(En)countering the Organizing Logics of the Canadian-State:
Immigrant Perspectives amidst Settler-Colonial and Climate Crises

by

Tina Oh

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Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki,
the ancestral, unceded, unsurrendered and
forever territory of the Mi'kmaq Nation

This thesis is dedicated to my umma

— and in solidarity with first-generation immigrants organizing for dignity.

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ABSTRACT

Academic inquiry of the climate crisis is incomplete without attending to the impacts of settler-colonialism. By building on analyses and critiques of settler-colonial theory, this thesis argues that modern climate change and Canadian settler-colonialism are intertwined crises that must be linked and read together. With the perceived absence of racialized immigrant perspectives surrounding these crises, narrative methodologies and semi-structured interviews were used to showcase the opinions of immigrant-settlers living in Nova Scotia. Their stories, in addition to interviews with social movement activists, revealed insights into the organizing logics of the Canadian-State in promoting settler-ignorance. It also revealed some of the barriers and challenges that immigrants face with respects to engaging in grassroots politics within the diaspora. In addition to a critical self-reflection of activist-scholarship, this thesis contributes to discourses related to settler-environmentalism, Thobani's theorizations of racial triangulation and the pathways for settler-solidarity with Indigenous resurgence across Canada and Abiayala.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

This thesis is grounded in critical self-reflection, activist-scholarship and narrative approaches that demonstrates research as a lived practice (Bawaka Country et al., 2012; Dixon, 2014; Woodiwiss, Smith, Lockwood, 2017; Gobby in conversation with Dixon, 2022). This introductory chapter opens with a positionality statement while providing insight into the experiences and motivations that led to undertaking this study. This chapter includes an overview of the research design, the study's rationale, as well as a summary of how the thesis has been organized.

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Growing up in Alberta, I rarely heard the term 'environmentalism'. After all, I was raised in a first generation immigrant working-class household near one of the world's most destructive and lucrative industrial operation: the Athabasca Tar Sands. As far as I can recall the only environmentalist I intimately knew in my childhood was a pixelated version of David Suzuki on my parent's perfectly-cubic television and the husky voice of David Attenborough narrating the beloved Planet Earth series. Soon-after turning 17 years old, I fled Alberta to the Maritimes for my undergraduate studies. It was there that I became increasingly involved in direct action for social and climate justice and absorbed by the prefigurative politics of related social movements, grassroots struggle and organized resistance across the borders of the lands that I had grown up to know as 'Canada'.

In the early 2010s, I was swept up in the youth-led wave of the Western fossil fuel divestment movement alongside tens of thousands of other young people (Grady-Benson & Sarathy, 2015; Belliveau, 2018). The movement was, and remains, widely-active within

liberal-arts and major post-secondary campuses across the US and Canada, including my alma mater, Mt Allison University (and the host institution for this research study, Dalhousie University). The campaign I was involved in during my undergraduate studies was called DivestMTA. It was a multi-year student-led campaign that organized and pressured administrators and those with power at Mt Allison University to divest (remove) its hypocritical, damaging and substantial financial ties to the fossil fuel industry amidst worsening climate crisis. In the years post-2015[1] – following the publication of the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) – many universities attended to the project of "Indigenizing" their campuses and platforming reconciliation discourses (Asch, Borrows and Tully, 2018). At the time, the hypocrisy of these post-secondary institutions felt ludicrously simple. It felt hypocritical that universities were preparing students for their future – teaching and producing climate change science – yet were also involved in the profiting of climate destruction through investments[2] with fossil fuel corporations, some of which had ties to major Indigenous rights violations in Canada (Maracle, 2012; Amnesty International, 2016).

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[1] I use the post-2015 timeline as an indicator to represent the publication of the TRC Report and the election of a majority Liberal-government under Justin Trudeau. Trudeau ushered in a different kind of settler-Indigenous recognition politics than that of the Harper government (Coulthard, 2014; Shaw and Coburn, 2017; Gardner and Clancy in conversation with Glen Coulthard, 2017). Additionally, the Idle No More movement spanning the early 2010s had increased attention towards Indigenous resurgence.

[2] In 2019, DivestMTA calculated that the University's endowment fund had at least $7.4 million invested in fossil fuel corporations (Koch, 2022). In addition to calling for the divestment of funds, DivestMTA has also critiqued the university's 'philanthropic' ties with Big Oil, and other unsustainable industries such as those that profit from war and weaponry.

In light of these hypocrisies, my peers and I attempted – and at times failed miserably – to practice a more genuine[3] form of reconciliation through climate justice organizing on campus. I began to consider my own proximity and complicity to the university's hypocrisies, and more broadly, to Canadian settler-colonialism. Part of this practice involved grappling with and assessing my own shifting colonial privileges as a first-generation Korean immigrant that had gained permanent residency status after thirteen long years of my family struggling without. Significantly, it was not lost on me that my family experienced a fundamental class shift that improved our quality of life as soon as permanent/settler status was granted by the Canadian-state.

While demands for post-secondary fossil fuel divestment were certainly not synonymous to struggles for Indigenous liberation, the campaigns were to varying degrees, associated with the concept of 'climate justice' and solidarity with Indigenous-led resistance to extractivism (Grady-Benson & Sarathy, 2015; Rowe et al., 2016; Oh et al., 2017; Belliveau, 2018). At least from my perspective, the fossil fuel divestment campaigns did not necessarily attract traditional environmentalists, but rather, young people who were broadly interested in leftist-politics and social justice. Many, including myself, shied away from outright-identification as environmentalists, and instead, commonly shared critiques of Western ecological thought, especially its failure to be concerned with ecology's colonial, racial, gendered and classed intersections (Kinch in conversation with Giibwanisi, Kaikakons and Sleeping Grizzly, 2014; Whyte, 2018; Robin and Griffiths, 1997). In contrast, divestment

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[3] At the time, most members of DivestMTA were settlers, and I recall supporting narratives and protest banners that read: "NO INDIGENIZATION WITHOUT DIVESTMENT". In hindsight, I now recognize such narratives were a misappropriation of climate justice and Indigenous-solidarity that reified colonial dynamics.

campaigns were more preoccupied with 'climate justice' principles than that of conservation. While definitions of climate justice vary, a common theme is that climate justice addresses the ethical, political, social, and classed inequities to the global climate crisis that disproportionately impacts people who have contributed the least to its making (including low-lying territories, the poor, Indigenous peoples, etc). International climate-justice coalition, Climate Justice Alliance (n.d) defines climate justice as "a Just Transition away from extractive systems of production, consumption and political oppression and towards resilient, regenerative and equitable economics… [which] place[s] race, gender and class at the centre of the solutions equation in order to make it a truly Just Transition". Despite the term seeing increasing dilution from green-washing efforts (otherwise known as green-capitalism) by extractive corporations and colluding nation-states (Bernstein, 2022), climate justice in its grassroots application typically centers an anti-capitalist and anti-colonial analysis.

It was my experiences navigating the connections and contradictions of climate justice and Indigneous-solidarity (Gobby, 2020; Gobby and Gareau, 2018) that led to developing the initial research questions and motivations for this study. When I began this thesis, I noted increasing literature related to white settler-environmentalism within a Canadian context (Curnow and Helferty, 2018; Curnow and Helferty, 2019; Helferty, 2020; Erickson, 2020), but virtually no literature on the perspectives of racialized immigrant-settlers. Furthermore, affirmed by my own experiences within climate justice organizing, I had noticed that the people of colour engaged in these struggles were predominantly Canadian-born settlers. Very few were first-generation immigrants (Nakhaei, 2008; O'Neill, Gidengil and Young, 2012), which piqued my curiosity to the barriers and challenges that first-generation immigrants face with respects to grassroots political action.

I share these reflections as an introduction to this thesis, which itself has been deeply influenced by my organizing experiences and my attempts in navigating the liminal space between activism and academia. Throughout the near five-years this thesis has spanned, my commitments to climate justice, Indigenous solidarity and grassroots activism matured beyond the confines of campus, and towards interconnected spaces and sites of struggle, such as migrant justice, trade-unionism and to four UN climate negotiations — where most recently, my role was as a trainer to support Black, Indigenous, youth of colour from Canada who were engaged in anti-colonial organizing at COP 26 in Glasgow, UK. These experiences have come to inform my political growth as a student-scholar-activist, and has consequently shaped this thesis' design, analyses and outcomes. Sudbury and Okazawa-Rey (2009: 3) defined activist-scholarship as "the production of knowledge and pedagogical practices through active engagements with, and in service of, progressive social movements" as a way to resist the dichotomy of academic-theory and material struggle. In speaking about her commitments to activist-scholarship, Sunera Thobani (2008) – whose theorizations of racial triangulation were of an immense foundation to this thesis which I discuss in Chapter Two – said:

> I place my work within the tradition of radical, politically engaged scholarship. I have always rejected the politics of academic elitism which insist that academics should remain above the fray of political activism and use only disembodied, objectified language and a "properly" dispassionate professorial demeanor to establish our intellectual credentials. My work is grounded in the politics, practices, and languages of the various communities I come from, and the social justice movements to which I am committed.

Similarly, in his book, Another Politics, Chris Dixon (2014: 13) explained how his approach to activist-research has been to "deliberately include [himself] in what [he discusses]". He highlights left-historian Barbara Epstein who said: "I believe that in general one can learn more about a movement from the inside than from the outside, and that a position of engagement and critical identification tends to be more fruitful than objectivity achieved by maintaining a distance" (Epstein, 1990, quoted in Dixon, 2014, 13). Inspired by the efforts of activist-scholars like Thobani and Dixon, as well as the endless courage of ordinary people engaged in struggle everywhere, the formulation of this thesis study has been rooted in grassroots politics, the activist community, the racialized immigrant community, and the social movements to which I am in service.

1.1   A Twin Crisis

In their groundbreaking 2015 study titled "Defining the Anthropocene", scientists Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin proposed a time-stamp for the beginning of the Anthropocene era — the geological epoch that encompasses present-day climate crisis. In their orbis hypothesis they claimed the Anthropocentric era began around the year 1610; and they explained they were able to prove so through the measure of Arctic ice cores that showed immense changes in atmospheric carbon dioxide levels around 1610 (Lewis and Maslin, 2015, 175). The orbis hypothesis theorized that the atmospheric changes were the consequence to the mass-murder of 50 million Indigenous peoples across Abiayala[4] arising

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[4] Abiayala comes from the Indigenous Kuna language meaning 'land in its full maturity". I refer to Abiayala in an effort to recognize the complex but tangled history of colonial contact throughout the Americas and of

from European imperialism, primitive accumulation and its insatiable greed for Indigenous lands and resource extraction. In other words, settler-colonialism across the Western hemisphere and the genocidal attempts to eradicate Indigenous Nations was central in kickstarting an era of irreversible catastrophic damage to Earth's ecologies, eventually prolonging to what is the present-day climate crisis. In further analyzing the orbis hypothesis, Dana Luciano (2015) explained that the climate crisis "develops alongside the global pathways of modernity". The coloniality of modernity paradigm was explained by Walter Mignolo (1998, 2002, 2011) as inseparable, two sides of the same coin, making up the pillars that prop Western nation-states and their continued existence. Therefore, as an ontological entry-point, this thesis requires the present-day climate crisis to be understood, not only as a consequence of the coloniality of modernity, but also as a crisis that exacerbates and reproduces settler-colonial conditions. That is to say, the climate and settler colonial crises within Canada are chronically-implicated twinned crises that cannot be delinked from one another. The theoretical entanglements of Canadian settler-colonialism and climate crisis are further analyzed in Chapter Two.

This thesis is about how racialized immigrants within Nova Scotia relate to and perceive both Canadian settler colonialism and the climate crisis, in addition to identifying some challenges and barriers faced by racialized immigrants in engaging grassroots political action surrounding these contemporary crises. Immigration status and ethnicity are sources of two key social divisions within contemporary Canadian society (O'Neill, Gidengil, and

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Indigenous resurgence across borders. In recent decades, some Indigenous sovereignty and land back movements within the Americas have referred to Abiayala as "transhemispheric Indigenous bridge". See Emil Keme's (2018) article "For Abiayala to Live, the Americas Must Die: Toward a Transhemispheric Indigeneity".

Young, 2012, 188). The reasons for excluding white immigrants was an attempt to move the study away from the dominancy of whiteness while also contributing to the burgeoning academic debates regarding racialized settler-relations as different than that of white settlers (Lawrence and Dua, 2005; Thobani, 2007; Sharma and Wright, 2008; Phung, 2011, Kaur, 2011). This exclusion is discussed more at-length within Chapter Three. Through qualitative and narrative inquiry methods, this study interviewed ten first-generation immigrants of colour, as well as five social movement organizers engaged in organizing for climate justice and Indigenous solidarity. The guiding research questions were: How do racialized immigrant-settlers perceive and relate to the twinned contemporary crises of climate and Canadian-settler colonialism? What are some challenges and barriers faced by racialized immigrants in engaging in grassroots political action surrounding these crises?

My research objectives were to:

- Gain insights to how racialized immigrants understand and relate to climate crisis and Canadian settler-colonialism;
- Identify some of the barriers and challenges faced by racialized immigrants with respects to grassroots political action surrounding climate crisis and Canadian settler-colonialism; and
- Build on existing literature regarding the positionality of immigrants within settler-Indigenous relations, and settler-environmentalism through the use of settler-colonial theory.

1.2   Research Rationale

A significant question that I asked myself in formulating this thesis was regarding how the research could contribute to the struggles of social movement-building (Dixon, 2014; Gobby, 2020). In their paper, "To Support a Stronger Climate Movement, Focus Research on Building Collective Power," activist-researchers Han and Barnett-Loro (2018: 1) argued that normative assumptions of how change-making happens — assumptions like: raising awareness or "more people in activism or shifting [public] climate change opinion" would come nowhere close to fortifying the political-power required for large-scale transformation that the climate crisis demands. Instead, Han and Barnett-Loro (2018) framed social movements as one of the few tangible solutions that can generate the mass power necessary to effect transformations within society, as well as minimize the catastrophic consequences of the ever-worsening climate crisis. They argued that researchers can make an invaluable contribution towards social movements by conducting research at a macro-level "to support decision-making around movement strategies" that essentially provides movement leaders the tools to "build sufficient, lasting political power" (Ibid, 4-5). Taking inspiration from activist-scholars whose research contributions provide strategic tools to social movement ecosystems, this thesis considered how its objectives and outcomes could be utilized by social-movements for the purposes of inclusive movement-building with first-generation immigrants who are seemingly obscured from national discourses on climate crisis and with regards to their settler-identity.

When embarking on this project, attention to settler-colonial studies was burgeoning across Western academia, specifically in disciplines such as Canadian studies, but had only just gained relative mainstream footing in the fields of ecology and environmental studies (Paperson, 2014; Zurba, 2014; Artelle et al., 2019; Zurba et al., 2019; Erickson, 2020). As mentioned earlier, the rising literature on settler-environmentalism was limited to the context

of white-settlerhood, and literature that looked at racialized immigrants' relations to ecology or environmentalism was nowhere to be found. That being said, alongside the burgeoning field of settler-colonial studies — the discourse that racialized settlerhood required a different analyses than that of white settlers began to flourish within a Canadian context too (Lawrence and Dua, 2005; Sharma and Wright, 2008; Phung, 2011; Sehdev, 2011; Cannon, 2012; Tuck and Yang, 2012; Snelgrove et al., 2014; King, 2014; Chatterjee, 2019; Chatterjee and Das Gupta, 2020). In light of a gap in literature within the field of ecology, this thesis draws on the recent wave of literature from settler colonial studies, in addition to the breadth of literature on the intersections of Canadian immigration and settler-colonialism (Abu-Laban, 1998; Das Gupta, 1999; Dua, 1999; Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007; Syed, 2010; Bauder, 2011, 2014; Kasparian, 2012; Chung, 2012). In doing so, this thesis attempts to understand the role of Canadian settler-colonialism in demobilizing and furthering mainstream ignorance amongst immigrant-settlers amidst the catastrophic crises of the present.

1.3   Structure of Thesis

This thesis is structured in the following manner. Chapter one introduced the research design, provided some insight and context into my positionality as the primary investigator, outlined some foundational literature, and explained my rationale for undertaking this study. Chapter Two lays out the study's theoretical framework of settler colonial theory to argue the ontological-links between the settler-colonial and climate crises while also providing background literature. Within the same chapter, I've highlighted critiques of settler colonial theory by Indigenous resurgence theorists, as well as some of the

challenges in utilizing settler colonial theory as a lens for engaging this research. Chapter Three reviews the methodologies used throughout the study, including an explanation for why narrative-inquiry was chosen, the types of interview questions asked, as well as other qualitative tools used for participant recruitment, data collection and data analysis, such as semi-structured interviews and manual coding. Chapter Four collapses both the research findings and related discussion into several organized subsections that respond to and engage with the research questions and objectives, as well as the literature throughout the thesis. Finally, in Chapter Five, I conclude the thesis with my overall reflections on the study with an evaluation of how this thesis addressed its original aims.

CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical Framework

Settler colonial theory was chosen as the theoretical framework for this study, not because it provided "a perfect explanation of what is being studied" (Anfara and Mertz, 2006, xxix), but primarily because of its articulation, focus, and analysis of the 'settler-subject'. Some dominant lines of theoretical inquiry in this study have been to explore the relation of immigrants as "settler-subjects", how they relate to and perceive the intertwined crises of settler colonialism and climate change, and the challenges and barriers that immigrants face with respects to engaging in grassroots politics surrounding these crises. These inquires aligned with the "predominant lines of inquiry burgeoning in settler colonial studies[:] the use of 'settler', and the politics of building solidarities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples" (Snelgrove, Dhamoon and Corntassel, 2014, 2; Edmonds and Carey, 2013). Later in this chapter, I highlight critiques by Indigenous resurgence theorists regarding the transfixion of the settler-subject.

A central definition of settler colonial theory is understanding settler-colonialism as a structure, rather than an event in the past (Verancini, 2011, 2; Wolfe, 2006). It is a distinct form of colonization, in that it requires "a mode of total appropriation of Indigenous life and land" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, 5) in order to establish an ascendancy of settler life and settler reproduction (Snelgrove, Dhamoon, and Corntassel, 2014, 5). Glen Coulthard (2016: 251) describes "settler colonialism as a structure of domination that is partly predicated on the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples' lands and the forms of political authority and jurisdiction that govern our relationship to these lands". Examples of how settler-colonialism has manifested in Canada include residential schools, the 60's scoop, the classification and regulation of Indigenous peoples through the Indian Act, while current

manifestations include police brutality, suppression of Indigenous sovereignty and continued

land struggles, denial of access to healthcare, and the crisis of violence against missing and

murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people (Vowel, 2016; King, 2017; Manuel

and Derrickson, 2017; McFarlane and Schabus, 2017; McCallum and Perry, 2018; Manuel,

2019). Despite Canada being laden with these everyday violences, Settlers often deny or do

not see their responsibility and complicity to the settler-colonial present. This phenomenon

can be explained through Verancini's (2011: 3) analysis that the settler-colony claims it is no

longer colonial by erasing distinctions and coverings its tracks towards supersession.

Therefore, a fundamental objective of settler colonialism is to deny its ongoing-presence in

order to maintain the very structures that continue to benefit settlers, "governments and

corporations whose authority is maintained within these systems" (Dmytriw, 2014, 11).

Consequently, many settlers understand colonialism in Canada to be "a singular event

located in history that has already been completed" (Snelgrove, Dhamoon, and Corntassel,

2014, 9).

The "singular event" located in history refers to European ascendency on

Indigenous lands within the Americas over 500 years ago, which was further made possible

through the Catholic Church's Doctrine of Discovery that remains enshrined within

Canadian law (Reid, 2010; Miller et al., 2010). Settler colonialism is a structure and the

Doctrine's legal framework was one of many tools that established a Christian, white

supremacist, and legal justification for colonization and genocidal attempts across Abiayala.

Indigenous lands were demarcated as uninhabited by the white Christian — therefore the

landscape was terra nullius — and free for the taking. Many scholars have analyzed that this

"myth of empty lands" was constitutive of the settler colonial project as it provided a barren

landscape, ripe with resources and ripe for settlement (McClintock, 1995, 30), however,

scholar Eva Mackey (2016) further analyzed a deeper insidious nature to the settler

colonialism's logic of terra nullius. Rather than "empty", Mackey argues that colonizers saw

Indigenous peoples to be "civilizationally incompetent" and incapable of possessing land

(Parasram and Mannathukkaren, 2021, 3). This colonial/modernity logic that Indigenous

peoples were under-developed humans — through what Parasram and Mannathukkaren

(2021: 3) described as "colonial construction of wilderness" — allowed settlers to claim land

using the basis of the Church's Doctrine (Stasialus and Jhappan, 1997; Manuel, 2017; The

Red Nation, 2020). Indigenous scholars have long argued that Canadian settler-colonialism

has continued to rely on this temporal logic that the dispossession of Indigenous peoples,

their ontologies, worldview, cultures, and languages are rooted in the past, and therefore

transfixed and ahistorical (Corntassel, 2012; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2014; Coulthard and

Simpson, 2016; Bernard, 2018).

2.1   Settler Colonialism at the Roots of the Climate Crisis

In theorizing the intertwined nature of present-day climate crisis and Canadian

settler-colonialism, it was important for this thesis to attend to the equivalency of settler

colonialism's attack on Indigenous lands as an attack on Indigenous sovereignties. In

present-day Canada, Indigenous peoples have been relegated 0.2% of their own traditional

territories, while, the Canadian-state and its settler-subjects occupies, reproduces, and

benefits from the other 99.8% (Manuel, 2019, 26). The control of 99.8% of the land base in

Canada has allowed for the accumulation of primitive wealth, affording much of the

hegemonic powers that it has today, which has all derived from stolen Indigenous lands

(Coulthard and Simpson, 2016, 251). This dispossession of Indigenous lands is what late

Secwépemc leader, Arthur Manuel, (2019: 26) explained as the "precise cause" of the structural and systemic impoverishment imposed on Indigenous communities. Further, Indigenous relations to land are fundamentally and "ontologically distinct from […] Western understanding of land, whether liberal or socialist, [which maintains] an ontological starting point in which land and humanity are separate, and that land must be worked upon in order to extract value from it" (Parasram and Tilley, 2018, 308). Parasram and Tilley (2018) positioned that Western ontologies of human's relationship to ecology and nature has been one of "ownership and domination", whereas Indigenous ontologies and relationships are one of "protection and partnership" beyond the colonial core (303).

