration Act, and the Citizenship Act suggest a renewed pre-occupation with citizenship among settler state officials. Bill C-11, which became the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), was first introduced in 2001. The First Nations Governance Act (FNGA) was proposed as a replacement for the Indian Act in October of 2002, with public meetings (and widespread opposition) taking place from January to March of 2003 (Hurley 1). This legislation died on the Order Paper when Parliament was prorogued in November 2003 (Hurley 2), but aspects of the proposed legislation continue to be implemented through other means.⁴⁸ Also scrapped in November 2003 was Bill C-18, which proposed changes

48 For example, some aspects reappeared in the omnibus budget, passed in the fall of 2012 despite

to the Citizenship Act (similar changes were proposed in Bill C-16, which also died on the Order Papers in 1999). Subsequent amendments to the Citizenship Act were introduced in Bill C-37 (which focused on “lost Canadians” and received Royal Assent in the spring of 2008), and in Bill C-24, named the *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act*, which came into force in June 2014.

Combined, this legislation maintains the settler colonial citizenship order. Although the legislation demonstrates a clear attempt to differentiate among members of the polity, there are significant overlaps and cross-references among policies. All three pieces of legislation purport a concern with fraud, terrorism, and criminality. In each case, the overarching goal is a protection of the national order and of the exalted status of citizenship. In the instance of the IRPA, this is depicted as a concern with misrepresentation, “bogus” refugee claims, and the increasing threat of terrorism following the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre.⁴⁹ Changes to the FNGA are similarly attributed to growing concerns about transparency, governance, and fraud among band leaders, and the proposed remedies echo those of the Hawthorne Report and the Federal White Paper on Indian Affairs (discussed above) in recommending that the Indian Act be scrapped, along with Indian status and entitlements. Finally, recent revisions to the Citizenship Act further establishes stringent conditions for obtaining citizenship, while simultaneously expanding the conditions under which citizenship may be revoked (for instance, see the Canadian Bar Association). Read together – along with subsequent and related legislation (such as the ATA) – these legislative changes provide further evidence of attempts to eliminate Indigenous sovereignty, maintain white settler dominance, and increasingly limit access to secure citizenship status, particularly for racialized migrants.

growing opposition and mobilization by Indigenous communities and activists.

⁴⁹ Of course, as Anna Pratt notes, this legislation pre-dates the bombing of the World Trade Centre and Pentagon.

Despite the seeming liberalization of immigration throughout the 1970s and 1980s (see Thobani *Exalted* 77, 96-7; Abu-Laban and Gabriel), many commentators suggest that Canadian immigration policy remains deeply exclusionary and rooted in the racist and sexist conceptions that underlie settler colonialism.⁵⁰ Most activists regard the IRPA as an extension of earlier policy regarding immigration. In particular, the narrowing of access to secure citizenship status, the representation of refugees as bogus claimants, and the emphasis on national security demonstrate significant continuities with earlier legislation outlined above. A number of scholars note the increasing reliance on temporary migration in the contemporary context, with secure immigration status reserved for those with a high degree of material and social capital (see Sharma *Home Economics*; Walia “Transient Servitude”). A host of seasonal, temporary, and precarious work programs recruit workers who will remain in the state temporarily, or remain a highly exploitable group of workers, many of them without status.⁵¹ Among those who do obtain citizenship, many will remain members of a highly exploitable low-paid workforce (for example, see Stasiulis and Bakan). Like the Chinese and South Asian men working in Canada in earlier periods, these programs largely stipulate that workers must be unaccompanied by spouses, partners or dependent children. In the few instances where workers are subsequently eligible to sponsor their families, family reunification has proven to be a slow and arduous process (see Boti; Parreñas).

With the exception of a handful of temporary foreign worker programs overwhelmingly comprised of migrant women (for example, as live-in caregivers and nurses), the majority of women entering Canada come as sponsored immigrants or as refugees. As Thobani notes, this reinforces gendered relationships of dependency and an assumption that women are primarily family dependents, rather than workers or professionals (“Closing”). Overall, changes to the refugee determination process have

50 For example, see Thobani *Exalted*; Thobani “Closing”; Sharma *Home Economics*.

51 See Nyers “Community Without Status”; Berinstein et al; Sharma *Home Economics*.

resulted in the increasing criminalization of all those seeking refugee status (see Anna Pratt 2-3). The 2004 Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the United States further limits access to the refugee determination process, particularly for those arriving in Canada from an American land port of entry (see Anna Pratt; Canadian Council for Refugees). According to the Canadian Council for Refugees,

Under the Safe Third Country Agreement, the US and Canada each declared the other country safe for refugees and established the general principle that refugee claimants should make their claim in the first of these countries that they reach... The Agreement applies to refugee claims made at a land border port of entry. As a general rule, claims made at the border are summarily refused.

As Anna Pratt notes,

The preoccupation with criminality, security, and fraud and the heavy emphasis on enforcement measures that pervade IRPA evidence the degree to which crime-security and fraud had already become the dominant justifications for the policies and practices of national exclusions prior to September 11th... The proposed reforms were quickly promoted as an important part of Canada's much-needed anti-terrorist, national security arsenal. The government, far from countering the fear-laced expressions of anti-immigrant, anti-refugee sentiments that followed the attacks, thus mobilized and affirmed this fear, further entrenching the associations between crime-security and fraud and new immigrants and refugees. (3)

These changes in policy and enforcement practice have direct and immediate impacts on political movements, activists, advocates, and service providers. Many participants explained that in addition to a renewed sense that already marginalized communities are increasingly targeted with surveillance, threats of detention, and deportation, this legislation serves as a means of further scrutinizing activists and political movements. Citizenship, or the denial of citizenship status, continues to shape relations of identity, land, and belonging, with direct implications for political action and alliance-building.

The Limits and Contradictions of Citizenship

The genealogy documented above demonstrates the processes through which

influential ideas about identity, land, and belonging have been constructed and enforced, particularly through immigration and citizenship policies. Migrant justice activists do not uncritically adopt this settler colonial framing of subjectivity. Yet, regardless of their critical stance, they also acknowledge that citizenship and related policies continue to impact on their lives and on political movements in complex ways, often with devastating implications for alliances against settler colonialism and in defense of Indigenous sovereignty.

Citizenship

Thobani suggests that “citizenship serves as a status that mobilizes national subjects, classed and gendered as they may be themselves, in defence of the institution against the claims of those designated as undeserving outsiders” (*Exalted* 76). She further notes that “the collusion of immigrants with an exclusionary white national-building project was to become historically systematized through the institution of citizenship” (*Exalted* 16). Racialized migrant justice participants spoke in great detail about the complicated intertwining of settler citizenship policy and immigration policy, and their impacts on their personal lives and on political action.

Toward the end of a focus group with migrant justice activists, I asked participants about the place of citizenship in their organizing, and specifically about whether their various mobilizations for Canadian citizenship stood in contradiction to their stated commitments to Indigenous sovereignty. After a couple of participants had spoken, one participant suggested that her political action was not about gaining citizenship status. Instead, she positioned her work as highlighting the exclusionary nature of citizenship policy and ongoing practices of settler colonialism. Concerning the campaign for access to municipal services regardless of citizenship status, she said:

We’re not really going to win access to all services for all people who don’t have [citizenship] status. That’s the point. The point is to reveal to these

communities who don't think status is an issue, or don't recognize the roles of non-status people in Canada, or where they fit in or why this is important – to give them the opportunity to see that. And I think the same way we do our immigration work in a broad way... across the country, slowly – when we're there at that point where regularization is in the broader consciousness of people, we can begin to infuse other things... we can talk more concretely about how we challenge the Canadian nation state, how we challenge capitalism in its various forms.

This prompted me to ask whether she sees citizenship as the goal of other campaigns, such as the push for the regularization of immigration status for those without secure citizenship. Her response, without hesitation, was “No. It's not.” In politicizing the exclusions of citizenship policy at the level of service provision and in access to citizenship status (i.e., regularization), she argued that her work opens a space for critical dialogue about identity, land, and belonging. This is a crucial potential contribution of anti-colonial migrant justice movements, but one which is complicated by the histories and structures of citizenship, immigration, and multiculturalism under settler colonialism.

Given the genealogy outlined above, it is not surprising that most participants expressed ambivalence and mistrust of the relationships among identity, land, and belonging embedded in immigration, citizenship, and multiculturalism legislation. They spoke about the difficulties of gaining citizenship, the challenges of living with insecure citizenship status, the limits of formal citizenship status for racialized settlers, and the contradictions of gaining citizenship in a context of ongoing settler colonialism.

Despite their misgivings, participants had concrete understandings of the importance of citizenship status, particularly in the contemporary context of heightened border control and increasingly precarious migration. Despite his deep mistrust of citizenship, one Latin American activist explained his decision to regularize his status, saying:

Oddly enough, even though I've been here for so long, I'm just getting my

[Canadian] citizenship now. I've never voted in an election, so even at those levels of participation, which I'm starting to... weren't as important to me when I came... The thing around the citizenship, it wasn't important to me before, I didn't give a shit. People said "You gotta get your citizenship, you're involved in a lot of stuff." But it's just recently, now I'm still as critical of Canadian state policies, even more so, but I know that in the current conjuncture they'll use that shit to fuck me up. This is where I'm located and I'm not planning to go anywhere – at least not willingly – anytime soon. I've been here for a long time so I think I'm less at risk than other people, but again not being a citizen is a precarious situation.

These comments are consistent with those expressed by other participants, who spoke of feeling caught up in the politics of citizenship and, hence, of settler colonialism. This participant is not seeking citizenship because he believes it will grant equality and meaningful inclusion; likewise, he has clear misgivings about the institution of citizenship in the context of ongoing settler colonialism. At the same time, as he says above "not being a citizen is a precarious situation," particularly in the contemporary national and, indeed, international context.

Despite gaining citizenship status, a number of participants pointed out that their experiences of belonging are deeply shaped by racialization and politicization. Many racialized migrants suggested that they have never felt that they really belonged in Canada and that their position has been made clear to them over and over again. They also suggested that engagement in political action – a hallmark of democracy – often leads to them being targeted by state officials. For example, one participant noted that her feeling of not being a Canadian, despite her formal refugee status, was reinforced when she was arrested at a protest. Noting that many suspected she had been targeted for arrest as one of few activists of colour, she explained:

In terms of my own piece... I never have called myself a Canadian, right. I always know that I'm not a Canadian. I'm a Canadian in passport but I'm not a Canadian because I'm not white, right. And that became very clear when I was arrested, when the judge said, "You're not a Canadian. You were born somewhere else". And nobody had actually said it that way, but he was

actually really direct: “No, you'll never be a Canadian.”

Another participant noted that despite her legal citizenship in Canada, the place of birth listed on her passport serves to limit the extent of this status.

And my passport says "born in Iran." That question of born where? I mean, talking about relationships with the state: I really started thinking about airports as checkpoints. Every airport, every time – that's one of the reasons I don't really travel much, because, except for very unavoidable family or work situations, because the fact that my passport says "born in Iran," it just, like, that's it. That's my other – that's my second-class citizenship certificate that puts me through different forms of interrogation and different forms of checking and questioning than anybody else gets subjected to. Even though I'm a citizen.

This sense of never being fully Canadian in the eyes of the state was echoed by a number of participants. One person pointed to the targeting of activists in the Algerian community in Montreal (see also Lowry and Nyers), and of Palestinian, Sri Lankan, and Colombian activists in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Many participants suggested that in Toronto, in particular, Palestinian activists were targeted by immigration officials immediately following the implementation of IRPA and the ATA. One Palestinian activist suggested that the security provisions implemented under the IRPA single out those from countries with a history of anti-colonial resistance:

Even the security thing applies largely where people come from countries where there has been, and maybe continues to be, a strong resistance movement. So people from countries like Colombia, or Sri Lanka – it would be something very normal growing up to be part of the resistance movement, and maybe not even just normal, it would be expected that this is the case. If you're born in a certain village then you're going to be part of this particular organization or movement, and you wouldn't have thought about this as terrorism, and then when you come here you're identified as a security risk.

Serving as a general check on the immigration of those with a history of anti-colonialism, this legislation reflects domestic concerns with maintaining the settler colonial order within a global context of renewed imperialism. As one Palestinian activist

further explained, changes to the legislation and precedent-setting legal cases have served to make citizenship even more precarious for entire generations:

Issam Al Yamani is someone right now who is being threatened with deportation. And he's been going through an anti-deportation struggle, or a normalization [naturalization] struggle, or whatever it's called since the late 80s. And his case went to the Supreme Court, and he won, and now they've reopened it under the new terrorist laws. So the terror laws, for example, essentially criminalize all Palestinians who are of an age where – like any Palestinian essentially who was in Palestine or Lebanon or Syria or Jordan, they were almost certainly a member or a supporter of a political organization or faction. And all of our political organizations have been put on the terrorist list. So whether it was Fatah or Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Hamas – all of these organizations are on the terrorist list. So anybody who is I guess over the age of 30 or 35 and was living in Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria at the time, like during the 80s or 70s or 60s, is now basically regarded in Canada as a terrorist. And actually it was in Issam Al Yamani's case that they decided that membership in a terror organization could have been something that happened in the past. Up until his case, to be considered a terrorist you had to be a member currently. Then his case changed it to make it that you could have been in the past a member of a terrorist organization, and the laws would still apply to you as you would be a security threat to Canada somehow. So definitely these immigration and citizenship laws are affecting our people in a very big way on the security side of things, we're all considered security threats in Canada.

In addition to perpetual surveillance and targeting by the state, Palestinian activists further pointed out that the ongoing apartheid system in their home country means that they are regarded as stateless. The absence of citizenship from an internationally recognized nation-state poses difficulties for international travel and for many other forms of belonging in a global context where everyone is identified by their nationality; but it also poses obstacles to deportation. As one Palestinian activist explained:

With Palestinians, we're stateless. So we don't actually have a place where – I mean, legally, you can't deport us anywhere. I guess some people have called it the three-walled cell. You're stuck here, Canada wants you out, but there's no place they can send you to, because you can't get in anywhere. If they're

going to deport us, our homeland is Palestine, they should deport us there. But Israelis won't let any Palestinians in, so they can't do that. And there's nowhere else that people can go. So it's kind of, it's a big problem. And it's not just Palestinians who face it, obviously, but our community is definitely one that's faced it in a big way.

As access to secure formal citizenship status is increasingly necessary internationally and yet restricted almost exclusively to those born and raised in the country, the ability of the state to intervene – increasingly with violence – demonstrates ongoing attempts to protect the settler colonial order, and to further conflate Indigeneity, racialization, and immigration as a nexus of non-belonging. As a result, citizenship status may become an important, if provisional, form of security, even as it comes at the price of formal complicity with settler colonialism. Many participants spoke about the double bind of rejecting the precariousness of insecure status and becoming complicit in the settlement project through gaining citizenship status. Two participants spoke specifically about their discomfort with becoming settlers on lands gained through colonization. One participant said,

I never call myself Canadian. People will ask “Where are you from?” “Chile.” I actually have lived less in Chile than anywhere else, and I actually don't like Chile very much. I don't have a very good time when I go there – it's very classist and racist. But I still consider myself Chilean, although I don't really feel Chilean either.

Another noted,

Strategically, for example, I would use it. I would say, “As a Canadian citizen...” You know, that kind of thing. But I really don't feel like I could call Canada my home. Although I might die here. It's kind of very... So, in terms of [my] relationship in Canada, it's kind of hard to say. Well, especially now it becomes more complicated, because this isn't even [my] land!

Furthermore, after speaking at length about the ways that citizenship policy is employed as part of the Israeli apartheid system to further displace and dispossess Palestinians, a Palestinian activist noted the irony of gaining citizenship from another settler state:

Other Palestinians, the lucky ones like me, were able to get citizenship somewhere else. I got a Canadian citizenship in the past couple of years. And so on that level, the only citizenship I can get is one where I'm forced to be a settler on somebody else's land without their consent, which is sort of this tragic irony, in a sense.

His comments also indicate the ways that citizenship is increasingly vaunted in the contemporary global context, to the extent that those without secure national citizenship from a state recognized by the international system of nation-states are at tremendous risk.

The comments by these participants fully articulate the complexities and indeed, the complicities, wrought through the exaltation of citizenship status in Canada and internationally. While their own experiences of displacement, land theft, genocide, and imperialism give these participants insight into the ways that settler colonialism operates in Canada, they are not in a position to simply refuse to engage with settler colonialism here. Gaining Canadian citizenship status may provide crucial security from which to continue their activism, yet it comes at the cost of incommensurability with Indigenous sovereignty.

As many participants were well aware, the emphasis on citizenship within the national and international context complicates many potential alliances against ongoing settler colonialism. One participant, a service provider at a women's support organization, noted that this contradictory position, embedded in immigration and citizenship policies, can cause significant conflict between Indigenous and immigrant women in her organization:

They emerge at these, in these really unstructured ways. So you're having a conversation about something else and somebody's like, "Oh yes, I just got my citizenship!" Or, "I'm going for my citizenship interview." Or, "I've applied." It's an opportunity to have this conversation about what this thing means for different people, and how some people are disentitled from this, and how the whole notion around citizenship in a context where it's a colonized country, where there are people who are Indigenous to the country who do not have

the same entitlements – what it means to come and claim citizenship in the face of that and how it can be offensive to want all the women in the space, including the Aboriginal women, to celebrate with you your acclamation of your citizenship... And it can bring about some real hurts and real anger....

The exalted status of citizenship, particularly in a context where citizenship status is increasingly difficult to obtain, limits the potential for meaningful alliances because of the ways that it forces individual activists and organizations to direct their time and resources toward obtaining and maintaining this status. It also means that racialized activists may face greater risks for engaging in anti-colonial action. While racialized migrant justice activists are not in a position to simply refuse Canadian citizenship, many of them are well aware of the ways that this position further complicates the possibilities of alliances with Indigenous sovereignty movements. As one Indigenous participant noted:

And that's the set-up. I mean that's the incredible... you know, again, that state-imposed stuff where, you know, like I mean all of us are in survival mode and finding the time. But you know, in the end, it'll benefit all of us if we do it. So, it's worth doing it. But it's tough. It's really tough. [laugh] They didn't make it easy.

As many participants noted, multiculturalist policies and discourses also contribute to the complexity of this work of alliance-building.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalist discourses limit the possibilities of meaningful alliances against settler colonialism by creating competition for resources, depoliticizing culture, and homogenizing racial, cultural, and epistemological differences. In many ways, multiculturalism perpetuates the exalted status of citizenship. Many participants spoke with great distrust about multiculturalism, suggesting as Thobani does, that the implementation and socio-cultural discourses surrounding multiculturalism have “worked specifically to co-opt and immobilize anti-racist, anti-colonial and related

movements” (*Exalted* 160). Multiculturalism undermines Indigenous sovereignty by masking the foundational and ongoing violence of settler colonialism, and re-framing Indigeneity as merely another ethnic group within the multicultural mosaic. As one Indigenous activist succinctly noted: “When I hear 'multiculturalism,' I just think about a state ideology.” She later explained, “Multiculturalism is sort of that false – the lie, the Canadian lie that masks genocide, it masks colonialism.”

A number of activists spoke about some of the contradictions inherent in multiculturalism. One Latin American activist suggested that his initial political involvement began from a critique of state multiculturalism but then tempered his critiques somewhat:

The language of multiculturalism, when we got involved in the anti-racism movement in the 90s, that's what we were critiquing. That superficial multicultural discourse is false and at the root of how Canada defines itself as a nation, so any anti-racist activism worth a grain of salt is going to... not spit at multiculturalism... I know it's a term that's important to use but... I don't think you'd use it too much.

Another participant noted that although some Chilean refugees expressed initial enthusiasm for Pierre Elliott Trudeau and the promise of multiculturalism, she was wary of the nationalist politics underpinning the legislation. She explained,

If you go to the Kensington market there's a Chilean butcher, and they have a picture of Trudeau, and it says “Thanks to Trudeau, we have multiculturalism.” It's very interesting, because Chileans actually came at a time when Trudeau was trying to fight the FLQ [Front de Libération du Québec]. At the beginning, the Canadian government did not want to bring any Chileans because they were too leftist – and intellectuals! – these were privileged people, right? And Marxists! And so, they didn't want to bring Chileans as refugees, and Canada did not allow any Chilean refugees until later. And that political move that Trudeau did was quite masterful, actually, he put Chileans in Quebec, trying to disarticulate all this indépendantiste [sovereigntist] movement, but also trying to say, “Oh well, everybody in the multicultural society's an equal group, including the French,” which becomes just like any other immigrant group, rather than the one of the “founding nations.”

This participant went on to talk about the ways that the language of multiculturalism further undermined Indigenous sovereignty. Thus, like other participants, she was not convinced by the discourse of inclusion offered by multiculturalism and instead remained critical of the colonial manoeuvres attempted in the legislation and discourse surrounding it.

Many participants argued that multiculturalism serves to tokenize and homogenize cultural difference. Several participants noted that measures deemed “multicultural” by agencies, service providers, and arts organizations, for example, serve to maintain the assumption that whiteness is synonymous with Canadian-ness. One cultural worker with a community organization reflected,

But sometimes I feel, you know, when we do these different collaborations... with different organizations or different groups, we're mostly invited to sort of fill their diversity component, right? So it's not necessarily they recognize the quality of the work that we do, the quality of the artists. They might not program those artists in their regular yearly program, right? But maybe they have a clause, or maybe they got funding from Canada Council [for the Arts], whatever agency, to fulfill that component of multicultural diverse programming. Sometimes it's more obvious than other times.

...we went to the opening of [a] show, and one of the people at that gallery said, “Well, it's so great that all of these different ethnic communities have come and joined us today.” So it was, you know, I hadn't heard that term [“ethnic communities”] in such a long time, being referred to as the guest ethnic person. And then it's like a big shock because then you realize that no, they don't understand the show that we're putting on. Maybe they don't know how to talk about it... They just sort of—they're so sort of sheltered in their own little bubble.

Some participants suggested that multiculturalism has served to take the analytic edge off of potential assessments of racism as it intersects with institutions and processes of oppression. Speaking to the example of prisons, a Black prison abolition activist explained,

There's the whole multiculturalism thing as well... In prison issues, I don't like

it when people talk about “people of colour.” We should be talking about Black people, First Nations people [rather] than whatever – people of colour, I guess. The prison-industrial complex doesn't disproportionately affect people of colour. It affects First Nations people, Black people... Definitely that comes up in terms of First Nations people, but also in terms of Black people within [our] organizing. And the need to have a specific focus in our education and in our discussions of the groups that are disproportionately oppressed by the violence of the prison-industrial complex. We do try to be a multicultural organization, but not because we want to be multicultural, but because we want to represent who is affected by prisons. That doesn't mean being this kind of City of Toronto multicultural, it means including privileged people and Black people and transgendered people.

This critique points to the ways that the language of multiculturalism may dull the analysis of the precise ways in which racialization is embedded within systems of oppression, such as prisons. This concern was also articulated by a white activist who noted a tendency to “de-genderize” and “de-racialize” in the discourse of multiculturalism. In her assessment, such practices “have made it almost impossible to talk from an anti-sexist or an anti-racist or anti-oppressive [perspective].”

Not only has political language become more generic, but so have potentially political identities. Thobani argues that “Immigrants who might have self-identified along any number and combination of possible identities, including those of class, gender, and age, instead find themselves to be overdetermined culturally, over and above all other aspects of their identities” (*Exalted* 175). As a result, one service provider suggested that her agency makes explicit attempts to re-politicize their discussions of gender, culture, and oppression:

I think the language of multiculturalism is, you know, has been problematic. So as an agency... the language more that we use is a language around anti-oppression, anti-racism. You know, people talk about “diversity” but we've been more using the language of anti-oppression, anti-racism, because I think the issue of multiculturalism or the language of multiculturalism... depoliticize[s] the issues and make[s] them more—leave them really within the realm of culture. And I think many organizations who use the language of multiculturalism, because that language depoliticizes the issue, is then what

they end up with are cultural fears and cultural representation. And they get stuck at the representation level and not looking necessarily at the systemic issues both within the organization but also the systemic issues externally.

In addition to reducing identity and inequality to culture, many participants suggested that rather than furthering cross-cultural exchange and understanding, multiculturalism has increased the segregation of specific groups, while concealing the factors contributing to these separations. In this way, multiculturalism continues to function as a “dividing practice” that facilitates the management of difference, limiting the potentially insurgent alliances among some of these communities and groups (see Haque). As one participant suggested,

Even though we like this idea of multiculturalism, our communities can get so pocketed and you don't have to really – you're not forced to always learn new things. I mean, you're not forced to learn about the history of the land or about the different sort of people that are around you. They can sort of, in some, ways shelter you or prevent you from that.

Another participant shared her reflections on the potential of multiculturalism to enforce divisions among different groups:

We were told that we'd get to keep our culture and our language, and at that time, there was money to have classes for the kids at their school, and all these wonderful things. There was an Argentinean playwright who began to criticize this and... he started to talk about multiculturalism as ghettoization. And it was the first time that somebody had said something negative about multiculturalism.

As many participants noted, these divisions and separations also foster competition, another well-worn colonial method of managing difference.

