Standing By and Doing Nothing About Genocide in Sudan and Canada

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to understand how riverain Sudanese stand by to genocide targeting peoples of Sudan’s peripheries, and how non-Indigenous Canadians stand by to genocide targeting Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Influenced by Indigenous relational approaches to research, this study was designed collaboratively with scholars and activists targeted by genocide in both contexts. Employing constructivist grounded theory methods (Charmaz, 2008) I have conducted in-depth interviews with 44 riverain Sudanese and 18 non-Indigenous Canadians complicit in genocide.

Genocides such as these destroy social figurations (Elias, 1978), the value-laden networks of relationships that define us. Reflecting this I uncovered two grounded theories of standing by to genocide, one for riverain Sudanese and one for non-Indigenous Canadians, with four relational dimensions in common:

1. relationships with place and their failure to connect across vast distances with those targeted by genocide;

2. relationships within their communities, and the colonial nature of relations between those complicit and those targeted by genocide;
3. a mesh of colonial ideas originating in Britain — capitalism, liberal values, the nation state, “modern” bureaucratized institutions, formal education, and race — that legitimize genocidal relationships in both contexts; and

4. Resulting from these relational networks a habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) that predisposes rather than prevents riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians from standing up.

Kinship relations in Sudan facilitate the colonizing riverain figuration monopolizing power at the centre, relegating peoples targeted by genocide to the peripheries. Riverain Sudanese both connect with and “other” peoples targeted in ways that facilitate doing nothing about genocide. Non-Indigenous Canadians have instead engineered themselves in a binary relationship, distant from, in contrast, and superior to Indigenous peoples in Canada. Their standing by is facilitated by the few and often poor relationships they have with Indigenous people and their denial of racism and domination. In both contexts the disposition of standing by can be explained along dimensions of (in)action, knowledge, feeling, and motivation.

This theory suggests that even modest changes could transform these networks of genocidal relationships in ways that would facilitate riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians standing up.
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Note on Transliteration

In transliterating Arabic words, I have generally followed the transliteration system used by the International Journal of Middle East Studies, omitting diacritical marks, with the exception of the letter ‘ayn which transliterated as ‘. Arabic names are spelled according to the person’s preferred English spelling when known or accepted English spelling otherwise. Accepted English spellings are also used for place names if available.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

2017 Word of the Year: “complicit” (Dictionary.com, 2017)

Many have labelled the persistent and disproportionate targeting of the peoples of Sudan’s peripheries as structural violence and violent conflict genocide. While enormous efforts have been made (in the West) to mobilize the Sudanese government, foreign governments, and the United Nations to end atrocities in places such as Darfur, little attention has been given to the way in which riverain-Sudanese people have stood by and done nothing to stop genocide. Yet scholarship suggests that their turning away dehumanizes those targeted and their silence normalizes abhorrent acts, creating a culture of impunity that empowers those who carry out genocide (Bar-On, 2001; Staub, 2010).

Canadians may be quick to judge Sudanese and dismiss genocide as something that happens only in “those types of countries.” However, as a non-Indigenous Canadian, I too have stood by to the persecution of Indigenous peoples in my own country. My European ancestors depopulated Canada of Indigenous peoples, took their resources, and forcibly tried to assimilate those who survived. Further, on my watch, Indigenous people have been denied rights essential to their survival as individuals and collectives, while the Canadian government has pursued a covert policy to destroy them as distinct peoples. So, I too am complicit in genocide.

In this thesis, I examine the inaction of those complicit in destroying a people to further our understanding of processes of genocide and, more importantly, to illuminate entry points for interrupting it. To this end, I explore:

1. How non-Indigenous people stand by to genocide targeting Indigenous peoples in Canada, and
2. How riverain-Sudanese people stand by to genocide targeting peoples of Sudan’s peripheries.
This exploration uncovers two grounded theories (Charmaz, 2008) about standing by and doing nothing about genocide in one’s own country, one for riverain Sudanese and the other for non-Indigenous Canadians. While distinct, these theories share four relational dimensions:

- the engineering of the complicit people as the colonizer and the targeted as the colonized;
- relationships within communities complicit in genocide, and colonial relations between those complicit and those targeted by genocide;
- a mesh of colonial ideas originating in Britain that legitimize genocidal relationships in both contexts; and
- resulting from these relational networks, a habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) that predisposes rather than prevents riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians from standing up.

The word “genocide” has led to considerable confusion and debate in popular and academic circles. For this reason, I begin this chapter by defining the term “genocide.” This definition clarifies my decision to study genocide in both Sudan and Canada, contexts often construed as opposites. I go on to explain the phrase “standing by and doing nothing” about genocide and how I arrived at this conceptualization. I then provide an overview of historical and contemporary processes of genocide in Sudan and Canada demonstrating that Indigenous peoples in Canada and peoples of Sudan’s peripheries have been targeted with a range of genocidal practices. This perspective led me to the development of a grounded theory with explanatory power across both contexts. This grounded theory illuminates dimensions of standing by and doing nothing about genocide in both places that I would have overlooked had I researched Sudan or Canada in isolation. I end this chapter with an overview of the thesis chapters.

What Genocide Means

Genocide has been committed throughout history, and throughout the world. However, it was not until the middle of the 20th century that it first was named and theorized, and its definition continues to be contested. American/Polish/Jewish lawyer, Raphael Lemkin (1900–1959) coined the term “genocide” and championed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) (A/RES/260, 1948). Lemkin (1945) argued that genocide is the attempt to destroy a people but not necessarily to kill the individuals who
comprise that people. He explained that genocide can be accomplished using a range of “techniques”:

[T]he term does not necessarily signify mass killings although it may mean that. More often it refers to a coordinated plan aimed at destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups, so that these groups wither and die like plants that have suffered a blight. The end may be accomplished by the forced disintegration of political and social institutions, of the culture, of the people, of their language, their national feelings, and their religion. It may be accomplished by wiping out all basis of personal security, liberty, health, and dignity. When these means fail the machine-gun can always be utilized as a last resort. Genocide is directed against a national group as an entity and the attack on individuals is only secondary to the annihilation of the national group to which they belong. (para. 5)

According to Lemkin (1944), genocidal processes are colonial:

Genocide has two phases: one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. This imposition, in turn, may be made upon the oppressed population, which is allowed to remain, or upon the territory alone, after removal of the population and the colonization by the oppressor’s own nationals. (p. 79)

While colonialism — the political control, occupation, and exploitation of those from another land — is intrinsic to Lemkin’s conception of genocide, mass killings are not (McDonnell & Moses, 2005; Moses, 2010). In the words of Dirk Moses (2010), a historian who has analyzed Lemkin’s ideas about genocide, “Genocide for Lemkin, then, was a special form of foreign conquest, occupation, and often warfare. It was necessarily imperial and colonial in nature” (p. 26). Not surprisingly, Lemkin’s definition of genocide was considered a threat to the interests of colonizing nations, and their representatives modified it before its codification in the Genocide Convention (A/RES/260, 1948).

Lemkin’s original conceptualization of genocide remained unused until it was revived, by Indigenous activists (Chrisjohn & Young, 2006; Churchill, 1997; Mako, 2012) and scholars

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1See Chapter 2 for a description of how this occurred.
working in settler-colonial contexts (Barta, 2000; Moses, 2004; Palmer, 1998; Tatz, 1999), to make sense of the way Indigenous people have been targeted for destruction. It is their theorizing of what is known in genocide studies’ literature as “colonial genocide,” that I draw on in this thesis; although, I am unconvinced of the need for the qualification “colonial” (See: Palmer, 1998). I refer to processes aiming to destroy peoples in Sudan and Canada simply as genocide and draw attention to the coloniality of genocide where appropriate.

I define genocide as a practice that targets a people for destruction, in particular, a practice that targets the ties that hold a people together, rather than the lives of a collection of individuals alone. Borrowing from the sociologist Norbert Elias (1978), I argue that genocide destroys a “social figuration,” i.e., a power laden network of dynamic interdependencies. I use the term “figuration” rather than “group” to emphasize that genocide kills relationships (See: Powell, 2007) not necessarily human beings. A figuration is a relational network, while a group is an assortment of individuals. I adopt this perspective of genocide not only to facilitate a sustained, contextualized, and in-depth analysis of the phenomenon; but because, as I later demonstrate, these characteristics are particularly germane to understanding how many often stand by and do nothing about it.

Bystander or Standing By?

“Standing by” is commonly understood as learning about an unacceptable act and doing nothing to stop it, in this case: acts of genocide targeting the social figuration of peoples in Sudan’s peripheries and Indigenous peoples in Canada. For the most part, genocide scholars define a “bystander,” an “ordinary person” (Barnett, 1999), by what they are not, i.e., a perpetrator or a victim of genocide (Staub, 1989). However, use of the term “bystander” as a noun is problematic. As Dan Bar-On (2001) points out, standing by is a behaviour not an identity, such as “woman,” “teacher,” or “settler.” Someone targeted by genocide can also stand by. That being said, the inter-relationship between behaviour and identity is crucial in genocidal contexts. As such, my research focuses on how members of figurations complicit in genocide, non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese, stand by to genocide in their own countries.
Though I often use the phrase “standing by and doing nothing” for emphasis, according to Ernesto Verdeja (2012), standing by to genocide is not, in fact, doing nothing — the apparent indifference of standing by is an act. It is an act that sends a message to those perpetrating genocide, giving them consent for what would otherwise be impermissible and morally abhorrent (Bar-On, 2001; Kahn, 2009; Staub, 1989). Those standing by have power to stop genocide by withdrawing their consent. In not speaking up, they become morally and politically, if not legally, responsible; in other words, they become complicit (Barnett, 1999). On a continuum of complicity to genocide, actors who stand by and do nothing fall somewhere in the middle, those who resist or act in solidarity with the victims are at one end, and the perpetrators are at the other (Barnett, 1999).

While for any number of reasons witnesses to genocide may feel unable to act when a specific violation is being committed, they may be able to intervene later. For example, Indigenous children in the Indian Residential School system in Canada could do very little when they saw their classmates being abused; however, as adults, they have come forward to serve as witnesses to the crimes committed. On the other hand, some of those who stand by are supportive of genocidal acts and/or processes. While they refrain from committing or choreographing violence themselves, they voice their support or act in indirect ways to enable the perpetrators. For example, in Sudan I interviewed Mahmoud, an academic whose writings have been used to justify genocidal acts.

In the middle of the complicity continuum are those who passively watch or look away from genocidal acts. Where a particular instance of standing by falls on the continuum depends on the bystander’s circumstances and their volition. The idea of a continuum is helpful as it reflects that genocide is a dynamic phenomenon. One’s participation in it changes over time and across space due to both internal and external factors. The qualitative data I collected for this thesis does not measure the level of complicity of the riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadian participants; in other words, my research is unhelpful in judging them. However, the data illuminate characteristics of standing by at different points along this continuum.

Some scholars argue that instead of falling along a continuum, those who stand by are indistinguishable from perpetrators; they are simply criminals who missed their chance to offend.
(Gushee, as cited in Barnett, 1999). Some of the scholarship on settler colonialism makes these claims about non-Indigenous people in Canada (Barker, 2009). In support of this view, those standing by can be groomed to become perpetrators through watching and providing indirect support to those carrying out genocidal acts (Arnott, personal communication, August 1, 2014; Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008). Further, claiming to be a bystander is a classic defence to charges of genocide. Nazi Adolf Eichmann is a notable example of a perpetrator who claimed he was just a logistician following orders (Barnett, 1999). A number of the Sudanese politicians I interviewed, who had at one time been part of Sudan’s inner circle of political power, may be viewed as indistinguishable from perpetrators.

As a researcher, who is also committed to interrupting genocide, I must determine whether or not defining standing by as a form of complicity serves a purpose other than condemning those who do nothing. Does acknowledging one’s complicity in standing by motivate riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians to change course or merely facilitate denial and further inaction? At the beginning of this research, I suspected that, politically or rhetorically, the concept “standing by” would resonate with non-Indigenous people and riverain Sudanese in ways that the concept “perpetrator” would not. Experience with my research participants suggests that the concept “standing by” does engage people, provides an entry point for talking about complicity, and may transform interactions. However, to do so it must be fully explained and used deliberately to avoid thinking of standing by as innocent, as in the phrase “innocent bystander.”

In this thesis, I demonstrate that standing by is an interaction in the context of relationships. Embracing relationality and using “standing by” as a verb, rather than “bystander” as a noun, also resonates in important ways with some of the worldviews of Sudanese peoples and Indigenous peoples in Canada whose languages are verb- rather than noun-based. This approach draws attention to the agency of those standing by, no matter how they are positioned. At the same time, relationality acknowledges that those standing by to genocide are embedded within contexts that, in turn, shape their actions. This perspective has also helped me to clarify that the aim of this research is to understand a way of interacting, rather than to merely condemn or excuse people for being bystanders.
Connecting with the Literature

I will not dedicate much time to reviewing the genocide studies’ literature on bystanders here for a couple of reasons. First, following grounded theory method I am uncovering theory inductively from the data rather than deductively applying existing theory to the data. Therefore, the justification for my theory is its goodness of fit with the data, not whether it fills a gap in, or appropriately illustrates, a theory from the literature. Further, my research does not easily fit the genocide studies’ literature on bystanders and forcing it to fit would risk distorting the findings. As I have explained in detail elsewhere (Johnston, unpublished), this literature is largely positivist and devoid of Indigenous perspectives, including the literature on colonial genocide to which my work is more connected. The empirical basis for theories on bystanders to genocide is limited to retrospective accounts of bystanders to the Holocaust (Hondius, 2007). While there have been limited attempts to apply research on bystanding to the genocides in Rwanda (Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008); Bosnia (Lucic, 2008); and what is now Turkey (Akçam, 1999); for the most part, this work is not empirically grounded and the researchers raise doubts on the applicability of bystander theories to their respective contexts. These doubts foreshadow my concerns about the applicability of these theories in Canada and Sudan. Finally, much of the literature on the bystander extrapolates to Nazi controlled Europe from laboratory-based, social psychology experiments. Largely conducted in the United States, this research occludes the importance of complexity and context in attempting to control for so called extraneous variables.

At the same time, there are connections and contradictions between existing theories on the bystander and my research. Rather than ignore these, I acknowledge them as they arise at the end of, and sometimes throughout, the chapters where I discuss my findings. Among these are theories about keeping distance (Barnett, 1999), which I discuss in Chapters 4 and 7; cultural reasons for standing by (Dan Bar-On, 2001; Koonz, 2003; Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002; Staub, 1989); psychological reasons for standing by (Bandura, 1999; Latané & Darley, 1970); and power and politics (Staub, 1989; 2010), which I discuss in Chapters 5 and 8. In Chapters 6 and 9 I discuss lack of awareness (Barnett, 1999; Staub, 1989; Tindale, et al., 2002; Verdeja, 2012); fear (Barnett, 1999; Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008); and self-interest (Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008). The social psychology literature also posits intrinsic connections between emotion and cognition (Storbeck & Clore, 2007) and the importance of emotion in motivation (Barhight,
Hubbard, & Hyde, 2013; Smith & Leiserowitz, 2014), reaffirming much of what Indigenous knowledges assert, and my research findings confirm, about holistic knowledge (See: Chapters 6 and 9).

Cultural and postcolonial scholars use different terminology to address standing by to genocide, including “othering” (Said, 2003) and “beneficiaries of genocide” (Mamdani, 1996). Furthermore, the concept of “witnessing,” used in some methodologies Indigenous to what is now Canada seems particularly relevant to this study (See: Regan, 2010; Hunt, 2018). Some research by whiteness and settler colonial studies’ scholars is relevant as well (D’Arcangelis, 2015; Thobani 2007). Sara Ahmed’s (2004) work on the stranger, particularly on emotion, connects to my research in important ways (See: Chapters 6 and 9) as does her work on racism. There is also burgeoning popular writing on standing by, particularly by white liberals, in reaction to the rise of white-supremacist discourse and hate-crimes associated with Donald Trump’s presidency, and the “#metoo” movement that offers interesting theoretical insight (“Don’t be a bystander, become an upstander,” 2016.; Langelan, 2017; Martocci, 2016; Miller, 2017).

Techniques of Genocide

Though discourse on genocide commonly refers to “acts of genocide”\(^2\) and “types of genocide,”\(^3\) in this thesis I use Lemkin’s original conceptualization of a range of “techniques of genocide.” By clearly distinguishing the “what” of genocide (the destruction of a people) from the “how” (the techniques), Lemkin’s approach highlights rather than obscures the crime in question.\(^4\) Furthermore, Lemkin’s “techniques” — he identified political, social, cultural, economic, biological, and physical techniques — are empirically derived based on his analysis of genocide under the Third Reich and so lend themselves to empirical analysis (Lemkin, 1944).

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\(^2\) The Genocide Convention (A/RES/260, 1948) specifies killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction, preventing births, and forcibly transferring children.
\(^3\) For example, cultural genocide, genocide by attrition, colonial genocide, political genocide, autogenocide.
\(^4\) The conflation of mass killings, an act of genocide, with genocide itself distracts from the actual crime.
The techniques of genocide used determine how people stand by to genocide. As such, I describe the techniques used in Sudan and Canada. Scholarship on genocidal episodes targeting specific figurations and isolated techniques of genocide in Sudan (Beny & Hale, 2015) and Canada (Woolford & Benvenuto, 2014; Woolford, Benvenuto, & Hinton, 2014) have been drawn together in recent edited collections and special issues of journals. However, this scholarship does not consider how multiple techniques are deployed together against different figurations over an extended period of time. In the following sections, I show how these techniques work in consort to destroy targeted figurations. I rely, for the most part, on secondary research, which varies in quality and rigour (from excellent to poor or anecdotal). To help readers contextualize these techniques I include historical timelines for Sudan and Canada at Appendix A.

As I discuss in Chapter 2, it is not that all genocidal techniques are used simultaneously against all peoples targeted. Rather they constitute a repertoire that agents of genocide draw on if and when necessary. I argue that genocidal attacks are not random and isolated but are connected and work systematically to destroy one social figuration after another. My account of genocidal techniques employed in Canada and Sudan is far from exhaustive. Due to the diversity of genocidal techniques, documentation of their use is dispersed in the literature; and as some techniques have become so ubiquitous as to be normal, or hidden from view, they have received little attention in research. Moreover, most scholars in Sudan are riverain and most scholars in Canada are non-Indigenous. Their failure to research these techniques could, in and of itself, be considered standing by to genocide.

Techniques of genocide in Sudan.

Political techniques.

When Sudan gained its independence from Britain in 1956, it was a bifurcated state (Mamdani, 1996), with a “British-style” administration governed by and for the hegemonic riverain peoples living at the geographic centre of the country and a Native Administration for controlling the

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5 Though I draw on Mamdani’s work on governance and colonization in Africa, like many scholars of Sudan, I have concerns with his scholarship on the genocide in Darfur (See the discussion thread in the African Arguments blog [http://africanarguments.org/] beginning with de Waal’s post in 2009).
diverse peoples of the country’s peripheries. The system of Native Administration, which was instituted during the second colonial period and persists to the present, coopted and modified some aspects of the traditional institutions of governance, while it undermined and destroyed others to facilitate colonial domination. Traditional leaders were made accountable to the colonial government rather than to their own communities. Leaders who resisted this arrangement were killed. A notable, though certainly not exclusive, example was Ali Dinar (1856–1916), Sultan of the Fur, who died resisting an Anglo-Egyptian invasion. Stripped of political and military power, leaders were relegated to appointments as administrators, tax collectors, and judges (Abdul-Jalil, Mohammed, & Yousuf, 2007). In other words, Native Administration provided the illusion of local control for tribes of the peripheries, while it substantively denied their sovereignty. At the same time, the system effectively excluded members of tribes of the peripheries from accessing the “modern” institutions centred in Khartoum (see Figure 1), which served the more “civilized” riverain tribes, for example a parliamentary legislature, government bureaucracy, political associations, labour unions, schools, universities, health care facilities, and financial institutions.

While Sudan’s independence from the British was an opportunity to bring the country’s diverse peoples together in a legitimate social contract and to create an inclusive national identity, the opportunity was passed over by successive democratic and military governments (Deng, 1995). Instead, an elite Sudanese “community of the state” (Gallab, 2011) — largely composed of an Arabized Muslim, educated-elite from the riverain tribes (Ja’aliyyin, Shayqiyya, and Danaqla) — stepped into the role of colonizer left vacant by the British and continued to weaken the figurations of the peripheries through political means. Peoples of the centre become citizens, while peoples of the peripheries remained subjects (Mamdani, 1996).

Considering the tribes of the peripheries “primitive” and unqualified to lead themselves and the nation as a whole (Khalid, 2003), the Effendiyya6 perpetuated the bifurcated state. With the consent of the British, peoples from the southern, western, and eastern parts of Sudan were not represented in the negotiations for independence. They were then underrepresented in post-independence democratic institutions, including the governments of their own territories. The

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6A Turkish term meaning “lords,” used to refer to the political elite.
Figure 1. The land once called Sudan and its peoples. Copyright 2017 Koen Van Rossum
handful of representatives of the peripheries who were permitted to participate were, “excluded…from all the vital decisions” (Khalid, 2003, p. 99). The dominance of political positions in the Sudanese government by the riverain tribes is documented in the “Black Book” *(Al kitab al aswad, 2004)*, which became a manifesto of sorts for opposition/rebel movements in Darfur, the peripheral areas to the west. In Chapter 5, I discuss the unequal distribution of political power in Sudan further and examine how it facilitates riverain Sudanese standing by. In addition, I explore how the prolonged exposure of riverain Sudanese to Western institutions has alienated them from their own culture, which in turn, has made it easier for them to look down on and dehumanize peoples of the peripheries (See also Chapter 10).