As an introduction to locate this thesis, within Chapter One, I highlighted Western scientists' Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin's 2015 study on defining the Anthropocene. While undoubtedly a groundbreaking study — I chose to introduce my thesis with this study as it was one of the first Western scientific studies that I had come across that located settler-colonialism in Abiayala as a source and consequence of the present-day climate crisis (Shotwell, 2016). Despite Lewis and Maslin's study opening up a much-needed paradigm shift within the field of Western ecology and its implications with settler-colonialism, Lewis and Maslin's research proved nothing that Indigenous ontologies had not already known by virtue of over 500 years "of endurance against a globalising colonial system" (Parasram and Tilley, 2018, 303). Here, I want to recall a phone discussion I had with a Mi'kmaw water protector on topics related to my thesis during the peak of pandemic lockdowns in the summer of 2020. Within the first couple minutes of asking questions related to climate change and about the urgency of the crisis, the water protector immediately chastised me for utilizing the term 'climate change'. She explained her confusion and dislike for the term, because from her perspective, climate change was only a symptom of a much longer

endured crisis: imperialism and Canadian settler-colonialism. The water protector described Canadian settler-colonialism as the origin that degraded and permanently altered her ancestral lands. For her, the "climate" crisis began with the expropriation of Mi'kmaw lands, fauna, flora and people five centuries prior. While I recall this memory with the utmost respect and admiration for water protector's bluntness — to which I interpret as a fierce act of teaching and care similar to that of blunt Aunties within immigrant communities — I sat with, not only theoretical, but material realization of Western ecologies' systemic and structural incompatibilities with the more-than-modern Indigenous worldviews of land (Bartlett, Marshall and Marshall, 2012; Simpson, 2014; Mossett and Caldwell, 2016; Parasram and Tilley, 2018; Helferty, 2020). The Mi'kmaw water protector — like what so many other protectors have said before and along with her — had known the substance of what Lewis and Maslin's research only recently proved within the Western scientific community: that imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy[5] had made irreversible damages to the world's ecosystems giving rise to the present-day era of climate crisis. As Mi'kmaw scholar, historian and lawyer, Pam Palmater explained: "Mi'kmaw sovereignty is a living practice that resists settler-colonial desire to redefine land as a resource or property" (quoted in Parasram, 2022, 450). The climate and ecological crises that we find ourselves in, could therefore be understood as a redefinition of a centuries-long settler-colonial crisis that attempts to obfuscate its role.

Settler colonialism gave rise to the climate crisis, starting 500 years ago, and settler colonialism continues to exacerbate the crisis 500 years later. This is ever-present in the

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[5] Here, I refer to bell hooks common expression "imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy" to describe the coloniality/modernity power structures within Western social order.

context of Indigenous land struggles in Canada (Preston, 2013), a salient example being

Wet'suwet'en Nation whose hereditary leaders have not given their free, prior, and informed

consent for the Coastal GasLink Pipeline (The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, 2020).

Indigenous peoples right to free, prior and informed consent has been enshrined in the

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, n.d.). In

February 2020, the RCMP, as directed by the Canadian-state, raided Wet'suwet'en territory,

assailed through their healing centre, and by force, arrested Gitxsan matriarchs and elders

(The Red Nation, 2020, 6). While it is crucial not to reduce or conflate Indigenous struggles

for sovereignty as "anti-pipeline", nonetheless, it has been the Wet'suwet'en who are

asserting their sovereignty that has ultimately immobilized the Canadian-state and its

corporation in constructing the CGL pipeline (Lukacs, 2013; Kinch in conversation with

Giibwanisi, Kaikakons and Sleeping Grizzly, 2014; Khalfan, 2015; Suzuki, 2015). In Nova

Scotia — the unceded, unsurrendered and ancestral lands of the Mi'kmaq people — water

protectors and grandmothers successfully defeated the Alton Gas' decades-long attempt to

store natural gas in underground salt caverns, mere kilometers from the sacred Shubenacadie

River, where ultimately tonnes of untreated brine would flow into the Bay of Fundy (Moore,

2021; Bernard, 2018). While Indigenous peoples worldwide constitute 5% of the world's

population, they are the stewards of 80% of the world's last remaining biodiversity

(Raygorodetsky, 2018). The lands under Indigenous jurisdiction are often more biodiverse

than those of settler nation-state protected areas such as national parks (Schuster et al.,

2019). What this tells us – as recited by Eriel Deranger (2021) — is that "colonization

caused climate change; Indigenous rights are the solution".

It is important to situate the settler-colonial Canadian state as a major contributor of

the climate crisis. It is one of the largest fossil fuel producers, emitters of greenhouse gases

and mining exporters in the world, with Toronto's Bay Street being the headquarters to over 75% of the world's total mining corporations. As a result, the Canadian-state is a direct collaborator with its corporations that displace, dispossess and extracts on Indigenous lands, not only within Canadian borders, but worldwide (Walia, 2008; LaRocque, 2010; Walia 2013; Kuyek, 2019; Walia 2021; Ponting, 2021). These sites of Canadian mining — particularly in Latin America and Africa — are known to be associated with some of the most vile and notorious human rights abuses and violences against Indigenous communities resisting these projects and defending their lands (Imai, Gardner, and Weinberger, 2017). Further, the Canadian-state's insatiable interests in resource extraction and "development" projects, particularly in the Global South, has further led to the displacement and dispossession of thousands of communities while taking no responsibility for their "zone of nonbeing" (Fanon, 1952, xii; Gordon and Webber, 2008, 64).

2.1.1 Settler Environmentalism

"Solidarity, like environmentalism, is an imperfect strategy, embedded within the dominant social relations of colonialism, racialization, and capitalism. […] It is unsettling and it is paradoxical, yet it is a foundation from which we might try to build a different type of relationship."

— Joe Curnow and Anjali Helferty, 2018

In the previous section, I highlighted Lewis and Maslin's (2015) research to trace the origins of the climate crisis to the settler-colonial (resource) executions of over 50 million Indigenous fauna, flora, and people across the Americas. Given this thesis' desire to collapse both the settler-colonial and climate crises as inexplicably intertwined, it was important to highlight the historic connection of these crises and how they inform one another as to the

basis for why they must be understood and read together. Having made some of those linkages, this section turns to another theoretical objective of this thesis, which is to analyze and deepen understandings of political and environmental settler-actions and settler-solidarity. Building on the question posed by Curnow and Helferty (2018): "How do settlers do environmentalism?", this section addresses what initially may seem like a contradiction between settler-extraction and settler-environmentalism. By using settler colonial theory to analyze historic and present-day environmentalism in the West, and its incommensurable references to Indigenous movements for sovereignty and decolonization, this section looks at the dual reality of settler-extraction and settler-environmentalism as inseparable and intertwined.

Amidst the backdrop of massive industrialization to resource extraction, settler-environmentalism in the West can be traced to the burgeoning conservation movements of the late 1800s and early 1900s, largely led by white urban elites (Colpitts, 1998). At the core of these conservation efforts was the idea that the settler-state "should control and scientifically manage natural resources to ensure the optimal production … for [settler] recreational and industrial uses" (Sandlos, 2013, 367). The state was responsible for conservation as a means to promote settler leisure as well as capital accumulation of land resources to facilitate economic trade that benefited settlers. Sandlos explains (2013: 366), these conservation politics were not immune to class and race politics; an example of this was "elite sport hunters [convincing] resource agencies to manage fish and game as a recreational [resource] rather than a subsistence resource". Meanwhile, Indigenous peoples and the rural working-class were demonized for "their supposedly barbaric and excessive hunting and fishing methods" (Ibid). Similarly, the aggressive expansion of Canadian national parks in the early 1900s — and as reflected in the proliferation of early Canadiana

artists, the Group of Seven[6] — gave rise to an image that Canada and its settlers were sophisticated conservationists capable of not only observing, but protecting, the unmarked landscape. The obscured reality was two-fold. One, the 'unmarked' landscapes were not unmarked, but stewarded by Indigenous Nations since time immemorial. And two, not only were these Nations forcibly displaced and dispossessed en masse in order to prioritize settler-environment leisure, but that the machina of Canadian settler-colonial resource extraction could not be remotely described as sustainable or conservational. In present-day Alberta, which is home to the world's largest industrial projects – the tar sands -- Albertan-settlers enjoy more national parks per capita than elsewhere in the country. Settler-environmentalism should not be understood as a more sophisticated form of settler-colonialism, but an inherent element of its overall project to "[totally appropriate] Indigenous life and land" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, 5). It is the practices of biocentrism, paternalism and white supremacy that "informs the practices of many (predominantly) white animal rights activists, environmentalists and conservationists" (Kitossa, 2000 as quoted in Hiller and Carlson, 2018, 53).

Historically, settler-environmentalism in Canada has relied on the dispossession of Indigenous peoples to make way for settler-recreation and pleasure, however, in present-day, more settlers than ever before are becoming politicized by environmental and climate justice movements that espouse solidarities with Indigenous land struggles and sovereignty (Hiller and Carlson, 2018; Gobby and Gareau, 2018; Gobby 2020; Temper et al., 2020). Hultgren (2018: 73) explains that there has been a ontological shift in the West, away from traditional

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[6] See Matteo Cimellaro's (2022) CBC opinion piece titled: "Let's liberate the Canadian landscape from the Group of Seven and their nationalist mythmaking".

environmental principles, and towards a framework of climate justice that focusses on addressing inequality and historic injustice. Examples of this include the fossil fuel divestments campaigns across Canadian post-secondary campuses as well as nationwide climate strikes that have introduced and mobilized masses of young people to promote climate justice. Despite the rise in climate justice discourses within environmental movements in the West, Curnow & Helferty (2018: 146) nevertheless situate "environmental activism as a white, settler space". They argue that "solidarity is not a foundational element of the environmental movement" and that settler-environmental scholars have yet to substantially explore "how race and colonialism shape the context of environmental solidarity" (Ibid, 150). They juxtapose this to Indigenous scholarship that has critiqued environmentalism as a perpetuation of colonial relationships to land such as Tsimshian and Nuu-chah-nulth scholar Clifford Atleo (2010), who argues settler-environmental "logic of needing to protect the land from humans/oneself is nonsensical within Indigenous teachings and practice" (as cited in Curnow and Helferty, 2018, 148), and that of Nishnaabe scholar Madeline Whetung (2016: 11) that argues "colonial land relations have settled over top of Indigenous land-based relations, and not beside them". A settler-colonial analysis of Western environmentalism is significant because it reviews the "racialized colonial logics that use environmental discourses as ruse for the expansion of capital, the dispossession of Indigenous peoples, and the exploitation of slaves and workers" (Curnow and Helferty, 2018: 147). With this analysis, settler-environmentalism is not a contradiction of settler-extraction, but a related arm of settler-colonial violence (Isaki, 2013).

In this section, I explained the complications of settler environmental-action as being separate and incommensurable with that of Indigenous movements for land back, sovereignty, and decolonization. Despite the thesis' desire to portray the climate crisis was a

consequence of historic and continued settler-colonial violence, and therefore implicated

and inseparable from the ongoing settler-colonial crises, settler-colonial theory showcases the

deep contradictions involved with settler-solidarity and engagement from an environmental

lens. Curnow and Helferty (2018) discusses the paradoxes of continuing scholarship "amid

so many contradictions" that are inherent in solidarity work. While there are innumerable

and important critiques that such work is motivated by "moves to innocence" the decision to

continue is also an attempt to move towards antiracism and decolonization rather than

centering whiteness, its supremacy as well as staying silent. As recounted in The Red Deal, an

Indigenous critique of the recently-popularized The Green Deal program: "This is the

contradiction and duty of our generation: decolonization or extinction" (The Red Nation,

2020, 39).

2.2   The Exaltation of Immigrants as Settler-Subjects

Settler colonial theory provides an explanation of how the ongoing Canadian project

has been able to transcend its identity from French/British white-settler-colony, to its

present-day facade as an peacefully-homogenous modern nation-state "which respects

diversity and embraces peoples of various ethnicities" (Pillay, 2015: 70; Bauder, 2014;

Bannerji, 2000). In this section, I build heavily on the work and contributions of scholar

Sunera Thobani, and her theorizings of racial triangulation, and exaltation as a political

technique, within the Canadian settler context to describe the transcendence of (some)

immigrants as settler-subjects. Thobani's analyses of settler-colony-cum-liberal-democracy

— facilitated through the master narrative of Canadian multiculturalism cemented in the

1960s and 1970s— was essential for the framework of this study that examined how

immigrant-settlers narrate and perceive the existential colonial/climate crises that implicate and surround them, and that of Indigenous peoples of whose stolen lands immigrant-settlers occupy. Given that immigrants and immigration-policies have been inexplicably constitutive of Canadian nation formation and its narrative of national identity, any discussion or inquiry that attends to immigrants and their relations, perceptions and narratives should consider its entanglements to the ongoing Canadian settler colonial project.

In her book, Exalted Subjects, Sunera Thobani (2007) theorized that the aggressive adoption of multiculturalism policies in Canada, was crucial for the nation-state to strategically transcend its settler-colony origins towards an image of liberal democracy, as a response to the post-war era that saw many Western nations strife with the existential "crisis of whiteness". This crisis of whiteness paradigmatically-shifted the West's (and Canada's) ability to publicly defend the use of overtly racist immigration policies "in the era of civil rights and decolonization [… and] in the recognition that immigration from the third world was going to remain a constant feature of western economies for the foreseeable future" (Ibid, 146), in part, due to Canada's declining birth rate and increasing need for cheap labour. Up until the late 1960s, "the Canadian state can be accurately characterized as having been an overt racial dictatorship […] as it organized the governance of Aboriginal populations through the Indian Act and upheld racialized immigration and citizenship legislation to produce a homogeneous and dominant white majority" (Ibid, 25). Canadian national identity "established its sovereignty by constructing [itself as a] 'white settler' nation" (Bhuyan et al., 2015, 49; Jakubowski, 1997, 11-12) despite masses of indentured people of colour, especially Black people, in developing the literal infrastructure (ie. railroads) that were the very foundations to developing the modern nation-state (Bannerji, 2000; King, 2014; Chatterjee, 2018). It wasn't until the solid establishment of the dominant white majority, that in 1967,

immigration policies began to move away from its historic "race-based preference" to a more mechanized "universal" point system for recruiting "immigrants who possessed large amounts of human and/or monetary capital", including those previously marked as "non-preferred races" (Bauder, 2008, 133; Reitz, 2010). These changes proved to be effective in "contributing to dramatic shifts in the demographic profile" of the nation-state (Bhuyan et al., 2015, 49), which meant that "racial proximity became a feature of daily life" (Thobani, 2007, 152). It became hard to argue otherwise that immigrants were "absolutely indispensable to economic growth and to Canadian national prosperity" (Ibid; Bauder, 2011). These liberalizing changes were coupled with the structural-integration of multiculturalism policies, which "furthered popular perceptions of the nation having made a successful transition from a white settler colony to a multiracial, multi-ethnic, liberal-democratic-society (Ibid, 144). This mutation to settler colony-cum-liberal democracy was and remains essential for the continued survival and reproduction of the Canadian project Thobani (2007: 155) argued:

> Multiculturalism as a specific policy and a socio-political racial ideology has thus come to attest to the enduring superiority of whiteness, of its ability to transform and accommodate itself to changing times and new opportunities. It became a framework that assumed a certain rigidity in the cultures of racial others, of their enduring inferiority, immaturity, and the need for their reformulation under the tutelage of progressive — always modernizing — western superiority.

Further, as posited by Parasram and Mannathukkaren (2021: 1), multiculturalism has been crucial to the "modern notion of citizenship" which serves "as a state regime of inclusion

and exclusion, [operating] on political assumptions anchored in developmental and civilizational myths justifying colonial encounters of the last 200 years". It has historically tended to the racial appearance of institutions, rather than "structurally altering the operations of institutions" (Parasram, 2019, 196). Through the enforcement and deployment of multiculturalism policies and master-crafted narratives of tolerance, diversity and inclusion, the settler colony-cum-liberal democracy arguably has wielded more power than it ever did before to assert a national identity on the grounds that colonialism — however violent or sorrowful — was an event of the far past, and that consequently, the nation-state's hegemonic power has been permanent and irrevocably established.

Multiculturalism policies, and their legal applications, have obscured Indigenous peoples, their sovereignty and struggles, specifically, by conflating "Indigenous people as an ethnic 'minority' group" and their experiences "with those of other ethnic groups" (Bauder, 2014, 20; Turner, 2006). In doing so, Indigeniety is described in racial terms, and Indigenous Nations' struggles for sovereignty and land back are seen comparative to immigrant struggles of anti-racism and inclusion (Lawrence and Dua, 2005; Tuck and Yang, 2012; Dhamoon, 2015). In doing so, settler-colonialism is relegated to be understood as a solely "Anglo and Franco sin" (Stanley et al., 2014), which ahistorically renders immigrants innocent within the Canadian settler-colonial project, but also makes false equivalencies that reinforce settler-national borders, "liberal politics of sameness", and collapses the different "political trajectories and objectives of diasporic and Indigenous peoples" (Chatterjee, 2019, 653). Moreover, it is significant to understand that mainstream conceptualizations of Indigeneity as a race — as similar to that of diasporic people of colour — serve the interests and mission of the Canadian settler-colonial project that disinvests from any legitimate recognition of sovereign Indigenous Nations. Building on Coulthard's theorizations on the

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colonial politics of recognition, it could be said that equivocating Indigenous struggles as a struggle of anti-racism, is itself an attempt by the Canadian-state to supercede its sovereignty, liberally locate Indigenous oppression in the past, and essentially create conditions of competition amongst its subjects. Further, anti-racist scholars like Dhamoon and Chatterjee — who build on Tuck and Yang's (2012) analysis that such equivalencies are a "settler move to innocence" — explain that such moves "shift our attention away from white supremacist capitalism and heteropatriarchy" (Chatterjee, 2019, 654), and consequently, prop up the Canadian-state and its "colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2011). This matrix "refers to the organizing social logics of capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and racism that have been naturalized within a Western-centric understanding of modern philosophy" (quoted in Parasram, 2018, 105). Multiculturalism policies, in conjunction with "increased people of colour's access to formal citizenship and its entitlements and their inclusion into the regime of a liberal multiculturalist social formation […deepened] integration into national fantasies and white domination" (Thobani, 2007, 175). In return for sustaining, transforming, and propelling the nation-state into yet another era of settler-colonial rule, the immigrant-subject becomes an exalted-subject that bonds with the nation-state, thereby representing what Thobani theorized as the triangulation of racial hierarchy. She explained:

> This racial domination lies at the very heart of Canadian nationhood, at the core of its identity and its social, juridical, and moral order. It shapes the various modalities of sovereign power. In the absence of a politics that envisions the transcendence of this foundational relation, the anti-racist aspirations of immigrants remain limited at best, and complicitous at worst. The racial configurations of subject formation within settler societies are thus triangulated: the national remains at the centre of the state's (stated) commitment to enhance national well being; the immigrant receives a

tenuous and conditional inclusion; and the Aboriginal continues to be marked for

loss of sovereignty. (Ibid, 18)

Incorporating Thobani's analysis of triangulated racial hierarchy, and exaltation as a political

technique to bond the immigrant-subject with the nation-state, were essential theoretical

underpinnings of this research study interested in locating immigrants within settler-

Indigenous discourse. [excellent] As such, this thesis positions that the immigrant-settler is

different than those of the white-settler national — in that immigrants remain seen as

stranger and Other (Ahmed 2000; Said, 1978; Bannerji, 2000)— but nonetheless are "deeply

complex and ambiguous figure[s …] than has generally been suggested" (Thobani, 2007, 16).

The exalted status of immigrants through the lens of settler colonial theory demonstrates

the innovative, reproductive nature of the modern nation-state, as well as immigrant

participation and complicity in furthering the settler colonial project that is Canada.

2.2.1   Immigrant-Indigenous Relations

The categorization of immigrants as strangers and outsiders, whether tolerated
through commodified inclusion or marked for exclusion, consolidates racial state
governance.

— Harsha Walia, 2021

In this sub-section, I build on the problematic categorization of "subjects" within

the Canadian settler nation-state, but before doing so, I recount some of my family's

struggles in gaining permanent-settler status, as well as my own experiences engaged in the

struggle for migrant justice within Nova Scotia. Like many working-class first-generation

immigrants, an immense burden was shouldered by my parents to secure permanent

immigration status for our family. Prior to gaining our permanent residency status in 2011, our immigration status was a hot potato toss of dependencies on student and work visas. Despite living with precarious status until I was fifteen, it wasn't until I reached my early 20s that I began to unravel the intensive and what felt like an unusual journey shouldered by my parents. At least from my perspective, then and still now, it seemed like other Korean immigrant families did not experience the lengthy and harrowing processes that mine did. This unravelling occurred parallel to producing this thesis and parallel to my increasing engagement in migrant justice organizing in Nova Scotia. In 2019, I was part of re-launching No One is Illegal – Nova Scotia (NOII), a local iteration of an international grassroots migrant justice movement rooted in anti-colonial and anti-capitalist struggles. [7]

Prior to becoming involved in migrant justice organizing, the identities of 'migrant' and 'Indigenous' was largely blanketed in my mind as mutually-exclusive identities. Since then, I've come to realize my flawed logic was rooted primarily in my own privilege of not having to navigate the binary, and also in an absence of an imperial-analysis of settler colonialism. Harsha Walia (2021), long-time migrant justice organizer with NOII-Vancouver, argued in her book Border & Rule, that a strong analysis of imperialism is crucial for any engagement of settler colonialism. In effort to do this, I've dedicated this and the next sub-section on highlighting some nuances to the binary-categorizations of 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous'. I do this by building off Nandita Sharma's theorizations on how these categories became and how they inform racial state governance in Canada, as well as by

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[7] In brief, NOII is an movement that advocates for the rights of migrants around the world to live with dignity, respect and safety.

reviewing how these categories manifest in present-day Canadian immigration policy through the lens of "border imperialism" (Walia, 2011). I also chose to engage in this complexity, at least in part, due to the thesis' general use of 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous' as separate categories.