Many participants were sceptical about multiculturalism in light of their knowledge about the histories of genocide and racial exclusion, and about the context within which the policy was constructed. Rather than advancing a celebration of difference and diversity, multiculturalism was regarded by many as a tool of colonization in the maintenance of white settler hegemony. One participant explained exactly how

this history shaped her understandings of contemporary deployments of diversity and multiculturalism:

Eventually, I became very critical of multiculturalism. And, I think recently, it hasn't been that long, really. Maybe after I came back from Mexico and found out that Oka had happened, I started to think, okay, so, again, Canada uses this multiculturalism, where not only the francophones but also the Indigenous population become part of the multiculturalism – that's one more group. So they show you the feathers, they put on the headdress... and not only that, but also specifically the Indigenous population are being used by Canada, in those pictures where the RCMP is shaking hands with some chief, to show that here it's been different than in the States. That the States are horrible, in the States they had slavery, in the States they had genocide, but not in Canada, right? not in Canada. And you begin to heed history, you actually start to, to pay attention to Canada, which for a long time I didn't, or none of us did because we were so much into dealing with our homelands, and the repression that was going on there... But you then begin to see all of the history and you begin to disarticulate the mythology a little bit.

Thobani suggests that multiculturalism is structured specifically to make this kind of disarticulation difficult, thereby explicitly circumscribing Indigenous sovereignty:

Not only has multiculturalism enabled the integration of people of colour into Canadian society under white supervision, it has also generated a popular mainstream denunciation of the claims of Aboriginal peoples. The popular sentiment... defines Aboriginality as amounting to no more than just one culture among many in the country, with Aboriginal peoples having no special claims, no special entitlements above those that can be claimed by other individuals. (*Exalted* 173)

These kinds of discursive manoeuvres can go a long way to limiting the potential for alliances against settler colonialism. They may frame popular understandings about Indigenous peoples and Indigenous sovereignty in deeply colonial ways. For instance, a non-Indigenous participant who works with an agency designed by and for Indigenous people in the City of Toronto explained that she is often invited to speak as a representative of Indigenous diversity:

Corporations that have diversity initiatives through their human resources now. That's coming up more and more that there are diversity days and

diversity initiatives, diversity luncheons, where they'll ask First Nations speakers or representatives to come out and talk about the foundations [of the city], so it's actually expanding fairly rapidly... I can never figure on who's going to call, it's always a surprise. It seems that there's more of a budget for larger corporations to have diversity initiatives than not, but it runs the gamut.

This participant also spoke about the ways that multiculturalist and diversity framings reduce Indigenous peoples to one of many ethnicities within the city:

...I was asked to participate as a First Nation[s] representative in a discussion about a potential future facility honouring all cultures. So I was asked as a representative of this community to contribute what I thought. And for the most part, 99% of the people attending represented community centres of specific immigrant groups: so we had the Italian community represented, we had the Ukrainian community or Sri Lankan [community]. Some were very small communities, but everyone was invited, it was very inclusive. We started this dialogue, we were in breakaway discussion groups and I was trying to discuss the foundations of this country and how that needed to be the basis of this place, the model, the beginning point. And the only response I received from several people was, "Don't worry, you'll have your space too"; "You'll have your corner" almost "your little booth, your section." And there was a complete lack of understanding of the differentiation between First People[s], foundation, and "You can have your street signs in Ojibway or Cree." Like there seemed to be a really big confusion about multiculturalism, and part of that is the way Torontonians, I believe, are raised to be accepting, but they also then are not realizing how damaging that can be, there is a lack of understanding there.

It seems to be that inclusion is creating this melting pot without any differentiation. And you'll get a lot of negativity and hostility from people saying: "What makes Indigenous people so special?" Oh, I don't know 10,000 years of history, being here first might constitute that, but people are: "Oh, come on, that was then, this is now, everyone's got like Little Italy or Greek Town," and it seems like a very circular discussion and it does get frustrating but I'm very dogmatic in repeating the foundations and keep at it.

Social service agencies run by and for the urban Indigenous community are similarly positioned in competition with other agencies for funding and support, while also combating the all-too-common perception that there are few Indigenous people in the city or that they should not have specific needs or entitlements. Participants

suggested that this is also the case with arts funding. One Indigenous participant noted,

And I also think that to the extent that – I mean the way that they’ve set it up, again, it makes us competitors. And I’ve heard many racialized artists, for example, say, “I don’t understand why there’s an Aboriginal arts program. Why is there an Aboriginal writing program? Why is there an Aboriginal music program?” And especially when they learn that there’s less money in the Aboriginal section than in other sections. Then they’re really upset and say, “Well, why don’t you just apply to the general pot?”

These comments suggest that multiculturalism policy and discourse have served to further settler colonial citizenship through the creation of a powerful discourse of ethnic diversity which co-opts potentially insurgent visions of identity, land, and belonging, and through the containment of Indigeneity as ethnicity, rather than as sovereignty. As one Indigenous activist summarized, “First of all, I think multiculturalism starts with the premise of first of all assimilation, and secondly, that Aboriginal people are simply another equity-seeking group, and not the owners of the land, and not the original peoples who have nations of their own and governments of their own.”

Multiculturalism has also had an impact on understandings of the place of culture (and indeed, the meaning of culture) in political movements. A number of participants suggested that culture is crucial to the politics of decolonization, and cultural regeneration has emerged as central aspect of projects of Indigenous resurgence. Many participants were cultural workers (for example, artists, dancers, writers, and actors), and cultural practice figures prominently in many different forms of political action across the city. Although many suggested that culture is an important site for political engagement and for projects of decolonization, in one focus group, culture emerged as a site of tension between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice activists. On the topic of potential obstacles to greater collaboration between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice groups, participants turned to cultural politics immediately. One participant, a migrant justice activist who arrived in Canada as a refugee from Iran,

suggested,

First Nations issues, the way they're framed in Canadian political spaces, are framed as identity politics. So if you're a... refugee who is a communist and kind of very rooted [in] "workers of the world unite" political messaging, someone being like, "Well, we need to have a smudging and a drum circle at the beginning of your meetings," and discuss whatever sounds to you like the worse kind of identity politics that there could ever be, and not politically meaningful...

These comments indicate that cultural practice, including identity and religion or spirituality, are framed as apolitical and "not politically meaningful." This participant is a cultural worker, engaged directly in numerous forms of political organizing that include cultural production in the diaspora. Her assertion is not that culture is unimportant, but rather that culture is not recognized as important in all facets of migrant justice organizing. She went on to explain,

So it's also a matter of understanding that First Nations issues are being filtered through this kind of mainstream white culture when it gets to immigrant and refugee populations. And that has to be negotiated. [laugh] It's not like people don't think that land issues are important, but they don't realize that it's land issues that are being discussed all the time.

This comment clarifies that her perspective is not that smudging and drum circles have no place in political action, but that they are not necessarily immediately recognizable as deeply political actions rooted in Indigenous knowledges and traditions to the communities and groups with which she organizes. The tension she is pointing to is one of epistemology, where migrant justice activists must continue to question the ways that identity and culture are taken up in colonial contexts, including in their own movements. In many ways, her words point to the partial success of multiculturalism policies, which have de-politicized culture and further obscured the connection between culture, land, language, epistemology, and political action. Put differently, multiculturalism policies have taken up where earlier policies of cultural annihilation only partially succeeded.

Despite participants' clear observations that citizenship and multiculturalism

policies serve to perpetuate settler colonialism, their insights point to the many ways in which migrant justice activists have few options but to engage, albeit carefully and critically, with these policies. For instance, in light of the crackdown on dissent and the continual narrowing of avenues for legal immigration, access to legal citizenship status has become vital. Even as participants recognized that racialization and criminalization combine with other systemic factors to ensure that this citizenship may be at best provisional, they were well aware of the much greater risks and limitations of not having citizenship. At the same time, they were also cognisant of the ways that citizenship status advances the ongoing displacement and denial of sovereignty of Indigenous peoples. Multiculturalism policy and discourse work closely with citizenship and settler nationalism to further limit the political agency of racialized settlers, and to reduce sovereign Indigenous peoples to one of many cultures within a colourful national entity. Combined, citizenship and multiculturalism policies and practices serve settler colonialism by “discouraging and possibly foreclosing the possibility of alliances that might allow a systemic challenge to white dominance, patriarchy, and global corporate capitalism” (Thobani *Exalted* 175). These policies and powerful discourses are clearly reflected in the ways that participants speak about relationships to land.

Land

Many participants who came to Canada as refugees expressed a great deal of ambivalence about their relationships to land. Unlike the clear similarities between Palestinian and Indigenous conceptions of land, many participants who arrived in Canada as temporary migrants, refugees, and immigrants expressed very tenuous and ambivalent relationships to and understandings of land. One participant who came to Canada as an Iranian refugee after a series of stops in many different European countries explained:

I think my relationship with land has changed drastically throughout this kind

of passage. I mean when I think land, and when I think of our relationship to it, I can't help but think back to Iran, even though I only have childhood memories. Because there's this kind of rootedness in the land, especially around my father's side, because they had lived in those particular places, on that land, and so on and so forth for so long. But having lived in so many countries without status, I have a very abstract connection to land and a very abstract understanding of what land is. I think that when I think of belonging, I think of your relationship to a particular country, I'm more inclined to think of documentation rather than relationship to land, because I don't feel any kind of rootedness, or connection to the landscape here in this country. I don't feel like any of it belongs to me. I don't feel that I have any kind of physical connection to the land in this country. To some of the people, yes, to communities and some ideas. But definitely not to the land.

This statement demonstrates the ways that the process of displacement has led this participant to focus on belonging as obtained through state-issued documentation, rather than relationships to land. And yet, she also notes that even these documents may not create or sustain belonging. In many ways, this is understandable, given the precariousness and trauma of her experiences of displacement, yet it also demonstrates the ways that colonial conceptions about land and belonging have become internalized through this experience. She went on to discuss the relationships to land that she observed among Indigenous peoples on the West Coast:

I think the only time that I started having a better understanding, in terms of the land in this country, was when I moved to British Columbia, and started doing more and more work with First Nations communities, particularly with the Native Youth Movement. And I think the kind of ways that politics and political activism gets framed in British Columbia is so much more concretely connected to First Nations struggles and to the concept of land, of where you are.

In many ways, her sense of disconnection from Indigenous sovereignty struggles in Toronto stems from the different relationships to identity, land, and culture in this context, where histories of genocide, displacement, and assimilation are much longer than those on the West Coast, and where discourses that posit land and Indigeneity as deeply non-urban are entrenched by colonialism. As a refugee who has gained

citizenship and become deeply involved in her community and for whom citizenship documentation has meant survival, to de-link understandings of identity, land, and belonging from those entrenched in settler colonial policies and discourses is a tremendous undertaking because of the very concrete risk of detention and deportation that lack of citizenship status might represent.

A Chilean activist shared a different story about her relationship to land and belonging, one in which long-term settlement was initially not the focus, even though it eventually did become the reality. She said:

In terms of belonging to the land, I have never felt I belong. In terms of the Chilean refugee community, we were always passing by, because everybody was expecting to go back to Chile. And I think many immigrants who come here through [a] coup d'état or war, they're always expecting to go home. This is not home. ... you self-segregate and you are segregated... Plus, we were never here to stay, we were always like, "Pinochet is going to fall, anytime now, next year." And there's a phrase that became very common in Chile, which was, "We always had our bags ready, we never unpacked, really." Except now, we're sort of like, after 30 years, I think we could [unpack]. And of course, people didn't want to buy houses or cars, because that meant buying into the First World, decadent, you know, whatever. So for a long time, anybody who bought a car was a traitor. People didn't study, because they spent years and years on solidarity work, so after a while, and this is a phenomenon that happened – that after 15 years, 20 years, and Pinochet wasn't going anywhere – everybody decided, shit you know, there's stuff that I need to do for myself. So they started going to school. But for us as a community, I don't think that even up to now, even though there are a lot of us that decided this is where we're going to stay, still don't know. So the belonging-ness thing is very different depending on your experience on how you got here... I don't know... I was talking with a friend of mine who said: "We're the generation who has no place." We're not at home in Chile and we're not at home here. So it's kind of this drifting generation that really can live anywhere and has no motherland... the only commitments and principles is actually to your political stuff, right. Not to the land per se. I'm thinking about belonging and... It is a generation I think that – and I think that it happens to all exiled people – that there is a generation that is lost in terms of any attachment to any piece of land, right.

This sense of not belonging anywhere was shared by a number of participants, who

noted that this is particularly problematic in the contemporary system of nation-states, where nationality is regarded as the primary locus of political identity.

Participants also problematized capitalist relationships to land as property, noting that many immigrants arrive in Canada with this notion of land and belonging in mind. Here, owning property is conflated with citizenship and belonging to the land. It is a non-Indigenous epistemology, and one that stands as a significant obstacle to meaningful alliances with Indigenous sovereignty struggles. One participant explained this conflict in detail, suggesting that this relationship to land, on an epistemological level, shapes the degree to which immigrants may engage with or even understand Indigenous sovereignty and settler colonialism:

I don't have [a] strong attachment to this land... I'm sensitive to how do we form these attachments and these belongings and such. And I think one of the things that came up... [was] very different forms of connection to the land.

She subsequently elaborated on the differences between capitalist and Indigenous conceptions of land and relationships to land:

I come from a capitalist society, and I've been born and raised in those relations of property. Probably the greatest tragic moment of dispossession for me and for my family was losing our house. So if I ever go back to Iran, even though I barely left 20-some years ago, there is no place, no land, to go back to. There is no such ownership there. That's a form of – that's the ultimate dispossession. So I think in a way that's privileged me because when I hear [Indigenous activists and cultural workers] talk about... the First Nations' conception of land and relationship with land... it's a totally different sense of belonging, whether it's belonging of the people to the land or of the land to the people, than what those of us who've grown up and who are so used to thinking about this land relationship as a real estate transaction, [where] the more you have, the richer you are, and whatever. [It's a] very different conception. And I think that really has opened up a way – that dispossession has opened up a way for me to be able to think about it differently.

In her view, these relationships to land, and understandings of land as conferring citizenship, are a crucial aspect of many immigrants' experiences of immigration, which leads to an acceptance of settler positionality. She said:

And it's, in fact, very different for me than it is for many Iranian people that I know in the city who have bought the house in Richmond Hill and, you know, have the two cars and their kids are going to school here, and maybe they go back to Iran every once in a while to visit their family, but they've come here to settle. They have settled... The first thing that they do when they come here, if they can afford it, is buy some land. In other words, get entrenched – and very, like, very concretely. That's exactly what it means. That's what the house in Richmond Hill is a case of. It's, "This is my piece of land. With buying this piece of land here, I am claiming. I have a claim here."

She went on to explain how this acceptance of relationships to land as property shape the immigration experience and assimilation, despite the clear evidence that their belonging remains precarious because of daily racism and state policies.

It's a relation – that relationship of ownership in fact becomes the very barrier that keeps them from seeing how precarious the[ir] position is because they assume that, you know, once I've bought my land then, you know, I have the house in Richmond Hill or in Mississauga or wherever, then I'm here. And I have my citizenship card, and my kids go to school here, and I'm here. I belong. This belongs to me. And it doesn't. So they can't really see their own [dis]possession. It's bizarre. Even though in a lot of ways they get subjected to racism, and if you sit down and talk to them, there are all kinds of complaints and nagging and stuff about the discrimination that they experience... Nevertheless, the mentality is that this transaction, this land – this transaction in real estate gives me entitlement.

In order to undermine settler colonial conceptions of propertied relations to land conferring some form of belonging, she suggests that alternative paradigms about relationships among identity, land, and belonging are needed:

So the paradigm remains that paradigm of private ownership. The paradigm remains that capitalist paradigm of ownership of land, which in fact is not in – has not been in this very specific way, in this intense way, has not been quite a good conception of the relationship to the land for a lot of the Indigenous communities [or] Indigenous nations here. And I think that's what [an Indigenous artist] brought up, which is really interesting to think about because when you think about it then... if we are talking about activism and making connections and such, if we think about what kind of vision, what kind of theorization can come out of that different paradigm, then making it in terms of the forms of action that we do around the question of non-status people. Who has the right to come here and to be here and to stay here? How

do those rights get distributed? If we make that assumption that we're all in this relationship of a custodial relationship rather than a relationship of ownership, the logic is completely different.

And if we think about it, then at that point we can bring in the immigrant communities to work alongside the First Nations communities to challenge the state around issues that are affecting all of them. One of the reasons we can't pull them in really is because we can't pull in the “mainstream” immigrant community here, and that I'm putting in quotes. One of the reasons that we can't pull them in here is because they don't see it, they don't see how they're replicating – their very presence here is replicating the regime, and their forms of presence here is replicating the regime that has led to their disposition to begin with. [laughs]... It's about the question of relationship to the land and whether you think of land as real estate, as private property, or you think of land as a community resource. You can see the same question addressed from a different angle and by different people, but it's the same as it is in Caledonia as it is in Palestine...

As this participant and several others suggested, the importance of reconceptualizing relationships among identity, land, and belonging is central to decolonizing projects. This work is complicated and challenging, perhaps particularly in the context of the settler city.

Complicating Home: Unsettling/Claiming the Settler City

For many Torontonians, the story of the place begins with their arrival, as it did for those newcomers who first established York and then Toronto. The nature of the historical inheritance of city residents, particularly in relation to the land, its Indigenous past, and its displaced Indigenous peoples, remains conflicted, complicated, and contested. (Freeman “Toronto” 31)

The size, diversity, and heterogeneity of the City of Toronto figured in many of my discussions with activists. Some participants shared stories of arriving in Toronto as a result of persecution, homophobia, death threats, poverty, and displacement, because they “had nowhere else to be,” as one participant explained. Many participants suggested that the city is the end destination in a journey marked by displacement, and the only place where they can find some degree of belonging. Employing the Indigenous

conception of Toronto as a “meeting place” (see Sanderson and Howard-Bobiwash, eds.), one participant suggested that the city is an important site of connection for him:

This is a “meeting place.” We kind of stick to this place, because who do I got in Alberta? My connection to North America and Toronto... my blood relatives in Canada and in Toronto are maybe five... my family for whatever reason, our roots in Toronto and in Canada are very tenuous still.

Similarly, another participant said,

I actually enjoy the urban context because as much as diversity can be frustrating in one way, you never meet the same people. You get to meet such a cross-range of society that it's really good. It keeps you thinking. People bring their own perspectives and their own points of view from their own lands, their own countries, whether they're tourists, or whether they're younger or older and they'll bring up a point that you hadn't thought about. I'm always learning and I think that an urban environment offers you the opportunity to learn. It's quite a steep learning curve at times, because it's such a rapidly changing environment.

One participant spoke specifically about her comfort in the city as a queer person:

I say I have roots in Toronto because I have some family that's from here. But that's not really my connection to it, mainly. My connection [to Toronto] is because I'm a queer person. And so for me both as a queer person who, since I've come out, has been out, so I can't imagine living in the closet, and also because I'm a butch woman, and so I present as queer whereas lots of people can pass, I don't think I would ever be able to pass very well. I need to be in a big city. Because I was born in central Canada, that big city is Toronto, because that's where I can really have a community... and family and all of the things that are necessary to sustain oneself as a queer person...

Although this participant is pragmatic about how the city is only a space of relative safety, she does suggest that the growth of a queer community within the city has been important to her: “And I think our community as we get bigger and bigger and bigger is broadening, so there are more and more spaces in Toronto where you can feel safe as a queer person. So that's certainly my connection to it and why I find it very difficult to think about leaving the city.” These are all articulations of belonging in the urban context, with tremendous potential for de-linking from state-based conceptions of

belonging as signalled through formal citizenship status. But all of these participants are non-Indigenous, with secure formal citizenship. Their narratives of belonging to the city and to specific, sometimes marginalized, communities sit in tension with Indigenous histories and ongoing presence in this place.

Indeed, for many non-Indigenous participants, the city is conceptualized as a site where new social and political relations can be made, outside the purview of the nation-state. One white participant said, “We’re all citizens of Toronto,” later adding, “The city is a place where we should get to decide how we live together, not the state.” As another white participant said, “Everybody is here. The whole world is here. Toronto is sort of a creation, and that's kind of where we get together in creating the city, creating the next city. We're all in the process of making that city happen.” The relationship to settler colonialism and Indigenous sovereignty in the process of this “making,” of course, requires further consideration.

A number of scholars have conceptualized the city as an important site for the advancement of alternative social and political relations (for example see Harvey; Young *Justice*; Lees). Warren Magnusson suggests that many contemporary political movements are adopting a “critical urban politics,”:

Urbanity implies a double relation, because cities are places where things are concentrated and where complexity is the rule. If concentration involves hierarchy, domination, and stability, complexity entails flux, change, and unpredictability. Although urban life implicates people in many forms of domination, it also poses new possibilities. It is in this latter aspect of the urban – its boundary-breaking excessiveness – that we can find hope for a critical politics. It is there that the possibility is raised that we can reconstitute our relations of ruling in more egalitarian and less exploitative terms. (351)

Engin Isin further regards much urban-focused activism as “acts of citizenship,” where demands made of and on the city can be regarded as claiming “rights to the city,” and therefore to citizenship:

Rather than struggles over rights that derive from belonging to the city, many

social groups have struggled over rights to the city by, what I would call, staging or enacting themselves through the city. For groups to enact themselves through the city means to organize, assemble, appropriate, stage, symbolize, and imagine themselves, in short constitute themselves as social groups, by claiming rights to and through the city. (“The City” 275)

These theoretical insights, and the comments of many non-Indigenous participants, demonstrate that more attention is needed to the ways that the politics of nationality and citizenship, and indeed of ongoing settler colonialism, remain entrenched in this urban site. As Indigenous participants suggested, and as the historical material presented in Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrates, political action that claims the city must also contend with active and ongoing assertions of Indigenous sovereignty over the same space. To do otherwise is to perpetuate settler colonial representations of urban space as a form of *terra nullius*, relegating Indigenous peoples and their sovereignty to the discursive plane of “long ago and far away.” These tensions may be particularly evident in some of the organizing for migrant justice in the City of Toronto.

Citing Pratt, Martin and Mohanty suggest that “there is an irreconcilable tension between the search for a secure place from which to speak, within which to act, and the awareness of the price at which secure places are bought, the awareness of the exclusions, the denials, the blindnesses on which they are predicated’ (Mohanty and Martin 101). Indeed, when asked about their relationships to land, belonging and Indigenous peoples in the decolonizing autobiography portion of interviews and focus groups, many participants comments reflected the complexities of these relationships to “home.” One participant, a service provider in a local women's shelter, explained:

My relationship to Toronto is, you know, I'm an immigrant. So, I came here [in] 1981. Home country: Jamaica. So came to Canada as an immigrant, as somebody whose mother came here under the domestic workers' program, the domestic workers' scheme that was, you know, that kind of program that targeted the Caribbean at that time, in the 60s, as the place to secure kind of in-home nannies and/or childcare workers. So my mother came under the domestic workers' scheme, and like many other families, left children, and

then children were reunited. So I guess I'm one of those children. Yes, so I think that locates me in terms of kind of my relationship with Toronto. Now having spent most of my life in Toronto, I see myself as, you know, an immigrant for whom Toronto has now become home. So the whole notion of home has changed. So where, you know, as an early immigrant, one would talk about going back home, it's, you know, having to shift that perspective because Toronto has now become home.

Another participant shared her experience of her family's immigration under the points system:

And so I felt like I really didn't have any sense of power or ability to change that situation, and it wasn't 'til I came to Toronto and began my activism and had established myself here more that I feel like this is home. This is a place that I have an agency to change, and I've met other people that are coming from similar places or similar histories – or not – who are interested in fighting to change this city and change the city because of the history that we come from. And having similar political perspectives with people around me is what gives me a sense of home.

Indeed, this contentious concept of home underpins, and may undermine, the potential for alliances among anti-colonial activists. Many theorists of diaspora and transnationalism have explored the tension between homeland and hostland (see K. Butler, for example). Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan suggest

Postcolonial diasporas... help us to understand the relationship between movements of people and the mobility of capital in the world today... Furthermore, in order to problematize the separation of a pure "home" from a "contaminated" diasporic location, we have to pay attention to how people distinguish their diasporic location from their "home" location. (16)

Such a distinction is further complicated in contexts where the diasporic location is also Indigenous land, a fact which most participants are well aware of and concerned with. Although anti-colonial activists' acts of claiming the city may be regarded as an expression of a desire to return home, many are well aware of the potential dangers and inherent conflicts, of such assertions. At the end of our focus group, the participant who had said that she gained a sense of home from her community in the city added,

I have to change something I said that's been bothering me. I don't feel like Toronto is home. I feel like Toronto is one of the first places where I want to try to create a home. But it doesn't feel like home. I feel like, for anyone who lives in Toronto that – and can feel like Toronto is home, they are coming from extreme points of privilege. To be able to feel like anywhere is home, in this globalized, colonized world means you're coming from extreme, extreme points of privilege.

Any efforts to do decolonize the concept of home in the settler city must contend with ongoing struggles for Indigenous sovereignty which include this very land and must envision new relationships among identity, land, and belonging.