Denial of the sovereignty of the tribes of the peripheries was also accomplished through the persecution of their legitimate leaders (as in the example of Ali Dinar). In the postcolonial period, community leaders have been harassed, imprisoned, tortured, and executed both judicially and extra-judicially, particularly in the context of the second Sudanese civil war (1983–2005), in the South; 7 the counterinsurgency in the Nuba Mountains (early 1990s); 8 and the 1989 coup that brought the current regime, led by Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir, to power. 9

The Sudanese government has consistently disregarded the human rights of and its legal obligations toward figurations outside the centre, which are enshrined in contracts, legislation, and the constitution. Without political representation or other forms of political power, peoples of the peripheries have had few channels to hold the Sudanese government accountable when they fail to deliver on their promises. Extensive measures were put in place to ensure political power for peoples of the southern peripheries under the *Comprehensive Peace Agreement between The Government of The Republic of The Sudan and The Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Sudan People’s Liberation Army* (2005). However, these measures were “too little, too late,” and the Northern government largely reneged on its promises. In 2011, the Southern Sudanese despaired of gaining fair representation within Sudan and opted to separate. Moreover, the agreement contained no provisions for the political representation of peoples of the northern peripheries.

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With the separation of the South, there are no guarantees of political power sharing among the peoples of the North or political reform.

**Economic techniques.**

 Appropriation of the resources and lands of peoples of the peripheries is a fundamental economic technique of genocide employed in Sudan. In precolonial times and during the *Turkiyya* period (1821–1885), resources (e.g., slaves, unprocessed gold, forest and animal products) were extracted through mercantile-style colonialism. Though economically exploited and their members sold as commodities (i.e., slaves), targeted figurations (in this case, non-Muslim tribes) maintained their sovereignty. However, demands for other resources (i.e., agricultural products, especially cotton; livestock; dams for agricultural irrigation and electricity; timber and petroleum) grew during the Anglo-Egyptian condominium (1899–1956) and postcolonial periods. The imperative to annex land and exploit labour increased so that resources could be extracted more “efficiently.” Notable examples include, the massive agricultural scheme at Gezira for cotton production (in an area traditionally claimed by the Shukria tribe); the Meroe Dam (home to the Manasir, Hamadab, and Amri tribes); and oil production (in what is now South Sudan in the disputed state of Abyei and in the Northern states of South Kordofan and White Nile, which are still part of Sudan).

The Sudanese government has appropriated land from targeted figurations in the peripheries. This appropriation has been facilitated by legislation passed during the British colonial period, designating all communally-held lands as national government lands (Komey, 2008). Due to the political conditions described above, control of lands by the national government has effectively meant control by the riverain elite, with or without privatization. When government land has been privatized, rather than being bought and sold on the open market, particularly in Gezira and Gadaref, it has been transferred to the riverain elite (Abdelkarim, 1992). Allied, rural Arabized-tribes have also benefited from this process in the Nuba Mountains and parts of Blue Nile and Upper Nile (de Waal, 2004; Komey, 2008; Salih, 1999). Further internal political boundaries have been redrawn to secure resource-rich lands under Northern control. The creation of Unity
State in 1983, which encompassed the major oil fields of the South, in an attempt to annex it to Northern Sudan is a notable example.

Violent methods to separate communities from their lands and resources have also been used. In the Nuba Mountains, in order to force the Nuba people from their lands into “peace villages” (effectively concentration camps), the government has:

Disrupted trade and closed markets, destroyed farms, and looted animals. Raiding, abduction, and rape prevented any movement between villages and to markets.

Thousands died of hunger and disease, while the flow of basic goods (including soap, salt, and clothing) to the rebel areas almost completely dried up. (de Waal, 2006, para. 10)

In Darfur, houses have been burned and assets either destroyed or looted. After being driven from their homes, those who attempted to return to their lands were either killed (males) or raped (females). If they were able to re-establish themselves on their lands long enough to bring a crop to harvest, marginalized nomadic “Arabs” (primarily Rizeyqat), coopted by the government, brought their herds in to destroy the harvest (Young, et al., 2005). Similarly, the Sudanese Armed Forces and militias, made up of members of marginalized nomadic “Arab” tribes (primarily Misiriyya), cleared Nuer communities from oil fields in Bentiu for oil extraction, using “scorched earth” strategies (de Guzman & Wesselink, 2002). Once desperate, the Sudanese government has used promises of relief to draw targeted tribes from their traditional lands into poorer, smaller, marginal areas where they can be easily controlled and their group identity more easily dismantled. Examples include, shanty-towns around Sudan’s urban areas, “peace camps” in the Nuba Mountains, and Internally Displaced Persons camps in Darfur. Humanitarian aid from the government and domestic and international relief organizations has then been withheld from starving and dependent populations (de Waal, 2006).

The appropriation of land, ethnic cleansing, and measures to privilege the economic interests of the riverain centre have compromised, and intermittently devastated, the livelihoods of peoples of the peripheries (Abdel Ati, 2005). Economic techniques have systematically impoverished figurations of the peripheries to render them dependent on, and thus subservient to, the riverain centre. The extent to which riverain Sudanese have been enriched at the expense of figurations of
the peripheries has bearing on their complicity. In this study, I explore this through interviews with individuals who have business interests that are affected by these processes.

**Physical and biological techniques.**

Physical and biological methods of genocide are included in the Genocide Convention, and there is a body of research on their use in Sudan: in the context of the second Sudanese civil war in the South (1983–2005) (de Waal, 2016; Fein, 1997; US Department of State, 1994); the 1990s counterinsurgency in the Nuba Mountains (Africa Rights, 1995); the conflict in Darfur (2003–present) (International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur, 2005); and the conflict with the Sudan Revolutionary Front (2011–present) (Human Rights Watch, 2015).

Physical techniques of genocide targeting tribes of the peripheries (e.g., the Dinka, Nuer, Nuba, Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa) have included mass killings. They have also included forced displacement, destruction of livelihoods, and withholding of humanitarian assistance to inflict starvation and disease on individuals from these figurations (Africa Rights, 1995; International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur, 2005). Rape of women from “African” figurations by men from “Arabized” figurations — a biological technique of genocide aimed at producing Arabized children and disrupting the targeted figurations’ social structure — is both a ubiquitous practice in areas of the country experiencing armed conflict and, apparently, an instrument of government policy (African Rights, 1995; Amnesty International, 2004). The Sudanese government leaders, indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for their role in the conflict in Darfur, have been charged with rape as a crime against humanity and a war crime (ICC, 2016).

The preponderance of physical techniques of genocide is explained by, and explains, the extent of armed conflict in Sudan. These techniques — whether acts of commission, such as mass killings, or acts of omission, such as the failure to provide humanitarian aid — are facilitated by the geographical separation of figurations (See Chapter 4) and necessitate an elaborate system and culture of denial. Given the preponderance of physical techniques, the non-physical techniques of genocide employed are viewed by Sudanese and the international community alike as relatively benign.
Cultural and religious techniques.

The former Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide to the United Nations (UN) Secretary General, Dr. Francis Deng, has called the Sudanese government’s policies of Arabization and Islamization a form of genocide (Deng, 2010). The so-called “civilization project” of the political elite has aimed to eradicate African Indigenous tribal identity and force individuals from African Indigenous figurations to adopt a new Arab-Islamic identity (Deng 1995; de Waal, 2004; 2006). Cultural difference is seen as a problem (e.g., the “Southern Problem”) and Arabization and Islamization the solution (Deng, 1995; Sikainga, 1993; Sharkey, 2012). This cultural eradication is facilitated by the belief that, in the words of the former President and current opposition leader, Sadig el-Mahdi, African Indigenous culture “was not a culture in itself” (Sikainga, 1993, p. 84).

The cultural technique of genocide, prohibited by the Genocide Convention (A/RES/260, 1948), includes removal of the targeted group’s children from their families and community to be raised by the dominant group. This has been accomplished both through the abduction of tens of thousands of children (and women) from southern Sudan as slaves (a practice that continued into the 1990s) and forced enrolment of Nuba children in residential Islamic schools in the 1990s (de Waal, 2006). The education system has served as a vehicle for genocide as well, for children who were not removed from their families. As early as the 1930s, it was government policy that education “must be oriented toward giving the country an Arab-Islamic character” (El-Affendi, 1991, p. 34). Despite the proliferation of Indigenous languages across Sudan, their instruction in schools in the northern part of the country has been prohibited since the second independence in 1956. Those who converted to Islam, including children forcibly converted, were often expected to change their Indigenous names to Arabic ones (Rone, 1995). In tandem with efforts to redraw boundaries and appropriate lands from targeted tribes, Indigenous place names have also been replaced by Arabic names (e.g., the names of major rivers in what is now South Sudan).

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10 Excluding the period between the end of the Second North-South civil war and the separation of the South, when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement provided for Indigenous language instruction in schools.
The Islamization policy has been effective in destroying Indigenous spirituality and religion; though, in the recent past, it has had the unintended effect of increasing conversion to Christianity in the South. Past-President, Sadig el-Mahdi wrote the Catholic Pope to establish a protocol for converting followers of Indigenous African religions: “We should agree…that paganism should be eliminated for humanistic purposes” (Sikainga, 1993, p. 84). Moreover the Sudanese government has been transparent about its goals. The current regime “made the spread of Islam a principal objective” when it seized power (International Crisis Group, 2011, p. 3) and has pursued it through proselytizing, constructing mosques and khalawi (Quranic schools), and restricting the activities of Christian missionaries (Sikainga, 1993).

The concept of jihad, or Islamic religious war, has been misappropriated to justify abrogating the rules of war (including those derived from Islam) and genocidal acts against non-Muslim civilians. Its archetypal use in Sudan took place in the attempted genocide of the Nuba people in the 1990s (de Waal, 2006). The instatement of shari’a law in 1983 justified denying non-Muslims full civil and political rights (e.g., a non-Muslim is not permitted to be head of state). The law requires all political and economic institutions to conform to a radical interpretation of Islam, irrespective of the rights of non-Muslims. The establishment of a religious state through shari’a law was used to transform, officially, non-Muslim Sudanese into second-class citizens (Deng, 1995; Khalid, 2003). While Christianized Sudanese have suffered under this imposition, those who continue to practice African religions are entitled to even fewer rights and protections. Cultural and religious techniques that elevate an Arab-Islamic identity are widely endorsed and even taken for granted.

**Self-genocide.**

I define the cumulative effect of all techniques of genocide as “self-genocide” a term analogous to Lemkin’s (1944), “moral techniques of genocide.” Self-genocide is possibly the most effective and damaging technique of genocide. Over a period of time, those targeted by genocide internalize the instruments of oppression they experience and administer them against

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11 Many techniques of genocide have their roots in Sudan’s colonial periods. In Chapter Ten, I write about the orthodox branch of Sunni Islam that the British imported and promoted in Sudan. At times, they persecuted religious leaders who promoted other branches of Islam and, similarly, forbade Christian proselytizing in the North.
themselves, so that the figuration destroys itself from within. On a theoretical level, this is related to what Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (1986) terms, “colonization of the mind.” On a practical level, self-genocide is characterized by self-harming behaviour.

The conditions many targeted figurations live under (e.g., poverty and displacement), especially those victimized by the security forces, have resulted in a plethora of “vices” harmful to both individuals and their communities at unprecedented rates. These include: alcoholism, suicide, intra-family violence, community and inter-community violence, sexual violence, stealing, prostitution, community leader and government official corruption, child exploitation and abandonment, destitution, homelessness, and breakdown of family structures (e.g., divorce and children born out of marriage) (Deng, 2010; Johnston & Borisova, 2007; Jok, 1999).

Self-directed, inter-personal, and intra-group forms of “immoral” behaviour fall under this technique. However, self-genocide also includes the systemic perpetuation of acts of genocide against one’s own people or against another, similarly targeted, figuration. Examples of the former include, the atrocities committed in the context of the conflict between Southern Sudanese tribes during the second Sudanese civil war (de Waal, 2016), and the participation of members of oppressed Darfurian “Arab” tribes in attacks on neighbouring “African” tribes. In addition, the mechanisms individuals, families, communities, and governments have traditionally used to cope with such challenges have been severely compromised by the same forces. With techniques of self-genocide riverain Sudanese blame those targeted for their own destruction, abrogating perpetrators and bystanders alike of responsibility.

Techniques of genocide in Canada.

While the Canadian context is clearly different, the same range of genocidal techniques that have been used in Sudan have been employed.

Physical techniques.

The myth that Canadian frontier settlers did not perpetrate mass killings of Indigenous people, like their American and Australian counterparts, ignores the fate of the Beothuk people, the
Indigenous inhabitants of the island now called Newfoundland (See Figure 2). The Beothuk were hunted and starved to extinction by British settlers in the early 1800s (Marshall, 2001; Pastore, 1987; Upton, 1977). While carried out by private citizens, representatives of the British Crown condoned these systematic murders until the Beothuk’s extinction was assured. Moreover, these techniques were not used against the Beothuk alone. The British similarly targeted the Mi’kmaq people during the same period. Though the impact was less devastating, these mass killings were actually officially sanctioned. Edward Cornwallis, Governor of the colony (now province) of Nova Scotia, issued proclamations in 1749 and 1750, awarding a bounty for the capture or

Figure 2. Indigenous peoples and languages on the land currently called Canada. Copyright 2017 Koen Van Rossum
killing of Mi’kmaq people (Paul, 2006; Reid, 2013). Betraying genocidal intent, Cornwallis, who targeted civilians (including children), wrote: “It would be better to root the Micmac out of the peninsula decisively and forever,” (Paul, 2006, para. 3).

Non-Indigenous Canadians erase and distance themselves from these episodes, as they occurred in Nova Scotia before Confederation in 1867 and in Newfoundland, which was not part of Canada until 1949. The erasure of these episodes reveals much about how non-Indigenous people construe their interactions with Indigenous peoples as non-lethal and non-violent; though the impact of other techniques of genocide have been more devastating and have affected more Indigenous peoples. The deaths and sadistic violence perpetrated against children in some of the Indian Residential Schools (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [TRC], 2012), which were established to assimilate Indigenous children, provide just one example of how these interactions have been neither non-lethal nor non-violent.

**Economic techniques.**

Relationships to land, livelihoods, and self-sufficiency are an intrinsic part of a people’s identity and attacks on these relationships weaken and potentially destroy figurations (See Chapter 7).

Though not acknowledged in the Genocide Convention (A/RES/260, 1948), the UN General Assembly’s resolution on *The Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (A/RES/47/121, 1992) acknowledges ethnic cleansing as a form of genocide. Settlers in Canada usurped and restricted access to land and depleted and destroyed the natural resources Indigenous peoples depended on for their survival. This led to starvation; catastrophic epidemics; destitution; and dependency, first on the colonial administration and then on the Canadian government (Croteau, 2010; Daschuk, 2013; Hubbard, 2014; Pastore, 1987; Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2014; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples [RCAP], 1996). Economic techniques were used against many Indigenous peoples across what is now Canada, over a long period of time. Merely citing examples risks understating its prevalence. In its extensive report on the historical relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996) dedicated three of the 24 chapters to the usurpation of Indigenous land and resources. Land and resource usurpation benefits every non-Indigenous person in the
Canada. In this context, calling non-Indigenous people bystanders could be perceived by some as getting them “off the hook.” Taiaiake Alfred (2009), for example, argues that the only just recourse for this theft is restitution to Indigenous peoples for stolen land and, if lands have been contaminated by resource extraction and industry, for a devastated environment that can no longer support traditional livelihoods or life at all (Gedicks, 2001; Hoover, et al., 2012; LaDuke, 1999). It remains to be seen whether non-Indigenous people will be willing to reconcile, if it comes at an economic cost.

In their efforts to destroy the political, social, and economic life of Indigenous figurations, the Canadian state cut off populations from the resources they needed to be economically self-sufficient and healthy (RCAP, 2016). When famine and epidemics inevitably occurred, the government refused Indigenous peoples humanitarian aid and health services, assistance they were obligated to provide according to treaties signed and fiduciary responsibility established in law. The Canadian government then used these crises to coerce Indigenous peoples into surrendering yet more land for less compensation (Daschuk, 2013).

A mortality rate of more than double that of the general population in Western Canada (Health Canada, 2011), juxtaposed with ongoing disparities in government spending on basic services for Indigenous peoples (Rennie, 2014), suggest that the Canadian government continues to fail in its obligations to provide life-saving support (let alone equal treatment) to the peoples they made dependent and destitute. This technique of genocide is characterized by failing to fulfill a duty rather than committing an act, making holding non-Indigenous people responsible a challenge.

Some genocide scholars have resisted the idea of genocide by attrition (Straus, 2001). However, whether a failed obligation or the commission of a genocidal act, the result is the same for those targeted.

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12 Between 2001–2002, the age-standardized mortality rate for Registered First Nations populations was 5.3 per 1,000, which is more than twice the rate for the general population in Western Canada (Health Canada, 2011).

13 The enlightenment philosopher Emmanuel Kant (1981) struggled with the way failure to meet an obligation can be viewed as morally different than the intent to commit an act.
Cultural and religious techniques.

Canadians who refuse to acknowledge genocide in Canada will, at times, concede that cultural genocide has occurred. Specific cultural techniques of genocide include: the Indian Residential School system (TRC, 2012; Woolford, 2015) and the “Sixties Scoop,” that took children from their families and communities in an attempt to acculturate them to Euro-Canadian culture (Kimelman, 1985); subsequent Indigenous education and child-welfare policies, which have had similar effects (Blackstock, 2010; Martell, 2013); severance of Indigenous peoples from their languages (L. Maracle, personal communication, May 30, 2016; RCAP, 1996); banning of religious and cultural ceremonies[^14] and Christianization (RCAP, 1996); and denial of access to traditional lands and livelihoods (i.e., confining Indigenous people to reserves) (RCAP, 1996). While many non-Indigenous Canadians view these genocidal techniques as things of the past, they continue to this day.

The reserves, which “were regarded for much of the 19th century as places for people to be confined until they became ‘civilized’,” continue to exist (RCAP, 1996, p. 460). Despite many churches having apologized for targeting Indigenous people for religious conversion (TRC, 2015), in Northern communities proselytizing by Christian churches has increased (V. Freeman, personal communication, June 16, 2014). The intergenerational impact of these cultural techniques and the lack of resources for revitalizing Indigenous culture, Indigenous languages in particular (Fettes & Norton, 2000), ensures that figurations remain in “disarray” (L. Maracle, personal communication, May 30, 2016). Furthermore, as fluent speakers of Indigenous languages and knowledge keepers age and pass away, the relationships that hold Indigenous figurations together fray further. Despite the resilience of Indigenous peoples and the resurgence of their traditions, with current government policies in place, languages and cultural practices will continue to die (Moseley, 2010).

One of the complexities of cultural techniques of genocide is that many of these acts were and continue to be viewed as benevolent (T. Logan, personal communication, August 8, 2014; C. Wesley-Esquimaux, personal communication, July 4, 2014). Education and child welfare are

[^14]: See: An Act further to amend “The Indian Act, 1880,” SC 1884 c 27, s 3 (banned spiritual ceremonies like the Pot Latch on the West Coast); An Act further to amend “The Indian Act, 1885,” SC 1895 c 28, s 114 (banned Sun Dance on the Prairies).
viewed as beneficial, and non-Indigenous people widely perceive those who conceived of and ran these systems as well meaning. The “good intentions” behind cultural techniques of genocide impact our understanding of how non-Indigenous Canadians have stood by. Why would they speak out against that which was for the “good of the Indian”? (Clint, 1878, p. 1) In addition, the racism and ethnocentrism of non-Indigenous people in the past has been used to excuse their actions, i.e., you cannot judge those living in another time by today’s moral standards. Overall, there is a focus (as with genocide by attrition) on the intentions of the actions (or inaction) of non-Indigenous Canadians at the expense of considering how Indigenous peoples have been impacted.\(^\text{15}\) This focus on the intentions of perpetrators is further supported by a legal definition of genocide, which requires proof of the malicious intent of the perpetrator (See Chapter 2); once again privileging the perspectives of non-Indigenous Canadians over the experiences of Indigenous peoples.

**Biological techniques.**

Historically, policies have prevented or discouraged Indigenous people from courting and marrying within their community, so that they would not give birth to and raise a new generation of their people. “Indian bands,” often with only a few hundred members, were defined and then isolated on reserves separated from other Indigenous communities. Then ceremonies, where members of different communities could gather and marriages could be arranged, were banned. A pass system was instituted, requiring permission from a government Indian Agent to leave one’s reserve.\(^\text{16}\) Forced and coerced sterilization which continues until today (International Justice Research Centre, 2019; Stote, 2012) and environmental contamination in Indigenous

\(^{15}\) In arguing that intentions are less important than effects, I have opened a Pandora’s box of debate on intention as a distinguishing characteristic of genocide (See: Chapter Two). I do not mean to suggest that in the past non-Indigenous Canadians had not intended to eradicate Indigenous peoples as groups. They clearly did (See: Chrisjohn & Young, 2006). I argue, however, that non-Indigenous Canadians perceived this as morally good, as did Nazi Germans who sought to eradicate Jewish people, Roma people, homosexual people, and people with disabilities; and extremist Hutus who sought to eradicate Tutsi people.

\(^{16}\) Logan (personal communication, August 8, 2014) drew my attention to the fact that the TRC and research on the Indian Residential School system reported large numbers of arranged and encouraged marriages among Indigenous students. This was done to discourage “illegitimate breeding” and to ensure that students did not reconnect with their communities and cultures by marrying those who had managed to escape the Indian Residential School system. These arranged and encouraged marriages highlight the complexity of genocidal techniques and the way they operate at cross purposes, at times, undermining genocidal intentions.
communities (Cook, 2008) compromised the fertility of some Indigenous women. High rates of marriage outside the figuration, which could be viewed as biological absorption, and the rape and sexual exploitation of Indigenous women (Smith, 2005) have threatened the survival of Indigenous figurations.