In the previous section, I articulated Thobani's theory of racial triangulation to introduce the categorization of 'immigrant' as being discursively separate than that of the white-Settler and Indigenous. Relevantly, in a broad assertion not unlike my early assumptions noted above, present-day mainstream societal assumptions within Canada — as evident by popular-media, public-discourse and historic literature — are such that 'immigrants', 'white-settlers', 'Indigenous' discursively exist as standalone categories. Due to limitations with the scope of this study, this thesis often glosses over the seemingly-standalone identities of 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous'. However, completely ignoring the nuances and problematic nature of these categories, would be — in the words of Chatterjee and Das Gupta (2020: 251-252) — "insincere" to any project that "talk[s] about migration or migrants". Their analysis went further:

> After all, we live in a world where thousands perish trying to cross borders (The Migrant Files, n.d.); a world where "borders never leave [some] alone" while others "traverse them practically at will and with very little thought" (Sharma, 2006, p. 4). This dynamic of ceremonious welcome and precarious incorporation is a key technology for maintaining racialized class relations within the borders of major western jurisdictions. As such, we consider migration both as state engineered formal pathways, typically (but not always) leading to less precarious immigrant subjects, and

the informal paths to sealed doors, fortress like nation states, "illegal"izing and

endangering migrant subjects, and further cheapening their labour. (Ibid).

The nuances that Chatterjee and Das Gupta discuss above, are conditions arising from

"border imperialism" that consolidates not only racial and classed state governance within

Canada, but the informal and formal state-engineered pathways of transnational

immigration policies that commodifies some for inclusion and others, "marked for

exclusion" (Walia 2021, 31; 2011). In her book, Home Rule: National Sovereignty & the

Separation of Natives & Migrants, Nandita Sharma (2020: 36-37) theorized that the "post-

colonial separation between Natives and Migrants [is] part of the legacy of imperialism […

that is] rooted in racialized geographies". She explained:

> With serious tumult erupting in British colonies [by the mid-nineteenth century], the
>
> empire attempted to dissipate the (potential) collective strength of unruly Natives.
>
> Instead of continuing to rely upon Native elites to secure rule over other Natives, the
>
> British imperial state employed enhanced technologies of biopower. Imperial
>
> attention was now paid to how each and every Native was defined and positioned
>
> within the colonies. Some Natives were fixed in place as Indigenous-Natives and
>
> became the only ones regarded in imperial law as being of the colony. Other Natives
>
> were redefined as Migrant-Natives and, as such, out of place. Their bifurcation was
>
> not only an extension of the classic imperial policy of dīvide et īmpera but was part
>
> of a new policy that Mahmood Mamdani (2012) calls "define and rule." Together the
>
> new bio political categories of Indigenous-Natives and Migrant-Natives further
>
> territorialized imperial identity, ushering in a new imperial governmentality in the
>
> process. By naturalizing the link between rights, territory, and identity, indirect-rule

colonialism became part of the genealogy of ideas about nationalized sovereignty.

(Ibid.)

Sharma's theorizations are worthy of analysis because she locates the categorization of 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous' as social constructions used by Empire for the purposes of settler colonial racial and classed state governance. And as such, an immigrant-Indigenous "parallax-gap" (Bauder, 2011; Žižek, 2006) and binary of immigrant-Indigenous can be traced back to a carefully-constructed tradition to the mid-nineteenth century.

Since the 1990s, Canadian immigration policy has seen rapid reliance of low-wage temporary migrant workers. For the first time in 2008, the number of non-permanent residents who entered Canada (399,523) exceeded the number of permanent immigrants of all types landed that same year (247,243) (Strauss, 2014). Strauss and McGrath (2017: 203) argued that these number reflect a "managed migration strategy designed to admit higher-skilled workers as potential citizens, and 'low-skill' workers as precarious non-citizens"; the latter is constituted as a "disposable workforce" (Walia, 2011). The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) was established in 1966 to streamline low-wage migrant workers from Jamaica for eight months of the growing year. In 2011, the SAWP brought approximately 26,000 migrant workers to Canada, and by a decade later in 2021, that number grew to 63,000 migrant workers, marking a staggering pattern of reliance. The SAWP is a significant "borderland" of scrutiny because it's existence to exclude migrant workers from pathways to permanent residency or citizenship. With bureaucratic federal oversight, often at the crossroads of insufficient provincial labour and healthcare jurisdiction, the SAWP is employer-driven, tying migrant workers' legal immigration and work status to their employer's control. The systemically precarious working and living conditions inherent to the SAWP have led "unfreedom and exploitation... because of restrictions on their ability to

change employers and the large debts they incur in order to migrate" (Strauss and McGrath, 2017, 203). Reporting abuses are inaccessible for a number of reasons, including lack of protections from reprisals and threats and fears arising of job loss, deportation and criminalization (Ibid, 204). Described by Walia (2011: 72), from the perspective of the state, migrant workers "represent the 'perfect workforce' in an era of evolving global capital-labour relations: commodified and exploitable; flexible and expendable".

It's worth raising the significance of the SAWP in discussions of the categorizations of 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous' because many of the temporary migrant workers from Jamaica, Guatemala and Mexico — the nation-states of which most SAWP workers hail — challenge the seeming binary with their intersectional identities. Evidently, many of the seasonal agricultural workers engaged in NOII's Migrant Worker Program in rural Nova Scotia are Indigenous peoples to lands outside Canadian borders — such as from Mexico and the Caribbean. They become part of a disposable workforce "driven […] by the same forces of neoliberal capitalism which foster their super-exploitation in the Canadian labour market" (Walia, 2011).

Within the burgeoning field of settler-colonial studies over the past two decades, growing attention, scrutiny, and resources has been spent on expanding scholarship and debate on immigrant-Indigenous relations and about the varying degrees and types of 'settler' (Byrd 2011; Lawrence and Dua 2005; Sharma and Wright 2008; Phung, 2011; Sehdev, 2011; Snelgrove, Corntassel & Dhamoon, 2014). Rita Dhamoon (2014) reflected:

> "[Settler-anxiety] seems especially heightened among people of colour since Bonita Lawrence and Ena Dua published their 2005 piece on decolonizing antiracism, which criticizes people of colour for failing to centre our implication in Indigenous dispossession. From their perspective, while there are differences among differently

positioned people of colour (refugees, migrant workers, economic immigrants etc.),

we are settlers. Sharma and Wright (2009) have responded to this by arguing that

people of colour are not settlers, but they make their argument by denying

Indigenous peoples relationship to their traditional lands. Then a third kind of

response has emerged from some people of colour to say that we are settlers but not

the same as white settlers. I find this third response more compelling, but I think the

debate about types and degrees of settler is a distraction from critiques of how

gendered dispossession, neo-liberal migration policies, and masculinist, capitalist

white supremacy are linked.

This thesis is located in the what Dhamoon refers to as the "third kind of response". The

next section expands on critiques of settler colonial theory and its preoccupation with

questions around itself/the settler — of its types, degrees, anxieties — rather than that of

Indigenous resurgence or "how gendered dispossession, neo-liberal migration policies, and

masculinist, capitalist white supremacy are linked".

2.3   Critiques of Settler Colonial Theory

Critiques on the focused attention and prominence of settler-colonial theory and

studies are being raised, notably, by Indigenous resurgence theorists who have pointed to the

problematic framing of settler-colonialism as inevitable and transhistorical. Moreover, their

critiques have pointed to the colonial tendency of settlers, and their research alike, to re-

focus attention, efforts and resources away from projects of decolonization, and towards

placatory attempts of awareness and colonial politics of recognition that reinforces the

ongoing settler-colonial crisis as inevitable (Coulthard, 2014). These critiques are relevant as they exposed areas of weaknesses to the theoretical framework applied throughout this research study. In the previous section, I introduced Sharma's theorizations on the socially-constructed categories of 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous', as well as the example of Canada's SAWP through the lens of border imperialism, as a basis for recognizing the collapsible nature of the terms 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous' despite this thesis glossing over those nuances. In this section, I continue to expand on the critiques and risks of glossing over those nuances, in light of decolonization efforts, Indigenous resurgence as well as Black critiques (namely, the works of Tiffany King) of the settler-Indigenous binary (King, 2014; King, 2015; Day, 2015; King, 2020).

Related to the objectives of this thesis, this investigation of 'who is settler', the degrees and types of 'settler', and/or articulations of settler-responsibilities, has not come anywhere close to attempting a practice of decolonization. This thesis also, does not necessarily focus on Indigenous articulations of immigrant(settler)-Indigenous relations, in what Harald Bauder (2011) refers to as an Indigenous-immigrant parallax-gap. By starting from an a priori assessment that immigrants are settlers, rather than a question of how settlers are produced and reproduced, I have incidentally framed the 'settler' as an event, rather than a structure worthy of escape (Snelgrove, Corntassel & Dhamoon, 2014, 22). In many ways, this thesis has obfuscated immigrant-settlers into a singular categorization and identity, despite highlighting the inaccuracies of doing so, has obscured the presence of Black people on Indigenous lands across Abiayala. This thesis glosses over an intersectional analysis of 'immigrant' and 'Indigenous', which itself is perhaps incompatible with the cannon of settler colonial studies so deeply focused on the categorization of the settler-subject, and that which posits immigrants as indisputable settler-subjects. A lack of nuanced

intersectional analysis of 'immigrants as settlers' not only obscures but denaturalizes the presence of Black relations and how anti-Blackness is "a constitutive element of settler colonialism's conceptual order" (King, 2014, 27; King, 2020). This is apparent in the thesis' theoretical lens of Thobani's racial triangulation, and categories of, 'white-settler' 'immigrant' 'Indigenous', which marks an apparent absence of Black people by their reduction to the categories of 'immigrant' or 'Indigenous'.

Tiffany King (2014) commended scholars who engage with "difficult work of understanding and naming how racialized people are situated within White settler colonial states". However, she raised critiques that the scholarship has tended to rely on the narratives and analyses of coerced racialized labour as "the site and mode of incorporating non-Black and non-Indigenous peoples into settler colonial relations". She explains how those analyses of coerced labour are insufficient in describing how Black people are situated within white settler colonial states and King, rightly, critiques theories of racial triangulation that attempt to force fit "Blackness into the Settler/Native antagonism". King (2014) said:

> [Labor] as a discourse may work for non-Black and non-Native people of color as a way of interpellating themselves within settler colonial relations, it does not explain Black presence, Black labor or Black use in White settler nation-states. Theories that attempt to triangulate Blackness into the Settler/Native antagonism in White settler states do so by positing Blackness as the labor force that helps make the settler landscape possible. It is true that Black labor literally tills, fences in and cultivates the settler's land. However, this singular analysis both obscures the issue of Black fungibility […] which represents a key analytic for thinking about Blackness and settler colonialism in White settler nation-states. Black fungible bodies are the conceptual and discursive fodder through which the Settler-Master can even begin to

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imagine or "think" spatial expansion (King, 2013). The space making practices of

settler colonialism require the production of Black flesh as a fungible form of

property, not just as a form of labor […] Reimagining Blackness and theorizing anti-

Black racism on unusual landscapes requires that we rethink the usefulness of

convenient and orthodox epistemic frames. We must venture beyond labor and its

limits in order to think about settler colonialism's anti-Black modalities.

I read King's argument as a critical and crucial expansion to the arguments presented by

Lawrence and Dua's 2005 paper "Decolonizing Anti-Racism," which in many ways, raised

the caliber of discourse within Canadian and settler colonial studies about people of colour

anti-racist movements as incommensurable with that of Indigenous decolonization. In their

paper, Lawrence and Dua (2005) speak to the historic complicity of non-Indigenous people

of color within projects of settler colonialism. They review the history of the Black

Loyalists, within colonial-Nova Scotia context, as being complicit in the dispossession of

Mi'kmaw lands, when the accepted the land from the British empire as a form of promised

compensation for fighting in their wars. Lawrence and Dua (2005: 134) have argued that the

history of Black Loyalists cannot be referenced without attending to the Mi'kmaq "being

exterminated to 'free up' the land for settlement [for that would] be complicit in erasing

genocide" — even if "Black peoples have not been quintessential 'settlers' in the white

supremacist usage of the word" (Amadahy and Lawrence, 2009, 107).

In similar logic to the arguments presented by Lawrence and Dua, this thesis has

defined immigrants as complicit, although different than that of the white-settler, but

nevertheless, still a settler. However, missing from this logic, as theorized by Tiffany King,

has been the obfuscation of Black fungibility. In obfuscating anti-Blackness as constitutive

of settler colonialism, binary formulations of Indigenous / settler within colonial and racial

formation are reinforced — even if they are applied through a triangulated lens that attempts to complicate the 'immigrant-settler'. Iyko Day (2015: 102) explained that these binary formulations reinforces "approaches [that] are at times deeply skeptical of relational or comparative analyses of race and reject any coalition premise that unifies people of colour generally". While the scope of this thesis was unable to resolve this glaring omission, I have at least attempted to feature some critiques that shed light on the thesis' gaps. For "[what] good is it to analyze settler-colonialism if that analysis does not shed light on sites of contradiction and weakness, the conditions for its reproduction, or the spaces and practices of resistance to it?" (Snelgrove, Dhamoon and Corntassle, 2014, 27).

Of the many crucial points raised by Rita Dhamoon (2014) in her conversations alongside Snelgrove and Corntassel, she referred to the generating of settler-anxieties amongst people of colour prompting liberal declarations of solidarity. In many ways, I consider this thesis project as a product of this declaration by centralizing immigrants as settlers. These declarations, as explained by Andrea Smith (2014: 215), can come off as "confessions of privilege" that rarely lead an actual dismantling of systems of domination. Dhamoon (2014: 11) went on to say: "It is not Indigenous peoples who are anxious whether people of colour are defined as settlers". Here, I reflect on the embodiments of the Jamaican migrant farmworkers that NOII-NS aims to work in solidarity with, and the problematic nature of containing their embodiments through categorizations that cannot be neatly fitted: migrant, settler, Indigenous, Black. In line with the critiques levied by Indigenous resurgence theorists, there is something embarrassingly egotistical, if not colonial, about theorizing terminology of how vulnerable people are categorized, while the very conditions that make them vulnerable get to escape the degree of scrutiny applied to the former. Despite this thesis excluding migrant workers and those with precarious status –

for these reasons and more shared in Chapter Three – I share this reflection as an material critique of the thesis that centred on nuances of the immigrant-settler-subject. Some of the ways that I tried to address these critiques in the thesis has been to focus, at least, partially on potential action, arising from the research question related to the barriers that immigrants face engaging in grassroots political action, as well as in the ontological starting point of immigrants as settlers – as an attempt to move past the debates on whether they are or aren't. While contradictory in nature, I do not consider these theoretical weakness and gaps to mean that the research questions are not relevant or not worthwhile. Rather, one of the main theoretical contributions of this thesis has been to expand the discourse from "a one-dimensional to a relational approach to settler colonial analyses that is connected to the issues of other Others" (Snelgrove, Dhamoon and Corntassel, 2014, 27).

CHAPTER THREE: Methods

Narrative researchers have argued that storytelling methods do not simply centre the story being told, but in many ways, centres the storyteller and positions them to be knowledge-producers (Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Polkinghorne, 1995). In attempt to remedy the absence of immigrant perspectives related to Canadian settler-colonialism and modern climate change, this study utilized qualitative narrative methods to foster storytelling and to centre participants voices and lived experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

The research sample was composed of fifteen participants. This study recruited ten racialized immigrants and five social movement organizers, who all resided in Nova Scotia at the time of data-collection. Semi-structured interviews took place during May 2020 - October 2020. The decision to limit the study to Nova Scotia was a matter of scope and to explore the theme of place-based solidarities as well as "accountabilities to place" that were arising from literature surrounding Indigenous-solidarities (Fine, Tuck and Zeller-Berkman, 2008, 172; Simpson and Coulthard, 2016; Bawaka Country et al., 2016; Zurba et al., 2019). As of 2021 in Nova Scotia, immigrants accounted for approximately less than 10% of the population, with the top five countries of origin being India, China, Philippines, South Korea and Nigeria (Nova Scotia Labour, Skills and Immigration, 2022). Participant interviews ranged 40 minutes to one hour in duration, with a prior promise during the recruitment phase that interviews would not surpass an hour. Participants were provided with $20 honorarium as a gesture of gratitude for their time and labour.

In keeping with the expectations of ethical research, each participant was anonymized with a pseudonym, but was also given the opportunity to be represented with their own name should they choose it. Consent was important as the act of anonymizing the intellectual contributions of participants has historically played a part in the obfuscation of

knowledge production by marginalized communities. One of the participants opted to proceed in their own name, and the remainder chose to have pseudonyms. The cultural appropriateness of pseudonyms were carefully considered, and ultimately, participants were given the choice to choose their pseudonym or suggest another. This study considered immigrant participation in research as largely and traditionally marginalized. In an attempt to create a theoretical and methodological space for immigrant participants to share rarely-heard and told stories, the use of pseudonyms was also a way to protect participants. The pseudonym protection also applied for the Organizer-participants too. Due to tight-knit activist networks in Nova Scotia, I emphasized that using pseudonyms would, at least, minimize outright identification.

At the time of developing the study's parameters – and eventually within the ethics review – I made a strong moral assumption and decision to minimize participant identifiers wherever possible, and instead rigorously apply participant anonymity. I relied heavily on a black-and-white inclusion and exclusion criteria for both sample populations, and as a result, failed to collect significant descriptors and a comprehensive analysis of participant intersectionality. Later in this chapter, I discuss the consequences of this decision and how the absence of these descriptors spotlighted some gaps within my methodologies and data analysis.

3.1   Immigrant Participants

This sample for this study population was narrowed to first-generation immigrants who identified as either permanent residents or naturalized citizens. Although technically the identity of "Canadian" typically applies to citizens of Canada, this study chose not to

differentiate between permanent residents and naturalized citizens; instead, both are considered in this thesis to be immigrant-settlers. The reason for this is because immigrant inclusion in this study were limited to those who were successful applicants of the two largest permanent-residency streams: economic/business-class or family-class. In 2017, the cohort from these two class-streams made up 84% of the total number of permanent residents admitted into Canada (2018 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration). These streams can be better understood as formalized state pathways to becoming an immigrant-settler in Canada. Throughout this thesis, I utilized the term "racialized first-generation immigrants", however in the literature, I noted the interchangeable terms such as "visible minority" and/or "foreign-born" (Nakhaie, 2008; O'Neill, Gidengil, and Young, 2012)

Other inclusion criteria included identifying as a person of colour, being a proficient English speaker and being a resident of Nova Scotia at the time of the study. It is also worth noting that although the study was limited to first-generation immigrants, there were two participants that immigrated as young children. Their experiences diverged in some ways from other first-generations who arrived as adults, and perhaps would most likely mimic the experiences of second generation immigrants. Regardless, I still viewed their experiences of immigration, even as a child, relevant to the diverse scope of first-generation experiences.

Geographic representation of the participants' origin countries included: Sri Lanka, Iran, Libya, China, Dominican Republic, India, Hong Kong, and Egypt. In retelling their immigration journeys, some participants shared the context of temporarily residing in multiple countries prior to their permanent residency in Canada. Four of the participants were newcomers of less than five years residency, while the majority ranged between 5-10 years of residency. There were three immigrants that surpassed 15 years of residency.

Although participant ages were not collected, as is revealed in the findings within Chapter Four, there were significant generational dynamics. Deduced from my interactions and related questions about when they immigrated to Canada, I estimated that the ages approximately ranged 20 to 60 years old. In both Chapters Four and Five, I referred to the terms younger immigrants and older immigrants, which are defined in this study, respectively, as those under 35 years old and those over 35 years old. The vast majority of participants in both study populations utilized she/her pronouns, with the exception of three participants. Two used he/him pronouns, and one participant used they/them pronouns; participants' pronouns are respected throughout this study.

Prior to data collection, it was anticipated that most immigrant-participants would not have prior background into the nuances of the intertwined nature of Canadian settler colonialism and climate crisis. This was an assumption I made through my own observations within immigrant and activist communities of which I am part of. Evidently, many participants shared that they had never heard the words 'settler-colonialism' or 'unceded' (as was referenced in the participant consent forms) and asked me to explain or define them. Although it was challenging to explain these rather complex concepts in an accessible simple manner, participants expressed quick intuition and recognition for these abstract concepts. Explaining these terms was a skill and practice that I had to hone throughout recruitment and data-collection. These skills are prudent for activist-scholars, researchers and social movement organizers alike, and I had noticed that my familiarity and prior activist and immigrant experiences with transmitting these concepts had acutely prepared me for discussions with participants. Some immigrants expressed that the interview was their first time having a discussion or expressing their opinion on topics related to this thesis; and some even apologized for not being informed enough about the topics despite prior-

information not being necessary. Rather, every participants shared significant, rich and interesting stories, which challenges the notion that such topics are too confusing, mature or inappropriate for immigrants to be part of.

While this thesis theoretically positioned the intertwined nature of these crises as an ontological starting point for analysis, I was explicitly vague with this framing when recruiting and interviewing immigrant-participants. The reason for this was to minimize my own activist bias and to organically allow for an emergence of conflicting, contradictory, multiplicities and diversities in the ways immigrants perceived and related to climate crisis and Canadian settler-colonialism. It is recognized that immigrant participants may have found the framing of the study quite confusing and disparate. Nonetheless, in both recruitment and in interviewing, the study was framed as exploring immigrant relations and perceptions to the climate crisis, their life on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq, and in taking political action. The interview guide for immigrant participants is referenced in Appendix B.