The tensions between claiming the city and subordinating Indigenous sovereignty are also evident in some of the movements that migrant justice activists have taken up. Peter Nyers suggests that as a result of their dissatisfaction with the piecemeal nature of national regularization programs at the level of the federal state,

Campaigns by non-status immigrants and their allies are beginning to direct their advocacy at levels of governance where the state's power to exclude can be avoided or minimized. One can see this kind of political activity within refugee and migrant rights movements, especially in their efforts to implement innovative public policy at the municipal level of governance. ("Community Without Status" 136)

For example, migrant justice group No One is Illegal Toronto (NOII-TO) actively targets the city in its "Sanctuary City" organizing: "We are taking back our city. One shelter at a time, one food bank at a time, one health care centre at a time. Breaking the walls, fences and borders in Toronto, we are creating a Sanctuary City that ensures justice and dignity for all" ("This City is a Sweatshop 2010"). In each aspect of their Sanctuary City organizing, NOII Toronto works in coalition with service providers, concerned community members, and other organizations. Their demands for rights to the city are advanced in claims for access to city programs and social services, while also claiming rights to visibility, political voice, and representation in the city. This campaign highlights the exclusions of social policy and of citizenship legislation. However, the

relationship of this campaign to Indigeneity and settler colonialism is ambiguous. Indeed, the complex system of providing social services to Indigenous peoples, whether living on- or off-reserve, and according to their formal Indian status, has made it very difficult to infuse a deeply anti-colonial focus in Solidarity City Network/Sanctuary City organizing. And indeed, a focus on common circumstances of marginalization within the settler city may further obscure the very different experiences and positions under settler colonialism that lead to these circumstances. In other words, to organize on the basis of a shared marginalization from vital social services may reinforce the incommensurability of migrant justice campaigns with Indigenous sovereignty.

This does not mean that the campaign is not important, nor does it undermine the importance of the campaign to many peoples' daily lives. Rather, I want to reiterate the importance of recognizing that such claims on the settler city are incommensurable with Indigenous sovereignty, at least as they are currently formulated. Many of the activists in this campaign are well aware of contradiction, suggesting that as a movement-building initiative, the Sanctuary City campaign problematizes state citizenship and may serve to de-link belonging from nationality and formal status within the state. One white participant active in radical migrant justice work in the city explained that he sees some potential in the Sanctuary City organizing to unsettle the association of belonging with federal, formal citizenship:

They're [the state] not really worried about us erasing the border guards from Fort Erie or Detroit, but rather that people are, like, "I live in Toronto. I see these people. Just let them do what they want," And that's scary for the government, more so. And I think that's why for me, the Don't Ask Don't Tell campaign⁵² can really get to the heart of that because if we can get people on an individual level to be, like, "You know what? This is how I'm going to live my life... I don't care what this person is here for or why they're here or what their status is, but that they're here, they're doing their thing, and let's just work and let them be." And in that notion, sort of that buy-out, [it's] like

⁵² Later re-named "Access for All!" or Sanctuary City, and then taken up by the Solidarity City Network, the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) campaign was created by NOII Toronto and community partners focused on gaining access to services including education, housing, and healthcare.

saying, “You know what? I’m done believing whatever you’re telling me about who should be here and who shouldn’t,” I think [that] can have a really strong effect at really delegitimizing any sort of [citizenship] over the long term.

This delegitimizing of citizenship may be an important aspect of delegitimizing the settler state, but it is implied, rather than central to the Sanctuary City campaign, at least as it was focused during the time of fieldwork.

Of course, claiming the city is no easy feat for any group, and the legacies of this city’s colonial history further complicate such politics, particularly for Indigenous peoples and those committed to a broader politics of decolonization. As illustrated throughout Chapters 3 and 4, the place of Indigenous people in urban centres is complicated by discourses of multiculturalism and long-standing representations of “real” Indigenous peoples as out of place in the city. Such challenges led one white participant, a service provider within a large Indigenous agency in Toronto, to suggest that advocating for Indigenous rights and recognition in the City of Toronto requires a “warrior position.” Indigenous participants noted the difficulty of advancing Indigenous rights in the urban context, and in Toronto in particular, citing the perceived invisibility of Indigenous peoples in the city, as well as the strong colonial conception that Indigenous people are not urban.

Among migrant justice activists, many of whom arrived in Toronto through various processes of displacement, many also expressed discomfort in claiming this city, given their knowledge, however uneven, of the colonial processes at the heart of its founding and of those processes which continue to sustain relationships of deep inequality and subordination within and beyond the city. Many suggested that in addition to joining alliances against ongoing settler colonialism, non-Indigenous activists and migrant justice organizations must also continue to build relationships and learn from Indigenous activists, organizations, and movements.

Indigenous activists had a number of concrete recommendations for how these

relationships might be differently imagined, as well as realistic understandings of some of the practical and systemic obstacles. In their comments on the potential of alliances with migrant justice movements, a number of Indigenous activists drew on Indigenous knowledge and practices around treating newcomers. One participant said,

My understanding of how [Indigenous] people were traditionally was that people welcomed newcomers. So that would be my tendency. I would always lean toward welcoming newcomers, but I don't think that's the consensus in our community right now.

She immediately noted the obstacle to such alliances, in the recognition that newcomers are implicated in the settler colonial project, given the structure of immigration and settlement legislation in this context. As a result, she noted that many Indigenous people would treat potential alliances with immigrants with caution:

You might even hear some fairly, almost racist comments about newcomers in our community – among less conscious people, people who just see their own disenfranchisement and perceive someone else as somehow benefiting from it. So that would be work that we would have to do in our community, would be to educate our own community members. That is one of the mandates of CSIS [Coalition in Support of Indigenous Sovereignty] too. That is why we do try to include these issues in our demos: to educate our own community about the fact that people are here for a reason that has to do directly with Canadian genocidal politics over there. So that we do see them as [having] a common enemy.

Several Indigenous activists took a similar position, suggesting that immigration is directly shaped by genocidal politics, often those advanced by the Canadian state. One participant explained this further:

But I also have concerns around newcomers that come here. And, again, first of all, the Canadian state's assumption that it has the right to decide who comes here, who doesn't, and you know, what category [laugh] they are assigned. So, that's of concern. But, again, the whole – and here's where borders get in the way, and concepts of land ownership get in the way: the Canadian government plays a role in disenfranchising people and alienating people from their land, and creating the conditions of poverty and war and violence that people want to escape. And then when they – first of all, if they get here – they treat 'em like shit... and that's not acceptable.

Among Indigenous participants seeking to strengthen connections with and increase support for newcomers, several reflected on adoption and citizenship practices in Indigenous nations (for a discussion of this practice in Nishnaabeg tradition, see Leanne Simpson *Dancing* 89-90). One Indigenous participant wished that Indigenous nations were in a position of strength where they could adopt some newcomers and refugees, providing passports or citizenship papers, yet she noted that the lack of infrastructure and strong connections between urban and land-based communities limit this possibility:

I think there's a lot of challenges, especially in the city. If there [is] to be a real infrastructural strength, then those connections have to be made on a government level, to actual First Nations. In Toronto, it's difficult 'cause that infrastructure isn't here. There are Native organizations, but they'll say flat-out they're not political because everyone's funded through that hand, you know? You can't bite the hand that feeds you. And the activists that are here, they don't have a lot of power, they don't have that power. They can educate and do forums, but they don't have a governmental lobbying power, the power to develop their own immigration policy, they don't have the land. So relationships have to be forged with leaders in First Nations. And that's hard to do.

Indeed, another Indigenous participant similarly noted the practical constraints on such potential alliances, noting the day-to-day struggles with ongoing settler colonialism in many Indigenous nations:

So, in terms of my work, those are concerns that I have. And I'm trying to challenge – I'm moving into a place where I would like to start to challenge through the work that I do, Indigenous nations to step up. And it's difficult because Indigenous nations are in survival mode right now, you know. I mean they have day-to-day issues of – you know, especially up north. I mean we're talking about, you know, huge problems with suicides, and substance abuses, and domestic violence, and incredible, incredible poverty, and all this kind of stuff. And to ask them to just step up as a nation, and start speaking on behalf of you know, settlers, it might be a bit too much to ask at this point.

Despite these significant constraints, Indigenous participants expressed a commitment to further developing the important alliances that have been growing in

Toronto. One participant noted,

I really do believe that our differences are necessary towards survival. We need each other to be different. We need those different cultures and histories and languages and ways of thinking and approaching things in order to survive, because it's not just enriching, it's also, creative, it's inventive, you know, and those kinds of things. But it is very difficult. And I think that colonization has impacted us in ways that – I mean, to some extent, it's been very successful at keeping us from building alliances.

Indeed, as these insights suggest, settler colonialism has rendered immigration problematic, even as it is often a root causal factors of much global migration. The ongoing impacts and practices of settler colonialism further limit the capacity to strengthen alliances. Despite plenty of good will, ongoing conversation, listening, and organizing is needed to continue building these alliances, and to recognize the ways in which the settler colonial context may foreclose the possibilities of some alliances.

Chapter 6: “It’s Like the Air I Breathe”: “Settlerness” and White Solidarity

[M]uch thought needs to go into the term used for describing things that are not Indigenous” (Shawn Wilson *Research is Ceremony*, 34).

We need allies in our struggles. Mother Earth needs allies. But after settlers learn the horrific and brutal truth of how Canada established itself – literally over the dead bodies of our ancestors – what, then, are their responsibilities? What do we expect of them? How do we hold them accountable? And how much responsibility do we have to take for their education, when our people are struggling for their very survival? (Amadahy “The Role of Settlers” 7)

This chapter continues the analysis of triangulated relations under settler colonialism by focusing on the insights of white activists with secure citizenship status. In contrast to the participants whose insights are highlighted in previous chapters, white participants were most likely to suggest that citizenship means little to them in terms of personal identification, and that their formal citizenship status has little impact on their day-to-day lives. They were also far more likely to suggest that citizenship has little or no impact on their political action or on the movements in which they participate. In part, these insights are perpetuated in the construction of citizenship and the exaltation of certain subjectivities in Canadian citizenship policy. As Thobani notes,

The figure of the national subject is a much venerated one, exalted above all others as the embodiment of the quintessential characteristics of the nation and the personification of its values, ethics, and civilizational mores. In the trope of the citizen, this subject is universally deemed the legitimate heir to the rights and entitlements proffered by the state... Even when disparaged as a gendered, sexed or classed subject... in its nationality, this subject positively commands respect as the locus of state power. (*Exalted* 4)

Exaltation has a direct impact on political action. Although white participants have a clear understanding of whiteness as part of the problem of colonization, for the most part they regard white identities and citizenship as outside of anti-colonial struggles.

These positions resonate with the historical construction of citizenship policy, where attempts to establish the role and position of the citizen rely on a normalization of whiteness. Although this position is not entirely or uniformly internalized, its impact is evident in the structuring of identity and in participants' understandings of their place in projects of decolonization. As a result, white activists are often positioned as supporters or allies in anti-colonial struggles, a positioning which reflects well-founded (and unfortunately repeatedly confirmed) concerns about the tendency of activists from dominant groups to monopolize leadership in political action. What is suggested here is not that white activists should be central in projects of decolonization, but rather that positionalities, such as white, Canadian, settler and also white ally must also be opened up to anti-colonial critique.

Conceptualizing Whiteness, “Settleness,” and Political Action

Of the thirty-one individuals interviewed for this research project, eight self identified as white and indicated that they hold secure formal Canadian citizenship status. All but one of these participants were born in Canada, gaining citizenship at and through birth. Most of these activists work in groups or organizations led and directed by Indigenous people and/or people of colour, with few other white activists in the organization. Two are members of groups that have long contributed to anti-racist and anti-colonial activism, although these groups are primarily – and at times almost exclusively – composed of white activists. Many participants are familiar with some activist and scholarly writing about whiteness, white privilege, and ongoing debates about the roles of white allies in anti-racist and anti-colonial activism.⁵³ Despite this politicization, the masking of aspects of whiteness is also evident in participants'

53 Although the source of this learning about being an ally was not fully explored in our interviews, the frequency of anti-oppression training and sessions on whiteness, being an ally, and solidarity, as well as the language frequently employed in organizing spaces, suggests that this is a widely shared discourse. Wilmot's discussion of how activists come to learn about whiteness and white anti-racism is found on pages 99-122.

comments regarding citizenship and identity and the impacts of these notions on political action.

As was the case for most research participants, few white activists embraced the identity of citizen. In contrast to Indigenous and racialized participants, white participants were most likely to suggest that their citizenship status means little to them and that it has little impact on their day-to-day lives or on their political action. This is perhaps not surprising, given its resonance in a large and growing body of research on whiteness and identity (for example, see Dyer; Frankenberg *White Women*). Most white participants regarded citizenship as meaningful only to those who do not have it, or whose citizenship is somehow problematized. For example, one participant said, "I've actually never really thought about this before, I've never really worried too much about citizenship except when I had a friend that I didn't want to get deported and I was really happy when he got citizenship". By contrast, another participant made clear connections between whiteness, citizenship, and privilege:

It almost doesn't mean anything to me except that I know it means a lot because people are denied their rights based on it. It's one of those things that – it's like all my privilege, I just take it totally for granted. I have no notion of myself as a citizen. That's my privilege. That means really nothing to me. Because it's the air I breathe, it's just always been around. It's like being white: that's normal, that's mainstream, that's something that I just always have. So it only becomes an issue when dealing with someone who's not considered to be a citizen.

She went on to explain:

And my struggle, certainly as a white woman and white Canadian, someone who's lived here all her life, born here, is to recognize the right of every person that I meet in my day-to-day [life] to live here and have all the rights that I enjoy. And so this notion that if you're not a citizen you should somehow not enjoy rights that I have I find really difficult to understand. I don't know why that arbitrary kind of "You have to live here a certain amount of time," "You have to come under certain circumstances," "You have to answer the questions on the test," all the different things that are required to make you a citizen and that confer on you all of these rights – which, of course, what we know is if

you are a Black citizen, you don't enjoy the same rights as I do, or if you're an Aboriginal citizen, you're never even really a citizen of Canada, or many Aboriginal people don't consider themselves citizens of Canada.

Some participants suggested that Canadian citizenship really only means anything to them when juxtaposed with the American context. One participant explained that she really only thinks about her own national identity when concerns arise about the power and imperialism of the United States:

Certainly as the United States becomes more and more of a threat on the south, you become aware of yourself as a Canadian more. But I think probably the leadership in terms of that struggle will come from people who have thought about these things long and hard and had to leave countries and will understand what that's all about. Again, I'm not giving a good answer to your question. It's all over the place, but I would say that because of my privilege as a white Canadian-born citizen, these are not things I have looked at particularly much. I may have to in the future and I don't know how I will deal with that.

This comment repeats the common formulation of Canadian citizenship as only having meaning when challenged, in this case by the dominance and power of the United States (see Berland), but also notable is the assertion that those who have been displaced from other countries – in other words, whose citizenship has been contested – will be able to help sort through the issue of citizenship. Similarly, one participant said that exclusion from citizenship is a potential ground of relationship-building among migrants and Indigenous peoples, but said nothing about the place of those who, like her, occupy neither of these positions:

...I guess I was just thinking about the way that both First Nations communities and migrant peoples are marginalized by the traditional concept of citizenship. While amongst these populations, there is a sense of struggle beyond the bounds of citizenship, but also demands for access to social citizenship rights, such as public, culturally appropriate health care, child care, schools, clean water, adequate housing.... I'm still thinking through this because there are clearly many contradictions, in the sense that while recent immigrants want to become part of the nation, the land reclamations and determined attempts to strengthen Indigenous identities point in an altogether

different direction.

Despite her clear insight that organizing around land and belonging exceeds formal citizenship status and that Indigenous sovereignty movements are seeking something entirely different, her own position in the citizenship regime and in the potential development of political solidarity remained invisible.

White participants made similar comments about identity, suggesting that their identities are not important or relevant to the political action in which they engage, despite a conviction that identity forms part of the organization of difference and oppression within settler colonial society. For example, one participant said,

In my work, identity is central. And in my organizing, identity is central, but not necessarily my identity. ...Issues of identity for me are not first and foremost. They are in my life in different places... it's not like I don't experience oppression. I do. And I certainly act from privilege all the time. So I notice those things. But I don't need to organize around them as an individual. I have a lot of support, and I have a lot of analysis and lots of places where I can talk about those things. My identity isn't so much of an issue.

As her comments suggest, this understanding of which identities are important to political action is informed by understandings of privilege and the operation of oppression, as well as concern about the divisiveness of some approaches to identity in political action, often referenced in the shorthand formulation of identity politics.⁵⁴ For example, one participant explained,

My generation really got deeply into identity politics, and it was – actually, it didn't do a lot of good. There were very deep and necessary reasons that identity politics began, but it's become terribly fragmenting, and also again, it's the psychotherapy thing again, it's all about our individual pain instead of about solving the problem. And that really helps the oppressor a great deal.

This resistance to focusing on whiteness can also be seen as a reflection of concerns about tendencies for whiteness to become re-centred, even in the most critical of anti-

⁵⁴ For more on identity politics and the potential limitations of it, see Hall “Who Needs 'Identity'”; Wendy Brown; Bannerji *The Dark Side of the Nation*; Adams; Briskin; Bickford.

racist analyses (see Audrey Thompson 15; Levine-Rasky “Introduction” 18).

The invisibility of whiteness is both a product of dominant narratives about citizenship and belonging in Canada (and white privilege in that regard) and a challenge for white activists attempting to make meaningful contributions to anti-colonialism. As participants indicated, this is partly how the privilege of citizenship, and particularly of white citizenship, functions within a settler colonial context. In rendering the citizenship of some non-problematic and empty, the citizenship of others is inherently contested, and white citizenship, as well as the white settlement project, remains hegemonic. Although the citizen is a figure that serves to mask the history of colonial settlement, as well as of national sovereignty, it does so as a cipher or an empty space. It is simultaneously “exalted,” to use Thobani’s conceptualization, and invisible. In fact, as Thobani notes, “In Canadian historiography, exaltation conceals the colonial violence that marks the origin of the national subject, even as it mythologizes and pays obeisance to its national essence” (*Exalted* 10).⁵⁵

Participants’ assertions that citizenship means little to them stand in marked contrast to the insights of participants analyzed in previous chapters, who provided detailed insights into the precise impacts of citizenship on their daily lives. This understanding of citizenship is also reflected in their comments on the place of citizenship in political action. For instance, when comparing the insights of two participants who are members of the same Palestinian liberation group, their responses were dramatically different when it came to the question of citizenship. When asked about the importance of citizenship to the group’s political action, one participant, a white foreign-born man, quickly noted: “But the word citizenship doesn’t figure into those discussions.” He went on to explain that,

⁵⁵ Thobani further notes: “The state organizes the rights that nationals come to acquire by treating these as rooted in their own intrinsic worthiness and not in the colonial violence, political, racial, and ethnic dominations, or in the classed and gendered exploitations and resistances that characterize nation formations” (*Exalted* 11).

From being there, I know in Palestine, the movement is – it was for one state, and then in the 70s it became for two states, but the idea was never nationalistic, and part of it is the diversity of the national liberation movement in Palestine that incorporates Christians, and Jews, and Muslims, and Arab, and non-Arab identity.

This participant went on to share his ambivalence about the importance of citizenship status to individual activists within the group:

A lot of our organizers aren't even Canadian citizens, and to the extent they are, it's used more as a claim to demand that Canada change its policies. But it's not: "As Canadian citizens we're going to demand changes on Canada's policy to Indigenous people." Although that's starting to happen. And conceptualizing that, it's like we can make claims as Canadian citizens but we can also make claims about Canada, right? And so I think that's happening, but it's all very new and fresh, but it's been happening for a while... It's also about to what degree me and you become conscious and aware of it.

Despite this back and forth and his obvious ambivalence about citizenship and its relevance to the political work of the group, he concluded by reasserting his original assessment that "Citizenship doesn't figure in the work that's happening."

This participant's ambivalence about citizenship and its relevance to political action in part reflects his rejection of citizenship and Canadian nationalism as tools of white settler colonialism in Canada. At other points in our discussion, he shared his insights into the dangers of nationalist organizing from his work in other militarized contexts, his experience and reading on issues of Black liberation, Palestinian rights, nationalism, and Indigenous sovereignty, and his experience of coming to Canada as a young child. Nevertheless, his insights stood in marked contrast to those offered by a Palestinian-born activist who has also been instrumental in the Indigenous solidarity movement, and offered a very different perspective on citizenship and its place in the group's organizing. When asked whether citizenship is relevant to the group's work, this participant responded without hesitation or ambivalence, saying, "You're touching on the central issue in the Palestinian struggle, which is the right of return of the refugees." He

went on to explain specifically what citizenship means in this context:

For us, the issue of citizenship is quite complicated. None of us want to live in the misery of the refugee camps, and the displacement, and the fact that you can't travel, you can't go anywhere, you can't access education, you can't access jobs in many places. But at the same time, the struggle is to return to Palestine. But not just to return by crossing the border, but actually to have the return as essentially the liberation of Palestine, and the return of the land that was stolen, and compensation for the damage that was done to us, and to our parents and grandparents, and recognition by the settler community of the crimes committed against us.

This comment provides a very specific understanding of citizenship, the concrete impacts of not having citizenship status, as well as the participant's vision of relationships of identity, land, and belonging in a liberated Palestine. Citizenship means very different things to these two participants. For both, however, it is problematic. Both are critical of the institution of citizenship and the potential gains it offers to anti-colonial political movements in Canada and in Palestine. In part, their differing positions on the impact and place of citizenship in political action are a result of their very different positions within the settlement projects in Canada and in Palestine.

A number of historians have tracked the historical construction of whiteness and its association with authority, hegemonic power, and racial dominance.⁵⁶ In Ruth Frankenberg's assessment, the terms white and race were both "birthed by imperialism" and as a result, "[i]n its universalization, whiteness came to be a marker of power and authority" ("The Mirage" 74-5). The history of this construction of whiteness has itself been hidden and whiteness has been normalized to the point where it is often difficult to discern. As a result, many scholars have conceptualized whiteness as a void or absence. For example, Frankenberg suggests that "[w]hiteness is, while as relational as its others, less clearly marked, except, ironically in terms of its not-Otherness" ("The Mirage" 75). Most importantly, she notes that "it is only to the extent that particular kinds of racially

56 For example, see Allen; Dyer; Roedigger; Lipsitz; Levine-Rasky.

supremacist hegemony are achieved that whiteness can come anywhere near to invisibility” (“The Mirage” 76). This marking and unmarking of whiteness is central to the project of racial domination. As Frankenberg suggests, “whiteness is in a continual state of being dressed and undressed, of marking and cloaking” (“The Mirage” 74).

Represented as universal, and imagined as natural, considerable energy has been invested in unpacking whiteness and making it visible. This endeavour is important but not without risk. Echoing the concerns of other critical whiteness theorists, Audrey Thompson suggests that some “white identity theories keep whiteness at the center of anti-racism” (15). Similarly, Cynthia Levine-Rasky notes that “In rendering whiteness as a meaningful area of inquiry, we run the risk of legitimating its material and symbolic purchase” (“Introduction” 18). In order to trace the operation of whiteness in the ongoing settlement project, Lorenzo Veracini proposes the concept of settlerness:

Settlerness, better than whiteness, can represent the inherently triangular nature of relationships in settler colonial settings: rather than an “unmarked” whiteness constituted against a variety of racialised alterities (and everything in-between), it can provide a conceptual framework where an equally “unmarked” settlerness is constituted against a variety of indigenous and exogenous alterities (and everything in both in-betweens). (“On Settleness” 10)

Highlighting the triangulation of relations under white settler colonialism, the concept of settlerness maintains a focus on complex interrelations, contradictions, and interdependencies, rather than isolating whiteness from other social relations.

Attending to settlerness may help to excavate the elision of whiteness in nationalist discourse. As Frankenberg explains, “whiteness has a habit... of sliding into class and nationality all the time” (“The Mirage” 75). She asserts that whiteness is most invisible when masked as nationality and citizenship, where “neutrality or normativity is claimed for some kinds of whiteness, with whiteness frequently simultaneously linked to nationality” (“The Mirage” 81). In the Canadian context, the power of citizenship is

invested in whiteness, even if not all citizens share this identification. In excavating the moment of transition from settler to citizen, colony to nation-state, it becomes evident that the creation of the citizen is central to the hegemony of the settler colonial state. In other words, the positionalities of white settler-citizens are no less constructed than those of “immigrant” and “Indian” traced in Chapter 3. A deconstruction of this politicization of the white settler-citizen is therefore an important aspect of a critical politics of decolonization, which may shed further light on the potential responsibilities and roles of white activists in Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements.