Furthermore, under federal legislation, which continues to be in effect, the descendants of two consecutive generations of Status Indians who have children with non-Status Indians “lose” their Status, i.e., their legal rights as members of a First Nation (Indian Act, RSC 1985, c I-5; Palmater, 2011). This is the last vestige of an “enfranchisement” policy that intended to destroy Indigenous figurations by severing the ties of individual members. Pamela Palmater (2011) calls this technique of genocide “legislated elimination.” Many non-Indigenous and Indigenous people in Canada agree that the federal government should not be involved in determining the membership and identity of Indigenous peoples. However, they are uncomfortable when Indigenous governments interfere with choices regarding who their members have children with, whether or not it is for the sake of group survival (Simpson, 2014). This betrays a concern for the individual over and above the collective (See: Chapter 8).

Non-Indigenous Canadians sexualize the bodies and devalue the lives and physical integrity of Indigenous women (Smith, 2005). They also refute the authenticity of those who do not appear sufficiently Indigenous or have enough “Indian blood.” It is difficult to envision confronting techniques of biological absorption without deconstructing Western conceptualizations of gender and patrilineal descent and requirements that children of mixed backgrounds belong to only one ancestry (Palmater, 2011). These concepts are manifest not only in laws that police Indigenous status, but in the social codes and practices that non-Indigenous Canadian society perpetuates.

\[\text{Self-genocide.}\]

Due to intergenerational transmission of trauma and structural inequality resulting from discrimination over time, the historical acts of genocide described above continue to damage

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17 As Auger (personal communication, July 24, 2014) pointed out, the Canadian government issues Indian Status cards to Indigenous individuals according to race-based criteria. This is analogous to administrative measures employed in Nazi Germany, South Africa under apartheid, and Rwanda since colonialism and leading up to the genocide there.
Indigenous figurations today. While non-Indigenous people may claim that these violations happened in the past, non-Indigenous people are temporally proximate to their effects: severance from land, culture, community, and family; physical, sexual, and psychological violence (e.g., in the context of the Indian Residential School system); and racism and discrimination, particularly when it is committed with impunity. These techniques inflict psychological and social damage that can lead Indigenous communities to turn against themselves.

Self-genocide can be characterized as self-harming behaviour. Among Indigenous people in Canada, death due to alcohol use is close to twice the rate of the general population and death due to illicit drug use is approximately three times higher (Chansonneuve, 2007). The suicide rates of First Nations males, between the ages of 15 and 24, are five times higher than the Canadian average and seven times higher among First Nations females; they are 11 times higher among Inuit youth (Health Canada, 2010). Aboriginal people are six times more likely to be murdered than non-Aboriginal people (Statistics Canada 2014). Political corruption, modelled and encouraged by the ways in which the Canadian government and Indian Agents have ruled Indigenous figurations, is common.

That self-genocide is viewed merely as Indigenous people harming themselves feeds non-Indigenous people’s acquiescence. Furthermore, standing up against self-genocide can be fraught for non-Indigenous people. By doing so, non-Indigenous people may be accused of violating Indigenous people’s sovereignty; “protecting” Indigenous children by apprehending them into the child welfare system for example. From a legal standpoint, it would also be difficult to prove that non-Indigenous people are legally culpable for self-genocide. In the words of Cherokee scholar and activist, Jeff Corntassel, “[I]magine if I went to, say, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and said that suicides are a form of genocide. How would I prove that? That would be the response of the court of the Commission” (J. Corntassel, personal communication, July 9, 2014).
Why Sudan and Canada?

This introduction to the contexts of genocide in Sudan and Canada suggests resonances between the two; however, it does not explain why I have chosen to research them together. While there may be genocide in both places, these countries seem worlds apart culturally, economically, and politically. Am I not comparing apples and oranges? One of the best countries in the world and one of the worst? Possibly. However the purpose of this research is not to compare contexts, but to uncover theory. As Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967), the originators of the grounded theory method, assert, “the ‘non-comparability’ of groups is irrelevant to the generation of theory” (p. 51). Moreover the diversity in the cases I have chosen may actually contribute to the development of theory relevant beyond the two contexts I study.

Given my approach, the important question is not “why” but “how” I decided to study genocide in Sudan and Canada together. The answer is that these contexts are connected through me. While experiencing these two places, I felt resonances that, upon further investigation, revealed relationships of genocide. Moreover, my pre-existing, significant relationships with people in both places and my experiential knowledge of Canada and Sudan are prerequisites to conducting this very sensitive research appropriately. In this research, I do not compare, I look at the two contexts through the same lens. I do not argue that Sudan and Canada are similar, nor that they should be lumped together; rather, I argue that with all that is unique and particular about these two places, there are resonances.

Initially, I thought I may be the only one who felt these resonances; but, to my surprise, most of the people who participated in this research (though not all) appreciated them. People who had been targeted by genocide with whom I collaborated in this research shared my enthusiasm for looking at both contexts and encouraged me to design my research in both places in similar ways. My research participants were intrigued and generally supportive. Those with postcolonial experiences outside of Sudan and Canada also appreciated this approach and thought my theory may be relevant to the situations in their countries as well. You, my reader, may have your own experiences of Canada and Sudan and bring your own subjectivities to what you read here. Perhaps you will feel some of the resonances I have felt and will, hopefully, notice resonances I have missed as you draw on your experiences of either place, or both. Though these resonances
may be experienced subjectively, in this thesis I demonstrate that they reveal material connections between Canada and Sudan by way of their colonial metropole, Britain (See: Chapter 10).

At different points in the thesis, I explain how looking at these two cases, side-by-side, has brought unanticipated methodological benefits. Before beginning this research, I expected to develop a different theory for each context. However, following the advice of the people I collaborated with in Sudan and Canada, I developed a similar research protocol for both places. There was also valuable cross-pollination between the contexts in the research design and analysis phases. The diversity of my cases forced me to reflect on my assumptions to a greater extent than I would have had I researched one context or the other. Using one context to shed light on the other is a methodological choice well-suited to researching standing by. In this research, I study absences, what is not known, said, felt, or done; things that are easy to overlook. The differences in my data across the two contexts have at times illuminated realities that are hidden or taken for granted in Canada or Sudan, realities that I otherwise would not have realized were there. Most significantly, researching these contexts side-by-side led me to use the label genocide in both places. Following the data, I arrived at a single theory of standing by to genocide that has explanatory power across the two contexts.

**Thesis Overview**

The two contexts I have researched do not easily fit normative definitions of genocide nor the Genocide Convention (See: MacDonald, 2015; Melanson, 2014; Welch, 2014; Westmacott, Greco, & Qorane, 2014 on Canada; and de Waal & Stanton, 2007; Straus, 2005 on Sudan). In Chapter 2, I go beyond explaining and justifying the definition of genocide used in this thesis and argue that the normative-juridical definition of genocide encourages standing by and doing nothing, particularly (but not exclusively) in Sudan and Canada.

In Chapter 3, I describe my relational approach to this research, an approach that reflects my desire to generate a usable theory to interrupt genocide and avoid reproducing the genocidal relations I explore. I then acknowledge how research approaches Indigenous to Turtle Island
(North America) have helped me achieve that aim. In line with Indigenous approaches to research, I introduce myself and the Guidance Circle of academics and activists, from communities targeted by genocide in Sudan and Canada, with whom I have collaborated in this research. I then explain how, following their advice, I explored my research question through 62 in-depth interviews with riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians about their views and relationships with the peoples of Sudan’s peripheries and Indigenous peoples in Canada, respectively. I describe how I analyzed these interviews using constructivist grounded theory methods to uncover the theory presented in the chapters that follow.

Respecting the distinctness of these two contexts, and rejecting comparative orthodoxy, in this thesis I explore standing by to genocide in Sudan and Canada separately, through the same lens. In Chapters 4 and 7, I describe how peoples targeted by and complicit to genocide relate to space and place (Sudan in Chapter 4 and Canada in Chapter 7). In Chapters 5 and 8, I explore relationships among riverain Sudanese and among non-Indigenous Canadians as they pertain to standing by to genocide. I describe how they relate, respectively, to peoples of Sudan’s peripheries and Indigenous peoples in Canada who are targeted by genocide (Sudan in Chapter 5 and Canada in Chapter 8). I conclude these context specific analyses with an exploration of how those complicit in genocide are predisposed to stand by and do nothing (Sudan in Chapter 6 and Canada in Chapter 9).

In Chapter 10, I discuss the ways in which these two contexts are connected through Britain, which colonized both places. While Sudan and Canada and their Indigenous peoples were not colonized in the same way, similar (and sometimes the same) people, institutions, policies, and ideologies were inflicted on both (Said, 2003). While, these connections have changed in the post/neo-colonial era, they continue to create colonial relations (e.g., the colonizers, my people, remain in Canada), although in their omnipresence we do not notice them. Colonialism has the capacity to adapt to the local context, yet it is recognizable across time and space (Nandy, 1988). It is also remarkably persistent. This is particularly apparent in the discourse of colonialism (Said, 2003). I identify and discuss the presence of a number of colonial ideas, including capitalism, liberal values, the nation-state, “modern” institutions, formal education, and racialization in my data. These are not intangibles. They dramatically, and at times destructively, alter material reality.
In the concluding chapter, I connect my theories with relevant research and provide examples of entry points for using my research findings to facilitate standing up against genocide. I conclude with suggestions for further research and broad principles for realizing respectful relationships in genocidal contexts that emerged from this thesis.
Chapter 2
Normative, Juridical Definitions of Genocide:
Standing in the Way?

[T]he wording of the Convention is so restrictive that not one of the genocidal killings committed since its adoption is covered by it. (Chalk & Jonassohn, 1990, p. 11)

Naturally, a juridically-based definition of genocide is used inside the courtroom; however, it also determines how we think and what we do and do not do about genocide in the wider world. In this chapter, I argue that the normative, juridically-based definition of genocide is not only a barrier to understanding genocide, in contexts such as Sudan and Canada, it stands in the way of effective action to prevent and interrupt genocide. The juridically-based definition actually promotes standing by and doing nothing. Those who advance this definition argue that it is not only well-suited for prosecuting those who perpetrate or are complicit in genocide, but that it should be used in scholarly and popular discourse as well (Ignatieff, 2001). For these reasons, I believe, I must refute the juridically-based definition rather than merely put it aside or argue that the definition I have developed is better.

I begin this chapter by delineating the juridical view of genocide. Though based on the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) (A/RES/260, 1948), the juridical view is much narrower than the letter of the treaty and has been heavily influenced by a historical reinterpretation of the Holocaust. It has been used by some to argue that a juridical approach forecloses labeling atrocities prior to the Genocide Convention as genocide (Schabas, 2010). Following this, I further demonstrate that the definition of genocide in the Genocide Convention preserves the interests of colonizing nations. This has led to a bifurcation: of fragile and colonized nations, such as Sudan, being policed for genocide and stable and colonizing nations, such as Canada policing for genocide. This bifurcation allows colonized/fragile/policed states to dismiss charges of genocide as another form of imperialism, and it transforms their citizens into wards of the international community without agency to interrupt genocide. Furthermore, it forecloses the possibility that policing nations harbour genocide.
I go on to argue that the normative, juridically-based definition of genocide is neither empirically nor theoretically grounded. This definition is, at best, unhelpful and, at worst, misleading for social scientists attempting to generate an evidence base for policies and practices to prevent and interrupt genocide. The juridically-based definition conflates mass killings with genocide and omits many significant techniques of genocide (including techniques included in the Genocide Convention itself). In so doing, this definition condones more “benign” methods (Moses, 2004) of destroying figurations. As this definition decontextualizes mass killings, it also impedes our ability to fully understand the few genocides that do fit its normative mould. The juridically-based definition ignores how genocide is determined by societal structures, rather than individuals who are fully autonomous actors; and it stands in the way of understanding the protracted dimensions of genocidal processes, an understanding necessary for preventing genocide. Moreover, this definition contributes to the normalization of many genocidal acts. I conclude this chapter by refuting the argument that the normative definition of genocide should be retained because of its legal utility, then discuss opportunities for rehabilitating the term.

**Juridical Needs and a Misconstrued Holocaust**

According to the normative juridical definition, genocide is the physical elimination (ideally killing) of substantial numbers of a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group by perpetrators who demonstrate a “specific intent” to destroy the group as a whole. In addition, genocide is considered a crime committed by the state against members of an ethnic or religious minority. This definition is normative in the sense that it has been taken up by the United Nations (UN) and its member states, liberal human rights advocates, and some scholars, not to mention the media and in popular discourse.¹⁸

This normative, juridically-based definition of genocide is not the same as the legal definition; in fact, it is much narrower than the definition established in the Genocide Convention

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¹⁸ This is, of course, a generalization. Discourses on what constitutes genocide are globally transmitted, particularly in contexts that have experienced genocide and, more so, among those who have been targeted (Wise, 2015). Moreover, these discourses are shifting in both contexts explored in this study and, in Canada in particular, have shifted during the course of my research (See: Chapter 9).
Beyond killings, the definition in the Genocide Convention includes four additional techniques of genocide:

Article 2(b): Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
Article 2(c): Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
Article 2(d): Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
Article 2(e): Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

The codification of genocide in Canadian law illustrates how the narrower normative definition has eclipsed the Genocide Convention’s definition. Three of the five techniques of genocide included in the Genocide Convention have been excluded from Canadian legislation: Article 2(c); Article 2(d); and, significantly, in light of the Indian Residential School system, Article 2(e) (MacDonald & Hudson, 2012). The Genocide Convention also says nothing about ‘specific intent,’ a concept I will explain and say more about below, and actually states that individuals, not just states, can perpetrate and be complicit in genocide.

As many genocide scholars have pointed out (e.g., Moses, 2007; Straus, 2001), the normative definition of genocide uses the Holocaust, rather than the Genocide Convention, as the mould that atrocities must fit. What is less discussed is that this mould is not based on the actual horrors of the Holocaust; rather, it reflects a reimagined history of the Holocaust. In this reimagined history, the full range of techniques used in the attempt to eliminate the Jewish people of Europe — political; cultural; economic; attrition (i.e., increasing death rates through starvation and conditions likely to bring about disease, including denial of medical care); biological (decreasing birth rates); and ethnic cleansing — are obfuscated by a focus on mass killings in the gas chambers. Furthermore, this reimagined history leaves out the way in which genocide was used to advance the Third Reich’s colonial vision. The mass extermination of Jewish people was one outcome of the larger Nazi Generalplan Ost (Master Plan for the East) (Levene, 2014). Jewish people, Romani people, people with disabilities, homosexuals, and political opposition leaders were undoubtedly most at risk. However, in line with Nazi scientific racism, attempts were also made to assimilate Luxembourgers; biologically absorb (i.e., encourage “inter-breeding” with

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19 Significantly concentration camps are omitted as they are not mass killings, but genocide by attrition.
Germans) the Norwegian and Dutch; and reduce the population of the “undesirable” Poles through starvation, epidemics, and prohibitions on marriage (Lemkin, 1944). Finally, the Third Reich usurped Polish land to make way for German settlers (Lemkin, 1944; Levene, 2014). In other words, the Holocaust was inextricably linked to colonialism.

Another example of this revising of history is the presumption that Lemkin developed the concept genocide in reaction to the Holocaust (Moses, 2010); when, in fact, he developed the concept before the world was aware of the genocidal plans of the Nazis, and in response to the Armenian genocide (1915-1923) (Lemkin, 1947). 20 Though mass killings were a feature of the Armenian genocide, the primary genocidal techniques used were ethnic cleansing and genocide by attrition; neither of which would fit the normative definition of genocide. Furthermore, in his book on the Third Reich’s genocidal exploits, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Analysis, Proposals for Redress (Lemkin, 1944), Lemkin did not focus on mass killings but on a range of genocidal techniques targeting “undesirables,” with Jewish and Romani people the most aggressively targeted and adversely affected. 21 As the title of the book suggests, Lemkin also focused on the German’s colonial motivations and linked colonial occupation to genocide. In his later attempts to write a world history of genocide (a project he died before completing), Lemkin continued to explore a range of genocidal techniques and the colonial underpinnings of genocide. In his planned volume on modern genocides, chapters were to include: “1. Genocide by the Germans against the Native Africans”; “3. “Belgian Congo”; “11. Hereros”; “13. Hottentots”; “16. Genocide against the American Indians”; “25. Latin America”; “26. Genocide against the Aztecs”; “27. Yucatan”; “28. Genocide against the Incas”; “29: Genocide against the Maoris of New Zealand”; “38. Tasmanians”; “40. S.W. Africa”; and, “41. Natives of Australia” (Lemkin, quoted in McDonnell & Moses, 2005).

The normative definition of genocide — in terms of acts recognized as potentially genocidal and the requirement that all genocides closely resemble the Holocaust (or rather a reimagined view of the Holocaust) — excludes all but the Rwandan genocide. Those who support this juridical view further argue that atrocities that occurred before the Genocide Convention was established

20 The exact term did not appear in Lemkin’s writing until 1944 — he used the terms “barbarity” and “vandalism” in the 1930s — however, the idea of what he would come to call genocide had already taken form.
21 It is important to note though that the book does not mention concentration camps and gas chambers, probably because it was written before Lemkin learned of them.
cannot be labelled genocide. Following the “principle of legality,” they posit that fairness dictates laws not be applied retroactively. This interpretation is questionable for a few reasons. First, whether or not the Genocide Convention can apply retroactively is contested by international lawyers (Schabas, 2010). Genocide and other crimes against humanity appear to be a notable exception to this “principle of legality,” due to their heinous nature. For example, during the Nuremberg trials, a judgement issued on this topic stated that “the attacker must know that he is doing wrong; and so, far from it being unjust to punish him, it would be unjust if his wrong were allowed to go unpunished” (Schabas, 2010, p. 50). Furthermore, interpretations vary depending upon jurisdiction. In Canada, where I have often heard this argument (from lawyers as well as others), “national courts [have] jurisdiction over genocide committed in the past, without any temporal limitation” (Schabas, 2010, p. 22). Moreover, this provision is never applied to the Holocaust, which occurred before the Genocide Convention came into force. Nazi perpetrators were prosecuted ex post facto for genocide (Schabas, 2010).

Those who advocate for a prohibition on retroactivity seek to foreclose culpability for genocide, not only legal culpability but moral and political culpability as well. It is perhaps telling that this interpretation seems to have first been advanced by the British government (Schabas, 2010), a government vulnerable to accusations of genocide for atrocities committed in its colonies. Even without the ability to prosecute for genocide, political acknowledgement of genocide can lead to redress and restitution for those targeted. Furthermore, it is entirely possible to distinguish between genocide and crimes of genocide, and the Genocide Convention seems to allow for this; the former being applicable for all time, and the latter applicable after 1951 (Schabas, 2010).

**Colonizing Interests**

Tony Finzsch (2008) points out that the Genocide Convention is a negotiated agreement between nation states with no “timeless meaning beyond the realm of politics” (para. 3), and by this he means power politics, not democratic politics. The spirit of Lemkin’s colonial-centred,

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22 This view purports that it is not fair to convict someone for an act that was not considered a crime when it was committed.

23 It can be argued that a legal norm prohibiting genocide preceded the establishment of the Genocide Convention by at least a few years.
empirically-based, comprehensive definition of genocide was retained in the first draft of the Genocide Convention presented for consideration to member states of the UN in 1947 (A/RES/180); however later drafts were modified (See Chapter 1). Though inspired by Lemkin’s vision, the final version of the Genocide Convention reflects the interests of the colonizing nations that dominated the UN in the wake of World War II. The member states were preoccupied with ensuring the stability of Western nation states, through the prevention of interstate war in Europe, rather than the interests of human beings, particularly those in their colonies. They were part of a machinery working to reinforce the power of the nation state, especially the Western colonizing state (See Chapter 10), and to facilitate state building and rebuilding. This undertaking was, and arguably still is, characterized by transferring populations and engineering citizens (See Chapters 4 and 8), approaches that coincide with Lemkin’s conception of genocide.

Due to concerns that their policies of forced assimilation, displacement, and subjugation towards Indigenous and minority peoples would be criminalized, a contingent of states led by the United States voted to remove most of Lemkin’s references to cultural techniques of genocide from the Genocide Convention (Bachman 2013; Mako, 2012).24 The United States, Sweden, Brazil, Canada, and New Zealand put their concerns to this effect on record at the UN (A/C.6/SR.83, 1948).25 However, Article 2(e), “Forcibly transferring children of the group [targeted for genocide] to another group,” was retained.26 The Canadian government, perhaps realizing its vulnerability to prosecution at the height of the Indian Residential School system, declined to

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24 The USSR agreed to this in exchange for removing political groups from the list of groups protected by the Genocide Convention.

25 Despite objections, the Genocide Convention retains some aspects of Lemkin’s original conception of the crime of genocide. Mass killings are merely one of a number of possible “acts” and despite objections to cultural techniques of genocide, “Forcibly transferring children of the group [targeted for genocide] to another group” (A/RES/260, Article 2(e)), made it into the final text of the treaty. The Convention reflects Lemkin’s conception of genocide as a phenomenon constituted by the actions of multiple agents that depends upon the complicity of individuals, public and private, in a practice of destruction. The treaty states that genocide can be committed by anyone, “whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials, or private individuals” (A/RES/260, Article IV, 1948); i.e., it is not only perpetrated by governments. Furthermore, the treaty criminalizes not only the perpetration of genocide, but the: “(b) Conspiracy to commit genocide; (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide; (d) Attempt to commit genocide; [and] (e) Complicity in genocide” (A/RES/260, Article IV, 1948). The treaty also considers acts as genocidal, whether or not they succeed in annihilating a people, if annihilation was their intent.