3.1.1   Exclusion Criteria

Most Canadians do not understand that Canada's immigration system operates within an oppressive multiple-tier system. The widely-understood "upper" tier consists of immigrants with granted permanent residency (settler) status. The multiple lower tiers include immigrants with precarious or undocumented status. For these immigrants, there exists little to no legal pathways to secure permanent residency in Canada, forcing many into "underground" conditions. Despite being an integral and essential community members within society, second-tier immigrants do not have equal rights as permanent residents,

meaning they cannot access crucial services like healthcare (Migrant Rights Network, n.d.). The Canadian-state does not recognize immigrants with precarious or undocumented status as legal citizens or long-term residents, providing them with either little (ie. extremely rigorous, time-consuming, expensive) to no formalized and legal pathways to becoming "Canadian". This includes those who are of the following statuses: refugees, asylum seekers and refugee claimants; temporary foreign migrant workers such as those on the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP); migrant students; and those undocumented. Consequently, migrants with precarious or undocumented status were excluded from this study. While it's certain that these migrants have unique perceptions, relations, and perhaps responsibilities, to climate crisis and Canadian settler-colonialism, the study was limited in analyzing those complexities and nuances. This gap should be considered in reading the thesis' findings. Further, I want to highlight that the identities of migrant and Indigenous are not exclusive and that many Indigenous peoples across the world are, and have been displaced from their territories, becoming migrant. Within Chapter Two, I tried to problematize the complexity surrounding the categorizations of "state-subjects".

Immigrants who did not identify as a person of colour were excluded from this study. Many scholars have articulated and theorized that the ideological designation of the 'Immigrant-subject' within the Canadian context is to be recognized as "perpetual stranger" and Other, despite exalted status (Thobani, 2007; Bannerji, 2000, Dua, 2003). Perceptions of racialization in Canada has shifted over time, and in early waves of Canadian immigration, Eastern European immigrants were considered to be racialized, regarded as Other and ostracized. The decision to exclude white immigrants from the scope of the study was made, not with the intention to dismiss or collapse white immigrant experiences as monolithic, but to focus on notions of racialization in present-day Canada. It was also an attempt to move

away from the dominancy of whiteness, and the mainstream discourse of white settler-Indigenous relations, solidarities (Lawrence and Dua, 2005; Phung, 2011; Kaur, 2011; Davis et al., 2016; McGuire and Denis, 2019) as well as white-settler-environmentalism (Curnow and Helferty, 2018; Helferty, 2020; Erickson, 2020). Furthermore, within "Chapter One: Introduction", I shared observations about seeing a disproportionate lack of first-generation immigrants within the grassroots political spaces and social movements that I had frequently navigated. This observation was affirmed in a 2012 study which found that immigrant-minority women (in other words, racialized immigrant women) were the least likely to participate in both unconventional and conventional political activity as compared to counterparts: native-born-majority (European-Canadians), native-born-minority (racialized Canadians) and immigrant-majority (European immigrants) (O'Neill, Gidengil and Young, 2012). Interestingly, white European immigrants were the second leading group, after that of European-Canadians, to participate in conventional political activity (ie, electoral-voting, membership in political party or interest group, etc), and participated in unconventional political activity (ie. signing a petition, participating in a demonstration, boycotting, etc) at nearly the same levels as the Canadian-born groups. The study suggests that the barriers or challenges that affect racialized immigrants engagement in unconventional (grassroots) political activity are unique than that of white immigrants, reaffirming the need for racialized analysis.

Immigrants who did not speak proficient English were excluded from this study due to reasons of time and financial constraints such as the cost of interpretation and translation services. It is assumed that this exclusion criteria was a major barrier and greatly reduced the ability of many immigrants to participate in this study, affecting the sample, and reflecting a prevalent gap in this study.

3.2   Organizer Participants

The inclusion criteria of Organizers consisted of those that identified as a community/social movement organizer who has been actively involved in organizing towards Indigenous-solidarity and/or climate justice. All five organizers shared that they have engaged in both climate justice and Indigenous-solidarity organizing, and told analyses and comments that considered climate justice and Indigenous-solidarity organizing to be intertwined and related. Throughout settler-environmental literature, it was noted that settler-environmental activists often conflated their environmental work as "frontline solidarity" (Helferty, 2020, 212). Consequently, many organizers focused their interviews on their Indigenous-solidarity organizing, rather than their climate organizing, indicating a possible prioritization between, and/or conflation, of the two.

While all organizers resided in Nova Scotia, and thus, their active solidarity-organizing was largely Mi'kmaw-solidarity, a broader term of Indigenous-solidarity was utilized in order to expand discussion that was inclusive of organizers' experiences of Indigenous-solidarity elsewhere. Of the five organizers interviewed, two identified as Indigenous to other regions of the world. Three identified themselves as settlers, specifically, two of them were white-settlers. Despite this thesis attempting to distance away from whiteness, the contributions and experiences of white-settlers engaged in Indigenous-solidarity were relevant across race. This was affirmed in an interview comment by Erika, a racialized settler-organizer, who described her experiences navigating Indigenous-solidarity as comparable to that of her white-settler peers engaged in similar work given a mutual "colonial-mindset".

One of the reasons that this thesis chose to interview social movement organizers was to expand upon and centre notions of movement and "grassroots politics" (Manuel, 2017), rather than that of traditional forms of political-engagement. Specifically with regards to immigrant populations, their engagement in traditional political activity (ie. electoral-voting, political-candidacy, membership in associations) has been widely studied (Gidengil and Stolle, 2009; O'Neill, Gidengil and Young, 2012; Boyd, 2012; Boyd and Couture-Carron, 2015; Pavan, 2019; Roest, 2021). In doing so, current literature demonstrates a centering and focus of traditional political engagement rather than that of "unconventional" (grassroots) political activities, obscuring the latter.

3.3   Purposive Sampling & Recruitment

Due to the inclusion and exclusion criteria used across both study populations, purposive sampling was chosen to intentionally seek and invite participants that met the criteria, in addition to allowing me to utilize my personal networks and relationships in recruitment. Recruitment and interviews occurred during May – October 2020, during the first COVID-19 shutdown, and as such I re-submitted amendments to Research Ethics Board that related to all in-person activities and recruitment. To recruit immigrant participants, I created a digital recruitment poster describing the study and eligibility, which was posted to my social media and disseminated further by my networks. I also conducted email outreach to a local settlement agency and they shared my recruitment poster on their mass email-bulletins.

The five organizers were recruited all by private and personal outreach. I knew all the organizers personally, witnessed their Indigenous-solidarity work in addition to having

organized alongside each of them. I was trusted by them, and I was also able to recognize any activist language or terms they said in the interviews. All five organizers are or were affiliated with an organized group focused on Indigenous-solidarity organizing, in addition to each holding meaningful relationships of solidarity with the Mi'kmaw water protectors. All were engaged in solidarity with the successful Mi'kmaq-led resistance against Alton Gas' proposed industrial project of natural gas storage. While I planned to utilize snowball sampling to compliment the purposive sampling method, recruitment for my small sample was relatively quick, and consequently, snowball sampling was not necessary. However, at the end of each interview with organizers, I asked if they could think of anyone interested in speaking on these topics. On more than one occasion, those suggested were already a participant in the study. If anything, I believe this reflected well on the application of purposive sampling. The interview guide for organizer participants can be referenced in Appendix C.

3.4   Data Collection

In alignment with narrative methodological approaches, semi-structured interviews were chosen in order for participants to "speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings" (Berg, 2007, 96 as cited in Alshenqeeti, 2014, 39) while providing some flexibility to the overall flow of the interview. An interview guide for each of the two study populations was used to "keep the interview within the parameters trace out by the aim of the study" (Berg, 2007, 39), however, I often took advantage of the flexibility, especially to ask probing questions that would expand and deepen interesting responses (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, 88). I noticed that as my confidence grew in data-collection, so did

my reflexivity as a researcher. In Chapter Four, I discussed some of the amendments made to the interview guide to reflect arising patterns in themes or more effective ways of framing.

Prior to the COVID-19 shutdown, I had planned to interview participants in-person. All interviews were transitioned to phone interviews, however, once gathering restrictions slowly loosened, a couple of participants requested to conduct their interview in-person, which we did in a private space of their choosing. All participants consented to an audio-recording of their interview, and all participants were given a consent form that detailed the study and the types of questions that would be asked. Within the consent form, participants were given a choice to receive a copy of their manually-transcribed transcript, and make any desired edits. Participants were also given a choice to receive a summary of the initial research findings.

3.5   Data Analysis

All fifteen interviews were manually transcribed which resulted in becoming familiar with the data in ways that may not have been possible without (Basit, 2003). Interviews were transcribed, verbatim, with the exception of removing some fillers (such as: 'ah' and 'um') in certain quotations reflected in Chapter Four. These were removed only in the context where I felt that the fillers would cause confusion to the reader. In most cases, the fillers, as spoken, were transcribed and included with the use of ellipses. Each transcript was read at least three times in full, before engaging in manual-coding and thematic analysis. I conducted manual-coding at least three time for each interview, which was, again, significant for becoming intimate and familiar with the data. More importantly, it made me "attend first to what is placed immediately before [me] — stories— before transforming them into

descriptions and theories of the lives they present" (Sandelowski, 1991, 162). I assigned broad deductive codes that arose from the literature and theoretical framework of settler colonialism by assigning respective descriptions to each prevalent code, and I noted any repetition or connections amongst common codes. After three rounds of this, the broad codes were inductively broken down to generate potential categories, and then further reduced to its most relevant themes in relation to the research question and objectives. It was during this process of coding and categorizing that I had to carefully ensure "preserving as best as possible the individual's story" without imposing my own interpretations (McAlpine, 2016, 43).

Evans (2017: 5) discussed this duality within narrative methodology as both "retaining the elements of narrative: connections between events, the passage of time, and individual intentions" while "[moving away] from merely describing […] data (and describing what people are saying) to examining how this might reflect underlying assumptions, ideas, or meanings which exist for individuals or in wider society". Consequently, in "Chapters Four: Discussion of Findings", I chose to keep in-tact long quotations, as a way to preserve the individuals' voices and to amplify their direct experiences and storytelling (Polkinghorne, 1995, 19; Saldaña, 2009, 11). Using this approach "[insisted] that research is not 'news from nowhere' but is itself a grounded, located, and partial set of activities and outcomes" (Woodiwiss, Smith, Lockwood, 2017, xii).

Given the generally small sample size of both study populations, the research findings should be read with the nuance that both immigrant and organizer perceptions or opinions are in no way monolithic nor assumed to be accurately representative of the various collective communities and positionalities that participants are identified or aligned with. Recognizing that the sample scope of "racialized immigrants" is immensely vast, the thesis

intended to present its analysis and findings as a snapshot or partial cross-section rather than something absolute. Despite this desired refusal to present sample populations as a monolith, it became clear throughout data analysis that the use of methodological thematic analysis often led to a grouping of opinions and perceptions under broad codes which inadvertently collapsed nuance and complexity within participant narratives. Through this collapse, it also became clear that the study had failed to collect and analyze significant participant identifiers, descriptions and intersectionalities. Early in the study process, I made the decision to rigorously protect participant anonymity, and consequently, many identifiers were either not collected or removed in data analysis. Descriptors, like participant's occupancy, ethnic history, and class-standing, would have likely made the thesis findings more robust and nuanced. As such, the findings should be read with these gaps considered.

3.6   Knowledge Mobilization

Significant thought was given to the mechanisms of knowledge mobilizations and how the research findings could be made accessible to both immigrant and movement communities. This thesis began with the assumption that its findings would foremost serve and be useful to immigrants and their communities. However, mid-way through data-analysis, it became clear that social movement organizers (and activist-communities alike) were a focal audience that had the potential to benefit from the research findings more than initially expected. An example of a worthwhile knowledge mobilization pursuit for this thesis would be a workshop and/or teach-in that centres generative discussions related to the research findings in a culturally appropriate venue (ie. religious, settlement sites and/or anarchist events).

3.7   Reflexivity within Settler-led Research

Data collection for this study began in March 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, which inevitably resulted in mandatory changes to the study's design and methods. Ultimately, this included having to pivot to digital and remote communications with the research participants, rather than a physical approach as was planned.

COVID-19 was not the only crisis to upend this research study. A month later in April 2020, a misogynist mass shooter went on a killing spree, murdering 22 people in Nova Scotia, marking it one of the deadliest mass-events in Canada. A month after that, police officers in neighboring New Brunswick murdered two Indigenous peoples (Rodney Levi and Chantelle Moore) struggling with mental health crises during a time when another compounding crisis was unfolding and international attention was focused on police-brutality and the extrajudicial murder of George Floyd. As the turbulent 2020 summer came to a close, a settler-colonial crisis amassed in Saulnierville, Nova Scotia, as mobs of white-settler fishers attacked Mi'kmaw fishers in attempts to violate Mi'kmaq treaty rights to fish and provide care for their families and communities.[8]

Up until the data collection phase of the thesis timeline, my study included a third sample group: Mi'kmaw water protectors and Indigenous land defenders. I had approached and discussed the merit of my research topic with several Mi'kmaw water protectors and Indigenous organizers throughout the development stages of the study. Their perspectives

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[8] See Parasram (2022) and Krause (2013) on the unfolding of contemporary disputes of Mi'kmaq-sovereignty led by settler-fishers.

on whether they thought this research would be useful were crucial, especially given that the research dealt with concepts of settler-colonialism, Indigenous-solidarity and Indigenous-settler relations. I received approval from Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch to conduct these interviews, and in fact, four interviews were completed. By the fall of 2020 I made the decision to amend the study and exclude Indigenous participants and their data for the reasons which I describe below.

It is important for me to admit that my own settler-anxieties in engaging Indigenous peoples in research were pervasive throughout the ethics approval process, with recruitment, during the data collection of the four completed interviews, and in anticipating the eventual data analysis phase of the study. I was unable to shake a gnawing feeling that it was wrong for me (as an outsider, and especially as a student) to learn how to conduct research with Indigenous defenders on the frontlines, with significant consideration given to the social climate between March 2020 – October 2020. I was also self-critical of this study's limited timeline, resources, its methodological approach of narrative inquiry, and theoretical framework of settler-colonial theory, which felt culturally-inappropriate to do alongside Indigenous defenders – especially in comparison to Indigenous or decolonizing methodologies (Smith, 1999; Minogiizhigokwe, 2011; Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008; Fortier, 2017; McGregor, Restoule and Johnston, 2018; Gone, 2019) or community-based participatory methods that focus on boundary work (Bawaka Country et al., 2016; Zurba et al., 2019; Zurba, 2022) . Especially within the cannons of Canadian, environmental and anthropological studies, there are still much-needed discussions to be had about the legacies of settler-academics who have profited from, gained serious authority on, and have built their careers on theorizing Indigenous struggles and politics (Datta, 2017; Binn et al., 2021; Ober, Oliver and Dovchin, 2022). At best, such legacies are often embedded in the

increasing desire from settlers to be recognized as allies, but at their worst, this legacy (and even ongoing) has been tied to abusing Indigenous consent, misuse of their data and theft of cultural resources (Kovach, 2009; Tuck, 2009; Mosby, 2013; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2018; Wong et al., 2020). Even well-intentioned settler-researchers have an obligation to navigate and redress those legacies, and in the context of this study, it involved interrogating my own positionality and intentions as a settler-researcher, considering appropriate time and place, as well as recognizing the sometimes "impossible[-]to[-]reconcile" contradictions associated with being "a non-Indigenous researcher connected to colonizing institutions like the university" (Fortier, 2017, 22). Fortier (2017: 29) explained how a practice of decolonizing research methodologies may sometimes involve "seriously considering terminating research prior to completion if it risks hampering" social movements and the generative politics that the scholarship aims to work with and alongside. Eventually, in further consultation with a Mi'kmaw elder, veteran organizers of whom I considered mentors, and my thesis supervisors, I amended my research design to exclude Indigenous participants and their interviews.

In making this decision, I had to question whether I was replicating and reproducing the very colonial dynamics – an erasure of Indigenous peoples – that this study aimed to be critical of. Confronting settler-discomfort is a key theme within settler-responsibility (Mcguire-Adams, 2021). Yet still, I felt strongly that the research was "not immune to the changing political landscape in which it was written" (Fortier, 2017, 32) and thus, required reflexivity in a way that prioritized community-safety and respect (Estey, Smylie and Macaulay, 2013). While discussions about Indigenous-solidarity should not obscure Indigenous peoples within their own struggles and liberation, there are numerous critiques about "how settlers seem to be continuously waiting for instruction from Indigenous

peoples on how to act" (Snelgrove, Dhamoon and Corntassel, 2014, 21). This phenomenon of inaction, until and only until, Indigenous peoples provide instruction and direction to settlers, has been a common critique that I have heard numerous times from Indigenous peoples on the frontlines.

The reflexive changes that were made in this study was also a reprioritization of the unique responsibilities associated with own positionality as an immigrant-settler student-researcher. Rather than conducting research amongst Indigenous communities that I was outside of, or in asking for their direction (which was how the study was originally framed), I refocused this study on uncovering themes that focused on the immigrant and activist communities I am directly accountable to. Instead of disproportionate research on, or perhaps even with, Indigenous peoples, settler-researchers should consider conducting research that situates, problematizes, and uncovers the biases within their own identities and communities rather than research "over there" that reifies westernized saviourism.

In October 2020, soon-after making the decision to amend my research, I made multiple trips to the Saulnierville wharf to support the Mi'kmaq asserting their sovereignty and treaty fishing rights (Patil, 2020). The Mi'kmaq had set up blockades and a camp on the wharf to defend attacks and intimidations by settler-fishers who refused to respect legal treaty and fishing rights of the Mi'kmaq. For a week, I was welcomed to support, stay and work at the camp. The solidarity-roles that I was assigned involved cooking food, cleaning dishes, rearranging the communal kitchen, as well as making several dozen round-trips to Tim Hortons. One evening, I was on night-watch patrol with one of the camp-leaders, a Mi'kmaw fisherwoman. As I got ready for bed, she said to me: "As long as you keep us fed, we'll keep protecting you while you sleep." It was a simple statement, but a memorable one. I drifted off to sleep that night in a damp car trunk with the backseats folded down, thinking

about the significance of Mi'kmaw reciprocity. Even in moments of immense threats to their

sovereignty, I paid witness to Indigenous ontological practices of radical care, protection and

reciprocity embodied throughout the frontlines. Here, I am reminded of the salient words of

Mi'kmaq lawyer and scholar, Pamela Palmater (2015: 80), who explains that it is Indigenous

peoples who are positioned to help settlers:

> Just as in the early days of contact when the settlers needed our help to survive the
>
> harsh winter months and seek out a new life here, Canadians once again need our
>
> help. They need our help to stop Harper's destructive environmental agenda. First
>
> Nations represent Canadians' last best hope at stopping Harper from the unfettered
>
> mass destruction of our shared land, waters, plants, and animals in the name of
>
> resource development for profit by multinational corporations.

It is acknowledged that the result of sharing one-off stories of solidarity can be "a move to

innocence" to demonstrate settler-exceptionalism. Despite this, I relayed this story to

express how my own material experiences grappling with Indigenous-solidarity was a

significant aspect of the thesis beyond a sole academic pursuit.

CHAPTER FOUR: Discussion of Findings

This chapter arranges the research findings into four major themes with subsequent sub-themes, respectively organized by headings and sub-headings. Relevant discussion has been paired alongside the research findings, with further discussions occurring in Chapter 5: Conclusion.

4.1   Immigrant Relations to the Climate Crisis & Canadian Settler-colonialism

The following sub-headings outline three major findings, derived from interviews with immigrants, regarding how they perceive and relate to climate crisis and Canadian settler-colonialism. The first finding reveals the common pathways in which immigrants learn and are informed about Canadian settler-colonialism. The second finding refers to how immigrants perceive the ongoing climate crisis, and the third finding is related to how immigrants perceive Indigenous and Canadian-state relations.

4.1.1   Pathways for Learning about Canadian Settler-colonialism

Common pathways for immigrants to learn about Canadian history and settler-colonialism involved a heavy reliance on family-members, state-sponsored events and institutions, as well as self-guided learning. Amongst young immigrants, there was a consistent pattern of assuming responsibility within the family-structure to educate and inform their family members (predominantly, their parents or older generations) about these

topics. Luis was a young child when he and his family immigrated from the Dominican Republic. Luis described responsibility he takes on to inform his parents "as much as [he] can" about Canadian settler-colonialism. He explained his strategy of trying to resonate with his parents on these topics by comparing it to the "kind of colonialism from the [Dominican Republic] experience":

> **Luis (Immigrant from Dominican Republic):** "I put a lot of time into learning about it. My parents haven't as much. But what I have done is that I have talked to my parents a lot about this […] —We had to talk about Canada Day. And how like, we shouldn't celebrate Canada Day. […] All of Canadian identity is like grounded in the same kind of colonialism from the DR experience. And I tie it to the fact that Indigenous people in the Dominican Republic were wiped out within the year of Christopher Columbus' landing. I talk to my parents about like… The [Indigenous] people here, who have survived this long had to endure the kinds of things that like... –Well that you erase from your history books, […] I try to be as mindful as much as possible, and inform my parents as much as I can"

This relational pathway to learning within immigrant-families (usually across generations) ranged from the micro-level — such as Luis' conversations with his parents that were politically-motivated with the intent to educate — to the macro-level — such as a systemic lack of structural opportunities for immigrants (specifically older immigrants) to learn about Canadian history and settler-colonialism. Mei, who arrived from China almost two decades ago, offers a macro-example of having limited experiences to learn about Canadian history. She explained that the only forum where she was able to learn about these topics was when she assisted her son and niece with their public school-assignments:

> **Mei (Immigrant from China): "**I mainly learn history from... —When my son had all those homework. He would bring it home and we'd do it together. He had such a struggle when he was in Grade Three. Nine-years-old. Had to do a presentation. First presentation in his lifetime. Oh my gosh, such a struggle… For the Nova Scotia history. He had to make up a comic talking about Nova Scotia. We finished that project. It was a one-month project. It was such a huge assignment, but he made it. During that period, we learned a lot about Nova Scotia history, right. We borrowed lots of books from library. And then we read together, right. Because he was only 9 years old… That's how I learned my Canadian history. Now, my niece is living with me. And she is 13 years old. So I'm studying… Learning more about Canadian

history with her. I learn all my Canadian history with those kids when they study their social science... That's all my experiences… [laughs]."