Constructing the White Settler-Citizen

The process of transforming the white settler into the master of national space in Canada has largely been obfuscated. In contrast to other legislative categories such as Indian or immigrant, the citizen has received relatively limited legislative attention. Instead, the citizen is largely defined in opposition to the racialized or Indigenous other, and remains relatively undefined and uncontested in the national imagination. However, as Thobani suggests,

[T]he category citizen did not emerge through some internal process within a natural community, with regrettable consequences for outsiders. Citizenship emerged as integral to the very processes that transformed insiders (Aboriginal peoples) into aliens in their own territories, while simultaneously transforming outsiders (colonizers, settlers, migrants) into exalted insiders (Canadian citizens). The category citizen, born from this genocidal violence of colonization, exists in a dialectical relation with its Other, the Indian, for whom the emergence of this citizenship was deadly, not emancipatory. (*Exalted* 74)

Unfolding over several years, three specific moments are explored in this section to illustrate the gradual construction of the citizen: Confederation (1867) and the steps toward federalism preceding this, the Citizenship Debates of 1885, and the 1947 Canadian Citizenship Act. These formative moments suggest that citizenship legislation

was overtly concerned with furthering the white settlement project, and the measures documented here suggest that this was largely achieved through assimilation, notably naturalization and enfranchisement.

Confederation and the British North America Act (1867)

Canadian confederation was inaugurated with the 1867 British North America Act, also known as the Constitution Act. As the first iteration of Canadian sovereignty, this Act sought unity under a single dominion, established a degree of autonomy from the metropole, and asserted national sovereignty (see Thobani *Exalted* 80-2). Such endeavours required attention to the emerging body politic. As Thobani explains,

The development of Canada as a self-governing territory, with its own political institutions and population base was built upon its close ties to Britain and its privileged white status. The political autonomy that the new state acquired through the British North America Act (1867) enabled it to further consolidate colonial relations and expand westwards... the state set out to eliminate “culturally distinct populations of 'Indians' through their forced assimilation” and to build a nation based on British institutions and social systems. (*Exalted* 81; quoting Green “Towards a Détente with History” 92)

As the settler was transformed into a citizen of the sovereign nation-state, colonial relations and white dominance were entrenched, as is illustrated in the creation of the legislative category of citizen.

In the years before Confederation, citizenship signalled membership in the British Empire. As Thobani notes, “Until almost the mid-twentieth century, the actual legal status of ‘Canadians’ was that of British subjects with domicile in Canada; immigration and nationalization legislation organized access to this legal status” (*Exalted* 81). Although Canadian citizenship was not legally defined until 1947, prior to Confederation, law-makers invested considerable effort in defining membership in the colony and emerging polity. In particular, the mechanisms of enfranchisement and naturalization were employed to differentiate among settler-citizens (who gained

citizenship status through birth in Canada), immigrant-citizens (whose status was regularized through naturalization), and enfranchised Indigenous people. The overarching goals of these mechanisms were assimilation and fostering allegiance to the emerging nation-state.

Lawrence notes that enfranchisement “has been a central part of the Canadian government’s assimilation policy since the Gradual Civilization Act of 1857” (*Real Indians* 31). She explains that the Gradual Civilization Act of 1857 “proposed voluntary enfranchisement as a ‘privilege.’ Initially an Indian had to be schooled, debt free, and of ‘good moral character’ before he could be enfranchised” (*Real Indians* 31). This legislation entrenched a legal distinction between Indigenous peoples and other Canadians, holding Indigenous peoples to a much more stringent measure of “civilization” than so-called Canadians. As John Tobias writes,

The paradox that was to become and remain a characteristic of Canada's Indian policy was given a firm foundation in this act. After stipulating in the preamble that the measure was designed to encourage civilization of the Indian, remove all legal distinctions between Indians and other Canadians, and integrate them fully into Canadian society, the legislation proceeded to define who was an Indian and then to state that such a person could not be afforded the rights and privileges accorded to European Canadians until the Indian could prove that he could read and write either the French or English language, was free of debt, and of good moral character. If he could meet such criteria, the Indian was then eligible to receive an allotment of twenty hectares of reserve land, to be placed on one-year probation to give further proof of his being civilized, and then to be given the franchise. Thus, the legislation to remove all legal distinctions between Indians and Europeans actually established them. In fact, it set standards for acceptance that many, if not most, white colonials could not meet, for few of them were literate, free of debt, and of high moral character. (130)

This legislation served three goals. First, it was as an assertion of “Canadian” sovereignty. Second, it made a clear legal distinction between Indigenous people and citizens in which the non-citizenship of Indigenous peoples serves as a mechanism for establishing the sovereignty of citizens. In other words, Indigeneity was effectively

established as irreconcilable with citizenship. Thus, as Lawrence notes, enfranchisement served as “the removal of Indian status from an individual, thereby creating a Canadian citizen of Aboriginal heritage who has relinquished his collective ties to his Native community and any claims to Aboriginal rights” (*Real' Indians* 31). Moreover, as Thobani suggests, “Canadian citizenship, therefore, represented an assault on Native peoples, a drive towards their cultural and political elimination” (*Exalted* 82). In the process, Indigenous sovereignty was undermined, a third goal of enfranchisement policy. As Lawrence explains, the newly enfranchised “would receive twenty hectares of land, freehold tenure, from his former reserve. This last provision violated the terms of the Royal Proclamation, by asserting that colonial governments could parcel out reserve land to individuals without band permission” (*Real' Indians* 31). Enfranchisement was utilized specifically to convert collective land-holding practices to private property and to decrease the size of communally held reserve lands, thereby reducing Indigenous sovereignty and claims to land (Lawrence *Real' Indians* 31; Thobani *Exalted* 82).

Much legislation throughout the latter quarter of the 1800s maintained this focus on enfranchisement as a measure of assimilation (see Leslie and Maguire; Lawrence *Real' Indians* 31-3). At times, legislators imposed enfranchisement as a means of assimilating an entire nation and usurping their lands (see Lawrence *Real' Indians* 31-3). When it was offered voluntarily, Indigenous peoples were rarely enticed by enfranchisement. Lawrence notes that “between 1857 and 1918 only 102 [Indigenous] persons enfranchised” (*Real' Indians* 31). Even when it did not serve the aims of assimilation, enfranchisement provided a means of distinguishing between Indigenous peoples and white settler-citizens, with the latter marked as masters of the national space. As Thobani notes, “For over a century after Confederation, the state therefore organized and solidified white racial identity as political (citizen) identity. The nation’s racial identity, as well as its legal citizenship, thus became fused as white” (*Exalted* 75).

In addition to distinguishing between citizens and Indigenous peoples, legislators sought to assimilate preferred races of settlers targeted for eventual inclusion as citizens. Naturalization served as a legal mechanism to mark the transition from immigrant to citizen, while also locating those not naturalized firmly outside of the national polity. As with other legal measures, the central goal of naturalization was settlement and the maintenance of white hegemony. Through naturalization, newcomers were encouraged to develop greater allegiance to the emerging national order. In this way, naturalization was a crucial means of responding to the increasing diversity of Canadian society and of forging a sense of national unity in the face of ongoing anti-colonial rebellion among Indigenous peoples, particularly in the western provinces.

As Alfred Howell explained in 1884, the social fabric of the emerging settler-nation was changing rapidly with new waves of immigration, and the Naturalization Act of 1881 offered a mechanism for differentiating among newcomers and maintaining the hegemony of the white settlement project:

The decennial census, 1881, showed the population of foreign nationalities resident in the Dominion of Canada to be 124,369, which has since been increased by many thousands and new accessions are constantly arriving. They come from the United States, from Norway and Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Germany, France, Russia, Italy, China, and other parts of the world; and unlike those who come from the British Islands, and other British possessions, who are our fellow subjects, they are the subjects or citizens of foreign powers, and not entitled to the privileges of British subjects in this country unless they become such by naturalization. Upon becoming settled, especially those with families, they learn the advantages of being placed upon the same footing as native born subjects, and large numbers in various parts of the Dominion annually become naturalized. (v)

Naturalization conferred the status of subject within the Dominion, providing important rights and privileges. It also served as an important mechanism for increasing the non-Indigenous population, forwarding the expansionist project, and ensuring allegiance to the Canadian polity, symbolized by the shedding of previous nationalities (see Howell v-

vi).

Of course, not all immigrants were equally valued as potential settler-citizens. Thobani notes that the “export [of] the unemployed, the poor, and the criminal to the colonies... often provoked the ire of settlers who resented the arrival of these lower orders. They were, however, rarely met with the bitter hostility and angry political opposition accorded the arrival of non-European migrants” (*Exalted* 83). In particular, state officials attempted to limit the naturalization of immigrants from China, India, and Japan (see Chapter 5), as well as Black and Jewish immigrants (see Thobani *Exalted* 76-7). Naturalization provided a mechanism for integrating desirable immigrants into the polity, but remained an inferior form of membership in the national order, conferring a form of citizenship but not the franchise.

The 1885 Citizenship Debates

As Howell suggests above, “native born” citizenship (that is, the citizenship of settlers born in the Dominion) was the most exalted form of citizenship. Among native born citizens further differentiations, according to economic status (literacy, social standing, class position) reserved the most desirable benefits of citizenship for the most elite members of settler society (Thobani *Exalted* 74-5). In particular, women and Chinese men were explicitly barred from the right to vote prior to 1885, with property and “character” provisions effectively barring the majority of working-class settler men as well. Throughout the 1880s, increasing tensions surrounding access to the franchise and related benefits of citizenship prompted legislative response. As Veronica Strong-Boag notes, during the 1880s,

[T]he monopoly of power by middle-class White men came under increasing attack. A movement politics emerged among workers, settler women, and Natives, and can be glimpsed as well among Asians. Across the Dominion, in settings as diverse as reserves, universities, and Chinatowns, prejudice's victims repudiated discrimination and disrespect. (72)

Set against the backdrop of the North-West Rebellion and the violent repression of Métis and Cree resistance that followed, these tensions culminated in a legal debate about access to the franchise. As Strong-Boag explains,

The franchise, whether municipal, provincial or federal, was but one, and rarely the most sought after, goal of protesters who often viewed freedom of employment or opportunity for education as better prizes. As the vote's significance in a modern, newly democratic state became clearer, however, its denial received increasing attention even from those preoccupied with other campaigns. (72)

Introduced on March 19, 1885, the Electoral Franchise Act sought to specify the conditions and qualifications for obtaining the vote and to slightly expand access to the vote. The original Bill 103 aimed to enfranchise two new groups of voters:

[S]pinsters and widows, at least those of European origin, meeting male property qualifications; and Indians who occupied land in fee simple with improvements of \$150 or more on their reserves anywhere in the Dominion. This latter group would no longer, as was required under the Indian Act of 1868, have to renounce tribal membership and annuities in return for the vote. (Strong-Boag 69)

In the context of the Riel Rebellions in the West, and the increasing migration of non-white labourers, the Electoral Franchise Act seems to have been about gate-keeping and perhaps also, as Strong-Boag notes, a means of distracting the populace from these other concerns (75-6). The debates about granting the vote to women, Chinese migrants, and Indians provide important insights into the emerging national order and the visions and preoccupations of legislators at the time.

Bill 103 marked the first legislative debate about women's right to vote. Strong-Boag recounts that despite the Prime Minister's support for female suffrage, the provision to enfranchise "spinsters and widows, at least those of European origin, meeting male property qualifications" (69) was removed early into the debates surrounding the Bill. Strong-Boag points out that "speakers spent more time debating the merits of enlarging the male settler electorate" (77) and that the attention of Members of Parliament (MPs)

was directed elsewhere, although “off-hand references to feminist agitation had occasionally surfaced” (Strong-Boag 80). The relative lack of debate surrounding the extension of suffrage to settler women at this time is indicative of the centrality of the existing gender order to social relations of the era.⁵⁷

The debates surrounding the enfranchisement of “Indians”, however, reflected deep-seated anxiety about the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the emerging state. In this Bill, enfranchisement again surfaced as a means of assimilating some Indigenous people and of reconciling the unsettled relationship between the state and Indigenous sovereignty. The portion of the citizenship debates regarding the enfranchisement of Indigenous men must be understood in the context of employing enfranchisement as a tool of assimilation and land theft, and Bill 103 departs little from earlier policy directions in this regard.

With the outbreak of the North-West Rebellion just a week into deliberations on the Electoral Franchise Act, the debates also illustrated the responses of state managers to this volatile moment that deeply threatened the national racial order. In her analysis of the debates, Strong-Boag notes that MPs frequently characterized the western Indigenous nations as uncivilized, and therefore unsuited to enfranchisement (81-3). While some were more comfortable extending the federal vote solely to eastern nations, seen as more suitable candidates for assimilation because of their longer exposure to colonialism and “civilization” programs (see Strong-Boag), fears that the resistance in the West could spread were undeniable. As John Leslie and Ron Maguire note, “By May, reluctance and fear marked the Opposition's attack on the [Electoral] Franchise Act which would allow 'wild hordes' of western Indians to go 'from a scalping party to the polls'” (86). The decision to exclude western nations from the provisions of the Act,

⁵⁷ Among women activists, it should be noted that most advocated access to the right to vote as a measure of furthering the nation-building project. Thobani notes that “even as they confronted their gendered inequalities, most did so in the name of furthering the national interest by stressing the importance of women to family and nation” (*Exalted* 84).

while not a radical policy departure, must be understood in the context of their resistance.

As for Indigenous peoples, although their voices were not represented in the Parliamentary debates, the proposed Electoral Franchise Act did make a notable break with historical precedent in permitting the simultaneous recognition of Indian status and enfranchisement, asserting for the first time that one could be both an Indian (in the eyes of the state) and a citizen, though only by meeting stringent qualifications. As Strong-Boag explains,

... the federal Franchise Bill of 1885 offered a solution to the dilemma created by Indian recalcitrance to surrender tribal rights in exchange for the promise of political assimilation. In effect, both legislative initiatives asserted an overriding community of interest among Canadian property-holders. Prosperous Indian counterparts to settler neighbours were invited to cast ballots. Since they were not forced to surrender status or community life, better-off Native voters might emerge as beacons of successful assimilation. Such at least seemed the hope. (81)

Strong-Boag recounts that the debates surrounding Bill 103 fell along predictable lines, with some MPs completely opposing the enfranchisement of Indigenous men before white women and white men who did not meet the property qualifications stipulated in the Act (83). Others suggested that Indigenous peoples should be regarded as minors, rather than independent adults capable of meeting the responsibilities of citizenship (Strong-Boag 82). Strong-Boag notes that partisanship and regional concerns dominated the debate, with some suggesting that access to the franchise would further the goals of nation-building and assimilation (87).

In the end, the 1885 Electoral Franchise Act reinforced popular assumptions about the “good”, assimilable Indians of the eastern nations and the unassimilable western nations, granting the vote solely to members of the eastern nations meeting stringent property and character qualifications (Strong-Boag 87). Although few Indigenous people availed themselves of this dubious privilege, this wasn't the end of

attempts to settle the nation through attention to the citizenship and franchise of Indigenous peoples. As Strong-Boag notes, “In 1898 [Prime Minister] Laurier would strike out the entire Native franchise” (87). In continuing to assert the right to determine membership in the nation-state, state officials both asserted sovereignty and maintained the hegemony of the privileged white citizen whose access to the franchise was secured.

While the bulk of the citizenship debates focused on Indigenous peoples and, to a much lesser degree, some white settler women, the seeming lack of debate surrounding the inclusion of Chinese men on the voters list illustrates the racial hierarchy underpinning the settler colonial order. As Li notes “Anti-Chinese sentiments were widespread in British Columbia in the nineteenth century, and except for a few years after the arrival of the Chinese in 1858, the province's history was marred by a long-lasting anti-Chinese movement” (*The Chinese in Canada* 5). The debates surrounding the enfranchisement of Chinese men, while limited, demonstrate that throughout the Dominion, Chinese men were carefully positioned in opposition to white European newcomers and citizens, as well as in relationship to Indigenous peoples.

Positioned by the state and society as temporary workers, and thus as neither settlers nor true immigrants, Chinese migration during this period was largely male (see Chapter 5). Although some nationalist mythology constructed these workers as “sojourners” (Li *The Chinese in Canada* 64), seeking employment rather than settlement, Li suggests that economic hardship in China and Canada, combined with a hostile environment and restrictive immigration policy were largely the cause of these migration patterns (see Li *The Chinese in Canada* 64-5). Li notes, “The apprehension of the Chinese was well summarized by a witness who testified before the 1902 [Royal] Commission [on Chinese and Japanese Immigration]: 'A large proportion of them would bring their families here were it not for the unfriendly reception they got here during recent years, which creates an unsettled feeling'” (*The Chinese in Canada* 64-5).

The debates surrounding the continued exclusion of Chinese men from enfranchisement are also instructive of racial relations between Indigenous and Chinese men. Taking place alongside the debates on the head tax bill, which was passed just two weeks after the Electoral Franchise Act, legislators were not only debating the merits of enfranchising Chinese men in relation to the modern white citizen, but also alongside and in relation to the enfranchisement of Indians. As Strong-Boag explains,

On May 4 [1885], Macdonald proposed inserting, after the inclusion of Indians, the words “and excluding a Chinaman.” Confident of support, he did not feel the need, as he explained, “to discuss at any length, the reasons for this amendment. The Chinese are not like the Indians, sons of the soil. They come from a foreign country; they have no intent, as a people of making a domicile of any portion of Canada...” (88)

While Strong-Boag notes that some politicians were more inclined to include Chinese men within the franchise, more revealing is the presumed contrast between Chinese and Indigenous men. It is worth citing Strong-Boag's characterization of this aspect of the debate at length:

Macdonald's original comparison with the Indians also sparked debate. Peter Mitchell spoke in favour of “Chinamen being placed on an equal footing with all other persons. Certainly a Chinaman is quite as good as an Indian.” From the constituency of Sunbury, New Brunswick, the Liberal Charles Burbee saw little to choose between two undesirable races... For Ontario Liberal David Mills, neither Chinese nor Indians had much to offer. He bluntly defined the Chinese as members of “the class we designate as non-progressive” and argued that the same could be said of “the Indian population, except in so far as they will show fitness to be enfranchised.” (89)

This portion of the debates reveals that whether reviled or respected, the place of the Chinese man was determined against and alongside that of the Indian. The segmentation of the racial order is further evidenced when these two racial categories were compared with the white settler. Again, Strong-Boag's insights are instructive: “The contrast with desired settlers was sharp. When he [David Mills] applied the criteria of progress 'to the young men of the country', a group he effectively designated as White, or 'to the

Europeans who come here to carve out homes for themselves', they passed unconditionally" (89). This conflation reveals that the underlying racial order was one of white supremacy, through which other social relations were organized hierarchically. While women and those of lower socio-economic status were further down on the hierarchy of inclusion, and the enfranchisement of Indigenous peoples continued to provoke significant anxiety among settler-nationalists – even though it was necessary for the completion of the settler colonial project – the exclusion of Chinese men from the franchise was virtually a foregone conclusion. As Strong-Boag recounts,

Ultimately, MPs revealed significantly less sympathy for Chinese than for women or Natives. The vote to exclude them [from the Electoral Franchise Act] was passed without the extended defence the others had inspired. Indeed the exclusion was deliberately broadened... The Bill's wording was... changed to read "Excluding a person of the Mongolian or Chinese race." (89-90)

The legislative history surrounding the construction of the citizen as modern, civilized, and lawful demonstrates that this subject could only be constructed through the production of the Other, and the rallying of intense fear and insecurity about Indigenous peoples and racialized outsiders. While feminist agitation would lead to settler women's federal suffrage in 1917, Chinese men and women, as well as Indigenous peoples were largely barred from the vote until the middle of the twentieth century (see Strong-Boag). As Thobani notes, the debates served as a mobilization of nationalist sentiment and collective imagining of the character of citizenship and the settler-nation:

Relatively disenfranchised groups among national subjects, including women and the working class, challenged state and elite power to increase their own access to citizenship. Unevenly endowed as their rights were, however, these groups made common cause with the elite and the state in curtailing the access of non-European populations to the same rights. Here, another aspect of citizenship becomes evident: citizenship serves as a status that mobilizes national subjects, classed and gendered as they may be themselves, in the defense of the institution against the claims of those designated as undeserving outsiders. (*Exalted* 75-6)

At the conclusion of the debate on Bill 103, the Electoral Franchise Act was passed with exclusions from the franchise based on gender, class, Indigeneity, property, and racialization. Although some Indigenous men were eligible for the franchise (those in eastern nations meeting strict property and morality standards), women and Chinese men were explicitly excluded. Through these exclusions the citizen was characterized as white, propertied, and male, with a few notable exceptions. The “citizenship debates” were largely about which groups to exclude from the gambit of full citizenship, while citizenship was naturalized as the purview of white, propertied men. This hegemonic association of citizenship with white propertied males (those seen as “natural born” - see below) naturalizes the settlement-nationalist project: those subjects with the greatest power and privilege in society (settler-citizens) are relatively invisible in this policy debate as their power is assumed.

The 1947 Canadian Citizenship Act

The Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947 sought to further entrench this hegemony in the service of national sovereignty. Ostensibly a statement of the nation’s independence from the metropole, the Act further elaborates the parameters for inclusion in full citizenship. Despite the significance of this shift, Janine Brodie describes the legislation itself as “perfunctory,” “specifying the automatic right of entry of Canadians into Canada, a minimum residency requirement to qualify for Canadian citizenship, the conditions under which Canadian citizenship could be revoked, and a revised oath of allegiance” (“Three Stories” 50). Introduced particularly to differentiate between “deserving” refugees, as compared to Nazis and war criminals (Brodie “Three Stories” 49-50), Brodie notes that the Canadian Citizenship Act employed the language of unity while entrenching the preferential treatment of British subjects (50) established in previous legislation. Indeed, as the words of Paul Martin, Sr., indicate, this unity was sought “to bridge the divisions among the different European ethnicities in the country”

(quoted in Thobani *Exalted* 89).

Thobani notes that racialized distinctions among citizens are further entrenched in the structure of the Act, which “created three classes of citizens: natural born, naturalized, and those granted citizenship by virtue of a certificate of citizenship” (*Exalted* 88). As the internment, displacement, and deportation of Japanese Canadians under the War Measures Act and subsequent legislation from 1939 until 1949 demonstrates, these provisions of citizenship were often conditional for non-white citizens and for naturalized citizens. The status of naturalized citizens (i.e. those born outside of the country), remained deeply conditional. As Thobani notes,

The first Citizenship Act thus distinguished between classes of citizens even after they acquired this legal status, ensuring that citizenship status was not to be unconditional for all citizens... The new Citizenship Act maintained this right of the state to impose a condition of statelessness upon immigrant citizens, thus allowing their immigrant status to permeate their citizenship even after they became naturalized, distinguishing them from the real citizens whose status could not be revoked. (*Exalted* 88).

And yet, even among “real citizens” (i.e. those born in Canada), citizenship status was conditional on the basis of racialization. For instance, Thobani writes that in the 1947 Citizenship Act, “the deportation clause... was not applicable to natural-born citizens, whose citizenship thus became defined as unconditional and irrevocable” (Thobani *Exalted* 88). Yet, a notable exception to this unconditional citizenship is evident in the deportation of Canadian-born people of Japanese ancestry during and after World War II. In their challenge to the Order in Council which would permit the deportation of Japanese Canadians under the War Measures Act, the Co-Operative Committee of Japanese Canadians obtained a ruling from the Supreme Court which asserted that “cabinet, a small group of politicians, had the power to deport and banish from Canada citizens who had not committed any crimes against the state. Racialization alone, or for Japanese Canadians, being designated as 'of the Japanese race,' was sufficient grounds”

(Miki 103). Thus, even the most exalted form of citizenship – citizenship afforded by birth – was conditional based on racialization (see Miki 90-91).

Gendered difference was also intertwined with this racialized hierarchy. Thobani explains that the Canadian Citizenship Act granted independent status to most Canadian women, “stipulating that they would not lose this status upon marriage to a non-citizen” (*Exalted* 88-9), yet this right was also mitigated by racialization. Indigenous women were faced with the opposite prospect, legislated under the Indian Act, of losing their Indian status upon marriage to a man who did not hold federally defined Indian status (*Exalted* 89; see Chapter 4 as well). As Oikawa notes, the dispersal, dispossession and deportation of Japanese Canadians stand as evidence of the limitations of their legal citizenship status (78). This was further evident in the loss of Canadian citizenship for those deported before, during and after 1947 (see Miki 101-115). These examples demonstrate the degree to which the privileges of citizenship were deeply intertwined with racialization, affording greater entitlements to white women, and limiting rights according to racialization. Thus, as Thobani notes, “The creation of modern citizenship by this Act [the 1947 Citizenship Act] thus reinforced and consolidated the white settler ideology and deepened the institutionalization of colonial relations” (*Exalted* 89).

These historical moments contributed to the normalization of whiteness and/as citizenship within the settler colonial project, demonstrated in the process through which some identities were settled, to a degree, while others were rendered problematic within the triangulated relations conceptualized by Thobani and Veracini. With hegemony secured, the traces of this process have been further obscured, particularly for those privileged by whiteness and settlerness. Yet, the inherent instability of the settlement project continues to haunt even those whose status is exalted in the citizenship regime. Creating an inventory of the institutional process through which this has been achieved is one step toward unsettling this hegemony, and toward making the lasting impacts of

this legacy on political action visible.

Unsettling Solidarity

As noted at the outset of this chapter, the white participants in this research project are conscious of their whiteness and of many of the privileges associated with whiteness in the settler colonial context, but few consider their citizenship or identity to be central to anti-colonial organizing. The historical construction of the settler-citizen outlined above helps to explain part of the seeming emptiness of citizenship and identity among white activists. This section looks at some of the impacts of this perceived emptiness on anti-colonial activism, and argues that white citizenship and its role in the settler order should be problematized as part of unsettling citizenship. This is reflected in some of the “solidarity” and “taking direction” approaches critiqued by participants. In attempting to guard against the propensity for white activists to monopolize leadership positions, these approaches sometimes run the risk of replicating white hegemony, leaving the white citizen outside of the problems of colonialism and positioning them as helpers rather than activists with a direct stake in decolonization.