26 Mundorff (2009) argues that this article was retained because the forced transfer of children by Axis powers during World War II was a high-profile issue at the time the Genocide Convention was being negotiated. Greece, who reintroduced this prohibition after its earlier removal during the negotiations, was actively engaged in efforts to repatriate tens of thousands of Greek children from the Balkans.
domesticate Article 2(e). In the decades that followed, a small number of international lawyers and judges worked, through legal precedent and scholarship, to limit the definition of genocide in the Genocide Convention further, elevating mass killings above other acts of genocide and raising the standard of intent required to convict for genocide (Schabas, 2009). Historical record thus shows that genocide was defined so that countries, such as Canada and Sudan, can continue to destroy, with impunity, sustaining cultural ties of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and peoples of Sudan’s peripheries with impunity.

Moreover, the normative definition of genocide fortifies a global colonial order that stands in the way of action to interrupt genocidal processes. Mahmoud Mamdani (2010) argues an inequitable international framework of genocide intervention facilitates the Western domination of countries like Sudan by giving the international community more power to breach their sovereignty through military invasion and arresting their heads of states. Mamdani argues that in making states like Sudan subservient, their citizens too are transformed from autonomous political actors into wards of the international community. As wards, not only are Sudanese who are targeted by genocide robbed of their agency, but Sudanese who stand by to genocide are as well. As such, they are not considered complicit in genocide.

The normative definition of genocide — its focus on state-led mass killings, in particular — and the defence of that definition reinforce the notion that genocide only occurs in a certain type of state: a state that is unable to defend its sovereignty; is unstable, poor, at war, and authoritarian; and, since World War II, is non-Western. The normative definition thus reinforces the notion that genocide is prosecuted and prevented by states that have strong militaries, stable democracies, self-sufficient economies, and are Western and predominantly white.

27 According to MacDonald and Hudson (2012), quoting Churchill (2004), “The official reasons given to Parliament by the Report of the Special Committee on Hate Crimes in Canada was that portions of the UNGC [Genocide Convention] were ‘intended to cover certain historical incidents in Europe that have little essential relevance to Canada’ and so could safely be omitted. They even asserted that ‘mass transfers of children to another group are unknown...in Canada’ “ (p. 435).
28 Mamdani refers here to the Responsibility to Protect, but this analysis is equally relevant to the international judicial regime for prosecuting genocide.
29 My argument appears to contradict the assertion that the Holocaust, which was committed by those who viewed themselves as the apex of whiteness, is considered genocide’s paradigm. However, following World War II, the nominally white, Western world purports that it has entered a new stage of enlightenment vis-à-vis peace and human rights, leaving its barbarism behind. The Balkan experience proves this point, as Western Europeans othered and racialized Slavs (not for the first time) during the conflict in Yugoslavia (Fleming, 2000). Similarly, the failure of the UN to prevent genocide and the International Criminal Court (ICC) to successfully prosecute it (e.g., its failure...
of genocide, in its current form, dichotomizes “unruly periphery” (Glover, 2011, para. 8) countries like Sudan and what genocide scholar/activist Greg Stannard (2008, p. 131) without irony, calls “major nations,” i.e., countries like Canada. The former countries are policed, charged, and convicted with genocide, while the latter countries do the policing and punishing. This distinction is, of course, pragmatic. You can only punish states and individuals who are militarily, politically, and economically weaker or countries where the regime (or the leader) has been overthrown. However, under this arrangement, it is proving impossible to hold genocidal regimes who remain in power, such as those in both Canada and Sudan,\(^{30}\) accountable.\(^{31}\) This bifurcation of states also creates a double standard, which undermines the moral legitimacy of a norm of genocide prevention. In Sudan, for example, it allows a genocidal government in the Global South to argue, convincingly, that a charge of genocide is just a new manifestation of the Western imperialist’s sustained war against darker-skinned people (Mamdani, 2010). It also makes it difficult to accept the possibility that genocide occurs in countries like Canada, because by definition it cannot. Canada is a nation that polices genocide, not one that commits it. In this vein, Mamdani (2010) argues that the criminalization of state-sponsored violence in Sudan is complimented by the normalization of the same by Western states and their non-Western allies.

Reflecting its juridical orientation, the normative definition of genocide also dichotomizes countries by judging some (e.g., Canada) as good or innocent and others (e.g., Sudan) as bad or guilty. Professional anti-genocide activists (e.g., Stannard, 2008)), who are disproportionately from countries like Canada argue that naming and shaming are effective means for interrupting genocide. But is this ostracism effective? Francis Deng (personal communication, October 29, 2013), former Special Representative on the Prevention of Genocide and a diplomat who has worked intimately with policed states, advocates the opposite: “To prevent genocide,” he says,

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\(^{30}\) Sudan presents an interesting case, as according to the assumptions of this bifurcation, it should be easy to defeat or at least control. However, the current regime has proven its resilience time and time again.

\(^{31}\) Some might respond that the problem is more the ineffectiveness of the bodies in place to protect and prosecute genocide than the definition itself. However, the two go hand-in-hand. While the weakness of international bodies protects power countries from international sanctions, the weakness of the juridical definition protects them from prosecution in their own domestic courts and the corresponding weakness of the normative definition protects them from being judged in the court of public opinion.
“we have to de-stigmatize it.” Moreover, as I argue in this thesis, naming and shaming assails the citizens, who are often bystanders, as well as the leaders of a country perpetrating genocide.

Based, largely, on his own experience as a South Sudanese, Deng understands that genocide is more than a narrow category of abhorrent acts. As I explain below, genocide is a process, a structure, that at certain moments in time, and only if absolutely necessary, manifests in mass killing. A people can be destroyed by means other than mass killings; if one waits for mass killing to occur, stopping genocide becomes a very high-stakes endeavour. Furthermore, genocide is not only the commission of acts, it is a process underpinned by acts of omission and efforts to uphold the status quo. Dismantling genocidal structures and substituting them with structures that promote peaceful coexistence requires engagement and trust, rather than shaming and ostracism, not blunt judgement and force but nuanced insight, courageous dialogue, and shrewd negotiation. There is as much need for such engagement in contexts where mass killings occur as in contexts where “kinder and gentler” techniques of genocide are employed.

Deconstructing the dichotomy of good countries and bad countries is not only important to protecting Indigenous people in Canada, it is important to interrupting genocide in countries like Sudan. The normative definition of genocide stands in the way of doing this deconstructive work.

**Disempowering Scholars, Activists, and Victims**

The colonial political process has created not only an ineffective mechanism for punishing or, more importantly, preventing genocide, it has produced an incoherent vision of what genocide is. Neither the normative nor the legal definition are widely accepted by scholars of genocide (Straus, 2001). Academic enquiry is based on logically and evidentially robust frameworks, rather than what Tony Barta (2008) terms frameworks biased “towards law, prosecution, judicial standards of proof, and a court verdict” (para. 2). As historian, Barta (2008) explains:

> Historical understanding is a very different enterprise from criminal investigation and prosecution. It calls for a degree of subtlety, inference, and imagination that might rightly be ruled out of order in a court. To restrict historical enquiry to legal rules of evidence makes for the reverse of historical justice. The effect (and sometimes the intention) is
injustice; the evidence admitted is partial and inadequate; the complexities of the case are covered over rather than elucidated; the history is primitive.

The same could be said for the sociology, psychology, political science, and economy of genocide. Mark Levene (2004), a historian as well, further argues that a juridical approach does not even contribute to scholarly efforts towards preventing genocide from occurring. Dirk Moses (2004), another historian, states that the narrowness of juridically-based definitions has rendered the term “genocide” useless to activists responding to injustices in the real world.  

Alex de Waal, a scholar/activist who has considered the question of genocide in Sudan (and East Africa broadly) for more than 30 years, has grappled with the term “genocide” and whether it should be used to describe the atrocities he has studied and tried to end. In the mid-2000s, de Waal vocally argued against labelling the Darfur crisis genocide. However, when I discussed using genocide as a lens for analyzing the situation in Sudan with de Waal, he surprisingly supported my approach. “But you don’t think there is genocide in Sudan,” I exclaimed. “Far from it,” he replied. He had just given up on using the term because lawyers had so thoroughly monopolized and distorted it (personal communication, June 21, 2013).

The normative definition of genocide has similarly disempowered those targeted by genocide. For example, Louise Wise (2015) describes how the Genocide Convention’s definition negates Darfurians’ experience of being targeted by genocide. Oneida scholar, Roland Chrisjohn (Chrisjohn & Young, 2006), and other Indigenous scholars and activists who have continued his work on genocide in Canada, reference the text of the Genocide Convention; however, they ignore the discourse and legal interpretation surrounding it and use the Genocide Convention as a tool to advance advocacy, based on their experience of being targeted for destruction. Tellingly, much of the denial of genocide in Canada dwells on how the Canadian situation does not meet the legal definition of genocide (Melanson, 2014; Westmacott, Greco, & Qorane, 2014).

32 Except, perhaps, for a small and elite group of anti-genocide activists, who have no particular concern for any one context of genocide and whose efforts have not made a demonstrable impact in halting genocide.
A Structure, a Protracted Process, or a Relationship

Failure to acknowledge genocide as a structure, a process, or a relationship facilitates standing by. In subsequent chapters, I explore how denial of the relational nature of genocide contributes to standing by and doing nothing in Sudan and Canada. Genocide as a concept helps make sense of diverse techniques of figurational destruction and illuminates their purpose and effects. To paraphrase Patrick Wolfe (2006), genocides are not an act or single event transpiring over a number of years, marked by the start and end of mass killings; they are structures that produce different types of violence. An analogy may be helpful here. A skeleton is an example of a structure. Looking at a live being, you cannot see their skeleton directly. The skeleton is covered with muscles, tissue, and skin; but you can see evidence of it working. It takes considerable insight, and sometimes dissecting a body, to reveal what lies beneath the surface. Now, consider the definition of bystander — a person (or group) who learns of an unacceptable act and does nothing to stop it — in light of Wolfe’s view of genocide as a structure: “Stopping” a structure, at best, provides temporary relief. Once the constraining force is removed, as long as the structure is still in place, genocide will resume. Instead, genocide must be destabilized or dismantled. Standing by to genocide as a structure is different from standing by to genocide as an act, but research on the bystander has yet to considered this distinction.

Viewed as a structure, genocide in colonial contexts is multidimensional, decentralized, protracted, and adaptable. The accumulated effects of multiple genocidal techniques, used over a number of generations, have devastated the figurations of Indigenous peoples in Canada and peoples of Sudan’s peripheries. The genocidal structure has persisted for decades, if not hundreds of years, adapting itself to vast and diverse geographical and socio-cultural landscapes.33 The term “shape-shifting,” which Jeff Corntassel (personal communication, July 9, 2014) uses to describe colonialism, is equally relevant to genocide in colonial contexts; it is “constantly recasting itself… to reframe acts of violence.”

33 More than 60 Indigenous languages and more than 200 Indigenous and non-Indigenous ethnic origins were registered in the 2011 Canadian census (Statistics Canada, 2013). The Ethnologue database lists 77 Indigenous languages in Canada, 70 Indigenous and 6 non-Indigenous languages in Sudan, and 58 Indigenous and 11 non-Indigenous languages in South Sudan (Ethnologue, 2017).
The structure is decentralized and not only a creation of the state. For example, in Sudan and Canada, corporations have contributed to some of these processes. Historically, the Hudson’s Bay Company in Canada (Logan, personal communication, August 8, 2014), and currently, in both Canada (Preston, 2013) and Sudan (Travis, 2008), extractive industries have contributed to genocidal structures. In both countries, religious institutions have also been central actors. With the help of shared ideologies of cultural supremacy and greed, diverse policies and actors are networked together, and thus the actions they produce are mutually reinforcing and effective.

Genocides can also be understood as drawn out and dynamic processes (Finzsch, 2008; Levene, 2005; Moses, 2004). In both Sudan and Canada, these processes took shape during the colonial period before either country existed as a state; and, although changed, they persist to this day. Susan Blight (personal communication, July 23, 2014) and I discussed how the challenge of “connecting the dots” — of multiple government policies and societal pressures across time, in diverse Indigenous communities — to understand genocide fully makes it easy for non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese to stand by and do nothing. Blight explains,

When it comes to Indigenous people in Canada, if we focus on a singular issue or a singular policy, often times the discourse in mainstream media around that becomes, “Well, here are the Native people complaining once again about something,” or “Here is this thing happening in this area”; and it sort of negates the overall systemic issues, right? If we focus on one singular issue, then it becomes something that was a wrong perpetuated against this person of this community; or it can even be turned around to, “Well, here’s Native people complaining once more about this.” But, I think what “Idle No More” [a popular movement for Indigenous rights] did was go, “Here’s all of these things.” And, when people think long and hard about it, and they put them all together, they can only come up with one thing, which is that Canada has had a policy of extermination.

Furthermore, as Chrisjohn and Young (2006) suggest, the problem is not that Canadians dispute, or are unaware of, specific acts of genocide that Indigenous peoples have been subjected to; the problem is with “how [emphasis added] events are to be understood...how [emphasis added] all of us are to interpret the abuse” (p. 19). It is how those individual acts contribute to the genocidal structure.
The intensity of genocide in Sudan and Canada has waxed and waned over time and, thankfully, has not (yet) succeeded in eliminating the vast majority of targeted figurations. However, the structures remain, and genocide is not over. In Sudan, genocidal episodes perpetually re-emerge because the agreements made to end them never succeed in dismantling the structure. I personally witnessed the regime’s commitment to its genocidal structure during the transitional period, after the 2005 *Comprehensive Peace Agreement*. During this time, the Northern-controlled government worked quietly and consistently to ensure that none of the political reforms they had agreed to in the peace agreement would undermine the status quo. In fact, the genocidal structure was so resilient that it survived the separation of the South and the economic collapse that followed. Furthermore, appendages of that genocidal structure were reanimated in the newly independent South Sudan, spawning renewed processes of genocide there as well.

While the views of genocide as structure and process are useful, Barta’s (2000) and Powell’s (2007) relational view of genocide has proven most valuable in my research. A relationship is dynamic in a way that a structure is not. A relational view accommodates the constant change and reinvention of figurations targeted by genocide, their re-inventive capacity not only static ways of being. Furthermore, a relational view allows for an Eliasian (Elias, 1978) understanding of self in relation, rather than dichotomizing structure and the agency of individual actors (See Chapter 11). This view is helpful in understanding how genocide destroys the collective by targeting the individual, and vice versa. However, more importantly, it illuminates how the interactions of figuration members, complicit in genocide, are determined by their relational network. Since individual agents constitute the figuration, with every interaction, they can transform it. A relational view looks beyond subjective intentions to what Barta (2000) calls, “the objective nature of the relationships” (p. 239). For example, it illuminates how non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese are complicit in genocide, simply because their way of life has been achieved by usurping the land and resources of targeted figurations. Finally, as these relations have yet to be restructured, we cannot discuss genocide in Sudan and Canada in the past tense; genocide is only in abeyance. A relational problem requires a relationally- transformative solution.
The Banality of Evil

Genocide, in colonial contexts, is simply business as usual. As Chrisjohn and Young (2006) argue, the Indian Residential School system operated “with scarcely a cloud on Canada’s moral horizon” (p. 6). If anyone notices that a people are dying out, it can easily be explained away as inevitable, part of the natural course, the unavoidable result of globalization, and the lack of relevance of the targeted figuration’s way of life in the contemporary world (Black, 2015). Though a war or a crisis may be helpful in covering up or justifying mass killings, for other acts the cover is unnecessary. Indeed, in Sudan, war is so ubiquitous; it is sadly normal. Genocidal acts, such as coerced and forced relocation and confinement (in residential schools, Indian hospitals, and jails in Canada or “peace villages” in Sudan) are recast as non-violent. These acts are either “justified” as self defence or, worse still, in the best interest of those targeted.

Moses (2004) argues that those who politically oppose physical techniques of genocide often participate enthusiastically in humanitarian measures that destroy Indigenous peoples through “kinder,” “gentler” means. They preserve the purpose and the effects of genocide while making the techniques more palatable. In Canada, the Indian Residential Schools transformed into the “Sixties Scoop,” in which Indigenous children were adopted out of their families; this, in turn, transformed into modern-day, Aboriginal child-welfare and education policy. The number of deaths due to violence, starvation, and disease decreased in Darfur after a peak in 2003–2004. However, in the years that followed, the confinement of Darfurians in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps for their own “protection” and the exile of many from the community, especially its leaders, as refugees have probably done more to destroy the fabric of Darfurian society than the loss of life. Following Claudia Card, the term Louise Wise (2015) uses to describe this impact is “social death.”

As I elaborate upon in Chapter 10, genocidal acts are also viewed as non-violent because they are carried out in a bureaucratic manner by official institutions, such as schools, hospitals, welfare authorities, humanitarian agencies, and the police. The genocidal militias, the janjaweed, in Darfur have been rebranded the “Border Intelligence Brigade.” The North West Mounted Police, now the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, with their extraordinary power (originally

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34 Arendt, 1994
hybrid soldier/judge more than police), epitomize how settler society carried out genocidal violence under the guise of maintaining law and order. Another example is the way genocide is driven by budgetary considerations. Cost-cutting measures are a leitmotif of colonial policies (Neu & Therrien, 2003). The Sudanese government preferred arming tribal militias, who have been given the right to pillage from the civilians they attack, rather than paying salaries to the Sudanese Armed Forces. At Confederation, the Canadian government decided that it would be too expensive to clear the prairies of Indigenous people through American style Indian Wars and, instead, accomplished the same objectives (and perhaps higher rates of death and suffering) through deportation, enclosure, and denial of humanitarian and health services (Daschuk, 2013).

As I discuss in detail in Chapters 5 and 8, the way those targeted with genocide are treated is rarely a significant, and never a sustained, political issue. One symptom of the extent to which genocide has been normalized is its imperviousness to regime change. Furthermore, most of the genocide literature presumes that genocides take place in authoritarian societies. However, I argue, this is untrue in the Canadian context and, perhaps surprisingly, in the Sudanese context as well (See: Chapter 10). In fact, in both countries genocidal turns were taken by progressive governments. Pierre Trudeau’s socially progressive Liberal party proposed terminating Indigenous title and treaty rights in the 1970s, under the guise of ensuring equality. The democratically-elected-coalition government led by Sadig al-Mahdi from 1985-1989 introduced an official policy of tribal militias for counter-insurgency. This genocidal strategy was employed in wars with the South, the Nuba Mountains, and Darfur.

Indeed, genocides in these contexts are legal and are pursued through legal channels (See: Chapter 10). The Sudanese government, which contrary to international perception has maintained a modicum of independence, has been careful to ensure that it cannot be held accountable by its own courts. Sudan is not a state party to the Genocide Convention and is very sensitive to international legal proceedings against Sudanese officials for genocide and related crimes. The Sudanese government did not simply ignore international accusations of genocide in Darfur but has been careful not to document genocidal intent, lobbied vigorously against cases being prosecuted by the International Criminal Court, and set up a domestic “Special Criminal Court on the Events in Darfur” to issue convictions. I already explained that the Canadian government declined to domesticate key articles of the Genocide Convention. Furthermore,
during the negotiation of the Genocide Convention, the Canadian government actively worked to limit its scope, particularly excluding cultural genocide, to ensure that its colonizing geopolitical and national interests would not be criminalized and to ensure Indigenous peoples would be unable to charge them with genocide in an international court (Bachman, 2013; Mako, 2012).

**Genocidal Intent**

The question of intent is one of the most complex and controversial in the prosecution and study of genocide. According to the Genocide Convention, the crime of genocide requires that the acts specified in Articles 2(a) – 2(e) be “committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such.” (A/RES/260, 1948) In other words, these acts are only genocidal if they are carried out with the goal of destroying a targeted figuration. Further clarifications to the Genocide Convention by states parties (the United States in particular), legal opinions, and case law have established that “intent” is what is legally referred to as “specific intent.” Practically speaking, this requires that the state of mind of an individual perpetrator be known or at least reasonably presumed, which usually requires that the individual confess that they committed acts with the goal of destroying a protected group. For a state — as Schabas (2008) argues and the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur agrees — specific intent requires that a genocidal policy is explicitly articulated.\(^3\) In effect, this requires a genocidal regime to state openly that they are trying to commit genocide. One might surmise, therefore, that the reason genocide convictions have been so difficult to achieve is that perpetrators are unlikely to incriminate themselves by stating their intentions to commit genocide openly. By analogy, one could imagine that there would be few first-degree murder convictions, if those accused had to publicly admit their desire to kill their victims.

On the other hand, some scholars of genocide, particularly those who study its colonial dimensions, employ a functionalist, rather than an intentionalist approach, to genocide. Functionalists, such as Levene (2005), reject the notion that the extermination of a group is necessarily preconceived and precisely orchestrated; instead, they view genocide as a process

\(^3\) On the other hand, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia ruled that a government policy was not required.
driven by “bureaucratic underpinnings and socio-economic configurations” that can gradually build up to extermination (Levene, 2005, p. 93). Functionalists are more likely to accept that genocide can occur while perpetrators are pursuing other aims (Barta, 2000; Fein, 1990). Discussing the Holocaust, Martin Broszat (in Wistrich 2001, p. 226) suggests that genocide does “not derive from...[a] clear will to exterminate” but rather has an “improvisatory character.” In both Sudan and Canada, targeted figurations are destroyed by colonialists with other aims: usurping Indigenous lands, resources, and civilizing savages and, in the Sudanese case, also counterinsurgency. Barta (2000) further argues that genocide can occur while perpetrators are trying to be benevolent. “[T]he bureaucratic apparatus might officially be directed to protect innocent people but...[the] whole race is, nevertheless, subject to remorseless pressures of destruction inherent in the very nature of the society” (pp. 239–240).