Not only did Mei describe a familial pathway, but she also highlighted another common pathway of learning which involves state-sponsored events and institutions, such as public schools. Similarly, Michelle, an immigrant from Hong Kong, recalled one of her first memories learning about Canadian settler-colonialism in high school. She described being assigned a problematic school essay on Inuit re-location without having any knowledge about Canadian colonization:

> **Michelle (Immigrant from Hong Kong):** "The only time I learned about [Canada's history] was a self-directed essay in high school. Basically, what they did was they gave you all these documents about the Inuit re-location and then you could just come up with a thesis and it really didn't matter what you argued as long as you argued it well... So that went really badly. And I didn't know [it was bad] until I graduated and when I came [to Nova Scotia] actually… [where I learned more through my peers]"

Beyond public-schools, other examples of state-sponsored pathways of learning affecting immigrants included Canada Day events as well as English-learning classes (commonly offered through state-affiliated settlement organizations). Zainab, an immigrant from Libya, recounted a memory where she learned about Indigenous peoples in Canada for the first time. Zainab also explained learning about Canadian history through her citizenship exam, which is yet another example of a state-sponsored pathway of learning:

> **Zainab (Immigrant from Libya):** "[Prior to immigrating] I don't have an idea [about Indigenous peoples] actually… But there was an event in Halifax Commons. And uh, I think it was Canada Day. A long time ago. One lady… When I saw the [Indigenous] clothes and the culture and I ask about these people. And one lady said to me: 'Oh. This is the original people of Canada. And this is their land.' She gave me a little idea. During my study [for the citizenship exam, there was…] The book of history of Canada… I study more about these people."

As has been revealed in the quotes so far, immigrant participants recounted feeling like they lacked or had zero awareness, education and knowledge about Canadian history and settler colonialism prior to immigrating to Canada. Upon arriving, immigrants still recounted struggles and barriers to seeking accurate information about these topics, and/or where they could learn more. Many participants expressed desire to continue learning more about Canadian settler-colonialism, politics and history, as well as learning more about Indigenous peoples and their struggles. Seeing very few avenues for learning, some immigrants recounted barriers to self-education and in seeking "legitimate information". Nadia, an immigrant from Egypt, described her realization about the invisibility of Indigenous peoples, and the challenges she faced seeking more information about Indigenous struggles. Significantly, Nadia described learning from her workplace's reconciliation reading club. It should be noted that Nadia's workplace is directly affiliated with the state:

> **Nadia (Immigrant from Egypt):** "I feel like it's something that I had to actively seek and learn about. It's definitely not something that [… is] talked about in gatherings or even with friends. […] —At the beginning, there was this idea: 'Oh! There's Indigenous peoples here! …Oh… Where are they? I never see them.' And then you start to question. And then you start searching. And um, my [workplace]… I'm actually grateful for where I work. […] Especially recently in the last two years, we started working a lot. We have a committee. We have like a reading club. And we're trying to share and educate ourselves… [with] books or documentaries […] To spread the knowledge I guess, and to spread awareness of issues. Or y'know, past and present issues. Um, so yeah, that has really helped me a lot in getting an idea. But I feel there's definitely a lot more that I need to learn and it's an active process. It's not just something that's given to you. It's actually very hard to find legitimate information."

The problem of (il)legitimate information on topics related to Canadian settler-colonialism, history and politics was also mentioned by Leila, a young immigrant from Iran. Notably, she articulated that her and her family's cultural background as Iranians has made them weary of "biased" traditional news sources. Leila explained that her family avoids traditional sources, and mainly relies on alternative sources to stay up to date on Canadian

news, describing relational pathways of learning within their diasporic community such as "word of mouth":

> **Leila (Immigrant from Iran):** I use alternative news sources, other than just [traditional] news. […] I know how media can skew certain information so I look at just random sites here and there. And I just make sure that they are scholarly. I'm a lurker on Reddit, so I check that often. There's some reliable sources that you can look at […] I go from word-of-mouth mainly as well, and then I'll go look at to see if whether that information is accurate or not. My parents though get information from somewhere else. They get it from... —directly from word-of-mouth [amongst the diasporic community] and… Or like online [messaging apps like WhatsApp]. They don't watch too much TV either. I guess that's just cause we know, as like Iranians, how much [traditional] news can be misconstrued to be biased on one side or the other."

Under this sub-heading, immigrants shared stories, experiences and memories learning about Canadian history and about Canadian settler-colonialism. Relational learning was identified to be the most common pathway for immigrants to learn about these topics. Notably, there was a strong pattern amongst young immigrant, such as Luis, who took on an active role within the family-structure to inform, educate and converse with other family members, especially amongst older generations, about these topics. In other cases, such as Mei, the relational pathway of learning was not necessarily intentional, but nevertheless was connected to another common pathway of learning, which involved state-sponsored events and institutions (such as public schools, Canada Day events and programming by settlement-agencies). All ten immigrant-participants expressed wanting to learn more about these topics, and that they generally did not know about Canadian settler-colonialism prior to immigrating to Canada. Additionally, some immigrants expressed facing difficulties in their ability to seek legitimate information about these topics, and that the few learning channels available to them were either insufficient or problematic. Overall, these findings related to immigrant learning pathways are relevant because it reveals potential pathways for education and intercultural dialogue that organically exists and/or is already being utilized. The relational,

familial and diasporic pathways of learning would be relevant in exploring the opportunities and challenges to organizing immigrants amidst the intertwined crises.

4.1.2   Perceptions of Climate Crisis

Three themes arose from interviews with immigrants regarding their perceptions to present-day climate crisis involving: individualized/dominant solutions, Canadian exceptionalism, and material irrelevance. All ten participants described their general appreciation and care for the environment. Many emphasized that their favorite aspect of living in Nova Scotia was the accessibility of nature, and to the "clean" waters and lands surrounding them. Some immigrants confidently identified themselves as "nature-lovers" or as "environmentalists", while some expressed feelings of guilt for not knowing enough about (or guilt for their contributions to) climate change. Despite varying levels of knowledge and relation to the climate crisis, all participants made explicit comments and understandings that the climate crisis was a negative phenomenon.

When asked questions about climate-change solutions, the majority of immigrants referred solely to individualized (and mainstream) environmental-actions including but not limited to: recycling, conservation of water usage, picking up litter, and walking/biking rather than utilizing a fossil-fuelled car. Grassroots political engagement and collectivized-action was starkly absent in participants' accounts of effective methods for addressing climate change. For example: Mei, who described herself as being a devoted environmentalist all her life, demonstrated a solid understanding of fossil fuel production as a driver of the climate crisis. She explained her commitments to the environment by proudly outlining the individualized efforts that she engages in:

Mei, Immigrant from China: "Oh. I'm an environmentalist. I consider myself an environmentalist. I practice recycle, reuse, all the time. I don't even have a car. I walk everywhere. I'm very conscious about the environment. I try my best to not waste anything […] My mom is an environmental engineer. When I was little, she was teaching me about this. She works at the power station but her job is to control the emissions of S02. She knows a lot. She taught us a lot about how the power company damaged the ozone layer… —How the coal-burning power stations in China... She involved us all in those things. She told us a lot about climate change... But since it's getting worse and worse.

Generally, participants did not remark on or describe grassroots political action as a means to address the climate crisis, which was notable given the salience of and attention to pipeline politics, climate change protests and Indigenous land and water defense across Canada. The reason for this absence could be for a number of reasons. One example could be that dominant neoliberal environmental discourses promote individualistic actions of sustainability rather than that of collective-ones (Lukacs, 2017). Or, as I further discuss in the next section, the absence could be an indication that many immigrants might not consider direct-action and grassroots political engagement as prominent or fruitful political strategies to effect change. Alternatively, the absence of collective and political action as potential solutions may be a result of immigrants' being excluded from, or in struggling with the inaccessibility of, what is otherwise improved (Western) salience of climate justice discourses over the past couple decades. If it is the case that immigrants do not perceive the political and collective tactics and strategies of environmentalism in the West as being relevant or accessible to them, then that poses worthwhile and significant questions for environmentalists and social movement organizers to consider diversifying tactics and/or adopting different approaches across different targeted groups. Beyond a simple analysis of exclusion or inaccessibility, immigrant perceptions of climate crisis were demonstrably rooted in their political understandings of the Canadian-state's role and influence in addressing the climate crisis, as well as within their own navigation of Canadian society.

Consequently, the second theme revolved around the frequent comments of Canadian-exceptionalism. Some immigrants' portrayed and perceived the Canadian-state as an international climate leader taking "helpful" actions to address the climate crisis. Interestingly, participants often remarked on Canadian-exceptionalism in the context of unprompted comparison to their origin country. When making these comments, participants did not qualify their belief of Canadian-exceptionalism — such as explaining exactly what exceptional things they think the Canadian state has accomplished. Rather, they made generalized comments and assumptions that Canada was "better than" what other countries are doing elsewhere.

Chrishani is another participant who, from a young age, says she fostered a strong sense of environmentalism. In comparison to her perception of Sri Lanka's lack of climate action, Chrishani described Canada as forward-thinking country:

> **Chrishani (Immigrant from Sri Lanka):** "I come from a country that is very tropical […] So from a young age, I grew up very close to nature, we love hikes. We love trees. We love green. […] –So, something I've noticed in Canada is that there is a lot of changes that's been happening recently that helps climate change… That addresses the problem of climate change... That helps with stopping things going south soon. So, I appreciate Canada. Because in my country, even though it's a smaller country and should be easier to control things... They don't really pay much attention to it. They just go with the flow. And like, sure, they would have like once a year beach cleaning... People would sign up and clean the beach. A week later, it goes back to the same situation that it was before the cleaning. So yeah... I'm just so happy that I'm living in a country that actually thinking forward and taking measures right now so that future generations don't have to suffer as much as they would if they didn't take action."

The theme of Canadian exceptionalism appeared regularly across the interviews, especially with regards to immigrant perceptions of Indigenous and Canadian-state relations, which is further explored in the next section. Jun was a participant that made a number of comments about Canadian-exceptionalism, especially as compared to China, her origin country. Notably, Jun described climate crisis discourse as an exceptional topic in itself.

When asked about how often the topic of climate change is discussed amongst her family, friends and diasporic community, Jun says: "I can say never. Really never."

When probed about why she thinks these topics are not discussed, she explained her perception that climate change is not an immediate concern within the Chinese diaspora. Rather, Jun explained her belief that Chinese immigrants are more preoccupied and concerned with their material survival, such as finding employment and navigating English-language barriers. She perceived climate change to be materially-irrelevant (at least in the immediate-term). She also described the climate crisis an exceptional issue "for Canadian-born people" who have the "spare time" to care — since they do not have to worry about navigating survival in Canadian society:

> **Jun (Immigrant from China):** "[Climate change] is not really a topic for my Chinese community. And we only focus on […] how to have a better job here. How to earn money here. That's what I think generally most Chinese people are concerned about. […] For example, when I was in language class [through a settlement-agency], I learned a lot about Canadian culture. But I don't remember learning about climate change or environment things. I don't think they prioritize this part to newcomers. [Maybe they] only think this is a topic for Canadian-born people, local people […] I think it's better if they can let us know more about this [topic], and I'm willing to learn more about it. […] I think maybe those who don't worry about how to survive in the society have the spare time to think about climate change… Because it's such a long-term and blurry topic, compared to survival problems like language barriers, or how to find a place to live, how to go to the hospital…"

In this sub-section, immigrants described their perceptions of the environment, on climate crisis and about climate change. The first theme demonstrated that immigrants promoted dominant frameworks of individualized environmental efforts as productive solutions to the climate crisis. Despite increased Western salience of climate justice and grassroots political action to address climate change within the past decade, there was an absence of describing collectivized action or grassroots political engagement as effective solutions. The second theme revolved around repeated comments of Canadian-

exceptionalism and the perception that the Canadian-state has taken helpful and positive actions to address the climate crisis. That said, details surrounding these "helpful" actions were rarely articulated. Instead, they were articulated, most often, in comparison to the participants' origin country and their generalized (and sometimes vague) perceptions of Canada being exceptional. Perhaps the most significant, the third theme involved immigrants perceiving that the climate crisis was a materially-irrelevant political issue and/or as a condition that was de-prioritized amongst all other areas of immigrants' immediate survival in navigating Canadian society. Jun described the act of caring about the climate crisis as an exclusive concern for privileged people who are not burdened with newcomer struggles. While it is nowhere near comprehensive, the above themes and quotes refer to a snapshot of how some immigrants in Nova Scotia perceive the climate crisis. Such findings are significant because they highlight rare and under-researched narratives and nuanced opinions of immigrants on this topic. More importantly, these findings demonstrate that immigrant perceptions of the climate crisis vastly differ from Canadian-born settlers, and are politically implicated in their capacities to navigate Canadian-State society.

4.1.3   Perceptions of Indigenous and Canadian-state Relations

Three consistent patterns came to light with respect to immigrants' external perceptions of Indigenous and Canadian-state relations. This included: perceptions of Canadian-exceptionalism with regards to Indigenous rights, feelings of sympathy and guilt in relation to historic and present-day Indigenous struggles, as well as burgeoning differences in perceptions amongst young immigrants (those under 35 years old) and/or immigrants who are long-term residents (at least 10+ years). Notably, the findings in this sub-section can be

analyzed in relation to the findings that are outlined in the two earlier sub-sections: 4.1.1 on the pathways of learning, and 4.1.2 on immigrant perceptions of the climate crisis.

Similar to the finding outlined in sub-section (4.1.2), there was a strong theme of immigrants describing views of Canadian-exceptionalism for advancing or protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples, as compared to their origin country. Notably, these comments were mostly iterated by new immigrants — who are, in this context, defined as those with approximately less than five years residency at the time of interview. Upon asking Jun about what she knew of Indigenous peoples prior to immigrating to Canada, Jun explained that Canada is "much better" in comparison to China's treatment of Indigenous peoples:

> **Jun (Immigrant from China):** "I learned something [about Indigenous peoples] but... I learned something in Chinese. And it was something bad. How... British people killed [Indigenous] people and they were trying to defend their homeland. So much blood and violence. That's not a very good impression about how [the British] got the land. […] That little education I got was […] not from any textbooks or official education… Just some articles I read from high school magazines. Now I'm an adult. And I know how Chinese people deal with First Nations in China's territory… And I think Canadian government is way much better. […] —They're not really a winner, because they did something really bad. They started wars. But compared to China, Canada government is way much better. At least they have the law to protect. At least they respect these people… Maybe they don't give the dominance power to those people… But yeah."

Like Jun, most immigrant participants described their understanding of Indigenous repression as being an "event" located in the past, rather than as an ongoing settler-colonial crisis. While Jun remarked on the Canadian state's exceptional treatment of Indigenous peoples, she also made critical comments about the genocidal attempts led by pre-Canadian governments to colonize Indigenous lands. While these perceptions may seem contradictory, it was clear by the frequency of such comments, that immigrants lacked the context of present-day iterations of Indigenous repression enacted by the Canadian state, and as a result, consider both to be true: that Canada has done wrong, but is also exceptional. Often,

comments about Canadian exceptionalism was quickly qualified with comments of

sympathy, understanding, and/or settler-guilt about Indigenous repression being morally

wrong. Interestingly, immigrants described their sympathies and understandings about the

plights of Indigenous peoples in relation and comparison to their own lived experiences of

colonialism, oppression or imperialism. For example, Zainab, an immigrant from Libya,

related her own personal experience of displacement while grappling with the guilt that she

now occupies land that is not hers:

> **Zainab (Immigrant from Libya): "**I feel sorry about [Indigenous peoples] actually. Because this is what happened with us in different countries. Like I am from different country. And my family immigrate to [here] so I feel like... Bad, y'know? Like this is not my land…"

Similarly, Dharshana, another immigrant from Sri Lanka, expressed her sympathies

for Indigenous-led demands in Canada for 'Land Back'. She condemned the stealing of

Indigenous lands by relating the context of 'Land Back' with land struggles in Sri Lanka:

> **Dharshana (Immigrant from Sri Lanka):** "I feel so... I feel so sorry for them. Because they deserve more, I think. Yes. They have a right to say to take this land back. […] It's the same in our country, right? But the thing is… If somebody did something wrong, it's wrong, right? We should not let it happen once again."

Reflected in the quotes above by Zainab, Dharshana and many others, interviews

with immigrants often revolved around stories, experiences and memories related to a

comparable context from their origin country, or from the standpoint of their origin

country. For example: in responding to questions about Indigenous—Canadian state

relations, Zainab and Dharshana referred to political contexts in Libya and Sri Lanka,

respectively. However, neither Libya or Sri Lanka are true settler-colonial nation-states, and

consequently, the history and conditions of land struggles in those geographic areas are

hugely different from a settler-colonial Canadian context. While comparisons can certainly

be made – for example, the strategies of settler-colonialism are not unique to solely settler-colonial nation-states – an interesting finding was that immigrants perception of Indigenous and Canadian-state relations are influenced by immigrants' knowledge and experiences of land and Indigenous struggles from their origin country (or multiple geographies), regardless of the context. When asked if she could explain more, Dharshana expressed hesitancy and mentioned that she felt scared to comment on her opinions about the Sri Lanka civil war between the Tamils (the minority ethnic group) and Sinhalese (the dominant ethnic group). While she did not necessarily explain in-depth, it is assumed that Dharshana's quote above referred to the land struggles of the Tamils, and the inherent violences associated with war and land-theft.

The third theme associated with immigrant perceptions to Indigenous and Canadian-state relations was the burgeoning differences amongst immigrants across generations and settlement duration. Generally, immigrants who were long-term residents, seemed to possess more confidence in discussing and sharing their perspectives on topics related to Indigenous and Canadian-state relations, especially in comparison to newcomers with less than five years of settlement. This could be due to a number of factors including but not limited to long-term exposure to these topics while living in Canada and with regards to their English proficiency or confidence level. Beyond generational differences, there were also some notable differences amongst immigrants who were long-term residents. Generally, they seemed to possess more confidence in discussing and sharing their perspectives on topics related to Indigenous and Canadian-state relations, especially when compared to interviews with newcomers (less than five years residency). This could be due to a number of factors including but not limited to long-term exposure to these topics while living in Canada, and with regards to their English proficiency or confidence level.

Particularly, there were four young immigrant participants (approximately under the age of 35 years old) whose perceptions of the intertwined climate and settler-colonial crises differed considerably from the main findings and quotations highlighted in this section. While all immigrants who were interviewed were first-generation, these four participants immigrated when they were in their youth, completed some level of education in Canada and expressed sympathies towards or had been involved (to some degree) with grassroots political-activism, although not necessarily in relation to these crises. These four immigrants each expressed experiencing and undergoing a "reckoning" when they learned about Canadian settler-colonialism. Each of them recounted memories or experiences of not knowing the truth of Canadian settler-colonialism in a substantial or historically-accurate way, but then ultimately, growing their awareness and becoming critical of the Canadian-state. Arjun, an immigrant from India, shared critical reflections navigating the Canadian immigration system and his initial, but no longer true, impressions of Canada as a "fairyland" and "land of white people":

> **Arjun (Immigrant from India) :** "At that time [when I was going through the immigration-process] I kind-of felt okay. Um, it was just like exciting… About wanting to come here and experience different things. Now that I look back, um, it's just […] infuriating. Putting so much… Asking for so much…They're literally looking for people who are quote-on-quote 'cream' [of the crop] of different countries. They're trying to make sure people don't have medical conditions, or traumas, or any diseases. Just nothing. They just want quote-on-quote 'the best humans' that we can use in our system […] Yeah those [initial impressions of Canada] were super like… —Canada is the fairyland. And the one impression that I really, really hate is that Canada is the land of white people… Europeans. Like I had no concept of first-settlers as far as I can remember. Because of that, I had no concept of Indigenous people who live here. […] my concept was automatically […] white people are the people who are the 'Indigenous' people of Canada. I would add that […] people still think pretty much the same."

Similarly, Luis critically described his experiences as a student within the Canadian public-school system, and the education he received that portrayed settler-colonialism as an

event "in the past". He described Canadian-pride as a measure of ignorance, and also

reflected on his own emotional discomfort benefiting and living on occupied and stolen

Indigenous lands:

> **Luis (Immigrant from Dominican Republic): "**I feel like [what happens in]
> schools here… Is that they teach you what happened, but they purposefully avoid
> how to connect what's happening now. They leave it in the past… —'We're sorry.'
> Whatever. Let's build another pipeline. Let's ignore the fact that people don't even
> have water, you know?' And like, that's really what my education has been like. I've
> connected the dots between what happened in the history books that I didn't learn in
> school and what is happening now […] and the amount of stuff we let go. Like that
> we let happen. It is really easy in Canada to not care about Indigenous peoples, and
> what has had to happen for Canada to exist […] for me, Canadian pride is being
> proud of how much you ignore […] The school teaches you that it happened a long
> time ago… That you don't have to worry about it. But that's not at all what the
> reality is […] There's places in this country that remind me of where I come from.
> Not because they look the same but because the people are under the same kinds of
> pressure. […] The challenges to living in Canada is what my parents gave up their life
> for was stolen from a lot of people who are still here. And it's like, gloated. Yeah, it's
> the fact that I just don't feel comfortable enjoying the things that I got…"

Under this sub-heading immigrants shared their perceptions and interpretations of

Indigenous-state relations, which helps to informs how immigrants relate to the ongoing

Canadian settler-colonial crisis. Significantly, there were many parallels to how immigrant

perceived Canadian exceptionalism in light of climate action and the findings highlighted in

this section that revealed perceptions of Canadian exceptionalism on advancing and

protecting the rights of Indigenous people, especially as compared to their origin country.