Solidarity is a frequently employed activist term, suggesting that activists committed to different causes can support one another and see connections across different struggles. It is often, although not exclusively, associated with transnational political action. For example, migrant justice activists spoke about solidarity between struggles of Indigenous peoples in Canada and those in Palestine, in some Latin American contexts, and other locales (see Chapter 5). Drawing on his experience of transnational activism in Palestine, one white participant explained that these enactments of transnational solidarity by white activists may serve to replicate the privileging of the white subject:

I joined [a group of white activists supporting Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation], but then I almost took myself completely out because I

noticed how fucked up and problematic that solidarity model can be. Not that it shouldn't be done, but there needs to be a lot of things worked through, and that's why I think [we need] work [that looks] particularly into those dynamics of how solidarity activists relate and what colonial and racist and other such processes are implicated in that and how certain problematic things are reproduced while at the same time disrupting others, but really thinking about that solidarity model.

In her research with white activists in international solidarity movements, Gada Mahrouse explains that this kind of activism aims to put the privilege of whiteness to work in the service of anti-racist and anti-colonial movements (88). In contrast to earlier transnational solidarity models, Mahrouse notes that:

Nowadays, many activists from the “first world” are aware of whiteness as an identity and a category and consciously deploy the status or privilege attached to it. Moreover, many who currently participate in transnational activism increasingly acknowledge, if not understand, their complicity in global suffering and oppression and are self-conscious about how their interventions may in fact contribute to furthering injustice. (88)

As a result, she argues that these activists, like the participant quoted above, are well aware of their place within deeply unequal global relations (88). Despite this awareness, Mahrouse notes that it remains difficult to step outside of a model where the white activist serves as a “helper” in the struggles of others. In particular, through the familiar practice of the white/Western activist engaging in transnational solidarity work and then returning to share the story of others’ oppression, a “rescue” of whiteness is effected, where this activist is absolved of these complicated relationships of privilege and complicity. As Mahrouse explains, such practices “inscribe morality to the noble white/Western activist telling the story. If the ability to elicit compassion among bystanders depends on a white/Western mediator, such activists’ practices are far from counter-hegemonic in their effects. Assigning humanity to the Other is, after all, whiteness in its finest form” (99). Although the privilege which accrues from whiteness may be mobilized in support of such struggles, whiteness itself is neither problematized

nor unsettled. In fact, it may be affirmed.⁵⁸

Participants raised similar concerns about practices of white solidarity in the Canadian context. In particular, many emphasized the importance of “taking direction” or “following the leadership” of those seen as directly affected, while also pointing to the potential obstacles and pitfalls of such an approach. Among participants and local activists, there was a widespread consensus that some struggles must be lead and directed by those directly impacted by the issue at hand. As a reflection of this approach, several Toronto-based groups operated with a caucus model, in which marginalized members of the group convene separately from the broader group to make decisions and to shape political direction. The caucus model may also serve as an important space for members to re-group and support each other in the face of what may be oppressive dynamics within activist organizations (see Amadahy “The Role of Settlers”; D’Arcangelis and Huntley). Many groups without a caucus structure also clearly articulate that leadership should come from those communities identified as directly affected, and they implement a range of strategies to ensure this outcome.⁵⁹ This approach is not necessarily new – in fact, feminist multiracial organizing has explored the principle of “following the leadership” (see B. Thompson *A Promise* 214-6). These strategies raise important questions about the politics of representation and identity and are clearly informed by concerns about the propensity for patterns of dominance to be replicated in organizing spaces and political movements.

Many participants raised important questions about the challenges posed by this approach to political action, despite their general agreement that it is important to take direction. In particular, many pointed to the risks of burdening small groups of activists or of making them tokens. In the context of organizing support for the Six Nations land

58 It should also be noted that such practices are not without nationalized aspects either, as Mahrouse discusses (97-8). This idea is revisited later in this chapter.

59 For example, this has been evident in anti-poverty, prisoner justice, and feminist anti-violence organizing.

reclamation among Toronto-based activists, Amadahy notes that

Requests from non-Aboriginal “supporters” to speak, co-organize activities and write for non-Native publications soon tested the capacity of the Indigenous Caucus, whose original ten members could not keep up with the invitations. Some requests were motivated by a sincere desire to learn and develop relationships, while others were clearly token invitations, issued at the last minute by organizers who had no intention of following up on the issues we put before them, or, better yet, assumed that their issues were our issues. (“The Role of Settlers” 6)

Such an over-burdening shifts responsibility to those already struggling against colonialism in myriad ways, while also potentially reflecting shallow or fleeting connections to those seen as directly affected.⁶⁰ These dynamics may also suggest that collective understandings of the impacts of colonialism on those whose position is privileged require further development.

In the context of Toronto-based organizing in support of the land reclamation at Kanonstaton, discussions about the roles and responsibilities of white activists and the relationships of solidarity and taking direction were pronounced. As noted in Chapter 5, one Indigenous participant contrasted the more strategic support provided to the reclamation by racialized activists with the involvement of white activists at the site:

What I noticed among the white settlers that responded to Six Nations... was a very, very different response. I mean and, again, to generalize, there were people that were living out there on a day-to-day basis, stressing themselves out like crazy, freaking out and crying all the time at the slightest – it was not healthy for them, is my point, right?

Despite her appreciation for their contributions to the reclamation, this participant wondered whether this was the most appropriate or effective contribution that white activists could make. She went on to explain:

I had a conversation with [a white activist] way later than it should have happened, about what really is the role of a white settler in that particular situation, or in others. Is it to be out there on the front lines and camping out

⁶⁰ A similar concern is articulated by Huntley and D’Arcangelis in their article on No More Silence and that organization’s shift from a caucus model, to one that is more explicitly “coalitional”.

and serving meals and washing dishes? Or... do you have another more significant role that you can play because Six Nations isn't going to be the last time... an Indigenous reclamation happens.

This participant also noted that the very ability to engage so thoroughly with the reclamation was a reflection of a relative degree of privilege among non-Indigenous activists. She recalled a specific discussion about this issue:

I remember at one point suggesting... "Maybe you guys should leave these..." you know, in the early days before the raid... "Allocate a car to the [Toronto] native community," ...and all this kind of stuff. And my understanding is it didn't fly, and I wasn't a fly on the wall for the discussion, but it didn't fly. But what did come back was an offer to share cars, like if I wanted a ride out there. And I'm thinking, "Well, on the one hand, okay, but on the other hand, I don't really want to sit in a car full of white activists for 90 minutes." Even for 90 minutes. I don't want to do that... [laugh] and maybe that's my problem.

Her comments point to some of the shortcomings of the "taking direction" approach, particularly as it played out in that context.

Indeed, a number of participants pointed to the example of non-Indigenous support for the nearby land reclamation as evidence of the need to further reflect on the "taking direction" approach. Tom Keefer points out that some of the involvement of white activists may have been more effective at mitigating white guilt than at advancing the reclamation:

While cooking and cleaning did make a contribution to the camp, I believe it was more effective in assuaging white guilt than it was in shifting the balance of forces arrayed against Six Nations. The focus on cooking and cleaning as the most appropriate expression of non-native solidarity flowed from the premise of "taking leadership" from Six Nations. When faced with dozens of (mostly) white hippie/punk youth with few camp-related skills and no prior contact with people at Six Nations, it is not surprising that Six Nations people directed them to do menial labour around the camp. Because this is what they were told to do, and because many of these white and/or middle-class activists were uncomfortable talking to white working-class Caledonians that they perceived as the enemy, food preparation was fetishized as the primary way for non-natives to contribute to the struggle. The possibilities of leftist non-natives intervening in the anti-native protests was never openly broached as a

potential political strategy (“The Politics of Solidarity” 116-7).

Keefer's concern that a “taking direction” approach may permit white activists to take a very hands-off approach resonates with the concerns outlined above, but his comments stem both from his critique of epistemic privilege (“The Politics of Solidarity” 108), and a desire for white activists to take greater active responsibility for decolonization. While I disagree with his disparagement of the importance of attending to epistemic location, Keefer's concern that taking leadership may serve as an alibi for greater personal and collective work has merit:

In practical terms, waiting for “leadership” has often meant that non-native activists have avoided looking at how their own social location implicates them in Canadian colonialism while simultaneously providing them with opportunities to disrupt it. By waiting for indigenous people to provide “leadership,” and by assuming that successful resistance to colonialism can only happen through high-profile barricades and occupations, many crucial opportunities to build non-indigenous support for the struggle at Six Nations have been missed. (“The Politics of Solidarity” 108-9)

Despite my agreement with some of his insights, proposing that “leftist non-natives interven[e] in the anti-native protests,” as Keefer suggests (“The Politics of Solidarity” 117), may further reinforce a paternalistic form of taking over without consultation and collaboration with those who must continue to live and work in alongside their non-Indigenous neighbours. Moreover, while valuing their commitments to the reclamation to some extent, one Indigenous participant shared her concerns about the ways that white activists at times also imposed their political perspectives, and attempted to engage directly in decision-making around the reclamation:

Infiltrating – sometimes they would try to infiltrate themselves into the decision-making process. I mean some people were very respectful about it, but other people were not. And in fact, I’ve read articles of people who ponder in their articles how they can insinuate themselves into the decision-making at Six Nations, right? There is also, in terms of the analysis and the writings and the stuff that has come out of it, a necessity to see what happened at Six Nations as somehow fitting into the – you know, this concept of class struggle.

And it's not a socialist movement. It's not. [laugh]... So, on the other hand, yeah, they put their lives on the line... I have some respect for that, but on the other hand, I worry about the other stuff that's going on and where it's going to take us.

In attempting to forward their own political analyses or agendas, some white activists were not, in fact, supporting the reclamation or advancing Indigenous sovereignty at all. This agenda, at least in part, explains why some – although by no means all – white activists were resistant to the model of “taking direction.” In addition, activists' ignorance of colonialism and colonial history, and their failure to recognize profound epistemic differences, may have profound negative impacts on the struggle. In her discussion of some of the Toronto-based organizing in support of the land reclamation, Amadahy explains:

The group was to be led by an Indigenous Caucus, whose role was to define the issues, how they would be addressed and by whom. At the outset there was resentment from a few non-Native activists, who voiced a concern that all they were being asked to do was “legwork.” The logic of how their ignorance of our history and culture might impact their praxis and jeopardize Indigenous actions (not to mention lives) was seemingly lost on them. (“The Role of Settlers” 6)

Amadahy's concern is that when moving beyond what they saw as “legwork”, non-Indigenous activists could not be trusted to act appropriately and independently given their ignorance of the history and ongoing impacts of colonialism. She provides a clear example of the implications of not taking direction or following the leadership of Indigenous activists and community members in problematic representations of the Six Nations land reclamation circulated by non-Indigenous activists:

[A] publication produced by sympathetic white activists who wanted to educate other settlers on the Six Nations land reclamation featured the infamous photo of the burning railway bridge on its cover, supposedly out of admiration for the warriors. Ironically, the same photo graces the opening page of hate websites opposed to the reclamation. The incident happened on one day of a siege that is almost a year old. The unused bridge was burned to prevent OPP access to the territory after the community had already been

attacked. Yet both supporters and opponents seized on the “burning bridge” photo to illustrate their respective points. Even supporters frame our struggles in ways that suit their own needs and perceptions. Had they consulted the Clan Mothers, who have consistently urged faithfulness to The Great Law of Peace, what photo might have been chosen to put on the cover of the publication? (“The Role of Settlers” 7)

Although with different concerns and remedies in mind, these critiques point to the ways in which white hegemony may be unchallenged in some approaches to “solidarity” and “taking direction.” For instance, while washing dishes and raising funds were potentially useful contributions to the land reclamation, they likely do not represent the full potential contributions of white activists to projects of decolonization. At the same time, the crucial importance of “taking direction” does not absolve activists of their responsibilities to engage in action, or to unsettle their own privileged positions in settler colonialism, but to do so in ways that are appropriate and effective in advancing the aims of the reclamation. These critiques raise important questions about how white settlers are implicated in colonialism and in struggles toward decolonization. While white activists must continue to act with accountability for their privilege, the solution is not for white activists to act without considerable consultation and connection to those leading struggles such as the Six Nations land reclamation. Despite their concerns with the ways that taking direction is often practiced, many participants were quick to note that this cannot mean failing to take action. An Indigenous participant said, “I don't really understand what stops people – white people and non-Native people from taking it on. I know that some people don't believe that allies should act without direction but I feel there is nothing wrong with allies taking the initiative and taking leadership in a supportive way.” As further evidence of moments when non-Indigenous activists have initiated their own organizing, she further explained,

There's a group out west, they were called SISIS... Settlers in Support of Indigenous Sovereignty... And they did all of the work around Gustafsen Lake, and they were really radical in their analysis and they were non-Native, they

were white people, and I haven't heard any Native people complaining about that fact that they went ahead and did that. People just worked with them and didn't have a problem with that.

One white participant shared his understanding that effective solidarity requires “really thinking about that solidarity model and [that] I think before I engage – being conscious that you still need to do stuff, it's not like... you have to do stuff, but you have to listen to the actual leaderships.” The shift echoes with Sheila Wilmot’s conceptualization of “taking responsibility:”

Since all white folks benefit – whether actively or passively, whether by doing something or failing to do something – from the white supremacy foundational to the organization of the capitalist political economy on which our society is based, since we are enrolled in the club, like it or not, we all have a social responsibility to challenge that notion of supremacy, both individually and collectively, and the resulting racism. (11-12)

The importance of finding a balance between taking direction and taking action (which includes being accountable for white privilege) is clearly articulated by Walia who asserts that taking direction “is not the same as waiting around to be told what to do” (“Decolonizing Together” 3). She further explains,

Taking leadership means being humble and honouring front-line voices of resistance as well as offering tangible solidarity as needed and requested. Specifically, this translates to taking initiative for self-education about the specific histories of the lands we reside upon, organizing support with the clear consent and guidance of an Indigenous community or group, building long-term relationships of accountability and never assuming or taking for granted the personal and political trust that non-natives may earn from Indigenous peoples over time. (Walia “Decolonizing Together” 3)

These discussions suggest that further reflection on the roles of white activists in projects of decolonization is needed. In particular, they point to the importance of problematizing white identity and citizenship as part of colonialism (indeed, perhaps central to colonialism) without centering the insights or actions of white activists. Many participants shared the understanding that decolonization requires that white activists attend to their own identities and histories in the development of anti-colonial

relationships. This kind of personal excavation requires a careful consideration of what it means to be a settler and how this subjectivity might also be part of a project of decolonization.

Settlers and Processes of Decolonization

Ingrid Huygens notes scepticism among earlier decolonization theorists such as Fanon and Albert Memmi regarding the potential for the colonizer to undertake decolonization (54). She notes that “Memmi allowed that some colonisers may ‘vow not to accept colonisation’, but he was pessimistic about their political impotence” (55). This leads Huygens to wonder whether “the self-rejecting colonizer [is] in an impossible historical situation when they live in a majoritarian democracy” (55), and if not, then how “the critical settler [might] participate in an agenda of decolonisation” (54). A related question is posed by Razack: “We may know how colonization changed Aboriginal people, but do we know how it changed, and continues to change, white people?” (*Looking White People in the Eye* 19).

Participants proposed that attention to identity, history, and relationality are crucial aspects of a sustained consideration of such questions. This makes identity – including white identity – a potential site of decolonization and problematization. Participants' insights indicate that a thorough investigation of the creation of the white settler-citizen might form part of an analysis and practice of decolonization.

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, many white participants are well versed in debates about identity politics, as well as some of the limitations and critiques of such approaches. At the same time, many noted that difference and oppression are organized through identity. As is evident in Chapters 4 and 5, Indigenous organizers and many racialized activists clearly articulate the importance of identity to anti-colonial struggles. Their comments point to what Stuart Hall calls ‘the necessity and the impossibility’ of

identity (“Introduction” 2). Lawrence Grossberg advocates “rearticulating the question of identity into a question about the possibility of constructing historical agency, and giving up notions of resistance that assume a subject standing entirely outside of and against a well established structure of power” (88). The centrality of identity to state-based mobilizations of exclusion and essentialism also indicates that although identity can no longer be “thought in the old way”, it cannot be abandoned altogether (Hall “Introduction” 2).

One participant suggested that identity may be an important place from which to begin formulating and advancing a critical political praxis. Drawing on her experience of coming to Canada as an Iranian refugee and of her deep involvement in Palestinian liberation organizing in Toronto, she explained,

If we accept that all of this, including our identity, is a construct, our first project is on our identity. Identity is a construct, so as such it has boundaries, it has limits, it has specific articulations that act as boundaries, be it gender, be it sexuality, be it race, be it ethnicity, nationality, etcetera, etcetera. ...So where are these boundaries? What are they? Let's articulate them because without articulating – without recognizing and articulating the boundary, you can't really cross beyond it. You can't break free of the limit that it imposes on you. Just as without really articulating a Palestinian identity and a Palestinian right to identity, which has been one of the biggest questions – until [the] 1960s, 1970s, most people in the world didn't know who the hell Palestinians were! Without articulating that identity it would have been impossible to come to a point now that we can in fact sit down and talk about a one-state solution. So that once this group and this identity is recognized, then we can talk about collaborations and co-existence.

She went on to explain,

In fact, considering identity is precisely the way that you can break through it. You can break beyond and cross the boundaries of identity. You need to articulate it first in order to be able – you need to articulate the limits on the boundaries before you're able to cross them.

Of course, politicizations of white identity may prove risky to projects of decolonization. Despite his agreement with many of the critiques of identity politics,

George Lipsitz worries that such criticisms may allow the further normalization of whiteness. He suggests that “ferment over identity politics” deepens the “possessive investment in whiteness” (Lipsitz 66). Moreover, “once we remember that whiteness is also an identity, one with a long political history, contemporary attacks on ‘identity’ politics come into clear relief as a defense of the traditional privileges and priorities of whiteness in the face of critical and political projects that successfully disclose who actually holds power in this society and what has been done with it” (Lipsitz 66). Levine-Rasky and Audrey Thompson are also critical of approaches which fail to unsettle whiteness. Audrey Thompson writes that,

White identity theories – including white stages-of-development and “allies” theories – describe the psychological shifts that whites undergo in moving towards a fully committed form of antiracism; implicitly or explicitly, the person at the highest stage of white identity development is an ally of people of color. The distinctive feature of such approaches is their emphasis on fostering a positive white antiracist identity. (14)

While an ally is not expected to be merely a helper in struggles against racism and colonialism (see Annie Bishop), Audrey Thompson’s critique of this approach is that “the entire white identity model is organized around individuals getting to feel good about being white in nonracist ways... functionally, the most important value is being and feeling like a good white person; political action takes second place to personal integrity” (15). Brander Rasmussen et al. note that anti-racist conceptualizations of whiteness range from a “reformulation” of whiteness (that is, nice white activists, or good white allies) to attempts to break whiteness apart, either through refusing the benefits of whiteness and white privilege to attempting to “abolish” whiteness and hence the social construction of racialization entirely (Brander Rasmussen et al. 3; on “abolishing whiteness” see Garvey and Ignatiev).

While many of these approaches provide valuable insights into the power and meaning of whiteness, few attend specifically to the ways that whiteness is intertwined

with state power in the context of ongoing settler colonialism, and even fewer consider the potential roles of white settlers in projects of decolonization. Although Veracini notes that settlerness and whiteness are not the same, he does acknowledge that they work together and overlap in the settlement project (“On Settleness” 9-10). The settler identity, like that of the citizen, is a relatively perfunctory one, frequently granted little attention. Veracini and Wolfe both suggest that the settler identity is constructed in opposition to the identities of Indigenous peoples (Wolfe “Settler Colonialism” 389; Veracini “On Settleness” 3). Veracini also notes that “[s]ettler identity, however, is often sustained by a multiplicity of dialectical counterpoints beside the indigenous one” (“On Settleness” 3). The masking of the dialectical nature of this process serves to naturalize white settler dominance. One of the ways to subject this hegemonic dominance to anti-colonial critique is through unpacking the specific historical and relational construction of settler identity. As Levine-Rasky suggests,

The task for whites is to redefine themselves as racialized social actors in a shared and ambitious quest to build a common social domain reticulated with and beyond identity. One beginning would entail redefining whiteness not as an attribute of identity adhering to a white body, but as a process, a performance, or ‘a constantly shifting location upon complex maps of social, economic, and political power.’ (citing Ellsworth, “Introduction” 5)

Elsewhere, Levine-Rasky writes that “[c]ontextualizing white identity as a problematic category acts as gateway to an explosion of identity charted with contradictory and unstable bearings. Whiteness itself becomes a field where meanings are contested, recede, and diverge” (“Critical/Relational/Contextual” 334). These insights prompt further investigation of the identity of the citizen, and by extension, settler.

Many scholars advocate a consideration of the historical construction of identity as a place to begin unpacking settler colonialism (see Huygens, Regan). As Huygens suggests, “A key decolonization practice for settler colonisers appears to be the ideological work of critically revisiting the history of their relationship with Indigenous

people in order to appreciate that colonial ideologies have shaped their world-view” (74). Huygens further explains that “when beneficiaries of colonization use critical counter-narratives, they tell the story of colonization while helping to dismantle it” (75). In turn, “[r]evisiting history challenges a settler coloniser’s internalized self-attributions of decency and fairness, and gives a sense of urgency to reviewing their cultural inheritance” (Huygens 75-6).

Thus, identity may figure in a politics of anti-colonialism, but useful considerations of identity must attend to heterogeneity, difference, fluidity, and history. Himani Bannerji suggests: “I have, then, no problem about many aspects of what is called ‘identity politics’ so quickly, so dismissively, as long as the notion of identity does not become another way of erasing history and its constructive social relations” (*Thinking Through* 38). Likewise, Hall suggests that historicizing identity is one way of attending to both the constitution of identity and its reformulation.

Though they seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actual identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation. (“Introduction” 4)

Hall advocates “not the so-called return to roots but a coming-to-terms-with our ‘routes’” (4):

Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies. Moreover, they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally-constituted unity. (“Introduction” 4)

Such approaches require careful attention to the formation and reformulation of identity,

providing important opportunities for new configurations of identity, land, and belonging, and accounting for relations of complicity and responsibility, while not foreclosing the potential for new relationships, alliances, and identifications. It involves not only a reformulation of identity but also careful attention to relationality.

A number of white participants have thought about such questions in depth. During the Decolonizing Autobiography exercise, one participant situated her family in relation to the Sixties Scoop in which Indigenous children were removed from their homes and communities and placed in non-Indigenous homes,⁶¹ to land grabs in Alberta, and to the massacre at Wounded Knee:

My father came from a Saskatchewan homestead, and my grandfather was a homesteader in Saskatchewan and his father, my great-grandfather, homesteaded in North Dakota, not long after Wounded Knee. I couldn't finish *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* because I knew we had a very problematic relationship with Aboriginal people and the land, but in my family, it's really very close and hurtful if you look into it. We landed in Saskatchewan at the time that Cree kids were being rounded up and not long after the rebellions in North Dakota, right after the massacre.

Another white participant spoke about growing up surrounded by Indigenous and Indigenous sovereignty activism:

I grew up in Toronto, but every summer, ever since I was really young (about a year old) I would go with my parents up north, to northern Ontario, and camp. And often, during those summers, we would join blockades that were going on, that were being initiated by First Nations people in the area. We'd also have meetings around campfires with people who were either white folks doing solidarity work with First Nations people or First Nations people themselves, when there would be discussions about why they were doing blockades and what their demands were. And so I kind of grew up with a sense of activism and solidarity with people, and so I guess that really shaped my understanding of the struggles of First Nations peoples, the struggles over land.

She recalls the emergence of a critical sense of herself as a white ally,

But then I also became critical of the commodification of Native culture and

61 See Fournier and Crey; Diebel; Johnston.

the neo-colonial implications of white, “new age” mostly middle-class folks using, idealizing and claiming to identify with cultural symbols of the very people we continue to marginalize... So when I ended up receiving gifts of jewellery by other activists, I would wear them – like a necklace or earrings that had First Nations designs. But then I started to feel really self-critical because I was reflecting on my position, wearing that kind of imagery, and how it could be possible to wear a necklace that to me is symbolic of anti-colonial activism and a reminder of the work ahead to build an alternative society while – from my position of privilege – it would imply a more problematic relationship. By the time I was in high school, I was trying to think of my positioning as a white ally and what that means, so I guess that's been sort of a connection between my reflections and solidarity activism with immigrants, migrants, and Indigenous Peoples. So rather than being brought up living off the land, my home has always been on the Mississaugas' territory of Toronto, and my perspective as an activist has always been shaped by more of an urban context.