While a centralized plan to destroy the targeted figurations may not exist, intent to commit genocide can be inferred from the circumstances: The genocidal acts themselves are purposeful (Fein, 1990) and the colonialists persist in a course of action knowing that it will lead to the elimination of targeted figurations (Barta, 2008; Finzsch, 2008; Moses, 2004). The Sudanese government has not publicly communicated an official policy of genocide in Darfur. However, they were accused of genocide while carrying out genocidal acts in Darfur and saw the genocidal impact of pursuing a similar counterinsurgency strategy in the Nuba Mountains in the 1990s. The Sudanese government continues to carry out the same acts to this day in Darfur and, now again, in the Nuba Mountains. That they reasonably knew the effects of what they were doing would be genocide, and were called upon to halt for fear that it was should be sufficient to prove their genocidal intent. Similarly, in the 1830s, a landmark report by the British Parliamentary Select Committee on Aboriginal Peoples warned that colonial policies were leading to the physical elimination of Canada’s Indigenous peoples. On the heels of this report, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Francis Bond Head, attempted to relocate the Anishinaabeg of his province to isolated and rocky Manitoulin Island to quietly die out (Freeman, 2010). Colonial officials were aware that the loss of Indigenous peoples’ land base and associated livelihoods, and their harassment and murder by European settlers, would result in their extinction. Genocidal intent was present because, despite this awareness, colonial officials did nothing to halt or reverse settlement.
Historians and social scientists are not the only functionalists. Recently some lawyers, due in part to their frustration with the paucity of genocide convictions, have adopted this approach as well. They have advocated to consider those who commit acts specified in the Genocide Convention, knowing that the acts contribute to destroying a protected group, as demonstrating genocidal intent (Ambos, 2009). According to a functionalist approach, physically eliminating an Indigenous people is one of a range of “strategies” contemplated by an often-factionalized group of colonizers, rather than an inevitable course of action. Alex de Waal (2006) describes the abandonment of the genocidal campaign in the Nuba Mountains as due to lack of capacity and resources, but also because political leaders intervened to stop it. In Canada, a distant British Parliament reined in Bond Head’s genocidal impulses and stopped his attempts to ethnically cleanse the Anishinaabeg and Wyandot from Southern Ontario (Freeman, 2010).36 A functionalist approach also leaves more room for agency among those targeted for genocide. The resistance of the Anishinaabeg and the Nuba contributed to the failure of these genocidal attempts as well. Functionalism further accounts for the waxing and waning of genocidal acts in both countries.

In addition, according to Levene (2005), Palmer (1998), and Barta (2000), colonial genocides are led more by society than by the government. The genocidal policies of the state are driven by popular opinion rather than the public controlled by a government intent on genocide. In societal-led genocides, evidence of intent is found in widely held, yet often unspoken, assumptions in colonial society. Because it “goes without saying,” intent does not need to be explicitly articulated in government policy. The unquestioned consensus within Canadian and Sudanese society is that the ways of being of the figurations targeted for genocide have no legitimacy. To this day, there is a steadfast belief in the superiority of a European-derived civilization in Canada (TRC, 2015), and an Islamic-Arab-derived civilization in Sudan (Sikainga, 1993). However, the Sudanese and Canadian governments are aware of and desire to appear to adhere to human rights standards (and, in Sudan, avoid sanctions for not adhering). As such, both governments are careful to avoid incriminating public statements. So, borrowing a phrase that lawyers use, there is often no “smoking gun.”

36 For other examples of the metropole reining in governments of the peripheries, see Cole Harris’s (2002) work on British Columbia.
The Impotence of Law

Proponents of a juridically-based definition of genocide defend it on pragmatic grounds. They claim that because it is enshrined in law, it protects the world from genocide (Schabas, 2009). Those who advocate to maintain as narrow a definition as possible claim that broadening it would weaken its effectiveness as a legal instrument and international norm. In David Stannard’s (2008) words “the more shielded the major nations of the world are by a narrow definition of the crime, the more likely they will be to seek the convictions of others” (p. 131) and intervene to stop an impending genocide. Yet, as Levene (2000, p. 306) argues, “Kosovo notwithstanding, the Genocide Convention has been more honoured in the breach than in the practice.” The Genocide Convention is probably the least effective international instrument of human rights or humanitarian law. It pretty much sat on the shelf for 50 years. Even after an international tribunal in 1997 finally issued the first charge of genocide only a handful of individuals have been convicted of this crime. This is not because genocides have not occurred in the world; in fact, arguably, millions have perished in atrocities labelled genocidal during this period. Rather the lack of genocide prosecutions and convictions can be explained by the high standard of specific intent that must be proven to convict someone of genocide.\(^{37}\) Law can extend protections through extra-judicial means, and this dearth of litigation would be less of a concern if the Genocide Convention deterred genocide; however the Genocide Convention clearly has not delivered on its commitment that genocide should “never again” be allowed to occur.\(^{38}\) Countries violated state sovereignty under the guise of protecting the rights of civilians in the century before the term genocide existed. Furthermore, since the Genocide Convention became international law, state parties have again and again stood by and done nothing when alerted of impending or active genocide. The United States’ official recognition of genocide in Darfur, Sudan, which should have triggered a legal obligation to intervene, did not result in a demonstrably different reaction by the government (Fowler, 2006). For these reasons, the argument for the preservation of a narrow definition of genocide, because of its legal effectiveness, is unfounded.

\(^{37}\) This standard has been set by case law and not the Genocide Convention.

\(^{38}\) Empirically proving that this juridically-determined definition has or has not reduced genocide is untenable or, at least, extraordinarily difficult. There are too many uncertainties regarding the number of genocidal acts and what counts as genocide. Furthermore, it is impossible to exclude competing factors that explain the increase or decrease of genocidal acts. However, it is clear that genocide continues unabated.
The Importance of Using the Term Genocide

Some, de Waal for example (personal communication, June 21, 2013), would argue that rehabilitating the term genocide is not worth the effort, that it would be better to use another term or create a new term to refer to genocides that do not fit the normative definition. Rather than argue against this course of action, I describe how I committed myself to reclaiming the term.

It was only after embarking on this research, that I discovered the limited public and academic literature on genocide in Canada (Chrisjohn & Young, 2006; MacDonald & Hudson, 2012; Palmater, 2011; Woolford, 2009; Woolford & Thomas, 2011). Though I had heard about genocide in Darfur before visiting Sudan, at the time, I was sceptical about the use of the term in this context. I agreed with the narrow juridically-based definition, particularly on the question of specific intent, and further agreed with de Waal (de Waal & Stanton, 2007) that the label genocide could impede negotiation for a political end to atrocities. My Darfurian colleagues, who were convinced that the Sudanese government was trying to eliminate them, disagreed, and were upset with me. This conflict between juridical and experiential understandings of genocide foretold a significant theme that emerged in this research (See also: Wise, 2015).

When I began this research, my decision to employ the lens of genocide was not based on political discourse nor academic literature on genocide but on what I had born witness to while living and working with Indigenous peoples in Canada and Southerners and Darfurians in Sudan. My decision was based on what Darfurians in Sudan and Indigenous people in Canada told me about their experiences and my direct experiences in both contexts. As I noted in Chapter 1, there were resonances between the contexts. These resonances, witnessing similar patterns of figurational destruction, led me to review the concept of genocide critically. There was simply no other word to describe what I was seeing. Furthermore, when I returned to the text of the Genocide Convention with these real-life experiences in my mind (and my heart and my body) and, more so, when I was introduced to Lemkin’s writing, I felt that, morally, I could do nothing but speak the truth.
In 2012, when I tentatively began using genocide as a lens for this research, its use in public discourse about Canada was very limited, and its use in Sudan was contested (de Waal & Stanton, 2007; Straus, 2005). I worried that genocide, in both contexts, would not be the best entry point for my research, that it would silence rather than generate conversations. To help me decide, I reached out to Indigenous academics and activists in Canada and academics and activists from figurations of Sudan’s peripheries and formed a group I call, my Guidance Circle (See Chapter 3). There was consensus among members of my Guidance Circle that, even if genocide could not be proven legally in Sudan and Canada, in a moral and scholarly sense it is not only an appropriate designation but, as I elaborate throughout this thesis, a necessary one. Moreover, the conceptual framework of genocide is crucial to understanding how those of the hegemonic figurations in Sudan and Canada stand by, because it makes sense of what they stand by to.

39 Prior to the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s interim report in 2012, the use of the term genocide in relation to Indigenous people in Canada was restricted to alternative media and a few opinion editorials.
Chapter 3
Researching Relationally

I was introduced to relationality not through academic theory but through friendships and working relationships with Indigenous people in Canada and Sudan, people whose worldviews are more relational than my Euro-Canadian perspective. Cross-cultural experiences, a feminist upbringing, and an early introduction to Edward Said’s (2003) critique of the dichotomizing and hierarchical discourse that underpins colonialism made me more open to these knowledges. I would not have been ready to learn about relationality, if I had not already begun to unlearn what I had been brought up to believe about the supremacy of Western ways of being and doing.

Tuhiwai Smith (1999) acknowledges Said in her critique of the Western epistemological tradition. She traces this tradition back to classical Greek philosophy, which “separate[d] people out from the [natural] world around them, and place[d] humanity on a higher plane” (p. 47). This dichotomy produced others: mind and body; reason and sense; reality and supernatural; individual and society; masculine and feminine. A dichotomizing and hierarchical worldview was revived during the European Renaissance by men, such as René Descartes. It became the basis for distinguishing and privileging civilized societies (colonizing) over primitive peoples (colonized) and justifying the exploitation and elimination of the latter by the former. A Cartesian worldview also underpins Western approaches to research.

On the other hand, many Indigenous approaches to life and research on Turtle Island are relational. According to Deng (1995), the values of the Dinka and Nuer of South Sudan are as well:

> Among the central themes of the indigenous value system that the people themselves emphasize and that have engaged anthropological attention are: (1) the pursuit of permanent identity and influence through procreation and ancestral continuity; (2) communal unity and harmony as expressed in idealized concepts of human relations; and (3) principles of individual and collective dignity and integrity. (p. 189)

As entities we — whether human or non-human, animate or inanimate, material or immaterial — are our relationships. This premise is reflected not just in Indigenous understandings of the
natural, social, and supernatural world, but in Indigenous understandings of what knowledge is (ontology) and how we come to know things (epistemology). Research is not viewed as the creation or extraction of knowledge but as a process, which establishes, strengthens, and brings us into closer relationship with knowledge (McGregor, Restoule, & Johnston 2018). Knowledge exists a priori to research in its own relational context, and researchers should honour that context. Relationships with knowledge are not viewed as value neutral nor as exclusive of all other relationships in the cosmos. Rather, two sets of relationships, researcher to knowledge and researcher to the rest of the cosmos, are interdependent (Wilson, 2008). This leads to the imperative that a researcher act in a good way in all their relations because relationships “hold Creation together” (Leroy Little Bear quoted in Absolon, 2011, p. 49).

While there are differences between Indigenous and Western approaches to research, there are some parallels, particularly between Indigenous Knowledges and cutting-edge, relational approaches in ecology and climate change science, neuroscience, and theoretical physics. The social sciences, however, continue to adhere to the “‘received’ (substantialist) notion that anything can be understood and explained in isolation from anything else” (Tsekeris, 2013, p. 103). Exceptionally relational sociology, originally theorized by Norbert Elias (1978), breaks with this Cartesian tradition and has been helpful in this research. Working with these approaches has helped me honour approaches to research that are Indigenous to the place I call home, engage those targeted by genocide in my research, and contribute to the decolonization of the academic community of which I am a part.40

Genocide is a relational process, and this research has been one as well. Reflecting this congruence, in this chapter I weave together the relational approach I employed both conceptually and empirically in this study. Centring relationships required me to reflect critically on who I am and how I want to be as a researcher and as a human being (Wilson, 2008). It led me to Indigenous approaches to research that uphold values of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity and insist that research produce knowledge that is relevant to those targeted by genocide (See: Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). To this end, I collaborated with activists and

40 This is not to say that all relational sociologists are working to decolonize the social sciences. In fact, Norbert Elias, whose research focused on the “civilizing process,” arguably legitimized colonial attitudes in the very process of trying understand what gave rise to them (Goody in Dépelteau, Passiani, & Mariano, 2013).
scholars Indigenous to Canada and of Sudan’s peripheries to uncover a grounded theory on how riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians stand by and do nothing about genocide in their own countries. In this chapter, I discuss how this research reflects the relationships I am in with land and with peoples complicit in and targeted by genocide. I explain how this relational approach shaped the questions I asked, how I asked them, and of whom, and how this approach led me to a contextualized analysis of the in-depth interviews I conducted with riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians. I also discuss how I addressed the ethical challenges of researching an ethically-charged topic. Finally, I explain how I developed a theory that is grounded in the knowledge shared with me through this research.

**Myself in Relation**

According to Cree scholar Shawn Wilson (2008), I am constituted by my relationships, and my research is the relationship between myself and the knowledge I seek. As a researcher, I must acknowledge my location, my subjectivities, and the responsibilities that flow from them. Most immediately, I am located within my family; I am a creation of those who came before me. My ancestors left their Indigenous lands in Scotland, England, Ireland, and other places in northern Europe and travelled to settle on Treaty 4 territory in southwestern Saskatchewan. Because of their decisions decades and centuries ago, I have found myself in relation with the Nlaka’pamux, whose traditional territory I was born on in Ashcroft, British Columbia; members of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Kainai, Piikani, Siksika, Tusst’ina, and Stoney Nakoda First Nations, including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nation), whose traditional territory I grew up on in Calgary, Alberta; and the Huron-Wendat, Seneca, and Mississauga’s of the Credit River, whose traditional territories I have lived on as an adult in Toronto, Ontario.

Looking to the future, my responsibilities as a mother overlap with my responsibilities as a researcher and overlap with my responsibilities as a guest on Indigenous lands and as a treaty person.41

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41 Stating that I am a treaty person is an acknowledgement that I benefit from treaty rights derived from the relationship between the Crown and First Nations people, and that I have responsibilities in that relationship.
Moving outwards, I am in a particular set of relationships with the community of non-Indigenous people I am from. These relationships are shaped by my family, on the lands where they have chosen to live, their livelihoods, and the relations their livelihoods have placed them in with the land. Growing up in Alberta, I was afforded many opportunities, thanks to both my father’s well-paying job in the oil and gas sector and the public services funded through royalties collected from those industries. The resources that led to these opportunities were available to my people because the government had ethnically cleansed the Blackfoot, Cree, Chipewyan, Dene, Sarcee, and Stoney Nakoda Sioux from their territories. Ironically, it is because of my ill-gotten privilege that I was able to pursue the opportunities that led me to this research.

Most of my work prior to undertaking this research has been as an ally to young people affected by violence, and I have lived close to half of my life abroad (as a child in Norway, Tunisia, and Britain and as an adult in the United States, Kenya, Sudan, Belgium, and Jordan). Perhaps a reflection of this, I am most comfortable in a position that others find uncomfortable: Being an outsider, whether among my own people or “others.” This research reflects my particular positionality, with themes, such as discomfort and disavowal, resonating both in my own life and in my research.

Following Plains Cree and Saulteaux scholar Margaret Kovach (2009), I have shared my story throughout this research to help participants decide whether, or how, to share their stories with me. In this thesis, I do so to allow you, my reader, to assess my credibility, the subjective validity of this research. I hope that sharing my story will also encourage you to consider how your own subjectivity affects how you connect with this knowledge. Reflecting on my location has made me conscious of my biases; and I have been better able to see and, when necessary, compensate for their impact on this research (See: Kovach, 2009).

As Anishinaabekwe scholar Kathy Absolon (2011) posits, locating myself in relation to this research (and vice versa) also begins to illuminate my reasons for undertaking it and whether these motivations are honourable. Despite the warm feelings the word relationship denotes, it is neither an inherently positive nor neutral concept. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) discusses the damage caused by colonial research relationships. Jean-Paul Restoule, Anishinaabeg scholar and my
thesis supervisor, and Debby Danard Wilson (2010) suggest that in an Indigenous context, the values of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity should mitigate against harm in research relationships. I return to these ideas in the section on researching in a good way.

For a decade and a half prior to starting this research, I worked with children and youth who were growing up in the midst of violence in Sudan and Canada. The relational network that facilitated this research, that made me who I am, is constituted of many of these (formerly young) people. I am confident that our work together had a positive impact on many of them and, through them, on other individuals and their communities. It certainly had a positive impact on me. However, in my work, I grew frustrated by treating the symptoms rather than the underlying causes of the violence targeting Indigenous young people in Canada and young people in West Darfur and South Sudan. These young people were not the problem that needed fixing; they were the easiest targets and the ones who suffered most acutely from genocide. My work with them prioritized and amplified their voices. However, I also yearned to voice my views on these issues without getting in the way of them being heard. I undertook this research, in part, as a vehicle for my own voice (See: Absolon, 2011; Wilson, 2008).

Finally, the catalyst for my research of this relational problem was becoming a mother, helping to create a new relational being. This transformation confronted me with the inheritance I am leaving my children and my responsibility to try to create a relational context in which they are no longer complicit in genocide.

**Other Voices**

I began this chapter in my own voice. Now, I introduce other voices, particularly the voices of those targeted by and those complicit in genocide. In positivist approaches to research, voice is often unclear or presumed to be the voice not of the researcher, nor of those participating in the research, but of objective scientific truth (Wilson, 2008). However, claims to objectivity can be used to mask the power wielded by mostly white, male, Western researchers as legitimizers of knowledge and, sometimes, justifiers of colonialism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Harding, 2008).

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For you, the reader, to judge the truth of the knowledge presented in this thesis, I must be transparent about the way power and its resulting bias are at work in this research, beginning with naming the voices presented. However, in so doing, I remain constrained by the colonial relations I am in as a researcher, relations that compel me to follow certain conventions to be believed and understood. My limited exposure to Indigenous worldviews in Canada and Sudan and post-colonial critique of the conventions of Western research (See: Tuhiwai Smith, 1999) provides me with a perspective from which to critique these conventions; however, I have struggled to enact a less oppressive alternative in my research.

In this colonial context, in my effort to explain “who” is part of this research, I find myself labelling peoples. Labelling, which is premised on privileging some relationships and denying others and excluding that which does not fit, is fundamental to Western research. At the same time, it sustains colonialism and genocide. To control or eradicate a people, you need a name for them. Both Sudanese and Canadians resort to what I call, colonial labelling. Colonial labelling ignores, or occasionally misappropriates, the terms those targeted by genocide use to refer to their own collective identities; it assigns foreign, often racialized, and derogatory labels (e.g., Indian, Eskimo, Native, ‘abd [slave], gharb [western Sudanese]). Through “engineering peoplehood” (Gallab, 2011), the colonialist usurps the right of a colonized people to determine their own name and membership and to have sovereignty over their own land and people (especially children) and undermines their treaties with other sovereign peoples (including the colonial state). These processes homogenize, differentiate, essentialize, rank, naturalize, and freeze identities — colonized and colonizer — in order to dichotomize them. Once hegemonic control over the targeted identity is secured, the colonial state is in the position, if it so chooses, to administrate a targeted people out of existence. Engineering peoplehood (a “kinder” and “gentler” form of genocide) may be accomplished through transforming the identity of a particular people into a benign entity that lacks the power to assert its sovereignty, and denying individuals membership in their figuration in order to reduce its size until it is no longer a threat, or until it ceases to exist entirely (Palmater, 2011).

In the Canadian context, I could easily have used binary colonial labels, which at first seemed unproblematic. The Indigenous scholars and activists I worked with were happy to help me decide on the correct terminology for different groups or nations and define who is part of each
group. None of my non-Indigenous participants thought to query my terminology or definitions or my rationale for grouping people in this way; neither did a participant of Métis decent, who has a painful family history and is living on the edge of group identity. Everyone seemed to accept the reproduction of these essentialized categories.

On the other hand, in Sudan my attempts to use labels were fraught. There was significant debate about what constituted the complicit figuration of standing by to genocide and who was targeted. For example, based on his research, Abdullahi Gallab (2011), one of my guidance circle members, conceptualized the complicit figuration as a “community of the state,” defined primarily by social and professional class. Others, whom I collaborated with and interviewed, focused on political power, wealth, geographical proximity to Khartoum, or tribal affiliation. The term “Indigenous,” which I believe facilitates understanding of relations in Sudan, was contested. A potential Guidance Circle member declined to participate in this research because of my interest in exploring this marker of collective identity. The riverain Sudanese participants interpreted tribal labels as colonial or pejorative when applied to riverain Sudanese though, revealingly, not when applied to people from other parts of the country. Many of the participants wanted to problematize, or erase, tribal identity. Hamid, an academic and one of the participants, stated, “I think we’re using identity as a diversion to not talk about rights, equality…. I don’t give a damn about my tribe.”

In Chapter 4, I discuss my use of the tribally derived designation, “riverain Sudanese.” There is no complementary term for those targeted by genocide in Sudan. “Indigenous” seems the closest term; but it requires much justification, is not widely used, and is, as noted, contested. Instead, in a geographical vein and consistent with academic and public discourse on Sudan, I use the term, “peoples of the peripheries,” when referring collectively to the figurations targeted by genocide. I avoided this issue in my interviews (See: Appendix B. Conversation Guide), as I wanted to learn from the research participants about the study topic, not debate with them about their labels. By using geography as a proxy, I referred to participants from Khartoum and participants from areas outside of Khartoum, and allowed them to use their own language. My approach was not just pragmatic. Guma Kunda Komey (2008) discusses the importance of “region” in Sudan (i.e., Darfur, the Nuba Mountains, the South, and the East) as “a source of their identity” (p. 993),
distinct from tribe though very much defined by one’s tribal homeland. He suggests that this is the basis for most political organizations and movements from the peripheries.