Further parallels can be made with regards to how multiculturalism policies in Canada have

reinforced nationalist ideas of "Canada as a fair, generous, and tolerant" nation (Cannon,

2012, 21), in addition to "[producing] a peculiar brand of "Canadian racism" described by

many as "polite," "subtle," "systemic," and even "democratic" (Das Gupta, 1999, 187).

These sentiments of Canadian exceptionalism can be understood in the context of what

Glen Coulthard referred to as the "colonial politics of recognition". In his book, "Red Skins,

White Masks", Coulthard (2014: 30-31) posited that the Canadian-state's liberal politics of recognizing its wrongdoings for attempted genocide and assimilation, and its consequent apologies, are ultimately a facade since there are no actual "[significant modification], let alone [transcendence] of power at play in colonial relationships". This logic of recognition seems to also be a basis for why immigrants hold onto ideas of Canadian exceptionalism. Generally, immigrants expressed emotions of guilt, sympathy or understanding in discussing the conditions of Indigenous state relations in Canada. It was also identified that immigrants' perceptions of Canadian settler-colonialism are affected and influenced by their understanding of, or positionalities related to, political contexts from their origin country, regardless of comparability. Lastly, it was revealed that perceptions from politically-engaged young immigrants vastly differed from the findings and quotes highlighted in this section. Young immigrants expressed critiques of the Canadian-state in reference to their record in violating Indigenous rights, as well as having to confront their own early misconceptions of the Canadian-state. Immigrants mostly references to Indigenous struggles as they relate to residential schools and land theft.

4.2   Immigrant Relations to Grassroots Political Engagement

Beyond research into immigrant perceptions and relations to the intertwined climate and settler-colonial crises in Canada, this thesis also explored how immigrants perceived and related to grassroots political-action. The intention to connect these two objectives were for the purposes of analyzing and building understanding on the conditions that foster grassroots political engagement that are inclusive of (or effective for) immigrants. Originally, immigrants were asked interview questions solely relating to political-action as a method of

community-building. However, it was clear after the two interviews that questions relating to political-action, using descriptive words such as 'protest', elicited responses of discomfort, hesitation as well as contradiction. These responses on their own are notable and worthy of analysis, but ultimately, the interview guide was amended to broaden the questions relating to grassroots political engagement. As was also reflected in the literature, it was apparent that the original interview questions committed a disservice to sentiments of solidarity-building and grassroots political-action that transcended mainstream forms of resistance such as protesting. Questions relating to traditional forms of grassroots resistance continued to be asked, however, new questions were asked that expanded on a broader notion of grassroots political-engagement such as community-building and community-volunteering. Specifically, questions that utilized politically-neutral language, such as volunteering, yielded rich responses, perhaps richer than the responses to questions framed in politically-active language.

For this reason, the following section is divided into two sub-headings to reflect the contrast in findings that related to immigrants' relation to grassroots political engagement within Canada. The first theme looks at immigrants' perceptions of protest and political action, while the second theme looks at immigrants' perceptions of community-volunteering.

4.2.1   Perceptions of Protest & Political Action

The following sub-section highlights quotes that outlined common themes in how immigrants perceived protests and political action within Canada. Responses included fear of political-actions which were seen to be dangerous and/or violent, and usually qualified in relation to contexts or lived experiences rooted in their origin country. That being said, there

were also responses that spoke to feelings of motivation and urgency to become more politically-engaged in Canada, as compared to their origin country, where the former was assumed to be less repressive than the latter. Additionally, immigrant perceptions of protest and political action were informed by the various intersections of their positionalities and identities, which in some cases, encompassed a political, familial, cultural and gendered pressure on some immigrants to be a model minority. The model minority myth has been referred to as the white supremacist tendency to commonly weaponize and portray the Asian diaspora in North America as successful, submissive and assimilative, unlike 'other' minorities (Chun, 2023; Zhou and Bankston III, 2020; Kim and Kirpalani, 2022) — which in itself signals an anti-Black and anti-Indigenous dog-whistle (Yi and Todd, 2021). This type of pressure to uplift and replicate the model minority myth appeared throughout the interviews in a different manner than the responses relating to fear of danger or violence, but regardless, are rooted in fear of risk-taking and/or repression.

Leila, a young immigrant with some lived experiences of being an activist, spoke about the cultural pressure and expectation to "keep silent politically" and not cause "too much trouble." She described the contradiction of her positionality as someone in Nova Scotia with the freedom to protest and dissent, and yet also references the challenges and barrier she struggles with being more politically-engaged. Interestingly, Leila made similar comments when asked about her thoughts on climate action, stating: "I have such a sense of urgency that I feel guilty for not doing this work with the privileges I have in Canada." She emphasized a feeling of trauma in "feeling locked down or tied in somewhat way" around the types of political-actions she can engage in:

> **Leila (Immigrant from Iran):** "I really value human rights. [I'm] being very vague because I'm trying to avoid being vulnerable. This is one of the questions that I was actually nervous around —talking about. As a first-generation Iranian immigrant, politics has always been put to the side. As a first-generation immigrant, I've been

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taught to keep silent politically. Be apolitical. Don't cause too much trouble. But that's hard to do here... Especially when it's like... I'm supposed to have this freedom […] I haven't taken as much political action I feel as I should have… But I also can't in some cases […] It puts me in a really helpless position […] As a first generation immigrant, from Iran, I have to somehow get past that trauma... That sense of feeling locked down or tied in somewhat way... To figure out in what ways we can or cannot…—But that's just my own experiences as a first-gen Iranian"

In contrast to the pressure that Leila feels, there were a number of older immigrants and newcomers that initially reacted with fear, hesitancy and discomfort to questions that asked for their opinions on grassroots political engagement such as protest, activism and social movements. For example, when asked, Dharshana quickly expressed her perception that she did not like protests due to their connection to violence. However, just as quickly, Dharshana drew a line between peaceful protests and protests where "killing" is involved. Although she claims to have never attended a protest in fear of getting herself or others hurt, she described the value of protests as a means for political change:

> **Dharshana (Immigrant from Sri Lanka):** "–I don't like [protests]. I don't like it. But the thing is... If it is a peaceful one… But not killing each other. Yeah… We need to protest or else nothing would happen. We can't get our things done. If we are not agree with something, we need to do it, but peacefully, without harming people […] I'm scared [to participate]. Sometimes… when I see things happening… — Oh, burning inside. But I don't go. I don't like to go because… sometimes you can get hurt. Others can get hurt. I don't want to be part of that. I really want to protest, most of the things that I think is not correct."

In subsection 4.1.3, Dharshana referred to the Sri Lankan civil war, and similarly to the finding outlined in that same sub-section, it seemed as though Dharshana's reference of 'violent' protests were likely rooted in a Sri-Lankan context rather than any contexts based in Canada. While certainly, violence is not precluded in Canada, it is not typical for there to be killings at sites of grassroots protests, activism or social movements within Canada. Further, it's worth noting Dharshana's contradiction of "not liking" protest, yet at the same time, "really [wanting] to protest". Such contradictions — occurring within the same sentence —

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affirmed that politically-charged words such as 'protest', 'activism' and 'social movements' evoked initial responses from immigrants that touched on feelings of fear and sadness.

Hesitant and anxious responses to questions related to 'protest', 'activism', and 'social movements' was common, and like Dharshana, were often discussed in comparison or relation to political-action in their origin country. Michelle, an immigrant from Hong Kong, described the 2019-2020 "Chinese crackdown" on the people of Hong Kong. However, in the case of Dharshana, who explained that her fear debilitated her ability to take action, Michelle's fear of Chinese repression served as a motivator that "fuels" them to be more active and loud in Nova Scotia:

> **Michelle (Immigrant from Hong Kong): "**Yeah, so back home... The Chinese crackdown is happening right before our eyes. So um, with the British, who like colonized us... It was supposed to be like 50 years before […] our autonomous region status was over and we fully reverted back to China. And now there's rampant censorship happening. It's only been a year but things have really dialed back. And seeing that happen so quickly is really scary... But that just fuels me more to be loud here [such as…] talking about things that would get me like imprisoned [over there]."

Michelle's quotation also reflected a pattern amongst interviews that touched on the political landscape at the time. All interviews took place during the summer and fall of 2020, which meant that interviews were parallel to the political uprisings occurring worldwide, and particularly in the Western hemisphere. This included Michelle's mention of the 2019 - 2020 Hong Kong protests, as well as movements to defend Black lives and resist against police brutality. Such findings demonstrate that research cannot be removed — or analyzed in isolation — from the political time and landscapes that the interviews took place in. Further, Michelle described her motivations to "be loud here" in Canada, as a result of her positionality and identity as a Hong Kong person that has witnessed Chinese-state repression. Immigrants' positionalities and identities also factored into how they perceived protests and grassroots political action. Another example of this was Luis who described that

the choice to opt out of political-action is a luxury and privilege in itself, especially from his standpoint as a Black person. He recounted a memory of attending his first protest, in support and solidarity with Abdoul Abdi of Halifax, a Somali refugee whose story was spotlighted by the media during the years 2018 - 2020 when the Canadian-state threatened (unconstitutional) deportation:

> **Luis (Immigrant from Dominican Republic):** "Taking action for me is whether or not I'm going to help it or get in the way, you know? To me, it's not enough to be out of the way. I don't think that's acceptable though. I don't get the luxury. –I think that as a Black person, I don't. They don't care about us. It affects my life because I could be on the other side of that, you know? […] I went to a protest actually […during] University. [It] was my first protest […We were in solidarity with Abdul Abdi]. And it was kind-of great. To be able to feel like I was doing something and the fact that it worked. —Even for a little bit. I think Abdul appreciated it and that's what matters to me."

In this sub-section, immigrants shared their perceptions of protest and other mainstream forms of grassroots resistance such as activism and social movements. The findings revealed that politically-charged words like 'protest' were not conducive to evoking organic responses from the participants, and rather, elicited guarded, hesitant or curt responses. It was clear that such topics were also emotionally-charged, with some participants expressing feelings of sadness and/or fear. Relatedly, some participants made connections to Canadian political-contexts arising from their experiences within their origin country or other/multiple sites of geographies. As such, the findings seem to indicate that the impact and experiences of pre-migration political repression remains a major contributing factor to immigrants' abilities, desire, and capabilities to engage in protest activities (Bilodeau, 2008). Relevantly, Bilodeau's 2008 study found that: (1) immigrants from repressive regimes abstain more from protest (grassroots) politics than those from non-repressive regimes, (2) the higher degree of repression in their origin country means that immigrants are more likely to abstain from protest politics, and (3) even after long-term

residency in Canada (30+ years), some immigrants continue to abstain from protest politics to a greater degree than Canadians. There were some immigrants that contradicted Bilodeau's findings – such as Michelle, Arjun and Luis. However, it is possible their outlier can be explained by the shifting values amongst young immigrants as compared to older generations, as well as the influence of social capital as one of the most important predictors of political participation (Nakhaie, 2008; Gidengil and Stolle, 2009). For example: Michelle, Arjun and Luis, each indicated that a relational and social network of peers and friends were the source of their initial political forays. Comments, stories, perspectives and experiences of global current events that took place parallel to the interviews, also trickled into participants responses. This included reference to the 2018-2020 community-response within Nova Scotia to stop the unlawful deportation of Abdoul Abdi, Chinese repression on Hong Kong, as well as the global uprisings in defense of Black lives throughout the summer of 2020. In addition, immigrants perceptions were influenced by the intersections of their own positionalities and identities, which in some cases, involved feelings of white supremacist pressure to conform to model minority status.

It is a broad undertaking to research immigrant tendencies, feelings, attitudes and perceptions of grassroots politics in Canada, as well as their reasons for participating and not. Future studies that pay careful attention to immigrants' ethnicity, class and age seem helpful for social movements interested in organizing immigrants. Consequently, findings from this theme are broad and generally point to the tensions that first-generation immigrants perceived with regards to grassroots, unconventional and protest politics in Canada. Related studies found that first-generation racialized immigrants participate in unconventional politics at much lower levels than compared first-generation white immigrants, and that of Canadians (O'Neill, Gidengil and Young, 2012). Interestingly, unlike

the case for conventional politics, racialized Canadian-born women led the groups with their heightened levels of unconventional political activity, while racialized immigrant women ranked last. Such dynamics speak to further potentials and opportunities for intergenerational learning.

4.2.2   Perceptions of Community-volunteering

The concept of community-volunteering was utilized in the interview guide as an attempt to frame grassroots political action in a politically-neutral manner. While it could be argued that neither concepts are synonymous, there was, at least, an argument in spirit that all grassroots political action could be described a volunteering (unpaid contributions to shared communities) and that community-volunteering — whether or not participants interpreted it this way — has political connotations and require political-engagement in some form. Scholars have studied the role of immigrant social capital and networks in informing their political engagements, pointing to a significant link between volunteering and politics within Canada (Tossutti, 2003; Nakhaie, 2008; Gidengil and Stolle, 2009; O'Neill, Gidengil and Young, 2012). Nakhaie (2008: 854) argued that immigrant "participation in voluntary associations and clubs is fertile ground for political socialization and participation. They provide opportunities for democratic participation and help organize individuals' interest in the political process". He goes on to further say that "voluntarism and cooperation enhances individuals' sense of belonging and civic responsibility [… which] are built on norms of generalized reciprocity, mutual obligation and trust. […] In other words, social capital stimulates political participation by providing channels of political information, social pressure and persuasive arguments, shared responsibility, cooperation and friendly competition." (Ibid). As compared to interview questions that utilized politically-charged

language, this sub-section highlights some of the remarkable stories, memories and

perspectives of immigrants engaged in relational, voluntary, diasporic-community work.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to highlight all of these responses due to the scope and

limitations of this study, however, the findings raise valuable analysis for future related

studies, as well as insights into the richness of solidarity and mutual-aid practiced within

immigrant communities across diasporas. Responses surrounding immigrants' volunteer

experiences and motivations were more fruitful and relevant to the research objectives at

hand, than the responses to questions regarding traditional forms of political action and

resistance.

Some of the richest comments regarding community-building arose from Zainab,

who reflected on the relational-support that she and her family received from her neighbours

and the African diaspora community when first immigrating to Nova Scotia. She referred to

this early memory as a transformative experience that motivated her to commit her life to

supporting newcomers — which she does in both paid and unpaid capacities. Notably,

Zainab differentiated volunteer work as doing it "for the people" rather than her paid work

that sustains her family. She explained the responsibility she feels to reciprocate the support

and solidarity that she and her family received so many years ago:

> **Zainab (Immigrant from Libya):** "I do a lot of volunteer work actually, for the newcomers. I try because when I came here, a lot of people support us. And hold hands for us. And support us. So I try to do this with newcomers who come to Canada. I try to support them as people had helped me to support me... To continue that with other people. […] I [do my paid] work and I take money for that […] Work is taking money for me and my family… —When I do volunteer work, I do it for the people. I don't get money, but I get smiles. When I come home, I feel very happy, very comfortable because the people happy and smile, y'know? […] When I come here, people helped me. And I know the meaning of needing help and you help them. It means a lot to them. I need to do the same for other people to feel the same... To feel good and comfortable, especially when they come to new country. Everything is new. Then, sometime people feel bad… And crying, crying, crying. Feeling a lot of stress. And some people […] decide to go back to their original

country, yeah... So, we try to support these people to feel good. We have to hold hands each other and be one community, and we support each other."

Further, Zainab also exemplified her commitment to a cycle of reciprocity by teaching her daughter and the newcomers that she supports, to engage in volunteer work that helps "everyone in the [same] community". It could be argued that Zainab's work of spreading and growing reciprocity is an act of movement-building and organizing:

> **Zainab (Immigrant from Libya):** I'll start with my daughter. When I do volunteer and help the people in the community… — For example, I help you. And [you] ask: 'What can I do for you…?' I say: 'No. Do nothing for me. But at least try… If anyone ask you [for] help, just help them. And continuous for that… And so I teach my daughter, and now, she's young, but she loves to volunteer. And she loves to help. She tells me like, she don't like idea about helping just newcomers […] We help our community. It's not just newcomers… Newcomers and Canadian and everyone in the community. She dream to do, like, work together... Canadian and newcomers together. We don't need to separate. I hate to say newcomers. We have to say community. We are community. We are people who live in the same community."

Beyond sentiments of volunteering as a form of solidarity or reciprocity, immigrants also described motivations of survival as their basis for engaging in community volunteering. These survival motivations included references that volunteering was a means to meet new people, learn and practice English-skills, and establish trust with non-immigrants:

> **Jun (Immigrant from China):** [Volunteer work is] a really effective way for people to get to know each other. It's better than […] some parties […] It's a better way to make friends, to get to know people. Because you have one target for volunteering […] you can build your relationships, build your network at the same time. It's like double. You spend one hour, but you earn two hours of results. I think it's really useful. And um, I think […] from immigrants' perspective… It's way much better because you have to start to build your personal history. People don't trust you. I accept that. Because people will always be afraid of new, strange things. So you need to use that platform of volunteer work, similar communities... To make people trust you and then you can get involved. […] You can get educated from people around you, from the thing that you're doing. It's a way for you to learn both culture, both relationships and improve your language…"

When Jun was asked about her immigration experiences to Nova Scotia, she explained that she received support and met friends through the popular Chinese social-media app called WeChat. Upon landing in Canada, Jun described how she did not have to try hard to find members in her diasporic communit. Instead, Jun described how those community-members directly connected with her – already knowing that she would be in need of "service" as a newcomer. Her comments are evidence of a robust, informal network of relational-support, solidarity, and community-building within the Chinese diaspora in Nova Scotia:

> **Jun (Immigrant from China):** "I found friends... Chinese friends who were already living here because we used a social app called WeChat. It all happens on WeChat. And those people try to actively find me, because they know I'm a new immigrant... That I am in need of service […] I don't really have to try hard to find my community; they directly find me."

In this sub-heading, immigrants described their perceptions on community-volunteering. Immigrants demonstrated a wide array of volunteering experiences, discussed the importance of community-building, and described wanting to contribute more. Immigrants portrayed a wide range of motivators for engaging in volunteer-work, such as practicing English, developing work experience and establishing trust. Additionally, each participant shared examples of receiving or providing support, solidarity, or mutual aid, once arriving in Canada — most often serviced by their diaspora community members. In a simple definition, Dean Spade (2020) described mutual aid as the "collective coordination [… that] directly meet peoples' survival needs" especially in the context where the government will not meet those needs, nor see it as their responsibility to meet those needs. Consequently, mutual aid has been foundational to practices and approaches in political anarchism (Kropotkin, 1902), as well as to the survival of communities that have been marginalized, ignored, and oppressed. In studying the root causes of political participation

and apathy within immigrant communities in BC, Pavan (2019) found that immigrants regarded "service to the community as not political/partisan" and yet, community organizations that were meaningful to immigrants were regarded as "conduits to raise issues". Relatedly, Nakhaie's 2008 (855) study showed that immigrants' social capital – such as participation in informal associations, social networks, volunteer activities and a trusting relationship towards political institutions (perhaps without fear of any reprisals) – were the most important predictors of political participation . He goes on to further say:

> Voluntarism and co-operation enhances individuals' sense of belonging and civic responsibility. Informal relationships and their embedded resources are built on norms of generalized reciprocity, mutual obligation and trust. Trust and expectation develop individuals' sense of fairness and efficacy. These involvements and values tend to enhance citizens' political information and promote attitudes, values and orientations that encourage political participation. In other words, social capital stimulates political participation by providing channels of political information, social pressure and persuasive arguments, shared responsibility, co-operation and friendly competition (Ibid, 854).

The role of social capital within immigrant communities and their relational motivations to volunteer and engage in diasporic mutual aid pose interesting questions and opportunities for building inclusion and bridging silos across communities (Ibid, 855). As such, these findings also illuminated a somewhat patronizing aspect of this research study which was interested in facilitating immigrants towards grassroots political engagement on the intertwined climate and settler-colonial crises. While this thesis intentions were from a standpoint to facilitate a lack of action amongst immigrants, these findings reveal a more nuanced landscape. The findings demonstrate that immigrant communities are active in

community-building – a significant mode of grassroots political engagement – and have operated and maintained substantial mutual aid structures that are rooted in solidarity, reciprocity and material-survival. While this finding does not necessarily speak to the role that immigrants can play in addressing the intertwined climate and settler-colonial crises, they do expose worthwhile questions about how activists, researchers, scholars and organizers alike can support these existing structures and networks that are already effective at facilitating foundational elements of solidarity and movement-building.

4.3   Organizers' Approaches & Practices of Indigenous-solidarity

In order to understand the types of motivations that facilitate grassroots political action in response to the intertwined settler-colonial and climate crises, this research had a secondary objective in exploring the experiences of activists and organizers who are engaged in climate justice and place-based Indigenous solidarity. Several common threads emerged from interviews with organizers, specifically as it relates to their approaches and practices of solidarity with Indigenous peoples. Notably, all five organizers' chose to predominantly discuss their experiences engaged in Indigenous-solidarity, rather than that of climate-organizing. While this may be perhaps a reflection of subconscious prioritization, organizers also spoke about the rigor required in Indigenous solidarity organizing. As evident in the literature, as well as my own personal experiences, most of the organizers were engaged in other grassroots political organizing before eventually committing to Indigenous-solidarity work (Davis, O'Donnell, and Shpuniarsky, 2007; Davis et al., 2016; McGuire and Denis, 2019). That being said, each Organizers shared analyses that described the settler-colonial and climate crises as interconnected and inseparable.