Elsewhere in the focus group, this participant shared another instance in her life which led her to recognize and question the privilege of whiteness, as well as her sense of responsibility,

When I went to Nepal, at the end of building some strong relationships with kids that had been carpet weavers, one of the last comments one of the kids made to me was something like: “You know, it was really so wonderful to be able to tell our stories to you and to know you're going to be able to take them out to the world and really tell people what has happened here, and about our lives. It really helps that your skin is so beautiful. Ours is not like that – we will never be able to do the same things as you can.” And that was one of the last things that they said to me, which for me, as a fifteen or sixteen year old, really did have an impact. It started to make me think much more deeply about my position, coming back to our so-called multicultural diverse community, and what it meant to be a white ally in that context. I think then I became much more convinced of the need to root myself in a community I can call home and be more connected to the people and activism there, while not losing sight of the connections and potential influences we do have on the broader global situation.

In both of these narratives, relationships to settler colonialism and to Indigenous peoples are centered. Neither seeks or constructs an “innocent” position, but rather they both acknowledge moments of difficult learning and self-reflection. Many white activists

shared similar stories, referencing influential teachers and friends who shifted their understandings of themselves and their relationships to land and belonging. Some knew very little about their families and the contexts in which they came to reside on these lands. One participant found it very hard to articulate his family's connection to settler colonialism, emphasizing his family's working-class origins. Yet even in this narrative, the process of working through family history entails somewhat of a deconstruction of the supposed homogeneity of whiteness. He began by talking first about relationships to land:

I think the first land-holding people on my dad's side of the family was his parents' generation. The rest of them came as peasant people from France, on boats, way back in the sixteen hundreds with Champlain to – and that's where our last name comes from, it's actually a Québécois name or a[n] Acadien name... So that's sort of my dad, and his family, all sort of comes in that area. And for them, I think – I don't have any record of it, but my assumption is that there could have been down the line, them owning small parts of seigneurial farmland that was taken from Aboriginal people and divided by the Catholic Church, but likely they would have been workers on it rather than owners of that – those land parcels. Everyone, I think, was illiterate in my dad's family up until my dad's generation, and they lived in extreme poverty.... His parents were—they both worked at the paper factory, the pulp and paper mill.

Throughout his narrative, this participant noted that his own process of learning about his family has resulted in new information, even over the last several years. He explained, for example, “I grew up thinking that my grandma was French, French-Canadian, but along the line, I realized that everybody, if you look at the family tree, everyone has Spanish names and not French names. And it sort of came to light eventually that my grandma's family is partly from Mexico, partly from Spain, but not from France at all.” On his maternal grandfather's side, due to connections to the Polish royal classes, his family was directly impacted by World War II, which was the catalyst that eventually led his grandfather to Canada. This narrative could be seen as an attempt to claim an immigrant rather than settler positionality and to downplay the ongoing

privilege of whiteness and settler status within the Canadian context. But it also demonstrates the complexity of identity, including for settlers, thereby denaturalizing settler discourse.

These narratives demonstrate both the potential and limitations of this kind of identity work. Rather than unsettling, at times narratives may work to reconcile positions of settlerness, to make them more comfortable, to find a place of marginality (a less “settled” settler?), or to “rescue” them. As Regan asks: “How can we, as non-Indigenous people, unsettle ourselves to name and then transform the settler – the colonizer who lurks within – not just in words but by our actions?” (11). The process of situating oneself historically and relationally is one step toward a deconstruction of whiteness, even if it must be recognized as partial and prone to attempts at recuperation. As Regan notes, “Settler stories as counter-narratives that create decolonizing space are both interior and relational. As such, they require us to risk revealing ourselves as vulnerable ‘not-knowers’ who are willing to examine our dual positions as colonizer-perpetrators and colonizer-allies” (29). As these participants point out, such endeavours should be difficult, uncomfortable, and ongoing.

Although not all participants were aware of the history of their families, or of the cities and towns where they were born, most could talk about how they came to accept a responsibility for decolonization and the important relationships that helped them to learn about themselves and about whiteness. Regarding the importance of such a practice of self-location, one white participant with a long history of engaging with Indigenous sovereignty struggles suggested:

We all have to address why we’re here. When... working with Aboriginal people we have to do this autobiography. That’s always how a First Nations person identifies themselves, as where they come from. In order to be with Aboriginal people where they are, we have to acknowledge where we are, and why we are where we are.

She later added: “I think it's just something we have to keep doing until it becomes

automatic, because it was a huge, huge, huge effort that brought all of us here, and it's good to not forget that weighted history.”

Another participant suggested that the decolonizing autobiography was an important historical and contextual practice as well as a means of critical self-reflection, saying,

I think, this reflection on yourself, it can be insular if it focuses more on a sense of guilt or alternatively [if it's] somehow self-congratulatory. But I think that the way that it was brought into this discussion, it's like a strong grounding, rooting yourself in your experiences as a way to see how you relate to activism, to land issues, to solidarity with different peoples. I think it is a good place to begin... We hardly ever just take a step back and say, “Who are we? How are we really all relating to this issue? And what stake do we have in it? What is it that's motivating us to push forward on these ideas? And why, how are we related, personally, to these struggles? And how do we want to relate to these issues? And what's our end – not end goal – but goal in the future? And what are we working for?” So, I think it's a good sense of grounding.

As part of a process of decolonization, such attempts to unsettle the homogeneity of whiteness must likewise avoid the temptation to seek or create a unified or comfortable identity, although this is certainly the pull of settlerness. As Stephen Turner notes, stories of settlement are never innocent of the power relations through which they are forged:

Stories about being colonial/colonial being are always something of a cover-up. Such stories mask, or bridge, an historical discontinuity (that there is a before and after your arrival). Whether these narratives are historical and/or fictional and/or personal, they provide an illusory continuity, a more or less seamless sense of place and history. The basic idea is to get the settler ashore. Get him (and her) set up. Get them a house and land. With any luck a whole country. The self-evident desire is to make the peoples, place and history all of a piece, alternatively to make yourself all of a piece with the place. (59)

Indeed, rather than seeking a comfortable/settled white identity, accepting discomfort and confusion might be more productive. As one white activist explained,

I mostly just think that the identity [of a white activist] is a very uncomfortable one, and that you should never really feel like you understand what it is, because you don't. It's not an easy thing to say, "I know how to act

and it applies in every situation." You can't make generalizations about communities like that. There's basic things that you learn about when to keep your mouth shut and how to operate respectfully in spaces that are often dominated by people like you. I find it's a really hard question to say what one's identity really is.

When pressed to elaborate further, she explained,

The way that I think about myself is an unfinished project. I think that my experiences most importantly with people who are now organizers [in migrant rights movements across the country] and then through support work for First Nations struggles, has been this process of trying to figure out... how I shape my identity based on guilt issues, and the more destructive parts of how you think about yourself as an ally and what you're supposed to be doing and whether you're supposed to be speaking and whether you shouldn't be... [Those kinds of] leadership questions.

This approach to further theorizing whiteness is echoed in Audrey Thompson's work on white anti-racism:

In contrast with student-centered educators who emphasize the achievement of a stronger, more integrated sense of white selfhood as the measure of white antiracist growth, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Marilyn Frye, and Maria Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman point out that growth in understanding is no guarantee of an enhanced, improved, or better integrated sense of self. Whites cannot count on "coming out of the [unlearning white privilege] task whole, with a self that is not as fragile as the selves of those who have been the victims of racism"(21-2).

Furthermore, Audrey Thompspon explains that:

Frye moves beyond her impasse not by seizing upon some reassuring ideal of goodness but by accepting that we have to invent new forms of responsiveness. "We have to practice new ways of being in environments which nurture different habits of feeling, perception, and thought", she says, and we have to create these environments ourselves. (Frye, quoted in Audrey Thompson 22)

In the context of settler colonialism, such an endeavour also requires a re-thinking of the identity of the settler. Huygens talks about searching "for other ways to be Pakeha than as Memmi's colonialists. Theorising as self-critical colonisers, Pakeha Treaty educators

positioned the settler colonizer group as potent agents for the task of divesting colonial power. These settler colonisers were theorizing and practicing the dismantlement of the colonial relationship in situ” (Huygens 77). In Aotearoa New Zealand, taking the Maori word for non-Indigenous people serves as a potentially powerful reversal of the colonial politics of naming; that is, having the Indigenous communities name and identify the settler and their place rather than vice versa. Rather than perpetuating the supposed emptiness of whiteness, citizenship, and settler colonialism, attempting to see these identities as they appear to those constructed dialogically as Other may prove deeply unsettling.

Indeed, a number of participants pointed to the transformative experience of encountering whiteness and settlement reflected back at them in processes of collaboration and alliance-building. One white participant suggested that the process of doing immigration case work prompted such shifts for her and other members of a largely white-dominated organization:

Obviously immigration casework and the history of doing that in the organization was a very powerful way to communicate the experience of fighting for status to – I think that that struggle is so often not at all understood by people who are born into [citizenship], and especially people who are dealing with a myriad of other kinds of oppression. To watch the way that an organization that was way more street-based or working poor or unemployed, mainly white, what the experience of the [immigration] case actions – primarily because there was a period where those happened quite consistently. But the experiences that people had, the internal education process because of those actions, which were always led by the people whose case was being fought around, unless they were just totally not comfortable with it, but the vast majority of times people were, and there was a whole series of those very, very intense, very, very in-your-face – the stories of people's lives where the telling of those stories were the crucial action rather than any flipping of chairs or what-have-you... The impact that that had on people who had no capacity to relate on the surface to that experience was tremendous. There never was an issue with people understanding the importance of participating in those actions... Those case actions were always – people came, people understood, people came to understand the significance of those battles. It was just this very straightforward, direct person-to-person

learning experience that just happened in a very particular way that taught people a lot, basically, and taught people to understand their own identity in a different way and to understand the privilege of that and so on and so forth, and the commonalities amongst the people and that status issues are critical to build a strong anti-poverty movement, it's integral to deal with that.

Many participants similarly suggested that experiences of seeing themselves reflected back, in Canada and in other contexts, prompted such transformations. Another participant related his experience of self-recognition during his trip to Palestine as a solidarity activist: “In Palestine, seeing what settlers look like to Indigenous people, and clearly seeing how it looks in Canada. Being able to be like, 'this is what we look like,' and how ugly and fucked up it is. So that's clearly a motivating factor.”

Similar experiences were shared by a number of participants, pointing to the importance of self-reflection, which makes settlement and whiteness visible. Through such processes, relationships to colonialism and settlement, as well as to projects of decolonization, may be clarified. Pamela Perry and Alexis Shotwell “use the term ‘relational understanding’ to name the implicit or explicit recognition of the dialogical co-constitution of a historically situated self, ‘other’, and society” (34). They explore two dimensions of this dialogical process: “the interrelationship between the individual and society and the social construction of self and group subjectivity” and “the interrelationships between individuals themselves in processes of co-constitution” (35). Becky Thompson suggests that this approach could be considered an “ethic of accountability” common to many of the white activists in her study (*A Promise* 369). Perry and Shotwell describe the process as “a more nondual, co-relational understanding of the processes and types of knowledge that shift white racial practices” (41). Such processes are crucial to the development of specific roles for white activists in projects of decolonization.

As Regan suggests, critical historical reflection may shift conceptions of self in

relationship to this history, but most importantly, it should lead to action rather than “passive empathy” (see 48-53; Boler). An Indigenous activist similarly suggested that white activists may have a specific role to play, beyond that of supporter waiting to take direction:

Yeah... there is power to someone speaking from experience, for sure. And in some ways that's irreplaceable, but in other ways, it has its own power too, to be speaking from a place of complicity, or a place of privilege. It can be just as motivating and moving. And yeah, I would like to see that happen more.

For one white activist, reflection on her own history and relationships to settler colonialism led her to focus her efforts on her culture – the culture of white settler colonialism – largely through educational and community-building work. She shared her process of coming to find a place from which to contribute to projects of decolonization:

We're a bunch of cluddy white people: stumbling, ill-mannered, aggressive, loud white people, and it's really difficult for Aboriginal people to be in the same room with us... I did find myself very often in that room where the white person talks too much, and then the Native people get offended, and everybody's feelings get hurt and nobody comes back ever again... we're all in pain really. Perpetrators are in pain too, we're just a lot better off and we've got choices that our victims don't have. But we are all in pain, and so it's... I don't have to inflict pain on people, I can work from my culture. So, that's mostly what I've decided to do. And I work on it with a voice that says, this is my people, this is our institution, and this is what we've done. It's very difficult to do coalition work, I find, just because it's so very difficult for us to forgive ourselves and one another... It's really hard to work with us, especially if you're Indigenous.

She went on to explain that her understanding of whiteness and the problem of decolonization came from Indigenous activists:

There was a lot of work done in the early 90s, there were a lot of opportunities for white activists to learn, there were a lot of gatherings... But the person, the elder who gave me the clue, who told me what to do with my life, was actually from the First Nation that [this gathering] was being held on. And he said, “We don't need you here. We don't need you here on our land, we don't need your help, we don't need your charity.” He said, “Go back and heal your culture.” So that gave me a focus...

After a brief pause, she continued,

One of the survivors of the Mohawk residential school, he was asked to send memories back to [the Department of] Indian affairs, back in the day when they thought that might be a good idea, that they'd get some nice and warm and fuzzy memories, and he said, "Well, these are yours. This is actually more your story than mine. The story of the abuse in the school is a white story." It's my culture that did that. So there's plenty of work to do in our culture.

These insights prompted her to further clarify,

When the elder said – he didn't say, "Heal yourselves." That's when [another Indigenous activist] was giving us shit about sort of going to an inward [place]: "I don't want to lie on the logging road, but I'll learn how to beat a drum and go to a sweat lodge," kind of thing. But what the elder said was not, "Heal yourself," but, "Heal your culture." And that's a very activist thing.

Indigenous participants further suggested that the work of healing culture and deconstructing history and identity must proceed alongside meaningful relationship-building. Despite the very different positions afforded to white activists in the settlement project and the recognition that some aspects of struggles for decolonization do not require the active and direct participation of white activists, many aspects of the massive project of decolonization require white activists to take responsibility and action. As one Indigenous activist suggested,

People need to have the analysis of colonialism and include that in how they act and how they approach relationships. I think that allies, white allies, need to completely deconstruct their history and at the end of the day – I think with the whole situation of global warming [for example] – that our struggle is a completely shared struggle. And white people, that can be the only approach, it's not just helping, helping people of colour, helping Native people, it's survival of the planet and all of its beauty and all of its life-forms. It's a shared struggle. But in order to make fundamental changes, we have to fundamentally shift our minds.

In a similar vein, another Indigenous participant suggested,

Yeah. In a way, I mean it is all our struggles, no question. But some of us have more at stake than others. Some of us are way more at risk than others. And

most of us [Indigenous activists and activists of colour] are more impacted than [others], no question.

The insights presented here suggest that there are historical and structural differences between the locations of settler-citizen white activists and those of Indigenous activists (see Chapter 4) or racialized migrant justice activists (see Chapter 5). As a result of this different position, white activists are frequently regarded as allies or helpers in struggles against colonialism, which are led and directed by those commonly seen as directly affected. Certainly, the insights presented in Chapters 4 and 5 suggest that the negative impacts of settler colonialism and the ensuing citizenship order in Canada impact on Indigenous and racialized activists in different, but significant ways. But this does not mean that white activists are outside of the problem of settler colonialism. While mindful of critiques of white dominance in political action, white activists must continue to find ways to take responsibility for settler colonialism and ongoing settler privilege, without centering themselves. Sustained processes of self-reflection, including historical and autobiographical narratives, must be balanced with ongoing alliance- and relationship-building. This self-reflection entails a consideration of what it means to be a settler and an ally, as well as sustained reflection on the ways that settler colonialism relies on the naturalization of white settler citizenship. Such approaches may also entail a broader conceptualization of decolonization, a consideration of how citizenship must also be subjected to anti-colonial critique, and newly imagined relationships of identity, land, and belonging.

Chapter 7: Processes of Decolonization: Balancing Autonomy and Interdependence

The goal of this project has been to understand the ways that settler colonial conceptions of citizenship have impacted on alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements, and to investigate alternative visions for the decolonization of relationships to identity, land and belonging. In this chapter, participants' perspectives on decolonization are examined. Overall, participants were sceptical about the possibilities of advancing decolonization through negotiation with the settler state. Instead, they emphasized the importance of contesting the settler state and of imagining relationships among newcomers, settlers, and Indigenous peoples differently. Most participants suggested that this process should begin from Indigenous knowledges and practices of governance. In particular, they emphasized Indigenous conceptions of interdependence and autonomy as important ways of building and strengthening alliances.

Processes of Decolonization

Few participants articulated a detailed vision of the end-point of decolonization. Instead, most regarded decolonization as “a process as [much as] a goal” (Walia “Decolonizing Together” 1). One Indigenous participant said,

The fact of the matter is I don't think anybody really has answers to those questions and they're gonna have to be worked out. How this land [is] going to be shared by Native and non-Native people is going to have to be worked out. Right now, I don't think anybody really has devoted a lot of time to that, and it's partly because First Nation communities are in a crisis mode. It's really about survival right now. I don't know that people really get that.

Another Indigenous participant said that the changes brought about to further decolonization would need to be substantive, but that they would likely take a long time

and continued mobilization:

If I try to concretely picture what could happen in terms of positive change in this country, I really don't see it being a revolution, like where's that going to happen today, in this world? But, things like Evo Morales becoming the leader of a country in Latin America has happened, so I do think there's going to be major shifts.

Most participants similarly agreed that decolonization is a long-term process that will require substantive change and ongoing negotiation.

None of those interviewed based their visions of decolonization on the formal departure of any one group of people, either all non-Indigenous peoples, or all white settlers. One Indigenous participant explained, "In terms of Canadian nationalism, I don't see a bunch of people going back home. It's just not going to happen." She later elaborated, "In a country or a landmass as big as this, we don't all need to leave. There is enough land. It just needs to be divided differently, and restructured. The wealth needs to be shared." This perspective seems to be shared by most Indigenous scholars on the topic as well, including Alfred (*Wasáse*) and Dale Turner.

Despite such assertions, participants' visions of decolonization were neither simplistic nor complacent with the status quo. In fact, one participant suggested that the idea of repatriation ought to be considered precisely to indicate the degree of transformation required to contest the settlement project:

I think as white allies we should be disrupting whiteness, we should be rediscovering our own Indigeneity as Indigenous theorists have urged us to do, and also starting to think about Europe as a place to return to and how we would fit into those contexts, and thinking about actually decolonizing North America in terms of movement of people also.

When asked whether his vision of decolonization entailed all white settlers returning to Europe, his response was,

I don't know. Because I think there is a settler experience here. Like with Afrikaners, I don't give any legitimacy to any of their narratives. It's very difficult for me to do so. And even Zionist narratives. And I don't think the

settler narrative here has any more legitimacy.

When asked about whether this plays into colonialist discourses of authenticity, in which all people belong to a specific bounded space, and how such a repatriation might further bolster white nationalism and xenophobia in sites of return, such as western Europe, he responded:

Yeah, that's the response that came up when Ward Churchill gave his talk. And it needs to be discussed, but it's not an excuse ... I think there's much more legitimacy to actual descendants [of racialized settlers, slaves, and indentured workers] making these claims that “we don't know where we'd go back [to]”. Because at a collective level, you can unearth these kinds of stories among white people... we always know where we came from, the boundaries may have changed... but we can pinpoint the geographic location. But if you don't know [whether] you came from East Africa, West Africa, North Africa, South Africa, those are huge cultural differences, huge differences in language, religion, socio-economic position. So that's a problem, it's not like they'll just go back to Africa. But with Europeans, it's a much smaller space, and you can generally pinpoint the group. But in terms of Western Europe, it's an interesting point about bolstering the whiteness of western Europe in terms of the populations there.

This participant pointed to the need for continued engagement with discomfiting questions about “roots and routes” (Clifford). His desire to at least consider the option of repatriation indicates the degree of uncertainty and discomfort that meaningful decolonization ought to demand. Such an assertion pushes settlers to consider just how far they are willing to go, physically and symbolically, in support of Indigenous sovereignty and decolonization. As part of this substantive re-thinking, many participants suggested that it was necessary to look beyond the settler nation-state – indeed decolonization contests the role of this modernist institution.

Contesting the Settler State

Many participants indicated that the settler state is the greatest impediment to decolonization and to meaningful alliances among Indigenous and non-Indigenous

peoples. As discussed in previous chapters, most participants saw little decolonizing potential in claiming Canadian citizenship as a political identity or as the sole focus of political action. Indigenous participants clearly regarded Canadian citizenship as deeply colonial, historically and in the current context. In their estimation, the state is entirely invested in maintaining settler colonialism. They see enfranchisement policies, the Indian Act, and discourses of settler citizenship as contributing to contemporary reformulations of settler colonialism. As one Indigenous activist explained, “The very existence of it [the state] [laughing] kind of impedes [decolonization]; it's kind of like the nature of a state, the state[']s values and whose [interests] they reflect, or what privileged group of people are represented there.”

Alfred and numerous other Indigenous theorists share this critique of the state, asserting that attempts to secure or advance Indigenous sovereignty through the auspices of the settler state work against decolonization, neither unsettling colonialism and racism, nor advancing meaningful decolonization (see *Wasáse* 224-5).⁶² Drawing on the work of Fanon, Coulthard suggests that because the settler state apparatus can only exist through the ongoing displacement and dispossession of Indigenous peoples, it cannot be a means of obtaining liberation (*Red Skin* 23). Indeed, Coulthard suggests that the settler state actively co-opts and curtails decolonization through the politics of recognition (*Red Skin*; see also Chapter 8). Andrea Smith further suggests that by challenging the assumption that the nation-state is ideal form of governance, space might be made for other, more just, conceptions of governance: “[Q]uestioning the nation-state as the appropriate form of governance for the world, in general, allows us to free our political imagination to begin thinking of how we can begin to build a world we would actually want to live in” (“Native American Feminism” 129).

62 The one notable exception is the work of Dale Turner, who suggests that Indigenous peoples must maintain dialogue with the state. Coulthard provides an in-depth critique of this position in *Red Skin, White Masks* (45-7), suggesting that despite ongoing engagements with settler colonial political and legal systems, little meaningful progress toward decolonization has been advanced.

Despite their mistrust of the state, most participants agreed that, at times, they must negotiate with and through it, including through the Indian Act, immigration legislation, and other aspects of the state's citizenship regime. As one Indigenous participant noted, the hegemonic power of the modernist state structure is difficult to ignore: “Those institutions... it's big, big... huge... It's hard to picture that crumbling. I don't know how a value shift... That's when it gets really big and a mess. [It's] a big question: how do we get rid of the Canadian state?” A similar point is articulated by Alfred, who notes, “Disentangling the elements of the Settler state from our lives any time soon seems out of the question for many of our people” (*Wasáse* 135). As outlined in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, these entanglements entail very different relationships to settler colonialism and hence very different possibilities of decolonization and alliance.

Although they have very different relationships to the settler state and to the ongoing project of settler colonialism, Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice activists also recognize that this difference does not foreclose all possibilities of alliance. Many participants argued that beginning from Indigenous conceptions of identity, land and belonging is the most effective way of supplanting settler colonialism and of fostering new alliances. This shift is best articulated by Walia:

Almost a hundred years ago, German anarchist Gustav Landauer wrote: “The State is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of behaviour; we destroy it by contracting other relationships.” Decolonization requires us to exercise our sovereignties differently and to reconfigure our communities based on shared experiences, ideals and visions. Almost all Indigenous formulations of sovereignty – such as the Two Row Wampum agreement of peace, friendship and respect between the Haudenosaunee nations and settlers – are premised on revolutionary notions of respectful coexistence and stewardship of the land, which goes far beyond any Western liberal democratic ideal. (“Decolonizing Together” 6)

Like Walia, many participants argued that practices of decolonization should begin from Indigenous worldviews and approaches to governance.

Participants drew inspiration from conceptions of land and belonging in Indigenous legal and political systems, which work against or outside of the colonial state structure. As one Indigenous participant explained,

Six Nations could give us the opportunity to do that [to contest the state] because they are for the first time being recognized at the table. They come right out and they don't recognize Canada as a nation, they're probably the most radical in those terms so far. And it would be really interesting to start to probe that and to say, so what happens to Caledonia, and what happens to the CCA [Caledonia Citizens' Alliance], and what happens to those people? What do we do with them? How do we work [with] the fact that there are people here? If they [Six Nations] get the Haldimand Tract back what happens to the town of Kitchener? Those are questions that have to be asked.

Other participants referred to Indigenous struggles throughout the Americas which have also actively challenged the power and authority of colonial states. One non-Indigenous participant spoke about Indigenous liberation movements in the Andes:

Because most of the Indigenous movements there recognize the state as an important locus of coercive authority and to that extent have mobilized to – like in Bolivia – seize power, but the movement and the forms of governance and the day-to-day relations that structure peoples' lives are based in non-state institutions and organizations and groups and cooperatives and also Indigenous forms of governance, localized governance. And a lot of it was preserved through the [indiscernible] system of Spanish colonization... So then Indigenous experiences, in the Andes in particular, they've thought through these issues, I think more than anyone else. The Indigenous population is relatively large, and they've organized outside of the state for so long.