Tensions between a relational approach and the colonial labelling process, which denies or dismisses all relationships that do not contribute to a hierarchical binary, have had important and challenging implications for my research, which I have managed but not resolved. Though I have adopted a relational approach, I contribute to the engineering of people in binary ways with these labels: Indigenous/non-Indigenous and riverain Sudanese/Sudanese from the peripheries. Sometimes I evoke these binaries to deconstruct them; other times I use them simply to be understood or to reduce the complexity of what I am researching, so it is manageable. Eventually, I decided to describe those involved in this research as either targeted by or complicit in genocide. These are also binary labels; however, they feel more relational and, possibly, less essentialist.

**My Collaborators**

This research was conducted in two genocidal contexts where both a technique and an impact of genocide are the silencing of those targeted: peoples of Sudan’s peripheries and Indigenous peoples in Canada. The absence of their voices in the academic literature on genocide is conspicuous. Am I not compounding this problem by providing yet another venue for the voices of those complicit in genocide, by researching how riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians stand by and do nothing about genocide? As with labelling, the answer is partly yes. I am, and this research is, a part of this genocidal system not separate from it. Researching within a genocidal system, at times, I re-inscribe relations that facilitate genocide. However, I hope that I simultaneously transform other relations in ways that interrupt genocide. In an effort to reduce the chances of the former and increase the chances of the latter, I have entered into relationships with activists and scholars targeted by genocide. I have asked for their endorsement to undertake what I know is risky work and for their guidance on how to undertake this research in a good way. I have reflected and acknowledged their perspectives, and the perspectives of others targeted by genocide in Sudan and Canada, throughout this thesis to begin to address the silencing of voices from communities targeted by genocide in the literature.
I have come to call the following people who have contributed to my research, most of whom are from a people targeted by genocide, my Guidance Circle:43

**Sudan Guidance Circle (13 members)**
- Abdullahi Osman el-Tom (Berti)
- Ahmed Hussein Adam (Fur)
- Alex de Waal (British)
- Amna Dirar (Beja)
- Fathelrhaman Abdelrhman Mohamed (Masalit)
- Francis Deng (Dinka)
- Guma Kunda Komey (Nuba)
- Hafiz Ismail Mohamed (Nuba)
- Hamdan Goumma (Misiriyya)
- Janice Body (Canadian), Doctoral committee member
- Luka Biong Deng Kuol (Dinka)
- Madgi el-Gizouli (Ja’aliyyin)
- Taisier Ali (Nubian)

**Canadian Guidance Circle (14 members)**
- Andrea Auger (Métis)
- Andrew Woolford (non-Indigenous)
- Audra Simpson (Mohawk)
- Cindy Blackstock (Gitxsan)

43 Initially, I planned to include only non-Indigenous people in Canada and peoples of Sudan’s peripheries in the Guidance Circles. However, as I spoke with Guidance Circle members, I was encouraged to acknowledge that though these divisions are important, they are constructed. The diversity of experience and opinions are sometimes greater within these categories than across them. Striving to avoid naturalizing these categories, I reached out to individuals who bridge these divides: Victoria Freeman, Andrew Woolford, Madgi el Gizouli, and Alex de Waal (who is non-Sudanese). Some of these relationships preceded this research and led me to it (For example, I had worked professionally with both Cindy Blackstock and Fathelrhman Abdelrhman); while I entered others at later stages, through my relational networks and through the networks of my thesis committee. Some of these relationships have been sustained, and at times intense, while others have been more superficial. Similarly, my ability to form diverse circles of accountability for myself have been determined by geography, my pre-existing relationships, personalities, the reach of the relational networks I have tapped into, the impact of structural inequality, and the time and interest each Guidance Circle member has had in my research. In Sudan, I connected less with women and Easterners than I had hoped; and in Canada, I connected mostly with Indigenous peoples from southern/central Canada.
Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux (Chippewa)
Jean-Paul Restoule (Anishinaabe), Doctoral supervisor
Jeffrey Corntassel (Cherokee)
Joanne Arnott (Métis)
Lee Maracle (Stó:lō), Doctoral committee member
Niigaanwewidam Sinclair (Anishinaabe)
Roland Chrisjohn (Oneida)
Susan Blight (Anishinaabe)
Tricia Logan (Métis)
Victoria Freeman (non-Indigenous)

In introducing myself at the beginning of this chapter and being transparent about the way in which I undertook this work, I help you judge the subjective validity of this research. In providing the names of my Guidance Circle members, I offer insight into the relational validity of the knowledge contained in this thesis.\textsuperscript{44} The notion of relational validity is related to Wilson’s (2008) observation that the relationships of researcher to knowledge, and researcher to everything else in the cosmos are interdependent. To judge whether what a researcher presents is true it is necessary to know something about them, or more importantly about the networks of relationships they are in, because those relational networks can hold them accountable for telling the truth. While some aspects of Indigenous principles of relational validity might make non-Indigenous researcher uncomfortable – for example the characterization of these relational networks as sacred and the giving of tobacco to bind people “to speak their truth” (Stevenson, quoted in Kovach, 2010, p. 102) – notions of situated knowledge, and established conventions in academic research, for example the supervision of a doctoral student by senior academics who hold positions at a recognized university, citing the work of other academics, and publishing the results of research in prestigious journals, are partial manifestations of this idea.

Responsibility for this knowledge is not equally shared among my Guidance Circle members and myself; this research is, in the end, a sole-authored endeavour. However, the research process

\textsuperscript{44} I intentionally do not list the professional or institutional affiliations of my Guidance Circles members because most of them do not fit easily into such boxes (or fit too many); and who they are and what they bring to this research clearly transcends these designations (Biographies of most members are available online).
included moments of true collaboration with members of my Guidance Circle, and the knowledge presented in this thesis is a reflection of these relationships. This research differs from much participatory research in that the members of my Guidance Circle have more power than me. Though, with the exception of my thesis committee members, they do not have ascribed power over me; in academic and political circles they are well positioned to discredit this research and me, as a researcher, if they have concerns with the process or outcomes of this research. In other words, they can hold me accountable.

The Guidance Circle members reviewed and provided feedback on my research proposal, which included a critical review of the scholarly literature on the topics under investigation, most of which is written from a Eurocentric perspective and by non-Indigenous North Americans and Europeans (See: Appendix C. Questions for Collaboration). The Guidance Circle contributed their perspectives and theories on standing by and genocide. They refined and developed my preliminary conceptual framework. There was consensus among members that the theories of genocide I outlined applied to both contexts, and they were comfortable with my use of the term genocide in this research. They advised me on my research design; which non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese I should approach for in-depth interviews about how they view and relate to Indigenous people in Canada and peoples of Sudan’s peripheries, respectively; and what I should ask interviewees about how they view and relate to those targeted by genocide.

I had envisioned more collaboration with Guidance Circle members (other than my thesis committee members) at the data analysis stage. However, geographical proximity/distance to both contexts (I moved to Amman, Jordan shortly after beginning this research) affected my ability to maintain contact with Guidance Circle members. Furthermore, I may have overestimated the time commitment necessary for Guidance Circle members to provide meaningful input on the analysis. Yet, they did provide feedback on the theory that emerged from the analysis. I provided all members with a summary and draft of the thesis and invited them to provide input in writing or through a conversation by Skype or by phone. I acknowledge their inputs throughout.

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45 I conversed with, rather than interviewed, my Guidance Circle members. Their reactions to my proposed research, or their desire to take our conversation in an entirely different direction, took precedence over my prepared questions, and together we worked through the dilemmas I was struggling with in the research.
Research Participants

Following a grounded theory method, participant recruitment for in-depth interviews was “theoretically sensitive” (See: Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45). Decisions about potential participants were made iteratively with the Guidance Circle members, drawing on insights from previous research experience, the literature review, and the contexts researched, or based on what I had learned as I began to conduct the interviews. My recruitment methods changed depending upon whom I needed to approach to uncover and deepen the ideas that would inform the theory I was piecing together (See: Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This approach was subjective yet not limited by my own subjectivity, as I made these decisions together with members of my Guidance Circle. I discussed who to recruit with them first and later with gatekeepers in each of the sectors I targeted.

In collaboration with my Guidance Circle, I chose to build a theory grounded in data collected from non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese. I asked participants to speak on their own behalf but also on behalf of their peers, thus gathering what Morse, Penrod, and Hupcey (2000) call, “shadowed data.” I also joined up the theory that emerged from the data with the views of my Guidance Circle members, my own informal observations in both contexts, and relevant academic literature. However, the theory remains partial and, primarily, reflects the perspectives of the riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadian research participants on how they stand by and do nothing about genocide.

I initially requested Guidance Committee members to nominate what I termed, “publicly influential” riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians as research participants. However, they encouraged me to focus on influential people who were not in the public eye as well (e.g., teachers and civil servants). I expected them to recommend that I narrow the scope of my research to focus on a single category of people who work in a particular sector. Yet, they encouraged me to broaden my focus. As a result, I did not recruit a homogenous sample of individuals, who fit clear and narrowly defined criteria (approximately 8–12 participants in each context), and conduct qualitative interviews until I achieved data saturation. Instead, I interviewed participants from four different professional designations in Canada and nine
different professional designations in Sudan for a total of 62 participants. Using Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) concepts, I began sampling with professional designation as a “partial framework of ‘local’ concepts” that gave me a “beginning foot-hold” (p. 45). I reserved judgement on whether the professional designations nominated would be theoretically relevant until after I completed my analysis.

I then used my own networks and the networks of my Guidance Committee members to identify gatekeepers in each sector, with expert knowledge of and extensive networks within their sector who would be willing to support my research. Most of my Guidance Committee members in Canada are Indigenous people and in Sudan from the peripheries; but most of my gatekeepers are non-Indigenous and riverain, respectively (i.e. of the figuration I recruited from). However, the categories of Guidance Circle members, gatekeepers, and participants were not discrete. A few members of my Guidance Circle acted as gatekeepers, a few of the gatekeepers volunteered to participate in interviews, and a few participants became gatekeepers (leading to a type of snowball-sampling method). This demonstrates, once again, that in the context of this research and, more broadly, the context of genocide, relationships are messy and do not always conform to discrete categories; and yet they are important and useful in the real world.

I then asked my gatekeepers to nominate and refer individuals I should approach for interviews who fit Spradley’s (1979) definition of “an excellent participant” (paraphrased in Morse, 2007, p. 231): 46

An excellent participant for grounded theory is one who has been through, or observed, the experience under investigation. Participants must, therefore, be experts in the experience or the phenomena under investigation; they must be willing to participate and have the time to share the necessary information; and they must be reflective, willing, and able to speak articulately about the experience.

Given my research topic, these participant criteria were extremely difficult to apply. I assumed that in many cases, if not most, those standing by and doing nothing about genocide would be,

46 The exception were Canadian high school teachers, who responded to a request for participants sent through curriculum heads to all high schools in the Toronto District School Board and to teachers taking professional development courses in the social sciences at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.
almost by definition, the opposite of excellent participants. How could they be experts on something that they are not doing? How could they be expected to speak about something they are unaware of? Why would they give up their time to talk with me about something that they do not care about? If they are complicit in genocide, why would they admit to it? On the one hand, it seemed I could interview almost any non-Indigenous Canadian or riverain Sudanese — most appeared to be standing by and doing nothing about genocide; on the other hand, I did not know whom to start with and feared that no one would talk with me. I shared these concerns with Audra Simpson, one of my Guidance Circle members. She responded: “That's information, silence is information. They could not want to talk to you, they could not have a story, they could not want to share the story” (personal communication, July 9, 2014).

In fact, when I began speaking about my research with others, I encountered many non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese who agreed to be interviewed, who felt this research was important, and who exerted effort to ensure its success. For some participants, the questions I asked were questions they had been asking themselves for a long time; for others my topic appeared to be a burgeoning interest. In both contexts, I heard clearly that this research was relevant and timely, even the question of the day. Rather than a threat, questions about standing by to genocide elicited, at times, feelings of relief in the participants. Some participants, whom I viewed as deeply complicit in processes of genocide by virtue of their public reputation, agreed to be interviewed because they wanted to figure out how to move from standing by to standing up. Other participants were actively engaged in trying to interrupt genocidal processes but acted outside of the public view. A further subset of participants viewed themselves as standing up, but their actions were perceived by my Guidance Circle members as contributing to genocide.

Once I began conducting interviews and reviewing the data I collected in the field, I returned to my gatekeepers to ask them to nominate individuals who would maximize differences within my sample in order to saturate the theoretical relationships I found in the data (See: Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In Sudan, I aimed to maximize differences based on: family membership, political beliefs, sense of racial/tribal superiority, religion, engagement with the regime, financial stake in the status quo, age, openness to international influence, travel to regions targeted by genocide, tribe, gender, and solidarity with those targeted by genocide. In Canada, I recruited additional participants to ensure diversity based on: geographical origin and residence, age,
relationships with Indigenous peoples, political beliefs, race, ideas about race, religion, nationalist sentiment, international exposure, and anti-oppression or critical lens. Of course, some differences were easier to identify than others.

Above and beyond these dimensions of difference, the extent to which participants were standing by and doing nothing about genocide was the most significant difference yet difficult to recruit for in both contexts. My gatekeepers easily identified those who were known for standing up for Indigenous peoples in Canada and those of the peripheries in Sudan. These individuals often enthusiastically agreed to participate in the research (whether or not I asked them to); and they are well represented in my sample. However, as expected, recruiting individuals who did not think about nor care about the research topic (presumably the majority in both contexts) was more difficult. In both contexts, I had planned to exclude individuals who had spoken out publicly against the rights of those targeted by genocide, as I viewed them as not standing by to genocide but supporting it. This reflected my, I now realize, mistaken assumption that I would not learn much of value about standing by from individuals who were openly antagonistic towards peoples targeted by genocide. Yet, my Sudanese Guidance Circle members encouraged me to include individuals at both ends of the spectrum, which resulted in a better representation of standing by in the Sudanese data than in the Canadian data.

It is impossible to know why some participants declined to participate in this research (in some cases, it may have had nothing to do with the research topic. Influential people are generally very busy). Some provided reasons and others, who were involved with the research, suggested theories. These included: desire to avoid a potentially uncomfortable conversation; concern about potential trouble with one’s employer or the authorities; sense that they had nothing to gain from the research; concerns about confidentiality; and sense that they had nothing to say because they had no relationships with nor knowledge of peoples targeted by genocide. As Simpson had predicted, this too is useful data for understanding standing by.

In this study, I interviewed 18 non-Indigenous Canadians, half of whom were female (9). These participants worked as: journalists (6); federal civil servants (4); high-school history, social studies, and geography teachers (4); and humanitarian, development, and human rights workers (4). Of the 44 riverain Sudanese I interviewed, 11 (25%) were female. These participants worked
as: journalists (5); university professors (9); humanitarian and development workers (4); civil society activists (5); leaders of Muslim religious orders (2); former military personnel (1); former judiciary officers (1); business leaders (5); politicians (7); and cultural sector workers (5). The differences between the Canadian and Sudanese samples reflect the intent to include participants that could facilitate understanding each context separately, rather than compare the same type of participants across contexts; though there is overlap in the sectors of journalism, education, and aid work.

Although I had no racial or ethnically-based criteria for participant recruitment, all participants in the Canadian sample were of European descent. I had made efforts to recruit Canadian participants of non-European origin or who are racialized; however, none came forward and individuals I actively approached declined to participate. As a result, the participants reflect a hegemonic version of Canadian-ness: they speak English, are of northern European origin, are white, represent themselves as cisgendered and straight, are upper-middle class, and live in a southern city.47 The Canadian participants are from across Canada, and I interviewed most of them by phone or by Skype. The Sudanese sample included a fairly-balanced representation of peoples from all riverain tribes, mostly from Northern and Central Sudan; they live in Khartoum and are upper-middle and upper class. All Sudanese interviews were conducted in person and took place in and around Khartoum.

**Time**

The research findings reflect the time in which the study was conducted as well as the people I worked with. In Canada, I began reaching out to my Guidance Circle members in June 2013 and conducted interviews with non-Indigenous participants in November and December 2014. During this time, Canada was governed by the Conservative party, under Prime Minister Stephen Harper. The government had begun its term by abandoning the Kelowna Accords, a series of

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47 Most of the participants did not disclose their religion. A proportionate number (based on StatsCan statistics) identified as being of Jewish decent (i.e., not necessarily religiously practicing). One participant lived in the North (by choice, not necessity); one was a naturalized Canadian from the United States; one immigrated as a child from Scotland; and one was an American living and working in Canada who grew up and spent most of her adult life in Latin America.
agreements negotiated with Indigenous leaders and communities to improve the education, employment, and living conditions of Indigenous people. On a more positive note, the Prime Minister delivered an official apology for Indian Residential Schools in 2008, raising awareness about this policy among non-Indigenous people. However, this was followed by the introduction, without consulting with Indigenous leaders, of legislation that undermined treaty and Indigenous rights; more adversarial engagement (particularly through the courts) with Indigenous communities; and a discourse that communicated less concern for the well-being and rights of Indigenous peoples. Policies that undermined the independence of the federal civil service and weakened environmental protections were introduced at this time as well. These measures explain, in part, the rise of the grassroots movement for Indigenous rights, Idle No More, in December 2012. Through its public protests and educational outreach, Idle No More garnered news coverage in mainstream and social media and raised the profile of Indigenous issues among non-Indigenous people. The Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools (TRC) operated during this period as well. However, it was not until the TRC launched its “Calls to Action” in June 2015, after my data collection was complete, that most non-Indigenous Canadians became aware of its work. During the data collection period, there was limited discussion in the media about whether or not the term genocide should be used in relation to Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in Canada. It was not until after the TRC’s report, which labelled the Indigenous Residential Schools an act of cultural genocide (a move that generated little public resistance), that the term entered public discourse in relation to Canada (See Chapter 2).

Producing a concise synopsis of the period in which I conducted interviews in Sudan (September and October 2015) is more challenging. Three years had passed since South Sudan had separated from the North. Separation had precipitated conflict between the two countries over oil revenues and, to a lesser extent, over support provided by both countries to armed opposition groups in the others’ territories. Prior to separation, oil revenues made up a majority of the gross domestic product (GDP) and government revenue. South Sudan cut off oil production in 2012 and, when civil war broke out in 2013, it was unable to return to previous levels of production.

48 Oil from South Sudan is sent to market through a pipeline that runs through (North) Sudan to Port Sudan for export.
As a result, in the North, foreign currency dried up, affecting imports of grain, medicine, and oil; and inflation skyrocketed. This led to a dramatic collapse in the economies of both countries, which had been booming through the 2000s due to oil and the end of the North-South civil war in 2005 (though unemployment remained high and economic development inequitably distributed). In addition, Sudan remained subject to economic sanctions, first instituted in the late 1990s, and was in the midst of negotiations with foreign creditors.

The war in Darfur, which began in 2003, continued and violent deaths and population displacement began to rise to levels not seen since the height of armed confrontations in 2004. The conflict in the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile was also restarted by the northern wing of the Southern People’s Liberation Army/Movement. The status of Abyei, an oil-rich, ethnically-contested territory, continued to be disputed by the North and South. There has been no functioning local administration, and Sudan has been monitored by a UN peacekeeping mission since 2011.

In 2013, South Sudan descended into a tribally-charged conflict after a coalition between the President, Salva Kiir a Dinka, and the Vice President, Reik Machar a Nuer, collapsed. In addition, a cut in fuel subsidies set off urban uprisings that brought riverain youth and youth from the peripheries together. These uprisings corresponded with the “Arab Spring” uprisings and had a social media component (Idle No More in Canada started at almost the same time). There were attempts to build an opposition coalition composed of Khartoum-based youth activist groups, the (armed) movements of the peripheries, and what remained of opposition political parties of the centre.

Separation, which came as a surprise to most Northerners, had precipitated discussions, official and unofficial, about Sudanese identity and about the regime. 500,000–700,000 Southerners, many of whom were born in the North and wanted to remain, had been denied citizenship. Thousands of them chose or were coerced and forced to leave for South Sudan. A much smaller number of Northerners, including Nuba had been forced to leave for (North) Sudan. People residing in the North were required to reapply for citizenship, with tribe as the criteria for determining this right, which technically excluded Copts, Fellata, and other communities that had migrated to Sudan, often many generations earlier.
The National Congress Party, which had been in power since its coup in 1989, had just won an election in April 2015, which was boycotted by the opposition and discounted by international election observers. Within the inner circle of the regime defections and realignments occurred. Urban protest was violently cracked down on, journalists and activists were increasingly persecuted, and conflict in the peripheries escalated. At the same time, the regime launched a national reconciliation dialogue. The focus of this dialogue overlapped with this research. A few of the research participants were officially involved in the dialogue; and the value of the process, and the government’s true intention in its initiation, were actively debated while I was conducting interviews. Also relevant to this research is the indictment of the President of Sudan, Omar Hassan al-Bashir (and other high-level officials), for genocide by the International Criminal Court in 2008; yet he continues to evade arrest.

**Researching in a Good Way**

I am unable to remain neutral about the subject of this research because genocide is ongoing in Sudan and Canada. This research is a product of genocidal relations and perpetuates or transforms them. I do not pretend that I can set aside my values nor that I should. Rather, I acknowledge that values are a part of what and how I research genocide; and I am transparent about these values so that you, the reader, can contextualize the knowledge I share.