Erika, a long-time organizer against global mining injustice described her motivations for engaging in Indigenous-solidarity organizing. From her perspective, Indigenous-solidarity organizing is different from other types of activism because of the centrality of Indigenous sovereignty, as well as positionality and identity. As an organizer who is also a settler of colour, Erika explained that her motivation to be in solidarity with Indigenous-led resistance to extractivism arises out of her desire for justice. She also described Indigenous-led resistance as being strategic, due to the inherent sovereignty of Indigenous peoples which stands in bold contradiction of the colonial-governments and corporate partnerships that are driving the settler-colonial and climate crises:

> **Erika (Organizer):** "For me, in terms of Indigenous-solidarity work, I think a lot of it as being very supportive to people... But not placing myself at the centre of the work […] So much falls on their shoulders as they are the ones with the rights to assert and often a Settler cannot just replace a Native person on the front lines… So, driving around Elders, running errands and fundraising are activities that I often engage in doing this work. It is also important not to rely on Indigenous people to always be initiating everything […] One of the reasons is that when you work with a community that's experienced a lot of injustice... If and when they win, there's justice in that. Justice is one of the primary motivators of my work, y'know? It helps resolve my anger at the system. It is also strategic. Indigenous people have um, a set of rights, and a narrative, that I believe makes them in a better position to enact systemic change, specifically over what I find to be the ridiculous foundation and assumptions of the extraction industries. For example, the extractive industries are built on a foundation that ignores peoples' right to free, prior, informed consent. The right to free, prior and informed consent is intuitive to people, especially when it comes to Indigenous people who are separate from whatever colonial government is making agreements with the extractive corporation. I believe this is one of the major contradictions that the extractive industries rely on… So obviously we're going to be working with the [Indigenous] people who are denied that consent and overturning that assumption is a major strategy."

Ana is an Indigenous person to lands beyond Canadian borders. She explained how she made a series of explicit and deliberate choices to "root" herself and her organizing in Nova Scotia, while remarking on the significance of place-based organizing. She described

grassroots-organizing and Indigenous-solidarity as an intrinsic part of her identity. She

further described her organizing approaches as a praxis rather than something theoretical:

> **Ana (Organizer):** For a long time, politics and community organizing has just been
> my life. Not something that I thought about in terms of... I guess like theoretically
> […] At a certain point, I did make a conscious decision to root myself here and to try
> to be engaged in collective-action […] around issues based on these territories […]
> Now I feel my collective-action and community-organizing that I'm involved in is
> rooted locally, and I think it's important to be engaged in the territory that one […]
> calls home and is based in […] Really looking at what are the root causes [of these
> crises]? What is the role of the Canadian state? …And looking at our relationship to
> the Canadian state as Canadians and really trying to, um, leverage that… Trying to
> support from where we are. –Recognizing that our conditions may be different and
> we have an opportunity to […] create change from where we are […] But not from a
> paternalistic place, or assuming that we know best."

One of the central themes arising from interviews with organizers was regarding the

significant value they each shared in maintaining, building and upholding accountable

relationships with the Indigenous peoples and Nations they attempted to be in solidarity

with. Masuma is another organizer who is Indigenous to lands beyond Canadian borders,

and also identifies with immigrant Afghani and Muslim communities. She explained her

approaches and perception of Mi'kmaw-solidarity organizing as primarily relationship-

building, rather than traditional methods of political-action such as a "petition":

> **Masuma (Organizer):** "Collective work [is having the ability to] have tough
> conversations […] Organizing doesn't just look like doing an action, or a petition
> […] When people talk […] about solidarity, [wanting] to support [Mi'kmaw women
> on the frontlines]… —Are you checking in on these women every day? Do you care
> about their mental health? Do you care about their children? Are you mak[ing] sure
> that they find work? Are you mak[ing] sure that in COVID times, they have
> groceries? […] If I want a better world for my family, my future, and my kids… that
> means a better world for Mi'kmaw folks... And a world where they're respected […]
> Mi'kmaw women have healed me too […] Do we have any other choice but to build
> solidarity in this world right now? It's the only act of decolonization that you can
> really take in your life that really changes it… —By building relationships with the
> people of this land. Proper ones and not tokenistic ones."

Masuma's quote above raises similar analysis to the findings outlined in the last sub-section (4.2.2) which were focused on the rich relational approaches and practices of solidarity and reciprocity that immigrants engaged in (as opposed to politically-charged language in sub-section 4.2.1). Given Masuma's identity as a second-generation immigrant, as well as positionality within immigrant-diasporic communities, Masuma's reflection that Mi'kmaw women have also healed her, was rooted in a similar theme of reciprocities that immigrants recounted in sub-section 4.2.2 as having motivated them to volunteer.

Each organizer reflected on their positionalities and identities to describe the responsibility they feel towards being in solidarity with Indigenous people. In some cases, organizers talked about this responsibility as being a powerful motivator for engaging in Indigenous-solidarity. For example, Quinn reflected on her life-long responsibility to interrogate her positionality and identity as a white-settler. She explained that this interrogation is ongoing, and has included grappling with and uncovering the legacies of her colonial ancestors being some of the first colonizers on Mi'kmaw lands:

> **Quinn (Organizer):** It is something I've been reflecting on a lot, because my… — Well in more recent years, just through trying to figure out what decolonization means… Which means trying to figure out how your family got here… So I have really specific questions about how my family began to think they owned land here […] I did learn that my forefather on my mom's side came over from, like Germany… in 1751? …To go settle in Lunenburg, which had just been emptied of Acadians so that British colonial subjects could be inserted in there […] —He was 12 when he came over […] But anyway, they brought him over and then he had to work for Cornwallis building Halifax for two years in order to get to Lunenburg and get that land. And that was something jarring and unsettling to learn: '…Oh. Like here…? You helped build Halifax? […] Trying to dig into some of that stuff. But it's life-long."

Amongst the organizers that identified as settlers, there was a common theme in recounting memories and experiences of making mistakes and perpetuating colonial-harm, especially in their initial attempts at being in solidarity with Indigenous peoples. Quinn

reflected on her colonial-mindset the very first time she worked in solidarity with Dorene

Bernard[9], a Mi'kmaw elder and water protector:

> **Quinn (Organizer):** "This was a learning journey for me too… because Dorene would say that she's working on [the water symposium]… And I had a very colonial way of understanding of how we would be organizing this symposium…. And Dorene would actually mean, like, she was going to the river to pray about it. And so sometimes I'd be like 'Oh my god […] I don't know if this is going to work. I don't know what Dorene is doing' – But like everything happened. It didn't happen in any way that she thought it would happen or I thought it would happen, but everything actually worked. And so I learned through that to trust that there were other ways you could organize things and it would work. Even if they were completely mysterious to me, and had nothing to do with the spreadsheets that I had worked so hard on…"

Similarly, Paisley, who is a white settler and avid climate justice organizer, explained

her perception that settler-organizers reproduce colonial-dynamics, especially in the context

of settler-environmentalism:

> **Paisley (Organizer):** "It's not my role to organize Mi'kmaq people but it is my role to support and remove barriers created by colonization and poverty and whatever... so that Mi'kmaq people can organize amongst themselves. [A Mi'kmaw water protector] says all the time –whenever I'm confused about something… [She says:] 'Colonization makes one hell of a mess' –Yeah it fucking does. Now, we're in this awkward position where […] ostensibly, I have years of organizing experience and I work in a massive NGO that has huge resources. [I] could be leveraging resources to do that […] But like how…? How do you leverage those resources in a way that's responsible? There's a lot of examples of movements where people, especially out West, where people are fighting pipelines left, right and centre. There are examples of NGOs like […] resourcing movements that when they step away, it falls apart... —because there's no resources and there's no infrastructure without that NGO... which is just like, a replication of some colonial patterns. I don't want to do that […] Yeah, the climate movement came out of the environmental movement which is super white... so it's not surprising that it's just imbued with a bunch of weird dynamics."

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[9] Mi'kmaw Elder and Water Protector, Dorene Bernard, indicated to me that she did not want to be de-identified or have a pseudonym applied to her, in the context of this study.

In response to these colonial-patterns, Paisley referred to the importance of developing and building collective accountability. She discussed the significance of being involved in a Mi'kmaw-settler-solidarity group:

> **Paisley:** The people in [the Mi'kmaw-settler-solidarity group] have mostly been working together for a long time […] Mostly for me, it's like an awesome, trusting space to be like 'I'm having a confusing problem. I don't know what to do with all these dynamics' And so I've really appreciated in the past couple years being like: 'Hey everyone. I work at an NGO... You all understand how that's inherently problematic... But I have some resources... Like, can you help me navigate my whiteness, the privilege of this organization, the structures of everything? Can we figure that out together?' — That I've found super helpful […] We were all kind-of struggling with questions like: 'How do we, as non-Mi'kmaq people, be in solidarity with this thing, together? How can we hold each other accountable?' —So it's been an accountability structure, a bit of a learning structure. […] I think it's enabled me and us, as a whole, to maintain a strong relationship with the Water Protectors and the Grandmothers. And there's a bit of a clear line of accountability there […] On a few occasions where there have been mishaps... It feels like we are trusted when someone can come and be like: 'Your group did this thing and we didn't like it... deal with it.' —That feels like trust, even though it feels bad. It sucks that we made a mistake [...] I feel like we need more [groups like this]. It's a bit of an affinity group… […] It's like a support group.

In this section, Organizers discussed their approaches, values and principles in engaging in place-based Indigenous-solidarities, particularly, Mi'kmaw-solidarities. All participants described their positionalities and identities as ultimately informing the role and responsibilities they take on when organizing to be in solidarity with Indigenous peoples. Some of these approaches and practices included: acting with an understanding of the inherently different roles between non-Indigenous people and Indigenous title-and-rights-holders, a life-long process of self-interrogating Settler-identity and complicities, as well as attempts to create accountable relationships and structures with those they are in solidarity with. Organizers emphasized the importance of good relationships as a foundation for solidarity and accountability. These findings are affirmed in studies related to settler-

Indigenous solidarities (Davis et al., 2016; Fortier, 2017; McGuire and Denis, 2019; Helferty, 2020)

4.4   Challenges and Barriers in Organizing Immigrants

The following section outlines findings that refer to the challenges and barriers in organizing immigrants towards grassroots political action in light of the intertwined settler-colonial and climate crises in Canada. Quotes from both participant groups are highlighted, and findings from the previous sections are referred to for additional analysis. Some of the challenges outlined in this section included: racisms and modern-colonial perceptions of Indigenous peoples, settler-ignorance, and the silo-ing of immigrant and Indigenous communities that act as a barrier to dialogue and relationship-building. Some opportunities are also outlined in this section which included mention of a celebration of cultures between immigrants and Indigenous peoples — outside the scope of whiteness, as well as the generational differences and salience amongst young immigrants in wanting to organize.

In discussing what obstacles and barriers there are in organizing immigrants towards possibilities of place-based Indigenous-solidarity, Erika referred to the deeply-embedded and pervasive racisms that exist amongst minority communities. She explained that these racisms originate from right-wing political groups that have motives and strategies in stoking division through scapegoating and in pitting communities against each other under a capitalist-logic of scarcity and individualism. On the other hand, Erika also described an opportunity for building solidarities between the two communities is the celebration of their cultures beyond the gaze of whiteness:

> **Erika (Organizer):** "I think that the main challenge to immigrant-Indigenous solidarity is that there is lot of racism on both sides… So that has to be overcome.

These sentiments are stoked by right wing groups, which often comes down to Indigenous and migrant people being pit against each other for resources […] Y'know, those are serious challenges to the work, but a lot of great work has been done, especially by groups like No One is Illegal where building this solidarity has been a major focus. There are also natural solidarities that can exist between migrants and Indigenous people. For example, the celebration of their cultures which are distinct from the dominant white culture. Thankfully, we see […] people who have become leading voices in Indigenous rights issues, that they are in solidarity with migrants and their plights. I think that a lot of this stems […] because of the communities of solidarity that support each other across issues for justice, who also see that it is strategic to unite our causes against those whose strategy is to divide us. […] Racism is so mainstream in the media and how things are framed. In particular, this narrative about how refugees get so many resources that should be spent on — fill in the blank — …poor people, Indigenous people, etcetera, etcetera... Your typical divide and conquer kind of strategy. Keeping people fighting over the crumbs of the pie... And not realizing that, we could just reallocate that money from policing, military, prisons, etcetra… There is more than enough to go around."

From Erika's perspective, undoing and unlearning racisms are a serious challenge for organizing immigrants towards place-based solidarities with Indigenous peoples. More than racism, it is more apt to describe immigrant racisms towards Indigenous peoples, as a settler-brand of racism – which isn't so much racism at all, rather – rooted in a coloniality of modernity (Mignolo, 2011; Mignolo and Walsh, 2018). The epistemic dominance was reflected in the following quote by Mei in discussing her opinion on Canadian residential schools. Mei was quick to identify their horrors, but was also quick to rationalize the schools' existence as a product of historical time, rather than constitutive of the nation-state. Moreover, her comparison to modern-day boarding schools was perhaps an indication that Mei lacked the systemic and structural nuance that Canadian residential schools operated genocidal and forced assimilative practices, separating families without consent. Regardless of the extent of her knowledge on the schools, it was clear that Mei understood, at least to some degree, the horrors that the schools enacted on Indigenous children and communities. She described her perspective that Indigenous reserves are primitive (not modern), and that those who do "integrate" into Canadian society are "successful stories" that media should

showcase more of. She explained her experiences of witnessing mainly "horrible" stories through Canadian-media's portray of Indigenous peoples and struggles:

> **Mei (Immigrant from China):** "I'm thinking maybe... on one half, I'm thinking that this is the right policy —at that time, in that situation. Put them in residential school... is maybe the only solution at that time. But I didn't expect... I was shocked they treat them like that. — I'm like... c'mon, the boarding school right now... only rich people can send kids to boarding school […] But they don't treat them like that. I'm not against boarding school. I think boarding schools can be organized very well. So that initial idea [of residential school] I think is good. Otherwise, how can they integrate with Canadian society, right? They don't speak the language. They don't know the culture. And the young kids… they have to be a country-builder for the future society. If they live with their parents in the reserve — and the skills they teach the kids — it's not suitable for modern society. They cannot live in that situation forever. Humans need to evolve. So that's the right thing to do for the parents... to give kids an updated education. But on the other hand, I was shocked by the treatment they get in residential school. They put nails on the kids. Harsh punishment. That is unimaginable. So, I think the government needs supervision. More supervision around that. But I also heard of... good stories. One of my Indigenous friends, he was adopted by a white couple. They raised him well. And they didn't treat him like second-class people or what. They loved him and treated him like their own kids. And he grow up... totally a healthy human being […] So there is good stories […] —I learned and heard a lot about horrible stories from media [about] the Canadian government['s mistreatment] —But that's just one side of the story. I think media should report another side of the story... which is how well those younger generations... Indigenous people integrate with Canadian society. I know there's people that claim their social benefit and then got drunk... Because Canadian government give them money to support them. But they just squandered it. But that's just a few percentage of them. Yeah... There is successful stories and I don't see that reported in the news a lot."

Mei's quote above was significant because it was one of the few socially-conservative quotes that appeared throughout the interviews. The lack of such opinion, however, should not be understood as a reflection all or most immigrants are socially-progressive. Notably, I did not ask participants for additional geographic or cultural identifications beyond their country of birth; and in the case of Mei, it is unknown which of the 56 ethnic groups in China she identifies with. It seems prudent to contextualize Mei's quote with the understanding that China operates hundreds of thousands of government-run residential schools for the many ethnic minorities that live within its state-borders. The schools in

China are said to model similar human rights abuses to that of Canadian residential schools, such as family separation, language assimilation and cultural control (Tasker, 2021). It could be that Mei's views on the contemporary operation of residential schools in China inform her perspectives on Canadian residential schools, specifically her argument that the schools could have been better and more accountable. Furthermore, it could also be assumed that a disproportionate lack of conservative responses was a result of participants wanting to avoid expressing opinions that they felt they may be negatively judged on. This was attempted to be remedied by the default use of pseudonyms, which I described in Chapter Three. The reality is that immigrants are in no way a monolith, and their perspectives are complex as they are diverse. Despite a lack of socially-conservative findings outlined in this chapter, it is recognized that there are many settlers in Canada, if not a majority, who believe that modernity or coloniality can be justified. The undoing of this modern-colonial epistemic dominance is posed to be one of the immense challenges in unsettling solidarities amongst immigrants. There is also something to be said with reading Mei's quote alongside analyses of model minority. The model minority concept is not solely a myth of white supremacist invention, and instead can also speak to what historian Vijay Prashad (2001) called a "[failure] to account for class privilege, as highly educated middle-and upper-class migrants arrive and 'succeed' (quoted in Parasram and Mannathukkaren, 2021, 8). This critical class analysis can all too often be obfuscated in studies exclusive to people of colour by focusing solely on their racial marginalization – and in the case of this study, the oppressions faced by immigrants. As history tells, "structural white supremacy […] does not require white […] bodies to perpetuate it; […] the interests of the privileged can be protected subconsciously by Others embedded in, and indebted to, the system (Parasram and Mannathukkaren, 2021, 9)

Most immigrants mentioned that they had limited, or even nil, interactions with Indigenous peoples, nor any close relationships or friendships. As a newer immigrant, Nadia expressed her confusion about the Indigenous reserve-system in Canada, and the isolation between those communities and hers. Her comments spoke to the challenges for immigrants to meet, interact, engage and build relationships with Indigenous people:

> **Nadia (Immigrant from Egypt): "**I feel weird about it. It's... uh... It's kind-of beyond my comprehension, as to why... Why don't they even... Why are they still living on the reserves…? Is that a choice? Or... or is the government keeping them there? Or putting some kind of barrier? Barriers don't have to be walls... but it could be financial. Or I honestly don't know. I'm not sure why they're not integrated within the community… And just [why doesn't] everyone feel like a sense of belonging in this country? We're all human beings. And we're all together. So... I don't even see Indigenous people when I walk down the street... or few people…"

Similarly, Masuma explained her understanding of the silos that exist between immigrant and Indigenous communities, and her perspectives on immigrants structural-ignorance about the Canadian-state. She explained her experiences attending an event hosted by the government that facilitated 'immigrant-Indigenous' reconciliation. She described the silos between immigrant and Indigenous communities are further challenged by the centrality of the Canadian-state as being one of the only actors facilitating cross-community dialogue. This finding is also affirmed in section 4.1.1 that referred to state-education/events as being one of the more common pathways for immigrants to learn about Canadian settler-colonialism. Further, Masuma described the challenges of facilitating immigrants towards political action arising from complex fears and perceptions of threats to their safety, which is also affirmed in section 4.2.1:

> **Masuma (Organizer): "**Immigrants […] come here and they think that colonization has never happened here […] They take their citizenship test, and there's nothing about Indigenous people. When they learn about Canada, they get all these stereotypes about Indigenous people. There's a lot of spiritual stereotypes around Indigenous people […] Me as a Muslim person… making wudoo. Making my ablution for prayer. I see a lot of similarities in the ways that Indigenous people

smudge. There's no medium, for having that understanding […] except for the Canadian government, mind you! So, I went to a forum that [connected] Indigenous women and Muslim women about their issues. And there's a bunch of Muslim women there that were immigrants, first-generation, um... Canadian citizens […] they're having conversations. And they're seeing a lot of understanding […] But the reality is that the Canadian government made this a program, for like 50 people, for not even a whole day. How do you expect anyone to really understand? These conversations aren't being had when people are going to ESL class. They aren't given sentences about how, y'know, residential schools […] There's this push for assimilation, and multiculturalism, and this neoliberalist discourse really gets into the minds of folks […] And, I feel like a lot of people come here, and they're like: 'I just want to be safe' […] There is a lot of grey area that is not being touched... And y'know, a lot of immigrants are also scared to get […] involved in [political] stuff, y'know. My parent's today… —I'm a Canadian citizen [but] they'll say: 'They'll take you away'. They're scared […] That's the reality of the... The state. We're all scared of the state. We're scared of the way the state is policing us."

Masuma's perceptions are unique due to her identity and positionality as a second-generation immigrant, an organizer, and member of the Muslim and Afghan diasporic communities. She described generational challenges of organizing older immigrants who "have profited off" Indigenous lands, as compared to the immense opportunities for change amongst young immigrants. This spoke to the one of the greatest obstacles related to organizing immigrants, cited by Martin Cannon (2012: 21), as having to "[upset] peoples' investments" in their perceptions of the nation-state and in "[considering] and [transforming] their own investment in and relationship with colonialism":

> **Masuma (Organizer):** The immigrant communities on their part… They're not doing the work. And First Nations… Indigenous communities are dealing with their own stuff. So, like, it's really on immigrant communities, and people like myself, who are doing this work to have these conversations. –And I need to say, the older generation of people like... —say they came here in the '70s or whatever… They do not want to have that conversation. Because they have profited off of this wealth. They own land. They're going to say: 'What do you mean? You want me to give my land back? No. I came to this country and I did all this, for this land. This is the fortune that I've made.' […] —But I think where I see the change coming in... is working with youth. The new generation of youth are having these conversations and they're doing the work. So, there is hope."

In this section, quotes by immigrant and organizer were highlighted to outline some of the various opportunities and challenges in organizing immigrants towards grassroots political engagement amidst the settler-colonial and climate crises. In summary, some of the challenges included settler-racisms, beliefs of modernity that lend to pervasive anti-Indigenous stereotypes, siloed communities, traumas related to safety, and immigrant feelings of un-belonging which in turn can demobilize political action. On the other hand, some of the opportunities included the celebration of cultures beyond whiteness and the generational changes amongst younger immigrants.