This participant went on to draw on examples of the Zapatistas and Indigenous liberation movements in Oaxaca, Mexico as evidence of Indigenous sovereignty organizing outside of (and against) the settler state. In *Wasáse*, Alfred discusses the Zapatista movement in several places, examining both the revolutionary potential and lessons to be learned from the movement.⁶³

63 See his discussion with Isabel Altamirano (140-3), and also pages 69 and 210 on relationships to the state.

This participant also pointed to the example of the Nyoongar court ruling⁶⁴ regarding the city of Perth, Australia, as a potential example of urban enactments of Indigenous sovereignty:

In terms of the urban environment, there is maybe, I don't know if you heard of the court ruling in Australia, the court ruling that, I guess Perth belongs to... I don't remember the name of the nation. But basically, [in] any public space, they can do whatever they want there, and there's no regulations, and it just caused a panic in Australia.

As this participant suggests, whether conceptualized as the repatriation of non-Indigenous peoples away from Indigenous territory or as the de-linking of modernist conceptions of state power as territorial power, decolonization is, of necessity, unsettling. In many ways, neither the distinct form of decolonization, nor the concrete outcome, can be determined in advance. Rather, decolonization must entail a prolonged process of unsettling the nation-state and the relationships of identity, land, and belonging constructed under its auspices.

Self-Determination, Nationhood & Sovereignty

Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants consistently pointed out that for Indigenous peoples, decolonization begins from, supports, advances, and enacts Indigenous sovereignty over identity, land, and belonging. In their comments, it is evident that this approach entails both autonomy and a recognition of interdependence. For instance, one Indigenous participant said,

I do believe that people should have the right to self-determination and have a right to be sovereign people, meaning for me, they have a right to lands that they have a huge connection to culturally, historically, a right to control those lands, a right to be represented in their institutions, to build their own institutions. And a right to have their livelihood, if that's connected to land, a right for it to be respected.

She further explained that for Indigenous peoples, self-determination must include

⁶⁴ For more on this case, see Borrows *Drawing Out Law*; Bennell.

specific relationships to land and territory:

I don't believe that there should be a borderless world. I do believe there's an order, that there are defined territories. Even within nations there are. For example, family access to land, certain fishing spots that belong to certain families, certain medicines that belong to certain families, that those things are to be respected – that history, that connection to that spot. I think for me, it's more about, again, that way of thinking is, yes, you might have a right to that land, but no one really owns it. You can't just go and pick it up and contaminate it. It's all connected. What we do to one piece here affects it all. That doesn't mean that I can just come and walk there without your permission. There should be definitions, there should be territories.

The intertwining of autonomy and interdependence in this participant's conception of self-determination is noteworthy, and these themes are also found in much scholarship by Indigenous theorists.

In much Indigenous scholarship, autonomy is a central facet of nationhood. For instance, this is evident in the statement by Vine Deloria Junior and Clifford Lytle that, “Nationhood implies a process of decision making that is free and uninhibited within the community, a community in fact that is almost completely insulated from external factors as it considers its possible options” (quoted in Monture-Angus *Journeying Forward* 29). In her discussion with Alfred, Audra Simpson also conceptualizes autonomy as a central aspect of nationhood:

[W]e are all different people, different nations, and would have different ideas about what nationhood is and what it means to us. The Sechelt conception or Northern Cree conception will certainly depart from Mohawk ideas about who we are. Each people will have a term in their own language that will mean “us.” I think that is what our concept of nationhood is. (quoted in Alfred *Peace, Power, Righteousness* 65)

Some non-Indigenous scholars have suggested that these principles of autonomy are isolationist, and that they forward a divisive conception of nationhood rather than examples of potential co-existence (for instance, see Cairns; Sharma and Wright). These critiques refuse to acknowledge the distinct epistemologies from which Indigenous

approaches to nationhood emerge, and as a result, they fail to differentiate between Indigenous conceptions of nationhood and those associated with the settler state. Such critiques also misrepresent the ways in which Indigenous conceptions of nationhood balance this emphasis on autonomy with a recognition of interdependence. As Andrea Smith explains, “Whereas nation-states are governed through domination and coercion, indigenous sovereignty and nationhood is predicated on interrelatedness and responsibility” (“Native American Feminism” 129). The balancing of autonomy with interdependence is most clearly evident Indigenous practices of nation-to-nation agreements, such as the Two Row Wampum.

Nation-to-Nation Relationships

Many participants argued that the principle of nation-to-nation relationship, as embedded in many treaties among Indigenous nations, as well as in agreements between Indigenous and early settler representatives, might provide useful starting points for processes of decolonization. One Indigenous participant explained,

A lot of the sovereigntists that I have met with, for example, people I’ve talked to from the West, or from the North, are really more about just – if we do have treaties, let’s live by them. If we don’t have treaties, let’s negotiate things on a nation-to-nation basis with some international accountability.

This participant went on to explain that the treaties and Two Row Wampum provide important grounds for new alliances:

At the end of the day, in a Canadian context, I do deeply look to the treaties, and the peace and friendship treaties, and I do see separate governments, but that are working together, like the Two Row Wampum belts. Everybody needs to know about that. Native people have never forgotten that, and they’re never going to. So, we need to educate people, and [there needs to] be a massive shift in education. It’s the only way people will actually understand where we’re coming from.

As Alfred suggests, the nation-to-nation principle is foundational to many relationships among Indigenous nations and centrally enshrined in many of the early agreements

between Indigenous nations and European settlers:

[T]he only possibility of a just relationship between Onkwehonwe and the Settler society is the conception of a nation-to-nation partnership between peoples, the kind of relationship reflected in the original treaties of peace and friendship consecrated between indigenous peoples and the newcomers when white people first started arriving in our territories. (*Wasáse* 156)

The Two Row Wampum, which is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 3, is generally understood as signalling such a nation-to-nation relationship. Alan Cairns has suggested that this is a limited political vision, a form of “parallelism,” which “does not address the reality of our interdependence, and of our intermingling. It speaks, therefore, to only part of who we [Canadians] are” (Cairns *Citizens Plus* 92). This emphasis on parallelism is a misreading of the actual intent of the agreement and the political principles, which according to Dale Turner, Borrows, and Alfred (*Wasáse*) also includes an explicit focus on interdependence.⁶⁵ As Alfred explains,

The notion of a universal relation among autonomous elements of Creation is embedded throughout indigenous cultures, for example, in the Tekani Teioha:te, known as the Two Row Wampum, or the widely used Four Directions teaching. The idea of recognizing our universal connection and at the same time respecting our differences is the fundamental theme in these teachings; it is the first principle that must be regenerated in our lives and brought to meaning in non-indigenous cultures and society... We need to move to accept the interdependency of all people and beings. (*Wasáse* 266)

In a similar emphasis on interconnections, Borrows advances a conception of “landed citizenship,” which he describes as “an indigenous declaration of interdependence,” arguing for an Indigenous conception of citizenship that posits Indigenous control of Canadian affairs (interdependence) alongside Indigenous control of Indigenous affairs (autonomy) (see Chapter 6 *Recovering Canada*). Borrows draws on detailed historical and legal analysis to argue that “Aboriginal tradition can thus support a notion of

65 For a careful critique of Cairns, see Dale Turner, pages 45-56 regarding the Gus Wen Tah, in particular, and Chapter 2 for a full engagement with Cairns’ *Citizens Plus*. Adam Barker also has a thorough critique of what he regards as a misrepresentation or partial understanding of the Two Row Wampum in Cairns.

citizenship that encourages autonomy and at the same time unifies and connects us to one another, and to the lands we rely on” (150).

Despite these endorsements of the nation-to-nation approach, which is central to many Indigenous practices of governance, there are also some potential limitations to a literal application of these practices, or of earlier treaties and agreements. The first and most glaring concern is that, at the moment, nation-to-nation agreements position the settler state as a treaty partner, a situation which is untenable to participants whose position is that the settler state cannot be trusted in projects of decolonization (see above). A similar position is also articulated by Coulthard:

Two problems emerge when we try and apply the nation-to-nation framework – for example to the 17th-century Haudenosaunee Two-Row wampum treaty – to the power relations we face today. First, they assume a moral equivalency between the colonizer and the colonized that simply doesn't exist. And second, they assume the legitimacy of the ship – of the state's economic, legal and political institutions that have destroyed the river and eroded the riverbank. Under such conditions, "recognizing" the legitimacy of the colonial ship's right of travel is an impossibility and we need to start orienting our struggles toward a different goal. (quoted in Walia “Land is a Relationship”)

Concurring with Coulthard's concerns about the potential outcomes of engaging the colonial state in nation-to-nation relationships as outlined above, one Indigenous activist suggested going “beyond the Two Row Wampum”:

There are groups that can take the lead and have taken the lead on these issues that are perfectly capable. And the Mohawk Nation News, for example, which isn't a nation, [laugh] and some of the people at Six Nations are stepping up and incorporating those kinds of concerns into theirs, and have a vision, which I think we need to discuss and contest and sort out. But [they] do have a kind of a vision about how Indigenous people can live with settlers that goes way beyond the concept of the Two Row Wampum.

The new relationships can only be encountered through the practices of Indigenous diplomacy and governance, with an emphasis on negotiation and relationship-building. Many suggest that embracing the spirit of treaties may be an important step in this

regard.

The Spirit of the Treaties

Treaty education has been advanced by educators and scholars as a means of critically engaging with the history of relations among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and imagining new paths forward (see Battiste; Epp; Regan; Tupper). Others have suggested that the written version of treaties often failed to encapsulate the true spirit of pacts reached between Indigenous nations and settler governments (for instance, see Craft). It must also be noted that most treaties have been violated by the actions of settler governments and peoples, and that not all Indigenous nations and territories have entered into treaties with settler officials or their predecessors. In response to such concerns, Robinder Sehdev suggests that “Treaties are adaptable enough to last such critique and reconstitution on the settler’s end” (273). She further addresses the common assumption that newcomers and people of colour are not party to treaties, suggesting that attention be turned to decolonizing treaty:

[W]e need to turn from an understanding of treaty as a historical artifact, based in European notions of rights and freedoms, and move toward Aboriginal philosophies of treaty as a process of making and keeping good relations. We, people of colour, must refuse the myth that treaty does not concern us. We belong here not because Canada opened its doors, but because Aboriginal nations permitted settler governance on their lands. Finally, we must identify as treaty citizens and so refuse the liberal strategies of tolerance and inclusion of difference at the expense of the more difficult task of formative change. After all, treaty is the space where power is negotiated. (273)

Although Sehdev's approach to treaty may simplify the relationships between settlement and treaties, her approach to the spirit and process of negotiation underpinning treaty processes may prove useful for those engaged in building new alliances using these ancestral practices. A focus on treaty must also address the reality that many Indigenous people have been denied treaty rights; that treaties have been

broken, in the sense that the original relationships created through them have not been sustained or renewed; and that all belonging to these lands must still be negotiated. As a result, new understandings, agreements, and treaties will need to be negotiated, and the possibilities of alliance – and the incommensurability of some relationships – should also be recognized.

Toward a Relationship Framework

As is evident in the discussions outlined above, participants regarded treaties and traditional practices of governance as vital tools for decolonization. Rather than advancing a re-application of existing agreements however, most participants spoke instead about returning to the spirit of the treaties and using these processes to envision the decolonization of relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in a collaborative way. One Indigenous participant noted,

I guess we have some experience... In First Nations communities, [we're] very lucky in that we have our own experiences of governance and we can use those as models. You know that the prophecies do say that the red people will, that we're coming into this time when people are going to look to the red people for direction, guidance and wisdom. And maybe that's one of the components. Maybe actually these traditional governments that are coming back are actually going to be models for a better way to govern the world.

When asked to elaborate further, she explained that processes of decision-making that come from Indigenous epistemologies present important alternative understandings of governance:

I guess consensus, that being the main basis for decision-making. And the idea of the leader being not so much a leader as being a caretaker, not so much a person in power, but a person who's responsible to the people, and these regulatory mechanisms, like the Clan Mothers, that monitor that. But you know, consensus decision-making is the main one. And it takes a lot of time. You really spend a lot of time in meetings and talking, taking things to the most grassroots level of who's affected before going ahead with anything. That would be the main one.

The emphasis on consensus, on slowly working out what decolonization and decolonized relationships might look like, was also mentioned by other participants. A non-Indigenous participant with extensive experience working in Indigenous communities explained,

My ideal would be people sitting in a circle and listening to one another, and I don't mean just hearing, I mean genuinely listening and hearing and acting in small ways. Not resisting. Too many people come to speak defensively, or they think we're going into battle when we're not. When you come to a table to sit and speak and to share, I wish people would drop pre-conceived notions and say, listen to what this person is saying, listen to what they truly want and what they're asking for. And cut to the heart of the matter, and look at the situations as objectively and fairly as possible, and then move towards a better future for everybody. And that can only happen when you do come to a table open-minded, and you have long-term interests in mind, you're not thinking of short-term solutions, you don't have your ego involved – where you're talking about your name in the headlines or you're a politician who may be having very self-fulfilling types of motivations there. Just open-minded people who want a better world to live in and work together. And just listen and respect one another and work towards that. That's how I think we can move forward.

This spirit of ongoing, sustained discussion was also articulated by one Indigenous participant as she described coalition-building among Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists committed to advancing Indigenous sovereignty:

I think it was probably fairly unique in this country as an attempt to try to formulate a basis of unity for Native and non-Native people, and to try to create a context and a framework for people to work together that's fairly open and doesn't limit the definition of sovereignty to any one thing but tries to see sovereignty or decolonization more as a process that we're engaging in together, and recognizing that there are going to be a lot of different views on that, and just try to be as inclusive as possible in facilitating dialogue around what [does] decolonization really mean at the end of the day; what is sovereignty going to mean?

Many participants also emphasized the need for face-to-face, sustained dialogue and conversation. One migrant justice activist employed the language of alliance in his discussion of building relationships and seeing connections among people and struggles:

I think that the alliances are necessary... to confront that system, you gotta have a basis for some broad alliances, because you can't confront the state alone anymore. I don't think that's reality anymore, and we don't have a lot of experiences of alliances that have been sustained. We're not starting from scratch, but it's tenuous.

He went on to explain that building such relationships might also entail working outside of more public venues and forums:

[W]hen you have the forum, cause we've had that too, you can identify these issues as important and have somebody speak to them, but to establish individual relationships and organizational relationships where these politics can become a reality, I don't think it can happen publicly to start. That's where the shit plays itself out. I think there's some discussions that have to happen, but I don't think they can happen publicly.

These insights all highlight the importance of relationality, a principle central to Indigenous epistemologies and to feminist insights on the potential for alliance. Relationality does not presume a flattening of power dynamics and differentials, but rather highlights them within a recognition of interdependence. This approach to relationality is clearly reflected in Amadahy's elaboration of a "Relationship Framework": "Understanding the world through a Relationship Framework where we don't see ourselves, our communities, or our species as inherently superior to any other, but rather see our roles and responsibilities to each other as inherent to enjoying our life experiences" ("Community" 2). This vision of relationality balances responsibility with accountability, taking direction with taking action, and autonomy with interdependence. It may also provide a powerful means of thinking deeply, and perhaps differently about identity, land, and belonging, and about the relationships that they might entail.

Chapter 8: “Making Space” for Decolonization: From Sanctuary City to Idle No More

The research for this dissertation was conducted in the context of intense contestations of identity, land, and belonging in and around the City of Toronto. Much has changed over the course of fieldwork, analysis, and writing. New movements have emerged, some alliances have deepened while others have dissolved and new ones have developed. Concurrently, the wealth of scholarly literature aiming to examine various aspects of Indigenous movements for resurgence has grown, and increasing attention is being paid to the roles and responsibilities of non-Indigenous peoples in projects of decolonization.

In recent years, representatives of the federal government have also made gestures toward a new relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. For instance, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement in June of 2008 prompted both the opening of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, set to close and release its final report in June 2015) and the federal Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools (issued by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in June 2008). Despite these measures and the governmental adoption of the language of reconciliation, there is little evidence of new directions in state policy and practice and much federal legislation continues to work toward the assimilation or legal elimination of Indigenous peoples. Examples of continuing legislative genocide can be found in Bill C-27 (the First Nations Financial Transparency Act), and in several measures in the omnibus bills (Bills C-38 and C-45 passed in 2012).⁶⁶ Rather than balancing respect for autonomy and interdependence, these legislative measures further impose settler sovereignty on Indigenous peoples. Tracing a continuity from the Royal Commission on

⁶⁶ The Omnibus Bills contained hundreds of legislative changes, including to the Indian Act, the IRPA, environmental protections, and waterways management.

Aboriginal Peoples, through to the federal Apology and the TRC, and through to the Comprehensive Claims Process (CCP), Coulthard suggests that this legislation continues to consolidate state power and settler colonialism under the guise of reconciliation (see Chapter 4 *Red Skin*). This leads him to argue that “Canada's policy framework is grounded in the assumption that Aboriginal rights are subordinately positioned within the ultimate sovereign authority of the Crown” (*Red Skin* 123).⁶⁷

Recent policy measures related to immigration have also continued many of the problematic differentiations between settler-citizen and immigrant, implementing stringent conditions for entry into the country through the IRPA, increasingly shifting toward temporary forms of migration (under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program) for those unable to meet the demanding property and asset requirements spelled out in the points system. Simultaneously, recent revisions to the Citizenship Act in 2014 make it possible to revoke citizenship status and increase the residency requirements for the maintenance of citizenship status. The 2015 Anti-Terrorism Act further entrenches practices of surveillance and criminalization which will likely continue to be exerted in deeply xenophobic, racist, and exclusionary ways, and to target Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice activists. In Toronto, neo-liberal austerity measures have made it even harder for already marginalized populations to survive, and surveillance and criminalization serve as deterrents to overt political action while increased immigration enforcement measures further remind would-be activists of their precarious status in the country. In short, state policies and practices continue to ensure that immigration and citizenship policies perpetuate the triangulation of relations established through settler colonialism. These measures also undermine the possibilities for alliances against settler colonialism in the city of Toronto, even as such alliances are urgently needed.

⁶⁷ For additional insight into the limitations of the language of reconciliation, see Leanne Simpson *Dancing* 21-3; for an insightful critique of the RCAP, see Kiera Ladner “Negotiated Inferiority”; and for a discussion of the limitations of the TRC, see Alfred *Wasáse* 152; Regan.

My central argument in this dissertation has been that citizenship, whether approached as subjectivity or as legal status, is implicitly bound up with projects of settler colonialism in Canada. Therefore, activists need to engage in unsettling citizenship and the city is an important place to do so. In this chapter, I summarize the central assertions and evidence presented in this dissertation. I then turn to recent actions which have focused on the city, arguing that the city is a potential decolonizing space. In the discussion of the Sanctuary City campaign and the Idle No More actions which took place in Toronto in the winter of 2012-2013, I examine the potential of unsettling citizenship, and of imagining new relations of identity, land, and belonging in and beyond the city.

One of the central contributions of this dissertation is in the integration of insights from Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice activists with historical policy analysis. Where possible, this policy analysis was directed by the comments of participants. In many instances, participants spoke in great depth about the policies that impact on them and their political movements, as well as the ways that they negotiate, reject, and work beyond these policies. The historiography of settler colonialism outlined in Chapter 3 begins from Indigenous scholars' accounts. This is a crucial foundation for the analysis that follows as it outlines many of the measures which continue to advance settler colonialism in Canada and in the City of Toronto, while also demonstrating the persistence with which Indigenous peoples have presented a viable alternative vision of governance and good relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples on this land. The historical policy analysis included in Chapters 4 to 6 further demonstrates the ways that immigration and citizenship policy have been constructed alongside the Indian Act to enforce and advance settler colonial power. Although the power of state policy is never absolute, the activists I conducted research with detailed the myriad ways that state policies continue to impact on them and on their political movements, and to

advance alternatives to the constructions of identity, land, and belonging advanced through federal policy.

As is demonstrated in Chapter 4, Indigenous activists were the most overt in their rejection of Canadian citizenship. They were cognizant of the ways that settler colonial policies, including the Indian Act, have employed enfranchisement and gender-based exclusions in order to reduce the number of people recognized as “Indian” by the federal government. Speaking to the lasting effects of these policies, they assert Indigenous sovereignty in contestation of state power and as responsibility for the regeneration of Indigenous conceptions of identity, land, and belonging. They see this as their role in building connections between urban and land-based communities, and in building alliances against settler colonialism.

In Chapter 5, the insights of racialized migrant justice activists demonstrate a complicated relationship to the settler state and to projects of Indigenous sovereignty. None of the activists I interviewed argued that citizenship status would lead to full inclusion in the state and, indeed, many saw citizenship as a position of complicity with settler colonialism. Participants asserted that the most organic alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements were formed with those organizing against displacement from their home countries. Conceptualizing these alliances as enactments of transnational Indigenous solidarity, participants suggested that the mutual focus on contesting a violent settler state, and complementary worldviews which emphasize relationships to land and belonging served as the foundations for alliances with Palestinian and some Latin American activists, in particular. In contrast, migrant justice movements which are focused more intently on assuring the right to stay in Canada, including rights to citizenship and property ownership, were regarded by participants as more incommensurable with Indigenous sovereignty movements. Participants do not suggest that such alliances are entirely

impossible, but rather that relationships to identity, land, and belonging which contest and ultimately unsettle the settler state must be fostered.

The comments of white citizen-settler activists in Chapter 6 highlight the impacts of settler colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging on those whose belonging in the settler state is most exalted. While these participants acknowledge that whiteness and citizenship status are crucial points of privilege in the context of settler colonialism, their activism remains largely focused on “helping” the struggles of others, rather than unsettling their own citizenship. This does not mean that white settler-citizen activists should revoke their citizenship status, but rather that alternative relationships of identity, land, and belonging must also be fostered. One of the means of unsettling citizenship recommended in this chapter entails the unsettling of solidarity, taking direction from Indigenous sovereignty activists, and also taking responsibility for decolonization.

Chapter 7 turns to the visions of decolonization articulated by participants, who largely regard decolonization as a process of negotiation and collaboration. Participants emphasize the importance of contesting the settler state, while also asserting that Indigenous practices of governance, including consensus, nation-to-nation relationships, and treaty relationships should inform approaches to decolonization. Underpinning these approaches, which parallel Amadahy's conceptualization of a “relationship framework,” is an emphasis on autonomy and interdependence.

The material presented in this dissertation suggests that the struggles of Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements are not always commensurable. Indeed, Indigenous sovereignty activists are focused on regeneration and resurgence, and directly contest the power and dominance of the settler state, while migrant justice movements may at times be forced to negotiate with and through the settler state. Alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements may effectively challenge the ways that settler colonialism seeks the annihilation of

Indigeneity as well as the violence with which borders are erected and enforced. In the next section, I examine the possibilities of such alliances within the urban context, with a focus on the Idle No More and Sanctuary City organizing in the winter of 2012-2013.

Unsettling the City: “Making Space” for Decolonization

December 2012 saw the explosion of Idle No More (INM) actions across the country. The Kindo-nda-niimi Collective assert that INM can only be understood in the context of long-standing and ongoing assertions of Indigenous sovereignty. They further explain that “This most recent link in this very long chain of resistance was forged in late November 2012, when four women in Saskatchewan held a meeting to educate Indigenous (and Canadian) communities on the impacts of the Canadian federal government's proposed Bill C-45” (21). As they note, the many different actions which took place under the banner of INM grew to encompass both a rejection of ongoing abuse by the settler state (22) and “an important moment for conversations about how to live together meaningfully and peacefully, as nations and as neighbours” (23). Idle No More actions took many different forms, from protests and blockades, to teach-ins and round dances (21). In Toronto, the largest public action was a round dance held on December 21, 2012 in Dundas Square, at the intersection of Dundas and Yonge streets across from the Toronto Eaton Place shopping centre. With well over 1,000 participants, this action highlighted Indigenous presence in Canada's largest settler city (see Jeff Denis), and stands as a clear example of regeneration and resurgence.

Just two months after this signal INM event in Toronto, migrant justice activists, working under the umbrella of Solidarity City, finally succeeded in their campaign to have the City of Toronto declared a Sanctuary City. On February 21, 2013 Toronto's city council passed a municipal policy declaring Toronto a Sanctuary City (CD 18.5). This policy provides all city residents with access to city services without fear of detention or

deportation (see Chapter 5). On June 10, 2014 the first implementation measures were spelled out to give the policy teeth (Motion 29.11). This is a tremendous gain for those living without secure immigration status in the City of Toronto, for migrant justice organizing in the city and across the country, and potentially also for alliances with Indigenous sovereignty movements.

While at first glance these developments may seem unrelated, I suggest here that the INM actions and the Sanctuary City policies are both excellent examples of what Regan terms “making space” for decolonization (6). Regan notes that “Colonization involves the taking of space: geographic, historical, narrative, cultural, political, legal, intellectual, and pedagogical” (239 n5). In their claiming of city space and enactment of Indigenous principles of inclusivity through INM and other actions, Indigenous sovereignty activists are engaged in regeneration and resurgence; they are also making space for connections between urban- and land-based Indigenous communities and unsettling dominant narratives about Indigeneity in this city historically, in the present moment, and into the future. Finally, Indigenous sovereignty movements force all non-Indigenous peoples to think about identity, land, and belonging.