Including values in this research is consistent with an Indigenous approach that views knowledge holistically (Absolon, 2011; Cajete in Kovach, 2009). Knowledge is not only intellectual, it is emotional; physical (i.e., embodied or experiential); and spiritual (See: Figure 3 for a representation of holistic knowledge on the Anishinaabeg Medicine Wheel). As an agnostic, I have struggled at times with the role of spiritual knowledge in my work. However I do believe that my dignity is contingent upon the dignity of others and feel inextricably linked to the rest of creation. An article of faith for me is that values bind us together, and I see this force as coming from Spirit. This holistic view of knowledge has led me to see values as intrinsic to the how and what of my research, rather than something I can set aside for the sake of objectivity or a separate add on. In the context of an Indigenous approach to research, certain values are recommended: respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and relevance (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991;
Restoule, 2008). While these values are consistent with research ethics as defined and policed by Western academic institutions, they extend beyond those standards of accountability (Wilson, 2008).\(^{49}\)

\[\text{Figure 3. Anishinaabe Medicine Wheel and Indigenous holistic knowledge.}\]

In this research, I tried not to allow my mission as a researcher to be a barrier to behaving like a good human being according to the cultural norms I was working within.\(^{50}\) For example, I related to the participants in the interviews as I would in a respectful conversation. My research protocol

\[^{49}\text{Responsibility in the context of an Indigenous research approach is not only about taking responsibility as a researcher; it is about taking responsibility as a human being embedded in a network of relationships, what Wilson (2008) calls, being accountable to your relations. Relational accountability is not only about the responsibility of the researcher to their academic institution or their research participants, it holds the family and community of the researcher, and all their other relations accountable for the research being done in a good way My Guidance Circle supports the relational validity of this research; it also supports me in being relationally accountable. As I recruited participants through existing relationships, the participants could bring concerns about my conduct to the people who connected us. I was also transparent about my relational network with the research participants. I was open with them about relationships I was in, during the study or in the past, which were relevant to the research, especially when these relationships bound us together in some way. In other words, I acknowledged my subjectivity. For example, in Sudan I mentioned that I had lived and worked in Darfur and in the South with people targeted by genocide. I mentioned acquaintances that we had in common and that I was researching similar issues in my own country (This fact was of great interest to participants). In Canada, with civil servants, I briefly mentioned that I had worked closely with members of their department a decade earlier; and with people working for aid agencies, I mentioned organizations I had worked with and colleagues of theirs that I knew.}\]

\[^{50}\text{For example, I related to the participants in the interviews as I would in a respectful conversation. My research protocol}\]
served as a reminder about topics I wanted to cover rather than a script. Respect in research unfolded differently in the different contexts I worked in. In Sudan, participants who were older than me often asked to meet at their home or workplace (if they had a private office); while participants who were the same age or younger than me preferred to meet at the apartment I was renting or in a café. In these contexts, I extended or received the courtesies of a guest or a host. Significant time was spent on “small talk;” including enquiring after each other’s family; greeting each other’s family members (my infant son had travelled with me to Khartoum); and sharing food. In Canada, I gave tobacco to my Guidance Circle members, in keeping with protocols for receiving knowledge in some of the cultures indigenous to Turtle Island; and I interviewed many non-Indigenous Canadians by phone or Skype based on their preference.

At minimum, researching in a good way required that I protect those involved in this research from harm. This may seem straightforward, but in the context of researching genocide it is far from it. Genocide is a difficult topic, and some of the research participants have survived traumatic experiences. As such, this research brought risks of further emotional and psychological harm to its participants. Furthermore, I was concerned that the participants may face retribution from their family, friends, employer, or government for participating in the research, especially but not exclusively, in Sudan. Designing the research collaboratively and empowering the research participants to work with me only in ways they felt were safe was crucial to managing these risks and keeping everyone, including myself, safe, in Sudan in particular. Fastidiousness about confidentiality and data security was also important.

Indigenous approaches to research centralize the keepers of knowledge for acknowledgement. The researcher connects ideas and concepts but does not create them out of nothing (Wilson, 2008). In this research, I have shown respect for those who shared their knowledge with me by naming them whenever possible and sharing this thesis with them before its publication to ensure I honourably represent their knowledge. However, given the sensitivity of the research topic, in both contexts, assurances of confidentiality were key to participants’ sense of safety and willingness to share information that was personally, professionally, and politically sensitive. Ensuring that I had an accurate record of what was shared with me was also a way of showing respect; but, I was required to respect confidentiality. In Canada I audio-recorded the interviews, which I later transcribed for analysis. In Sudan, where audio-recordings could put members of
the Guidance Circle and research participants at risk if seized by the authorities, I relied on handwritten notes, which I elaborated on immediately after each interview.\footnote{I worked closely with University of Toronto’s Information Security office to set up systems and procedures to ensure the security of the data collected in Sudan above and beyond standard data security protocols. As some of the efficacy of these techniques comes from those who may wish to access my data being unaware of them, I do not describe these here.}

Not only was I responsible for protecting individuals from harm that could arise directly from their participation in this research, according to principles of Indigenous research, I must ensure that knowledge shared through the research and new knowledge that arises through the research is not misused (See: Wilson, 2008). In particular, I have a responsibility to ensure that this research benefits, rather than further harms, those targeted by genocide. But what about those complicit in and perpetrating genocide? According to Indigenous approaches to research, I was responsible for adapting to my non-Indigenous Canadian and riverain Sudanese participants’ ways of thinking about and doing things (See: Wilson & Restoule, 2010).\footnote{Following Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991).} Does this include ideas and actions that facilitate genocide? I struggled with this tension. It was by being humble in the way I worked, another way of showing respect, that I struck a balance. Though I introduced myself and kept interviews conversational, I kept the focus on my participant’s perspectives, not my own. I respected what they shared with me as their truth and probed their answers, so that I could understand that truth to the greatest extent possible. However, if I found internal inconsistencies in what the participants said or contradictions between their knowledge and beliefs and my own, I would ask about them and adopt a stance that (I hope) was curious rather than challenging. In other words, there were moments of gentle, respectful critique and discomfort in these conversations. There were also times when I did not probe participants regarding statements they made because I felt that by doing so, the relationship that formed the basis of our conversation would abruptly end. I did not achieve an ideal balance at all times; and, in reviewing the interview transcripts, I wish I had been more critical with a few of the participants. Yet, many of the participants told me that this process helped them reflect on and deepen their understanding of their own views and relationships and led to self-critique. In my analysis, this tension emerged again and contradictions between the views of the participants, my Guidance Circle members, myself, and a variety of secondary sources were revealed.
Respect also means asking permission before conducting the research and ensuring all participants are doing so voluntarily. In the context of Indigenous research approaches, this extends beyond obtaining individual informed consent\textsuperscript{53} to respecting knowledge sovereignty. Sovereignty over knowledge means that communities being researched decide why, what, and when knowledge is sought about them and the methods used to seek it. The research conducted should ensure that it supports the resurgence of figurations targeted by genocide, rather than facilitate genocide (See: Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). However, given the topic of this research and my positionality, tensions emerged in this regard as well. To my surprise, I was given permission from the government to enter Sudan to do “field work,” and was supervised by the University of Bahri. Nevertheless, the Sudanese authorities did not give their informed consent for this research. As I explain below, I never used the word genocide when speaking of my research in Sudan. In fact, my Guidance Committee members and I expected that if the government had been fully informed of the scope and implications of my research, it would not have been allowed.\textsuperscript{54} Similarly, in Canada, I did not seek permission from the Canadian government to interview Canadian civil servants, nor from any of the institutions the research participants worked for. Respecting knowledge sovereignty should include consideration of the ways various institutions facilitate abuses of power. Assuming that the nation state and its officials or corporate institutions are legitimate arbitrators of knowledge sovereignty is problematic, especially in genocidal contexts, such as Sudan and Canada.

Indigenous approaches call for research to be relevant to Indigenous communities. However, this research also engaged communities complicit in genocide; and so, it was important for me to consider its relevance to riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians like me. Where is the integrity in asking research participants to make themselves vulnerable through this research, if I turn around and use that information to judge them (Simpson, personal communication, July 9, 2014)? The presumption is often that the interests of those complicit in genocide are in conflict with those targeted by genocide; and that in allying myself with one community, I work against

\textsuperscript{53} In Canada, I provided potential participants with a written description of the research and a consent form, which they signed and returned to me. In the Sudanese context, this approach was considered culturally inappropriate; and, moreover, my Guidance Circle members and I were concerned that it could comprise the safety of the participants, the host institution, or me.

\textsuperscript{54} I did encounter some resistance from the government. I had to abort an attempt to interview high school teachers in Sudan, which I pursued with support from a former Sudanese colleague who had worked in this sector for many years, as this attempt (perhaps tellingly) raised concerns with security officials.
the other. I concluded that this is not necessarily a zero-sum-game. Yet, there continued to be tensions that required management. This concern felt most pressing when I decided where and how to use the term genocide in this research, a term that is simultaneously an accusation and a judgement.

While I was convinced of the analytical utility of the lens of genocide in these two contexts, I was concerned about the ethical implications of myself as a researcher “accusing” riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous research participants of standing by to genocide. I could not proceed as though on morally neutral territory. I aimed to create an accountable but safe space for the participants to share their perspectives. Due to the indictment of the President of Sudan for genocide by the International Criminal Court, uttering the “g-word” in Sudan could be interpreted as almost treasonous. In consultation with my Guidance Circle and experts on research in Sudan, I decided not to use the term genocide during my field work in Sudan; it could put the research participants, my Sudanese Guidance Circle members, and myself at risk.

However, in Canada, by the time I conducted interviews in the fall of 2014, the idea that Indigenous people in Canada were and may still be targeted for genocide was being discussed more widely; so, I referred to genocide in these interviews as follows:

Recently some have started to use the word genocide to describe the way Indigenous peoples have been treated in Canada and how this is threatening their survival as groups or nations. What are your thoughts and feelings about this?

Probe: Does the label genocide change how you think and feel about what we have discussed so far today?

In Chapter 9, I discuss the reaction of the Canadian participants to the label genocide and their views on its use in the context of their relationship with Indigenous people in Canada. Unfortunately, I do not have comparable data for Sudan.

I moved forward with my work despite these dilemmas because the potential benefits of this research seemed to outweigh the potential risks. I mitigated the risks through being reflexive about the power relations I was in and researching collaboratively with Sudanese from the peripheries and Indigenous peoples in Canada who are academics and activists. Furthermore, I drew parallels with the riverain and non-Indigenous Canadian participants by saying, “just like
you, I am complicit in genocide.” I do not pretend that this equalized power between myself and people in Sudan who may be impacted by this research. However, I hope that my discourse troubles the dichotomy of Canada=good/Sudan=bad that contributes to these power differentials. These tensions in my research were not resolved; however, they were less of a problem than I had anticipated. In the beginning, I was fearful about telling people about what I was researching, and I continue to be fearful of the reactions of some to the results. Yet, as I told others of this research, I faced few reactions of anger, denial, or rejection. Honouring the principles of Indigenous research in my relationships with non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese — respect, responsibility, relevance, and reciprocity — may have created these tensions, but they also helped me manage them.

In sum, the purpose of my research is not just about an outcome — interrupting genocide — but about a process, working in relationship. While there is a risk that results of this research may have no impact on genocide, I am optimistic that the way I conducted this study has made a contribution. In honouring Indigenous knowledges through research, in a small way, I facilitated their survival. By acknowledging genocide and being in good relations with those who participated in and contributed to this research, I promoted healing; and, as I argue in Chapter 11, by engaging in reflective conversations with riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians I may have helped them transform genocidal relationships.

**Grounded Theory**

The focus of this research — how riverain Sudanese/non-Indigenous people stand by and do nothing about genocide targeting people of the peripheries/Indigenous peoples — is under-theorized, theorized for contexts very different from the ones I have researched, and theorized in ways that reinforce colonialism. For these reasons, I have looked to grounded theory methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and, in particular, a constructionist interpretation of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2008). A number of Indigenous scholars have used grounded theory and have found it to be compatible with Indigenous research approaches (Elers, 2016; Kovach, 2011). Bringing a non-Indigenous method and Indigenous research approaches together is, I believe, congruent with the cross-cultural nature of this research.
Grounded theory refers to both a process of conducting research as well as its product. It can be contrasted with “logically deduced theories based on ungrounded assumptions” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 4), i.e., theories not originating in empirical data. In relational terms, grounded theory is the purposeful uncovering of theory through systematically seeking and making sense of data. Charmaz (2008) calls it an “interpretive understanding of the studied phenomenon that accounts for context” and a “strategy” (p. 402). Grounded theory methods value process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and they free the researcher from the constraints of social science theories that are contrary to and threaten Indigenous worldviews. The appreciative and action, rather than adversarial, orientation of grounded theory is also a good fit with Indigenous approaches.

Not all researchers adopt the same approach to grounded theory. Objectivists, according to Charmaz (2008), believe researchers must set aside the knowledge and experiences they bring to the research process in order not to bias their theory. Objectivists may see my prior commitment to relationality and interrupting genocide as a barrier to uncovering a valid grounded theory. Charmaz (2008) challenges this view, and argues that,

> [R]esearch always reflects value positions. Thus, the problem becomes identifying these positions and weighing their effect on research practice, not denying their existence. Similarly, social constructionists disavow the idea that researchers can or will begin their studies without prior knowledge and theories about their topics. Rather than being a *tabula rasa*, constructionists advocate recognizing prior knowledge and theoretical preconceptions and subjecting them to rigorous scrutiny. (p. 398)

I would add that objectivist grounded theory presupposes a rigid and absolute view of what constitutes research and data. In reality, the point at which the research process begins and ends is potentially arbitrary and unimportant; and decisions about what constitutes data can be subjective. In the case of this research, everyone in my circle of relationships (in Canada and Sudan) and I are within the purview of the research. Furthermore, I was collecting and analyzing data and developing theories long before commencing “the research.” There is a personal context. Though I did not conduct autoethnography in this study, I acknowledge that my

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55 Some grounded theorists feel the need to also verify their theory using the data, having another person code the data using the code book they developed and calculating the inter-rater reliability to quantifiably measure how reliable the code book is. Though I verified my theory in the process of saturating my codes (at high level categories using data from two contexts), my primary aim is to generate theory.
experiences have both guided and validated the theory I have uncovered and provide information about my own relationships with the places and people in this research.

In addition, while living in Canada and Sudan, I was able to observe interactions relevant to the research topic informally in many realms over many years. Though these observations were not sufficiently systematic to be considered participant observation, they nonetheless provided context for my analysis of the interview data. In addition, when I began explaining the research topic to people with no formal attachment to the project, I often found myself in conversations that amounted to unofficial interviews. My Guidance Circle members provided additional context; and as members of peoples targeted by genocide, their perspectives were very different from the research participants’ and my own. I inevitably brought knowledge from these sources into conversation with the data, and they have shaped my final theory. Reflecting these connections with knowledges beyond what I collected from the official “research participants,” I could call my approach “modified grounded theory” (See: Elers, 2016).

My approach to data collection, discussed above, follows a grounded theory method. In data analysis, grounded theorists recommend researchers look for connections in their data (“similarities,” according to Glaser & Strauss, 1967), connections that indicate concepts with distinct properties. As illustrated at Figure 4, I began this process inductively with open coding, developing a label that stands for the meaning in a passage; I prefer labels that match language used by the participants. I then assigned the same label to subsequent passages with similar meanings. I aimed for conceptual categories and, following from it, a theory that would be usable in the situation that generated it and accessible to those who could use it, including those being researched. This coding was facilitated by qualitative data analysis software.56

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56 NVivo does not analyze data, it is merely a tool for attaching codes to selected text.
Figure 4. Illustration of grounded theory analysis process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open coding</th>
<th>Establishing relationships between codes and creating higher level codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Largely inductive</td>
<td>- Began as largely inductive and became more deductive over time as I used new data to saturate existing codes as well as reveal new codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The language of the participants dictated the naming of the codes</td>
<td>- Related codes were grouped together under higher level codes (often called axial codes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- My a priori knowledge affected what I &quot;saw&quot; in the data and how I labeled it</td>
<td>- This was done separately for the Sudanese and the Canadian data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conventionally in GT you code for constructs, not relationships. In coding for a relationship I had to turn it into a node, a construct</td>
<td>- A challenge with conventional approaches to GT is that one dimensional, hierarchical relationships are preferred over multidimensional non-hierarchical relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- My open codes, that eventually became lower level codes, were specific, plentiful and thus less saturated</td>
<td>- When appropriate, labelled and relabelled higher level codes based on codes developed for the other context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relabelling sometimes led to the splitting or collapsing of codes, or sometimes necessitated reviewing transcripts again for codes that may have been missed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Absences in the data were revealed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross fertilization between the GT of the two contexts</th>
<th>Literature review to understand relationships and absences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- A literature review was conducted guided by the topics suggested by the emerging GT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- When appropriate labelled and relabelled higher level codes to reflect relevant theoretical concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Further absences were revealed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Write up and consultation with Guidance Circles                           | - Relationships continued to emerge and the theories continued to evolve |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------| - It was only at this point that the two contexts were brought together, but only for the 4th relational dimension: a mesh of colonial ideas |
|                                                                             | - A draft was shared with Guidance Circle members for feedback |
To illustrate, in the data collected in Sudan, the following interview excerpts indicate the category I call, “complicated relationships,” which speaks to the relationship, or what riverain Sudanese know of the relationship, between themselves and people of Sudan’s peripheries:

“They are carrying arms. It’s all confusing.” (Mia)

“To be right, though, sorting out communities along lines of polarization might not be fully correct. It’s much more complex. These social networks in some senses overlap.” (Musa)

“They don’t want to get involved. It’s a messy situation. There isn’t a single person who has been involved.” (Naim)

“It’s hard to go to these deep roots. It was too complicated; we wanted a simple explanation.” (Said)

As the number of codes grew and became unmanageable, I began to group similar codes together in an approach that was sometimes inductive and sometimes deductive, informed by a priori knowledge I brought to the research.

As I uncovered more and more of these concepts in the interview transcripts, I began to look for (or “hypothesize,” according to Glaser & Strauss, 1967) relationships between the concepts and, at times, hierarchies of concepts with greater and greater levels of abstraction. The example at Figure 5 shows hierarchical relationships between codes about relationships of othering between peoples complicit in and peoples targeted by genocide from interviews with non-Indigenous Canadians. As I showed above, each code stands for what the research participants said in their interviews.

I consider myself skilled and experienced in this method of data analysis. I have been trained in and used grounded theory methods for twelve years across a number of different research projects. However, my growing commitment to relationality made it challenging to use this method in this research. Ground theory methods usually focus on constructs, rather than the relationships between constructs. It requires you to extract the construct from the context in which you found it, to draw a line around it, to distinguish it from other constructs. Yet, the data itself, especially the Sudanese data, was very relational. Rather than fitting neatly in conceptual boxes, it spilled out of them. There were, at times, more relationships across conceptual
categories than within them: hierarchies I created to manage the growing number of codes sometimes felt arbitrary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code (# of interviews, # of passages)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distancing self from genocide (13, 29)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pointing out how Indigenous people are different (4, 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluding and segregating Indigenous people (8, 27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discriminating against Indigenous people (9, 28)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Victim blaming (9, 26)</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.* Illustration of coding for “othering” in non-Indigenous Canadian interviews

Indigenous ontologies not only value all types of knowledge, they respect the way knowledges are interconnected (Wilson, 2008). It is through these interconnections, not within discrete domains of knowing, that we find meaning, real understanding, and knowledge that can be used for good. I began to feel uncomfortable with the process of extracting knowledge from its relational context and fitting it into a different framework of my own design (See: Smith, 1999). Not only theorists of Indigenous research have noted these problems. Postmodernists have criticized grounded theorists for not attending to story nor the whole lives of participants (Charmaz, 2008, p. 400).

I clearly saw connections across the interviews, not only distinct narratives; though they were very complex and dynamic. There was an underlying story, or at least a few stories, in what the participants shared. On a conceptual level, through this analysis, I also experienced the dynamic
nature of categories. Categories are not static-bound things (objects), but dynamic nodes produced by different relationships converging. This led me to wonder if or how to “code” for relationships instead of themes. I attempted to achieve this as I learned from the knowledge shared with me by both my Guidance Circle members and the research participants. Many of the codes changed from individuals or groups and essential characteristics into relationships and interactions, from nouns into verbs. An example would be the tendency amongst non-Indigenous Canadians to “describe” Indigenous people: they are poor, uneducated, and live on reserves. However, all of these adjectives can be translated into relational terms: they have been impoverished, denied quality education, and segregated. Similarly, with intra-figurational attributes, i.e. Canadian values. Rather than objects, things, in general values denote how we should relate to others: be a good person; collaborate; consider the common good; or pursue opportunities. Similarly, “the media” or “schools” are hubs that connect people.