4.5   Summary of Findings

Four major thematic findings are outlined in this chapter. The central question of this thesis was how immigrants related to climate crisis and Canadian settler-colonialism. Findings related to this question are described in the first theme which was divided into three sub-themes: pathways that immigrants came to learn about Canadian-settler colonialism; perceptions of climate crisis; and perceptions of Indigenous-state relations. Among them, some of the notable findings found that there was a heavily-relied upon relational channels of intergenerational learning, whereby young people were taking on a role (either actively and passively) in informing their older family members about Canadian settler-colonialism. Similarly, in Davis' 2015 study (unpublished) on the politicization of settler Indigenous-solidarity activists, Davis points to the "dynamic constriction and circulation of settler-colonial narratives that are ongoing through[…] family conversations […] and through educational activities" (quoted in Davis et al., 2016, 13). Immigrant relational learning raises interesting questions for either future studies or for social

movements to consider opportunities of learning and teaching that are conducive for immigrant family-structures arising from their multigenerational households as well as the interpretive and translatory responsibilities of, and expectations on, immigrant-children. The findings also showed that the Canadian-state itself was one of the few organizing bodies to "facilitate learning" amongst immigrants through state-sponsored events and institutions, such as public-schools, settlement-agencies' English classes, the citizenship test, etc. Participants remarked that these sources of learning were said to be inadequate. Additionally, immigrants often recounted narratives of Canadian exceptionalism (as compared to their origin country) when discussing the role they perceived the Canadian state to play in addressing the climate crisis or in navigating Indigenous rights. Older immigrants, especially, did not perceive themselves to be impacted by climate change, and some immigrants raised the idea that being concerned about climate change was a privilege in light of not having to worry about their material survival in a new country.

The second theme regarded how immigrants related to grassroots political engagement, which was divided into two sub-themes: the first being traditional protest and the second being community-volunteering. The notable finding here was the difference of framing what was meant by grassroots political engagement. Immigrant responses to questions framed as community-volunteering were much richer than politically-charged questions associated with traditional protest. Importantly, the findings also showed that immigrant communities had long been practicing an extensive relational-ethic with one another, based on solidarity-building, shared struggles, reciprocity and mutual aid. Consequently, this exposed that immigrants were not unfamiliar with practicing grassroots action as is reflected in the powerful ways that immigrants have helped one another with their material struggles of survival. This also raised interesting questions for future areas of

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study, and especially for Western social movements to consider learning from and appreciating these existing structures of community-building that have been successfully set up, by and for immigrants, in light of inadequate state-supports. Perhaps most relevant for activist-scholars who identify as immigrants, or immigrant-activists, there is much consideration to be had with regards to how could these existing, effective structures could be utilized for deeper organizing, learning and teaching.

The third theme was around social movement organizers' approaches and practices of Indigenous-solidarity, which included: the prioritization acting with an understanding of the inherently different roles between non-Indigenous people and Indigenous title-and-rights-holders, a life-long process of self-interrogating Settler-identity and complicities, as well as attempts to create non-tokenizing relationships and accountability structures with those they are in solidarity with. I noted that many of the approaches of Indigenous-solidarity mentioned, such as reciprocity, mutual aid, and the significance of good relationships were similar to that of the community-building values shared by immigrants outlined in the second theme.

Lastly, the fourth and last theme was around the challenges and barriers for immigrants to engage in grassroots political action surrounding these crises. The findings demonstrated that some of the barriers preventing solidarity-building were the modern-colonial perceptions that immigrants held towards Indigenous peoples, settler-ignorance, the silo-ing of Immigrant and Indigenous communities, while opportunities pointed to generational change and salience arising from young immigrants wanting to confront these crises. The following concluding chapter contains further reflections about the research findings and relevant discussion.

CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion

This chapter provides a summary and closing reflection of the thesis' objectives and theoretical aims. Much of this study was about understanding how racialized immigrants in Nova Scotia perceive and relate to the twin crises of climate change and settler-colonialism while also exploring some of the challenges and barriers they face with respects to grassroots politics. Through these lines of inquiries, this thesis provided some insights into how the Canadian settler-colonial state demobilizes and perpetuates ignorance amongst immigrant-settlers amidst catastrophic crises of the present. However, as much as this thesis was about these objectives, this thesis was also a culmination of critical self-reflection during a pivotal and formative timeline that presented significant nuances to my political and organizing beliefs than those I had when I initially began this thesis project nearly five years ago. Given that many of the parameters of this study – such as the research questions and sample criteria – were acutely tied to my observations as an immigrant-settler activist, this thesis concludes with further critical reflection on the broader research process. These reflections are shared to convey the significance of the actual research process itself, as crucial to that of the final findings and ultimate objectives (Zurba et al., 2019, 1023).

5.1   Chapter-by-Chapter Summary

Using Western scientists' Lewis and Maslin's 2015 study as a jumping-off point, Chapter One introduced the thesis and the links between Canadian settler-colonialism and the climate crisis. In doing so, the thesis starts with the assertion that the climate crisis cannot be studied in isolation of settler-colonial analyses, and consequently, that the crises

are twinned and must be read together. As a background, I briefly outlined my own positionalities as a first-generation immigrant-settler, as well as my experiences with activism and climate-justice organizing. I did so in the spirit of, and being inspired by, radical activist-researchers and activist-scholars who complicate and problematize the Western ontological point that research should be objective, impersonal and without bias. The obvious contradiction here is that bias exists in all research, and that Western research, in general, is itself rooted in a Eurocentric history that "bear a clear stamp of the modernist and secularist bias of the Western liberal academy" (al-Ghazali, 2008). Parallel to that, by integrating social movement organizers as interview participants, this thesis attempted to showcase that social movements and movement-spaces are significant sites of research inquiry that possesses capabilities to "generate new knowledge, new theories and new questions" (Kelley, 2002, 8). By also explicitly placing myself throughout the thesis in practice of critical self-reflection, I tried to demonstrate that researcher-standpoints do not just come from nowhere but are also rooted in lived experiences, belief systems and their understandings of identities and place. Although my activist-bias was apparent throughout the thesis, the act of making this explicitly clear was done to honour transparency and researcher honesty.

In developing the study, reviewing the related literature, and through my personal observations as an immigrant-settler activist, three core concepts led to the research questions and objectives: (1) that, more than ever before, young people and settlers in Canada were mass-mobilizing to address the worsening climate crisis; (2) that many of those people, including myself and my peers, turned to Indigenous-solidarity as an active component of present-day climate-organizing (Davis, O'Donnell, and Shpuniarsky, 2007; Curnow and Helferty, 2020; Helferty, 2020); and (3) that despite masses of people of colour joining the climate justice movement, first-generation immigrants were nearly nowhere to be

found. These observations were sources of curiosity that ultimately informed the guiding questions of this research study, such as: what are the linkages between settler-colonialism, Indigenous-solidarity and climate struggles? What are the structural and systemic reasons that explain the lack of presence amongst first-generation racialized immigrants within grassroots-activist spaces? How do immigrants understand their relationship to the state and to Indigenous peoples as they settle on stolen Indigenous lands?

A broad theoretical undertaking was outlined in Chapter Two by building on settler-colonial theory in relation to the following themes undergirding the thesis: Canadian settler colonialism and its connections to the climate crisis; the contradictions of settler-environmentalism; the exaltation of immigrants as settler-state-subjects; immigrant-Indigenous relations; and the shortcomings of utilizing settler-colonial theory that centralizes the settler-subject rather than of decolonization or Indigenous resurgence. Within the chapter, I briefly discussed the historical incompatibility of Western ecological thought and Indigenous ontologies of land-relations. I explained how settler-environmental scholarship often lacks recognition of its constitutive settler-colonial features, and as such, much of the literature and analyses cited within the thesis came from Canadian studies and Indigenous resurgence cannons. However, it was relevant to note the increasing exceptions within conservation literature centering Indigenous ontologies of land, while complicating Western ones (Ms'ɨt No'kmaq et al, 2021; Bawaka Country et al., 2012; Bawaka Country et al., 2016; Artelle et al., 2019; Zurba et al., 2019, Zurba et al., 2019).

Chapter Two explained that settler-colonial theory was chosen for this thesis — not because it was the perfect or only theoretical framework that could frame the study — but because settler-colonial theory articulated and focused its attention on the "settler-subject". Additionally, settler-colonial theory was able to make sense of the connections between

settler-colonialism and western environmentalism, which was articulated in the sub-section on settler-environmentalism (2.2.1). In part, I expanded on Curnow and Helferty's question of settler-environmentalism — how do settlers do environmentalism? — as not only a question of doing, but a question of identity. I considered immigrant perceptions on the topics of climate and settler-colonial crises to be of settler-environmental substance, regardless of whether the settler thinks of themselves as an environmentalist or having done environmentalism.

In the second half of the chapter, I build on Sunera Thobani's theorizations of racial triangulation in Canada, and the historic exaltation of immigrants as settler-subjects. I considered how this technique of exaltation is part of an organizing logic of the Canadian-settler nation-state (bonding itself with the immigrant-subject) through modern-citizenship and multiculturalism policies. Reviewing and analyzing this logic was crucial for this thesis in order to understand some of the state-driven origins of settler-modern ignorance, and ultimately, how that ignorance primarily benefits the interests of the Canadian-state. The last two sections of Chapter Two highlights the theoretical critiques regarding the complex categorization of "settler-subjects" — noting that such categorizations have shifted across time. Specifically, I named that there was a gap and obfuscation of Black identities and positionalities within the thesis' use of racial triangulation. As well, I highlighted the critiques by Indigenous resurgence theorists that have exposed the dangers of placating settler-colonialism as inevitable, rather than escapable. I considered these to be significant criticisms of this thesis, and accordingly, the study should be read alongside these limitations.

Within Chapter Three I reviewed the study's methodologies while outlining the reasons and decisions behind the study's parameters such as participant sampling, inclusions and exclusions, and its use of thematic and narrative inquiry. Using long-form verbatim

participant quotes meant that I had to connect my analysis and discussion directly to what the participants were saying, while also minimizing my own activist-biases and providing space for the readers to make their own conclusions and interpretations. Semi-structured interviews allowed for frequent revisions and diversions to the respective interview guides, providing further opportunities to showcase reflexivity. Notably, within this chapter, I reflected on some of the major reflexive changes made to the thesis' design, such as amending the study to exclude Indigenous participants and interviews. Responsibilities of activist-scholarship must include consideration to the social movements and the generative politics that the scholarship aims to work with and alongside (Dixon, 2014; Fortier, 2017). As such, I viewed my methodological choices of utilizing narrative thematic analysis and settler-colonial theory as having the evident potential to reify an extractive colonial dynamic that would be unable to assess, analyze and rigorously apply the contributions of Indigenous participants. Despite the consequences of departing from the intended research design, and its eventual impact to the overall fluency of the thesis, I stand by and do not regret this decision. In making these reflexive changes known, I am reminded of activist-scholar Craig Fortier's (2007: 3) call-to-action "for other non-Indigenous academics to make transparent even the most vulnerable and shameful inadequacies of our research". Ultimately, this experience led to serious self-scrutiny and consideration regarding the moral imperatives and incompatibilities of settler-students engaging in Indigenous-methodologies. For other non-Indigenous student-researchers like myself, I encourage us to grapple with the fact that our student thesis research earn us ivory-tower degrees (uplifting our class status), but rarely uplifts participants in materially comparable manner.

Also within the chapter, I highlighted some of the gaps and flaws with the thesis' methodological choices and applications of narrative and thematic analysis. Although the use

of narrative methods were intended to platform the unique, complex and varied individual stories, perceptions and opinions of the participants, the use of thematic data analysis inadvertently collapsed some of the nuance and complexities of individual narratives, opinions and perceptions. Furthermore, I noticed that my decisions to strongly apply participant anonymity meant that I missed the opportunity to inquire, collect and further analyze demographical information from the participants. Besides the limited exclusion and inclusion criteria of the sample populations, participant intersectionality such as class-status, ethnic histories, family-structures and occupations were decontextualized. In recognition that these factors affect individual's belief systems, positionalities, opinions and perceptions, an inadequacy of the thesis was its lack of inquiry to include these descriptors for deeper analysis and more nuanced findings. Particularly, by focusing the scope of the study to a broad criteria of racialized first-generation immigrants, the study explored immigration as a racialized experience, but fell short in making robust classed analysis beyond its sample exclusion criteria. As an example, in the findings, some participants highlighted that they felt the climate crisis was not materially-relevant to them due to their preoccupation of struggling and settling in an new country (ie. finding a job, learning English). It's imagined that such struggles would be felt differently under varying classed experiences. Exploring those nuances would have likely enriched the findings, but nonetheless, presents fertile ground for future studies and inquiries.

Chapter Four contains the thesis' findings and related discussion. The findings are arranged into four major themes, further marked into a series of sub-themes. The first theme answered the central question of the thesis: how do immigrants perceive and relate to climate crisis and Canadian settler-colonialism? This first theme was divided into three sub-themes: pathways that immigrants came to learn about Canadian-settler colonialism;

perceptions of climate crisis; and perceptions of Indigenous and Canadian-state relations. Most immigrant-participants expressed that discussion and dialogue on such topics are somewhat rare for them, and that when they do occur, it happens in discrete and indirect ways. While some of the findings demonstrated the relational and intergenerational channels of learning amongst immigrants, the findings also highlighted the role of the Canadian-state in administering learning on these fronts – as evident in participants' mention of their experiences with public education, settlement agencies, Canadian media, and government-affiliated events. Given the settler-colonial politics of recognition and the state's prolific gains from reproducing and advancing settler-colonialism, this thesis also points to the Canadian-state, itself, as being the most significant systemic barrier in demobilizing immigrants from grassroots political engagement and genuine learning on topics about climate crisis, settler-colonialism and immigrant-settler-identity.

The second thematic finding regarded how immigrants related to grassroots political engagement, which was then further divided into two sub-themes: the first being traditional protest and the second being community-volunteering. The third theme was around social movement organizers' approaches and practices of Indigenous-solidarity, which included: the prioritization acting with an understanding of the inherently different roles between non-Indigenous people and Indigenous title-and-rights-holders, a life-long process of self-interrogating Settler-identity and complicities, as well as attempts to create non-tokenizing relationships and accountability structures with those they are in solidarity with. Lastly, the fourth and last theme was around the challenges and barriers for immigrants to engage in grassroots political action surrounding these crises. The findings demonstrated that some of the barriers preventing solidarity-building were the modern-colonial perceptions that immigrants held towards Indigenous peoples, settler-ignorance, and the silo-ing of

Immigrant and Indigenous communities. On the other hand, some opportunities for solidarity-building included generational changes arising from young immigrants attempting to confront these crises, as well as practices of mutual aid amongst immigrant communities.

This thesis began with an observation that racialized immigrants, by-and-large, were not engaged in grassroots politics with respects to climate and settler-colonial crises. This observation was tied to an assumption that understanding immigrant perceptions and relations to the twin crises was a necessary precursor in order to organize immigrants towards grassroots politics. Although it can be argued that this study generally demonstrated that first-generation immigrants are uninformed about settler-colonialism, the climate crisis and their settler-identity, the study's findings contradicted many of the internal and initial assumptions and observations I held about immigrant's (non)engagement within grassroots politics. Much of these contradictions arose within the findings that explored immigrant perceptions and relations to community-volunteering, and within their recounts of engaging in solidarity and mutual aid with their diasporic-communities. Particularly, the findings showcased that many immigrants were, in fact, engaged in grassroots politics, albeit not within traditional-activist spaces nor under the auspices of climate justice or Indigenous-solidarity. Rather, immigrants shared stories of being mobilized by efforts of solidarity, reciprocity and mutual aid through political-issues and within institutions that they perceived to be more materially-relevant to them, such as settlement agencies, their workplaces, and with their relations. In hindsight, I recognize that my initial observations to locate (with the intent to organize) racialized immigrants within grassroots politics was a result of my activist-biases that problematically attempted to define what was and wasn't grassroots action surrounding the twin crises. This is not to argue that racialized immigrants are "off the hook" when it comes to redressing settler-privileges and complicities simply because some

of them are engaged in grassroots politics. Here, I'm reminded of the words of Rita Dhammon, who talks about an "ethos of 'unsettled solidarities' […] Where I, where we, are never outside of struggle, everyone is 'structurally implicated in the dispossession of Indigenous lands" (in conversation with Snelgrove and Corntassel, 2014, 25). How struggle is defined, where struggle occurs and how we, uniquely, are tethered to struggle are pertinent inquiries arising from this study.

5.2   Closing Reflections

A consistent challenge throughout this research process was the sheer nature of its contradictions. Not only was the theoretical aspect of the work vastly difficult – in part due to the broad scope that I had chosen – but I had also self-imposed great pressure on the principled aspects of activist-scholarship. I often told myself that material organizing was a far nobler priority than working on an isolated thesis that theorized topics of solidarity. For much of this research process, these contradiction felt exceptionally demoralizing, if not shameful. This logic ultimately factored into an on-and-off relationship with this research project spanning nearly five years. During this time, my political organizing shifted away from climate justice spaces, and instead, towards migrant justice and structure-based organizing with trade unions. Despite my time and efforts centering and advocating for other pertinent issues, at no point in this transition did I feel that I stopped being in service to climate justice principles. My location to struggle may have changed but I remained tethered to it. Likewise, this thesis showed that some immigrant-settlers, such as Zainab, are engaged in struggle within the communities they feel most tethered to. Similar to the social movement organizers featured in this thesis, Zainab too, practiced principles of reciprocity,

solidarity, and mutual aid based on her positionality, experiences and location in the world. Like myself, her present work occurred elsewhere to climate justice. And yet, it strongly felt as though Zainab and I were kin to similar, if not the same, struggles.

My work now, rooted in migrant justice and trade unionism, has changed many of my beliefs around identity-politics and political-organizing compared to when I began developing this study. Paying respects to many of the critiques forged by Indigenous resurgence theorists, I care much less about centering the settler-subject including settler-based inquiry. Even though the initial research questions that grounded this study were deeply embedded in my own positionality and activist-perceptions, I noticed that as my politics transformed, the initial research design was no longer an accurate reflection of my activist assumptions. Additionally, the literature on topics related to this thesis swelled considerably during the study's timeline. As academic debates and analyses on the complicity of racialized-settlers became increasingly acute, I struggled to continue with a research topic that was laden with contradictions and critiques. I now recognize, in part, that such logic was a way of self-soothing my own settler-anxieties and guilt in undertaking and theorizing these complex topics. As many activist-scholars have proved otherwise, research and movement-work are not mutually exclusive. It is hoped that this thesis contributed in demonstrating that social movements inquiries are rich sites of knowledge production with the potential to subvert the traditional roles of researcher and researched.

May we never allow our contradictions and anxieties to immobilize from the complex and necessary work of unsettling solidarities. Onwards.

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APPENDIX A: Approval from Dalhousie's Research Ethics Board

Social Sciences & Humanities Research <mark>Ethics</mark> Board
Letter of <mark>Approval</mark>

March 06, 2020
Tina Oh
Management\School for Resource and Environmental Studies

Dear Tina,

REB #:   2019-5022
Project Title: Exploring the Role and Responsibilities of Immigrants / Settlers of Colour Amidst the
Climate Crisis and Indigenous Resistance

Effective Date:
Expiry Date: March 05, 2021
The Social Sciences & Humanities Research <mark>Ethics</mark> Board has reviewed your application for research involving
humans and found the proposed research to be in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on *Ethical
Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. This <mark>approval</mark> will be in effect for 12 months as indicated above. This
<mark>approval</mark> is subject to the conditions listed below which constitute your on-going responsibilities with respect to
the ethical conduct of this research.
Sincerely,

Dr. Karen Foster, Chair
R1030939
Dalhousie, School of Resources and Environmental Studies, Research Award 2019

APPENDIX B: Sample Interview Guide for Immigrant Participants

Immigration Experience & Life in Canada
1. Can you briefly introduce yourself, and tell me about yourself?
2. When did you immigrate to Canada? Why did you immigrate? What brought you to NS?
3. Do you remember what impressions you had about Canada, prior to immigrating?
4. What do you like and love about living in NS?
5. What are challenges or difficulties that you faced while living in NS/Canada?
6. How and where did you find community and friends once you came to Canada?
   → Was there anyone or any group that helped you with getting settled?
7. What type of news are you interested in, and that you follow?
8. How do you keep up to date with Canadian news?
   → How would you describe your engagement with Canadian politics?

Indigenous peoples & struggles in Canada
1. Since moving to Canada, what opportunities have you had in learning about Canadian history and how Canada became a country? Where and when did you learn this?
2. Can you share any memories of when you first learned about Indigenous peoples and their struggles in Canada? What did you learn? How did it make you feel?
3. What's your opinion and perspective on the Canadian government's relationship with Indigenous peoples?

Climate Change
1. How does climate change make you feel? What do you think causes climate change?
2. How often do you talk about climate change with your family, friends or in your community? What do these conversations entail? How do they respond?
3. Do you consider climate change to be a crisis that impacts you?
4. In your opinion, is society is doing enough to address climate change?

Taking Political-Action
1. What is your opinion on community-volunteering?
2. What are your experiences engaging in community-volunteering?
   → How did you get involved? How do you feel engaging in those activities?
3. Are there any social movements that you care about and why?
4. What is your opinion on protest, activism or political-action?
   → Do you see them as good things to do? Useful? Are some better than others?
   → Have you participated in any of these activities? Why/Why not?
5. What does solidarity mean to you?

APPENDIX C: Sample Interview Guide for Organizer Participants

Biographical
1. Can you briefly introduce yourself, and tell me about yourself?
2. What type of organizing work have you done related to the climate crisis and Indigenous solidarity?
3. How long have you lived in so-called Nova Scotia? Can you share any reflections about your relationship to these lands?

Organizing and Movement-Building
1. How do you define "organizing"?
2. How did you first get involved with "organizing"?
3. Why do you engage in social movements and collective work? Any reflections on how it differs from individual-action?
4. As an organizer, what are some challenges you've encountered in working to build and bring new people into the movement? What are some opportunities and joy that you face when doing this work?
    - → If any, what are the differences you face when bringing white people into the movement vs. racialized people?
    - → Do you have any experiences organizing with immigrants?

Organizing Indigenous-Solidarity
1. What does "solidarity" mean to you?
2. Can you share some of your experiences organizing and engaging in Indigenous-solidarity?
    - → Why do you do this work?
3. What are challenges and difficulties you see in Indigenous solidarity-building?
    - → How do you think they can be overcome?

Organizing within Climate and Settler-colonial crises
1. In your opinion and in your experiences organizing, how does the climate crisis and settler-colonial crises relate?
2. What does it mean for you to organize in a time of overlapping and compounding crises?