For their part, while the Sanctuary City policies admittedly do not directly advance Indigenous sovereignty, they do potentially create urban space for decolonization in troubling state narratives about citizenship and the city. The Sanctuary City measures serve to diminish the power and exclusivity of citizenship status, at least with regards to access to city services. In doing so, they unsettle the exclusivity of citizenship, which may open up the possibilities of other relationships to flourish. Furthermore, in gaining access to basic city services, migrant justice movements may be able to direct more energy previously devoted to the basic necessities of survival toward mobilization and alliance-building. The gains achieved under the City of Toronto Sanctuary City policies are momentous, although there are still many areas where

citizenship status will remain crucial to day-to-day life. For instance, health care and education both fall primarily under provincial jurisdiction, and further mobilization will be required to achieve access to these vital services. In de-linking the emphasis of movements from gaining citizenship, or from gaining access to services through citizenship, Solidarity City organizers are therefore unsettling citizenship, at least in some regards, within the context of the city. In these ways, there is the potential for Sanctuary City measures to contribute to the unsettling of citizenship necessary for decolonization.

In his five theses on resurgence and decolonization, Coulthard advocates for direct action, an end to capitalism and private property, enactments of urban sovereignty, a focus on gender justice, and the importance of moving beyond the nation-state (see “Conclusion” in *Red Skin*). These are useful principles for potential alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements. Although the presence and dominance of the settler state and settler colonial conceptions of identity, land, and belonging currently limit some of the possibilities of meaningful alliances, ultimately, the undoing of settler colonialism is what each movement seeks and needs. In this regard, there is tremendous potential for collaboration and alliance.

Indeed, unsettling citizenship might be regarded as one facet of unsettling the state. Many participants suggested that alliances between Indigenous sovereignty and migrant justice movements would be best served by the demise of the international borders established through colonialism, imperialism, and settler colonialism. As noted at the outset of this dissertation, Indigenous activists and theorists contend that it is settler colonialism which makes immigration problematic, not Indigenous nationhood. In this spirit, when asked about her ideal vision of decolonization, one Indigenous participant said,

I think that would be for me... that would be more to me talking about the traditional worldview that was inclusive and accepting of newcomers. I would

still... I'm an anarchist... my ideal is for the world to be a place where there's communication and people can just get away from the confinements of identity and not wanting to be restricted to my nation, or my sex or my identity or my gender, or my sexuality... it's such a limiting space. I would want to bring that in to my community that way, through the spiritual values of inclusivity and the four directions. We always talk about the four directions – and those directions intermingle and come together. The red doesn't always have to stay in the east...

Of course, doing away with the nation-state and colonial borders is only tenable within a context where Indigenous sovereignty is established and upheld. A non-Indigenous activist suggested that critical engagements with borders and the politics of nationalism must entail a recognition of Indigenous sovereignty which includes Indigenous relationships to land and belonging. He explained,

[W]e're a group that says No One is Illegal, that land is not something you can own and that people should be free to be where they want to be, but also a group that respects the fact that the system which is bringing people here now is the system which displaced the original inhabitants of this land and that connection has to be made, and the history has to be understood. And I think it's a very important political goal for us to really work within the historical context that creates the situation [that] we're living in now, in this sort of physical space of Toronto, which is a physical space that has been historically rooted in both Indigenous colonialism as well as European colonialism around the world, which has caused this wave of migration to a really cold, cold place.

In a similar spirit, Lawrence and Dua note that:

Borders in the Americas are European fictions, restricting native peoples' passage and that of peoples of color. However, to speak of opening borders without addressing Indigenous land loss and ongoing struggles to reclaim territories is to divide communities that are already marginalized from one another. The question that must be asked is how opening borders would affect Indigenous struggles aimed at reclaiming land and nationhood. (136)

These insights all clearly articulate the importance of Indigenous sovereignty and nationhood, of regeneration and resurgence, to creating the conditions in which a just world might be possible for all. As one Indigenous activist concluded:

I may really differ from a lot of Native people in that I don't want to confine

myself to any one nation or place, I don't want borders at all. I actually agree with that whole 'No Borders' slogan, although I don't think you can use that the way it's been used. I would never say that. But it is my ideal.

It is my hope that the insights recorded in this dissertation provide further fodder for ways of thinking, working, and talking through the changes needed to reach such an ideal.

Settler colonialism establishes a zero sum end game. Meaningful recognition of Indigenous sovereignty destabilizes the power and authority of the settler state, while the maintenance and stability of the settler state requires the elimination of Indigenous peoples and their sovereignty. Settler colonialism implicates all of us in this appalling tug of war, albeit in a host of different ways. Unless we are prepared to accede to genocide, decolonization requires that we imagine some way toward coexistence. For Indigenous sovereignty activists, this entails a commitment to responsibilities for the regeneration and resurgence of Indigenous nationhood, in addition to ongoing contention with the settler state. To the extent that migrant justice movements seek inclusion in the settler state, including through the legal status of citizenship, these movements are incommensurable with those for Indigenous sovereignty. While this does not mean that migrant justice activists should never engage the settler state and its citizenship policies, it does demonstrate that alternative conceptions of identity, land, and belonging must also be imagined in order to create the conditions for meaningful alliances against ongoing settler colonialism. For white settler citizen activists, whose legal status is exalted and normalized, the task of unsettling citizenship entails a continued engagement with privilege and responsibility for privilege, alongside a critical praxis of “taking direction” which recognizes that we are all “directly affected” by settler colonialism, albeit in drastically different ways.

In keeping with Indigenous approaches such as the Two Row Wampum and the nation-to-nation principles underlying the negotiation of many treaties, coexistence can

only be accomplished through a recognition of autonomy and interdependence as well as a critical anti-colonial engagement with the politics of identity, land, and belonging, including those established in citizenship policy. In short, decolonization requires, at least in part, the unsettling of citizenship. While the city is an important potential decolonizing space, it is also a site where settler colonialism has long been – and continues to be – entrenched. In order to advance decolonization from within the urban context, then, Indigenous sovereignty in and over the city must be recognized. As recent actions focusing on the urban context demonstrate, there is tremendous potential for reimagining these relationships outside of the parameters established by the settler state. It is this potential which ought to inspire and direct future action.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Timeline

1497	Giovanni Caboto (England) lands on the east coast
1534	Jacques Cartier (France) makes his first voyage from France, travels the Saint Lawrence, makes contact with the Iroquois
1603	Samuel de Champlain (France) arrives in North America
1605	Champlain establishes French settlement at Port Royal
1608	French Settlement at Quebec City, beginning of French settlements in North America; abandoned in 1607 (Paul 53)
1610	Fishing outposts for England established in Newfoundland
	Signing of Mi'kmaq Concordat
	Beginning of the establishment of the 13 British colonies that were to become the United State of America.
1648	Treaty of Westphalia
1650-1815	Fur trade
1677	Covenant Chain
1688-1763	Intercolonial Wars
1670	Royal Charter grants monopoly trading rights to the Hudson's Bay Company
1701	Great Peace of Montreal (treaty between France and Iroquois nations)
1713	Treaty of Utrecht
1745-61	Regulations for trade established by the British Crown
1754-63	Seven Years War

- 1759 Battle of the Plains of Abraham
- 1763 Treaty of Paris cedes Canada and most of New France to Britain
- Royal Proclamation creates Quebec, establishes 'nation-to-nation' relationship between Crown and Aboriginal nations, bars settlement and sale of land, creates Crown land.
- 1763-64 Pontiac Uprising
- 1764 Treaty at Niagara
- 1774 Quebec Act
- 1775-83 American Revolution
- 1783 Treaty of Paris grants independence to US (13 colonies)
- 1787 Toronto Purchase (revised in 1805)
- 1791 Constitutional Act divides Quebec into Upper and Lower Canada (English and French) to accommodate loyalists fleeing US.
- 1794 Treaty of Miramichy
- 1812 War of 1812 (between USA and Britain)
- 1815 Large scale immigration to Canada from England & Ireland; timber industry surpasses fur trade.
- 'Civilizing mission' expands: missions, churches, establishment of reserves.
- 1834 Incorporation of the City of Toronto (renamed for York)
- 1837-1838 Patriot uprising in Lower and Upper Canada (leads to Act of Union of 1840).
- 1839 Establishment of reserves, Indian land labelled 'Crown lands' to protect them from encroachment by settlers
- 1840 Act of Union (merges Lower & Upper Canada into the province of Ontario)

- 1849 Establishment of 'responsible government' for all British North America
- The Hudson's Bay Co. is granted Vancouver's Island to develop a colony.
- 1850 Initial definitions of "Indian" emerge through colonial policy in Lower Canada; initially quite broad
- 1857 "Act to encourage the gradual civilization of the Indians in this Province, and to amend the laws respecting Indians" (Gradual Civilization Act) passed by United Canadas Parliament
- 1858 Beginning of Chinese migration to Canada (*Li Chinese in Canada*)
- 1867 Constitution Act and Confederation or British North America Act (ON, QC, NS, NB); divides province of Canada into Ontario and Québec
- 1867-1913 Immigration from Europe encouraged: farmers, female domestics, labourers
- 1868 Dominion Police founded
- 1869 Act for the Gradual Enfranchisement of Indians
- Red River Rebellion
- 1870 The North-West Territories (Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory) are acquired by Canada by the Hudson's Bay Company; from part of them Manitoba is created as the fifth province (Tobias)
- Beginning of the establishment of the treaty system and reserve system throughout the prairies
- 1871 British Columbia and Vancouver Island join confederation
- Treaty 1 & Treaty 2
- 1872 Dominion Lands Act (claim over western lands); encouraged immigration to Canada to farm & 'settle' the West

- 1873 North West Mounted Police formed
Treaty 3
PEI joins confederation
- 1874 Treaty 4
- 1875 Treaty 5
- 1876 First Indian Act (Act to amend and consolidate the laws respecting Indians). Revised in 1880, 1884, 1906, 1951 ('new'), 1985
Treaty 6
- 1877 Treaty 7
- 1880-1885 Chinese immigration sought to build railroad (CPR)
- 1881 Naturalization Act
- 1884 Indian Advancement Act; extends band council authority
Royal Commission on Chinese Migration
- 1885 Electoral Franchise Act grants franchise to those nations East of Lake Superior in dominion elections, as well as a number of others (members of the military, landowners). Tabled March 19, 1885, less than one week before the outbreak of the North-West Rebellion (Strong-Boag)
North-West Rebellion
Chinese Immigration Act; first Chinese head tax imposed (\$50)
- 1886 Anti-Chinese Riots in Vancouver
- 1896 Franchise withdrawn for Aboriginal peoples
- 1898 Yukon created (after Klondike gold rush); changing some provincial boundaries
- 1899 Treaty 8
- 1900 Chinese head tax increased to \$100

Increasing emphasis on reserves, despite dissatisfaction with success of this system. (Tobias; Peters “Developing” 58)

- 1900-1914 First phase of immigration recruitment; “aimed at recruiting Europeans as settlers for agricultural settlement and later as workers for industrial expansion” (Li *Destination Canada* 97)
- Almost 3 million immigrated during this time, 500,000 of whom came from continental Europe, 1 million from the British Isles, and 750,000 from US (Li *Destination Canada*)
- 1902 Royal Commission on Japanese and Chinese Immigration
- 1903 Chinese head tax increased to \$500
- 1905 Saskatchewan and Alberta become provinces
- 1906 Indian Act (consolidated and revised)
- 1907 Immigration Act
Vancouver Riot
- 1910 Immigration Act Revisions
- 1914 Komagata Maru arrives in Vancouver and is turned back
- 1914-1918 World War I
- 1914-1920 War Measures Act first implemented and in force
- 1918 Women granted suffrage in Canada
- 1919 Canada joins the League of Nations independently of Britain
- 1919 Immigration Act revised, nationality added to 'race' as qualifier, literacy test
- 1919-20 Imposed enfranchisement for Indigenous peoples (under the power of the superintendent). Changed so that people needed to apply for the vote (which few did) then re-enacted in 1922
- 1923-1947 Chinese Exclusion Act bans immigration of most Chinese

- 1927 Parliament of Canada bans First Nations from spending money or discussing land claims (repealed in 1951)
- 1929 Beginning of the Great Depression
- 1931 Immigration recruitment dries up; still a focus on family reunification.
- Only ad-hoc attention paid to Indian policy and immigration
- 1939-45 World War II. Although Indigenous peoples are not regarded as citizens, their war support is crucial. General uproar following this, calls for revision of Indian Act and Royal Commission.
- 1939-45 War Measures Act enacted; primarily targeted Japanese Canadians for displacement, dispersal, loss of property and assets, and deportation.
- 1945-47 National Emergency Transitional Power Act maintains control over mobility and property ownership for Japanese Canadians (see Miki 89)
- 1947-49 Continuation of Transitional Measures Act extends control over mobility and property ownership for Japanese Canadians (see Miki 89)
- 1945 United Nations established
- 1946 Joint Committee between Senate & House established
- 1947 Canadian Citizenship Act
- 1948 UN General Assembly Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Canada votes in favour.
- 1949 Newfoundland enters Confederation
- 1950s-1970s Second phase of immigration recruitment; reliance on “technical and professional workers” to fill industrial boom of post-war (Li *Destination Canada* 97)
- 1951 Provincial Franchise for Aboriginal peoples

New Indian Act: Minister's power limited to supervisory role with veto power. Responsibilities for services to Indigenous peoples being turned over to provinces (Peters "Developing")

UN Convention on the Rights of Refugees Passed; Canada not a signatory until 1969

- 1952 New Immigration Act; allows refusal of admission on several grounds
- 1957 ILO Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Populations (Convention Number 107); still not ratified by Canada
- 1953 Attention starting to be paid to Northern Aboriginal peoples (i.e., "Canada and Our Eskimos" report)
- 1960 Federal franchise for Aboriginal peoples
- 1963 Royal Commission on Bilingualism & Biculturalism; Federal Response in 1970 beginning of multiculturalism framework
- 1965 UN adopts International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; ratified in Canada in 1970
- 1966-7 Hawthorn Report (Citizens Plus language)
- 1967 Move away from language of 'preferred' nations; point system introduced in immigration policy
- Royal Commission on the Status of Women inaugurated
- 1969 Federal White Paper on Indian Affairs; withdrawn in 1973
- Official Languages Act
- Decriminalization of homosexuality under Trudeau
- 1970 Implementation of the War Measures Act during the October crisis in Quebec
- 1973 Federal Multiculturalism Directorate established

- 1973 Calder case (Nisga'a)
- Introduction of the Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (NIEAP)
- 1973 Attorney General of Canada v. Lavell
- 1976 New Immigration Act & Points System; beginning of tightened restrictions on immigration
- 1981 Lovelace v. Canada
- 1982 Repatriation of the Constitution (Constitution Act, 1982), including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which includes a recognition of multiculturalism. Quebec was the only province not signing onto this repatriation.
- Shift to 'Aboriginal' in legislative language of Constitution – broadest definition to date, but few entitlements. s.35(2)
- 1985 Bill C-31 amends aspects of gender discrimination in Indian Act
- 1988 Multiculturalism Act
- 1989 ILO Convention No. 169, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (replacing No. 107). Canada has not ratified this Convention.
- 1990 Oka Crisis
- 1991 Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship formed
- 1992 Charlottetown Accord
- 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
- 1999 Nunavut becomes Canada's third territory April 1, 1999.
- 2001 Bill C-61 (First Nations Governance Act) proposed.
- 2002 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)

- 2004-2005 Meetings to reach the Kelowna Accord
- 2006 PM Martin introduces an Act to Implement the Kelowna Accord
- 2008 Federal Apology for Residential Schools
Establishment of Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- 2011 Bill C-3 extends partial status to some of those disenfranchised due to gender discrimination in the Indian Act
- 2012 Federal government implements widespread legislative change through Omnibus Budget Bills C-38 and C-45 passed in June and December of 2012, respectively

Outrage over changes to environmental protections, waterways, and Indian Act prompt Idle No More movement
- 2013 Bill C-27: First Nations Financial Transparency Act being debated at the to level of Senate
- 2013 Federal Court rules to include Métis in definition of Indian status; appealed by federal government
- 2013 Sanctuary City motion passed by Toronto City Council (Keung “Toronto Declared”)
- 2015 Final Report & Closure of Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Sources for this timeline include: Paul; Miller *Skyscrapers*; Tobias; Erasmus and Sanders; Miki; Abu-Laban and Gabriel; Lawrence *‘Real’ Indians*; Knowles *Forging Our Legacy, Strangers at Our Gates*; Thobani *Exalted*; Li *Destination Canada, The Chinese in Canada*; and A. Pratt.

Appendix B: Sample Informed Consent Form

Solidarity & Land Research Project

Written Informed Consent

Principal Investigator

My name is Krista Johnston, and I am a PhD Candidate in the Graduate Programme in Women's Studies, at York University. I am doing this research as part of my dissertation. Below, please find information about the research project, the procedures that I have agreed to follow, and other important information for participants. If you would like to contact me at any time about your involvement in this research project, you can reach me at:

Krista Johnston
Graduate Program in Women's Studies
712 South Ross Building
4700 Keele St.
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3
kristarj@yorku.ca

Project Description

The goal of this project is to explore the impact of citizenship policy on the development of anti-colonial solidarity within and amongst activist groups in the city of Toronto. There are three broad threads to this analysis: activism, cultural workers, and urban social planning.

Personal interviews will be held with interested participants. The personal interviews will last approximately 1 hour, and will focus on issues of citizenship, land, cultural work and solidarity.

Focus groups of 3-5 people will be held to document collective discussions on these topics. The focus groups will last from 2-3 hours.

Participation in this study

Participants have been approached for this study based on:

- their knowledge of and participation in various forms of solidarity work with Indigenous peoples, communities of colour, immigrants, and/or refugees in Toronto.
- their work as cultural workers (artists, musicians, filmmakers, writers, etc) in the city of Toronto
- their work on innovative social planning/land use initiatives in Toronto.

Participation in this study is voluntary.

Participants have the right to refuse to answer any questions.

Participants have the right to withdraw from the interviews at any time. If you withdraw from the study all existing research data on your participation will be destroyed upon your request.

Every effort will be made to keep information confidential. Interview recordings will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Principal Investigator's home. Interview recordings will be returned to participants upon request. Otherwise they will be destroyed after transcription.

Transcripts of interviews will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Principal Investigator's home.

Participants will be provided with transcribed copies of their interviews and will be invited to propose changes, corrections, edits.

Interview questions and an informed consent form will be provided in advance.

No material incentives are offered to study participants due to conflict of interest concerns.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participants in focus groups will be assigned a number in interview transcription. A copy of the corresponding names will be kept separately from the transcripts.

Participants in personal interviews will be assigned a pseudonym. A copy of corresponding names will be kept separately from the transcribed interviews.

Video and audio tapes of focus groups will be destroyed upon completion of transcription.

Confidentiality will be ensured within the limits of the law.

Risks and Benefits

- There are no foreseeable risks to be incurred from participation in this project.

Dissemination of research results

- All participants will be forwarded research results and drafts upon request.
- If requested, a copy of the dissertation will be made available to research participants.
- The Principal Investigator will make herself available to share research gathered at relevant forums.
- Participants consent to further publication related to this research. The researcher will make every attempt to notify participants of further publication of this research.

For more information, please contact:

Graduate Programme in Women's Studies at (416)736-2100 ext. 58143

Please direct general inquiries or concerns regarding research ethics to:

Manager of Research Ethics for York University (Office of Research Services)

214 York Lanes; 416-736-5055

This research has been reviewed and approved for compliance to research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review Subcommittee (HPRC) of York University.

Declaration of Informed Consent

- I agree to participate in this project.
- I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks from it.
- I have received a copy of this consent statement.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant (please print)	Signature of Participant	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Principal Investigator	Signature of Investigator	Date

Appendix C: Sample Focus Group Questions

(De)Colonizing Autobiography (Haig-Brown, 2003)

All participants will be asked to share parts of their personal narratives particularly relating themselves & their families to land, Indigenous peoples, and colonialism.

The facilitator will participate in this exercise.

Participants will be asked not to interrupt each other, or to engage in dialogue on these narratives until everyone has finished.

Participants may take as long as they like, or their comments may be quite brief.

Everyone will have a chance to participate. Discussion will follow.

General Questions:

How long have you been doing activism in Toronto?

What kinds of activism have you done?

What kinds of groups and organizations have you participated in?

How have these groups and organizations addressed issues of land, citizenship, Indigenous sovereignty, refugee and immigrant rights, and anti-colonialism?

What has been a highlight of this organizing for you? What concerns you?

What do you think some of the shortcomings of activism in Toronto have been?

Do you think that there's something specific about activist organizing in Toronto?

How would you describe the activist 'scene' in this city?

Have you done activism in other spaces/places? Could you compare the two?

What do you think the most important issue is at the moment?

What do you think the demographics of activists in the city are?

Have you done activism around Indigenous sovereignty before? If yes, please elaborate.

Have you been a member of anti-colonial coalitions that addressed both Indigenous sovereignty and refugee & immigrant rights? Could you tell us a little bit about this work? What was effective about it? Did members of both of these communities come together? If not, what were some of the obstacles to this?

How is the state addressed in this activism?

On Coalitions

Have you worked in coalitions? Which ones? What issues were at the centre of these coalitions?

What were the demographics of these coalitions like?

Did these coalitions attempt to address Indigenous solidarity? How? How successful was this?

What were the hardest parts of organizing in this way? How did the group attempt to mediate this?

What was the greatest success of the coalition? Why?

Did the coalition address immigration issues? How? How successful was this?

Have these groups addressed issues of land, citizenship and Indigenous sovereignty?
How is belonging (to the group, to the nation, to other collectives) determined within the coalition?

Critiques of specific groups/organizations – what can we learn from each other? What are the obstacles to working more closely together on these issues?

On Land

How do you think about your relationship to land in Toronto? In Canada?

What do you think your personal relationship to land is at the present moment?

How does this impact your personal approaches to organizing and activism?

How does land figure in the groups and organizations of which you have been a part?

What do you think the relationship between land and citizenship is in Canada?

What do you think the relationship between land and group belonging is in Toronto?

How have the groups and organizations you've been a part of addressed belonging and/or citizenship?

Return to Autobiography

Is there anything you'd like to add or change about the autobiography you shared with the group?

Do you think that this exercise was useful to thinking about solidarity?

What is your vision of a perfect set of relationships in Canada? How does land figure in this vision? What are the parameters of belonging in this vision?

Any final thoughts, questions, or comments?

Appendix D: Discussion Questions Focus Group #4

Indigenous Solidarity

- What is [the group's] stance on the Reclamation & on Indigenous solidarity?
- Why are we going to the Reclamation as members of [this group]?
- Why is Indigenous solidarity an important part of our work?

The Six Nations Reclamation

- What do we know (or need to know) about this action & the history of the Six Nations reclamation?

Reports on Previous Trips

- What have been peoples' experiences of previous visits to the site?
- What kind of discussions happened about NOII's work and the links between these struggles?
- What were the hardest conversations?
- What were the most powerful connections made?

Trip tomorrow

- Why are we going tomorrow?
- How are we planning to conduct ourselves?

Other questions, concerns?

- Are there other places where we need more research, information on these connections?
- Outstanding questions or pieces of information that would help folks out?

Appendix E: Sample Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself and your activism?
2. What is your relationship to Toronto? How long have you been here, what are your connections to land & colonization here? What is your relationship to Indigenous peoples here?
3. In which ways have you worked on issues of Indigenous rights & sovereignty and/or the rights of immigrants and refugees?
4. What is the role of identity in this work?
5. Would you say that this work was/is anti-colonial work? What does this mean to you?
6. Is it 'solidarity' work? What does this mean to you?
7. Is land an important dimension of this work? What about citizenship?
8. How do Aboriginal & non-Aboriginal people come into contact in this work? What is the result of this relationship?
9. Does this work address immigration policy? How? Does it address other aspects of immigration?
10. Does it address Indigenous rights & sovereignty? How?
11. Can you think of any times when alliances have been formed among Indigenous peoples and immigrants & refugees? What were they? What was the basis of this alliance? How effective & lasting was this alliance?
12. Do you think it is useful to address these links & attempt to build solidarity among these groups? How do you think that this can be done?
13. What is the impact of the urban context on this work? How does land figure in this?
14. What is your vision of a 'perfect' set of relationships in Canada? How does land figure in this vision? What are the parameters of 'belonging' in this vision?

Appendix F: Glossary

AFN	Assembly of First Nations
ATA	Anti-Terrorism Act
B & B Commission	Royal Commission on Bilingualism & Biculturalism
BNA	British North America Act
CBSA	Canadian Border Services Agency
CCP	Comprehensive Claims Process
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
DADT	Don't Ask Don't Tell Campaign (later: Status for All!)
DCI	Department of Citizenship and Immigration
FLQ	Front de libération du Québec
FNGA	First Nations Governance Act
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
INM	Idle No More
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
IWD	International Women's Day
NCCT	Native Canadian Cultural Centre Toronto
NIEAP	Non-immigrant Employment Authorization Program
NOII	No One is Illegal
OCAP	Ontario Coalition Against Poverty
RCAP	Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
RCCB	Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
WCCC	Women's Central Coordinating Committee, Chile-Canada (Wallmapu)