Though this approach lessened the tensions I experienced in conducting this research, it did not resolve them. Perhaps tensions are simply innate to cross-cultural research and are more acute in the colonial contexts in which I conducted this research. As I have suggested, perhaps it is inevitable that I re-inscribe at least some (though hopefully not all) of the colonial relationships I am trying to interrupt. Perhaps it is sufficient to acknowledge that it is my voice, my experience of the topic, when referring to the relationships I elucidate between concepts. I discussed this with my committee member, Lee Maracle. Maracle is from the Wolf Clan of the Stó:lō. One of the Wolf Clan members’ responsibilities is to speak last when the community comes together in their Longhouse to discuss issues facing the community and make decisions. Every other clan representative speaks in turn, and the Wolf Clan representative must listen. Each clan, because of their unique responsibilities brings a different perspective to the issue discussed. This responsibility of listening is great. In the end, when it is the Wolf Clan representative’s chance to speak, they must synthesize what the representatives from all of the other clans in the Longhouse said. And then, only then, may she or he add one new thing. Perhaps I have enacted a similar process. From its conception, grounded theorists have emphasized the incompleteness of any grounded theory; it is merely the latest iteration of theory about a topic, a researcher’s efforts, and not the final word (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Perhaps these tensions are not mine to resolve
but will be resolved by others who take up this work. To borrow from Leanne Simpson’s (2014) definition of Nishnaabeg theory, it “is generated and regenerated continually” (p. 7).57

Another problem I faced was approaching research in both contexts simultaneously. Before beginning this research, I expected to develop a completely different (modified) grounded theory for each context. However, while researching these contexts side-by-side, data collection, data analysis, and theory development in Sudan assisted me in conducting the same processes in Canada and vice versa. Following a constructionist approach, I embraced this cross-pollination rather than try to protect against it. I developed separate grounded codes for each context. I worked across contexts as I began to group the grounded codes together under higher-level codes, occasionally relabelling grounded codes when a label from one context seemed better suited than a label from the other context. The resonances truly emerged in the more abstract, higher-level codes, where more substantive cross-learning occurred. The most significant pollination resulted from the relational thinking of the Sudanese research participants, which yielded relational codes I could apply to the Canadian data. It is not that the Canadian participants did not experience these relationships; they struggled to talk about them explicitly.

There were of course differences in the data across contexts. Often these were differences that required no comment; but, at times, they illuminated realities that were hidden, or taken for granted, that I would not have noticed otherwise (e.g., cultural techniques of genocide in Sudan or the existence of a system of formal education in Canada). Glaser and Strauss (1967) had a similar experience researching genocide in the United States and Malaysia. They wrote: “[W]e discovered a cross-national uniformity — not a difference — by noting abroad what we had missed in America.” (p. 57) This cross-cultural method is particularly important in researching standing by. I study absences, what is not known, said, felt, or done. In other words, things that are easy to miss. In some ways, this method is consistent with Max Weber’s comparative sociology, which seeks to “reveal unique aspects of a particular entity that would be virtually impossible to detect otherwise” (Mills, van de Bunt, & de Bruijn, 2006, p. 621). Moreover, my

57 Her full definition is as follows: A “theory in its simplest form is an explanation of a phenomenon, and Nishnaabeg stories in this way form the theoretical basis of our intelligence. But theory also works a little differently with Nishnaabeg thought. ‘Theory’ is generated and regenerated continually through embodied practice and within each family, community, and spiritual presence and emotion; it is contextual and relational. It is intimate and personal, with individuals themselves holding the responsibilities for finding and generating meaning within their own lives.” (Simpson, 2014, p. 7)
decision to study these two contexts, which are viewed by many as polar opposites, facilitated the success of this technique. For example, I may not have noticed that non-Indigenous Canadians lack consciousness about themselves as a people, if I had not spent hours listening to riverain Sudanese elucidate their constitution as a figuration. The cross-cultural research I conducted in Sudan, helped me think cross-culturally at home, in Canada.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I described my break from the Cartesian research tradition and adoption of a relational approach in this research, inspired by Indigenous approaches to research along with relational sociology. I began by locating myself in relation to the people whose lands I have lived on, my relationship with my own community, the work that led me to this research, and my responsibilities as a mother. In so doing, I shed light on the subjective validity of my findings and motivations in this research. I introduced my Guidance Circle members who brought the voices of activists and scholars from figurations targeted by genocide to this research. They strengthen the relational validity of the research findings and have held me accountable. I explain the ethics that are integral to this research, the values of Indigenous research which I applied throughout the research process. While these values were applicable the study, in the context of genocidal relations, they created tensions that required management.

In addition, I described the theoretically sensitive participant recruitment I conducted through gatekeepers in priority sectors identified by my Guidance Circle members. I explained who the research participants were and my decision to use or resist colonial labels that set up dichotomies of colonizer/colonized in my interactions with them. I described the data collection process and the modified grounded theory method I used for the analysis. Use of grounded theory in the analysis, though well suited to the research topic, was at times challenging due to the relationality of my research approach and the data. I conducted the analysis differently than I had done previously. Though I initially analyzed each context separately, there was significant cross-pollination across contexts that led to me to develop a grounded theory that applies to both Canada and Sudan.
Research can be used to improve our understandings of relationships, yet it also draws on and creates new relationships. The research and the researcher are a part of the world, connected to everything in it, at all times. In activating the research relationship, we activate all of our relationships. Through research we not only work with data, with ideas, directly and indirectly, we work with people and with the cosmos as a whole. Relationships are imbued with power. Power is their quality. Therefore, the relationship of research is a relationship of power. This is true of all research but more so in this study, given its focus on colonial and genocidal relationships. By reflexively replicating the Western research tradition I have inherited, by doing my job as a social scientist, I replicated a relationship of domination, of colonizer over the peoples in lands that have been colonized. An Indigenous approach to research demands I acknowledge this and try and move towards a good, more balanced, relational place. As I moved, as I decolonized, the research moved and, in an incremental way, the world moved with me.
SUDAN
Chapter 4

Relations in Space and Place in Sudan

Relationships occur in a place or more than one place. A relationship can never be binary because it is never only between two people, it always also includes the space. In the first of three chapters on Sudan, I chart and situate the relational networks relevant for understanding how those of Sudan’s hegemonic figuration stand by to genocide. I discuss my view of the construction of this hegemonic figuration, or value-laden network of relationships, that justifies focusing on the standing by of riverain Sudanese, particularly the Ja’aliyyin, Shaiqiyya, and Danaqla. I argue that the movement of peoples across Sudan’s space, away from their traditional territories, has rendered riverain Sudanese colonialists and the people of figurations targeted for genocide colonized. I then move from discussing physical space to using centre and periphery as a metaphor to locate Sudanese figurations in relation to each other.

In the corresponding chapter on Canada (Chapter 7) I also present demographic data. Though demographic data relevant to understanding the different figurations in Canada is problematic, they pale in comparison with the problems with demographic data on Sudan. The last reliable census figures on language and tribe in Sudan were published in 1956 and identified 3,989,533 out of 10,262,536 (some 38.8 percent) Sudanese as ‘Arab.’ However, given different rates of population growth, migration and processes of Arabization, it would be conjecture to extrapolate from this data the current size of tribal or linguistic figurations in Sudan. Linguist Abu-Manga (2010) suggests that Arabic was the mother tongue of approximately half of Sudanese prior to the separation of the South. This percentage has likely grown in the North post separation. However, the proportion of Arabic speakers is not a valid proxy for the percentage of Sudanese who are “Arab,” and is a poor indication of the percentage of people who are part of the hegemonic riverain figuration I am researching. Many figurations who do not identify as Arab (or Afro-Arab) now speak only Arabic; many Arabs are not riverain; and some riverain-Sudanese tribal figurations have retained the languages they spoke prior to gradual Arabization (ca. 14th Century CE). According to what has been published of the 2008 census, the population residing in Khartoum State (5,274,321) — one of the places associated with the riverain figuration — made up 17% of the population in the North (30,894,000) and 13% of the total population of
Sudan pre-separation (39,154,490) (Population Census Council, 2009).\textsuperscript{58} Yet, this too reveals little. Immense population movements have occurred since the census; riverain Sudanese are found in other states, especially around the River Nile; and many people from figurations of the peripheries now live in Khartoum. If riverain Sudanese are a minority, or even a small majority in the country as a whole, the Sudanese case is a departure from most genocides where a small minority is targeted by a substantial majority.\textsuperscript{59} As a result, different dynamics might be expected and the Sudanese experience could challenge paradigmatic ideas about how people stand by to genocide.

With this gap in knowledge noted I present what I have learned from the research participants and secondary literature about the relationships Sudan’s peoples have with place and across their country’s space.

\textbf{Unbridged Distances}

As a number of the research participants noted, the label “Sudan” has always been a foreign designation. \textit{Bilad as-sudan}, “Land of the Blacks,” was the Arab name for all of western and northern-central Africa. Farouq,\textsuperscript{60} one of the participants, argued, the contemporary idea of Sudan does not correspond with the diverse, land-based identities of the peoples who make their homes there. Mahmoud, an academic who is influential in political circles, said that it is geographical proximity — not cultural, social, economic or political forces — that places Sudanese into relation with each other: “The geographical considerations superseded social identity…. One may say “Saudi,” you are linked to the family of the Saudis. Now we are just like Americans, we don’t have an identity. We are different from each other.” This is consistent with the fact that the country was not formed in response to local contingencies. The borders of Sudan reflect imperial objectives, not human or physical geography. The Ottoman Egyptians (1820–1885) and then British brought/forced disparate social figurations together, including longstanding enemies, and separated others to form a condominium (1899–1955) and then a

\textsuperscript{58} Please note: the 2008 census data have been contested.
\textsuperscript{59} The German colonizers targeting of the Herero and Nama is another example of a minority targeting a demographically larger population.
\textsuperscript{60} All participants’ names have been replaced with pseudonyms.
nation state (1956–present) that suited their interests. The North and South were joined together, mostly to diminish the power of Egypt (Johnson, 2003). In the post-colonial period, the political geography of the country continues to be dictated by a colonial mindset. For example, more and more internal borders have been drawn and administrative entities established to divide peoples further in order to rule them.

As the research participants emphasize, the space of Sudan is vast, and many relationships must contend with these great distances. Before the separation of the South, Sudan was the largest country in Africa. I have frequently heard Southerners remark, in part because of the country’s unwieldy size, “This should never have been one country”. Its size is a challenge for accessibility, communication, and institutional infrastructure; and, with the many countries that Sudan borders, it is a challenge for security and regional relations. Furthermore, Sudan’s size and geographical diversity have led to cultural diversity, something the participants identify as both a defining characteristic of the place and a hurdle that inter-figurational relationships must overcome. Often, they do not.

The vastness of the country has impeded the movement of people and thus the ability of Sudanese to form relationships with each other. As Sara, a business person, noted, “In my grandmother’s time going [from northern Sudan] to Juba was like going to Antarctica.” Though most of the participants travelled extensively internationally, few had domestically. For many, travel outside of Khartoum has been restricted to visiting relatives to the north or Gezira. Participants who ventured beyond Khartoum and their ancestral homes, travelled because of work — journalistic, political, artistic, and humanitarian work, in particular — and, for the most part, because foreign organizations covered the costs. Omnia, an activist, summarized the effects on relations among Sudanese: “I have nothing to do with them [people of the peripheries]. I have never been there [to the peripheries].” Muneer, a development worker, notes, “People from Darfur [and other peripheral areas] come here [Khartoum] versus the other way around.” Therefore when riverain Sudanese do meet those of the peripheries, it is at home, where they have the upper hand.

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61 The Republic of the Sudan is now the third largest country in Africa.
This physical separation between those of the centre and the peripheries means that riverain Sudanese in the centre do not have to witness genocidal acts, most of which occur in the country’s peripheries. In her research on the Holocaust, Barnett (1999) asserts that physical separation from those being targeted for genocide may contribute to the passivity of those standing by. The research data suggests the same may be true for Sudan.

**Economic bridges or yolks?**

The riverain Sudanese participants who travelled to the peripheries had done so primarily for trade, education, and work. While I will discuss these all in depth in Chapter 10, the argument I make in this chapter about interfigurational relations depends upon at least a basic explanation of trade relations. In Sudan, trade creates economic interdependency, a relationship across space. However, like any relationship, economic relations manifest power differences. While local trade promotes the co-existence of social figurations within Sudan, most paradigmatically between farmers and pastoralists (Young et al., 2005), long-distance (i.e., international and regional) trade has often had a negative impact on these relations, increasing violence and exploitation (Rolandsen & Daly, 2016). Sudanese have participated in long-distance trade for thousands of years. Historically, important regional trade routes ran through what is now Sudan: down the Nile to Egypt and from Darfur to Egypt, as well from West Africa to Suakin on the coast where boats would sail to Arabia (See: Chapter 1, Figure 1) (Soghayroun, 2010). In the past, exports included gold, ivory, timber, incense, and, most importantly, slaves. The fact that so much of this trade was dominated by riverain Sudanese, and was in slaves captured from figurations of the peripheries, begs the question, how did members of different figurations come to play such different roles?

The Nubian ancestors of today’s riverain figurations have lived as settled farmers on a narrow strip of very fertile land along the Nile for millennia (Adams, 1984). At various stages, extremely stratified societies arose here (and then collapsed). Members of these societies accumulated material wealth, participated in globalized trade networks, produced but mostly imported luxury goods, constructed elaborate buildings for religious and secular purposes, adopted new technologies including written languages, and developed formal institutions. These – what in
Orientalist parlance would be called “civilized” – societies often exploited, vilified, enslaved and looked down upon less stratified social figurations in the surrounding desert and the swamps to the south. Usurping resources, including slaves, for trade from their more egalitarian and sometimes (though certainly not always) militarily weaker neighbours was likely reciprocally related to the social stratification of the ancestors of today’s riverain Sudanese. Though many riverain Sudanese today have a limited awareness of this history, it can at least be said the colonial like relations of today have local antecedents.

Cultural transmission inevitably accompanied this trade, the bulk of which was from what is now Egypt:

Throughout history the northern country has set the standard of civilization for Nubia [what is now Northern Sudan and the realm of riverain Sudanese], and no ideology which has ever developed there, from the cult of the pharaoh to the cult of Nasser, has failed in the end to prevail in Nubia as well. (Adams, 1984, p. 444)

This extended to cultural influences in the form of luxury goods and technological innovation. During the long Christian period Nubians were led by the Coptic Patriarch in Alexandria, Egypt. While for centuries Christian kings were able to maintain their independence from Islamic Egypt through treaties, eventually they were invaded and forced to swear loyalty to the Mameluke sultan, and then later they were formally colonized by Egypt. While Nubians (to an extent) emulated those they traded with to the North, they culturally differentiated themselves from their neighbours in the surrounding desert and to the south (Adams, 1984).

In contemporary times international trade has continued to impact inter-figurational relations. In the period before the separation of the South, oil was the largest Sudanese export (World Bank, 2016). Under the guise of civil war, the riverain-controlled government employed scorched-earth tactics to drive local communities from the oil fields in Dinka and Nuer lands (de Guzman & Wesselink, 2002). The revenues from oil primarily enriched riverain and foreign developers. Abdulrahman, a business person, argued that the revenue from artisanal and small-scale gold mining, which has experienced a resurgence in the past few years, has been more difficult for

62 I say “often” because sometimes these settled communities were made subservient to their nomadic and southern neighbours.
those of the hegemonic figuration to capture. However, as this industry becomes more formalized, patterns of exploitation are being reproduced in this sector as well.

Despite its potential, internal trade has done little to connect figurations within Sudan. The economic base across most of the country is agricultural, and agricultural commodities are consumed locally and exported (UNDP, 2017). However, the infrastructure necessary to bring agricultural goods from the peripheries to markets in the centre, and to support agricultural processing in the peripheries, has never been properly developed. The little that was built has been allowed to deteriorate (Daly & Sikainga, 1993; Ranganathan & Briceño-Garmendia, 2011); according to Naim, a business person, by the 1970s, overland shipping companies had established a network of transportation hubs and trading centres connecting much of northern Sudan, but now most of them are closed. The histories of family businesses narrated by the business leaders I interviewed illustrate the declining role of the business sector in building relations across vast distances in Sudan. In the past, riverain traders, referred to as jellaba, travelled the length and breadth of the country. They often spent years away from their homes, even marrying and starting families in other parts of what is now Sudan. According to Abdulrahman, unlike today, “prominent business people weren’t in Khartoum during the colonial period.” Transportation networks may have been poor by today’s standards, but they were universally poor; and infrastructure in Khartoum was comparable to infrastructure in other towns. In the present, there is significant disparity in development between the centre and peripheries, and almost all businesses are headquartered in Khartoum. The costs and risks of investing outside of central and, to some extent, northern Sudan are prohibitive due to lack of infrastructure and security. Moreover, none of the business leaders I interviewed had travelled beyond central and northern Sudan, even those who had significant business interests in the peripheries. Tijani, another business person, stated that the brands that can be identified as Sudanese, which are recognized and available across the country, were developed one or even two generations ago. Although Sudanese capacity to bridge these vast physical distances has grown over the years, in part due to advances in communications technology, it seems that the effort they expend to do so have decreased.

63 With the exception of the south during the colonial period, which was closed to Muslim northerners by the colonial administration.
Foreigners (But Not) in Their Own Land

Understanding the movement of people within, and to and from Sudan, is key to understanding the nature of the relational dynamics I discuss in the next chapter. While relations among figurations are built through travel and trade (though as I have just argued that even these are limited), these relations are not as powerful as the relations formed when a figuration (or part of a figuration) migrates permanently to a location near to, or occupied by, others. These relations are further strengthened when people from different figurations intermarry and potentially, over time, transform from two figurations into one.

In Sudan, claiming to be foreign, especially Arab, can be a move to consolidate power. The myths Sudanese tell about migration may be as important to understanding their social figurations as what can be “scientifically” established about their “real” origins (Hasan, 2012; MacMichael, 1922; Spaulding, 2000). According to one of the participants, Abdullahi, a historian, we may learn more by trying to understand why claims of being Arab are made in the first place, than by defending some claims and discrediting others. Many Muslim tribal figurations claim Arab descent because professing patrilineage back to the Prophet Mohammed consolidates (in some contexts) religious and, thus, political, social, and cultural power (Adams, 1984). However, as I discuss in detail later, the correspondence of Arab-ness to power is not perfect. Some of the most marginalized tribal figurations, the Rashayda, for example, have the strongest cultural, genetic, and historical claims to being from Arabia; while those with the most power, for example, riverain figurations (again, depending upon context), proudly claim mixed-Arab-African origins.

Historians (Adams, 1984; Hasan, 2012) and geneticists (Hassan, Underhill, Cavalli-Sforza, & Ibrahim, 2008) affirm that riverain peoples are connected by blood with Arabia. Nevertheless, they argue that the non-Arab contribution is more substantial. Hasan (2012) states that around the 600s CE, small numbers of Arab Muslim traders (including slave traders), prospectors, refugees, pilgrims, and missionaries migrated to Sudan through Egypt and, to a lesser extent, across the Red Sea. Over hundreds of years, these immigrants gradually married into, converted, and Arabized people living along the Nile. This transformed pre-existing figurations along the Nile to
the great as-Sud swamp. Contrary to traditional genealogical narratives, historians maintain that the Ja’aliyyin and the Shaiqiyya are not Arab tribes from Arabia but African figurations that have been Arabized. Central to this process of Arabization was the adoption of Arabic and, among most of the riverains, the forfeiting of local languages. Arab-ness became a source of prestige because Arabic is the language of the Qur’an, and formal education in that milieu required Arabic literacy. Arab-ness also became associated with power because Arab immigrants married into the riverain elite; and, at different junctures, these Arabs benefited from the patronage of powerful Egyptian rulers who sought influence in Sudan. Arabs were also well placed to profit from long-distance trade with other Arabic speakers. Ahmed, an academic, explains the impact of the modest number of Arab settlers who, for the most part, Arabized African figurations using influence rather than force or coercion,

People tried to harmonize their lifestyle with the ones who had power and money. This has been the Arabs for 500 years. Those with African roots tried to do all that the Arabs do, the jellaba. The Arab [skin] colour tint has become more [prevalent]. Somebody coming from Nuba Mountains to Khartoum has to learn Arabic.

The preference for Arab over African intensified during the Egyptian and British colonial periods. Consistent with Fanon’s (1967) theories of colonization, riverain Sudanese, who were in closest contact with the colonizers, internalized the colonizers’ racist ideologies, ideologies that placed the Arab above the African and held both as inferior to white-Europeans. This elaborate ideology resulted in the creation of a detailed taxonomy of Sudanese tribes, which implicitly (and at times explicitly) ranked them from more to less civilized (MacMichael, 1922). This racist ideology was formally taught to the first generations of Sudanese to receive a British colonial education, nearly all of whom were riverain (Sharkey, 2007). In effect, the colonizers created the inequality they believed in through educating, enriching, and empowering, and then bequeathing the state to the peoples they considered superior. These racist ideologies were easy for riverain Sudanese to assimilate, as they fortified the beliefs they already held about being superior to other Sudanese tribal figurations. They also legitimized their inequitable access to the privileges that the colonial administration extended to them as local clients. The riverain Sudanese elite who agitated for independence from colonial rule, could tell themselves that they benefited from colonial rule because they were smarter and more capable, rather than because they were complicit in Sudan’s oppression.
I do not suggest that there is a clear Arab/African dichotomy in Sudan, similar to the immigrant/Indigenous dichotomy found in Canada, which I discuss in Chapters 7–9. Rather in Sudan, these identities are a matter of degrees, shifting, and heavily dependent upon context. Another riverain tribal figuration, the Danaqla, presents an interesting case. For the most part, they claim a Nubian heritage and have, until recently, maintained their Nubian languages. However, they too occupy a hegemonic position and partake in the same privileges as the Ja’aliyyin and the Shaiqiyya tribal figurations. Furthermore, not all Nubian tribal figurations are as privileged as the Danaqla; the Mahas, for example, have been persecuted. Similarly, “Arab” pastoralist tribal figurations, such as the Rashayda, have stronger claims to being Arabian than riverain “Arabs” have; yet, they are not part of the hegemonic figuration though they have aligned with riverain Sudanese when it suits their interests. Some of the targeted figurations of the peripheries, for example, the Masalit and Fur, also profess an Arab pedigree. Yet, as they have come in conflict with the riverain dominated government and been targeted for genocide they have increasingly emphasized their African roots. As I discuss further below, these patterns suggest that those with power place themselves in the middle of an Arab/African continuum rather than at the Arab end of the continuum. Other considerations, such as having a “civilized” or “modern” lifestyle, in particular, are necessary to consolidating power as well.

The extent to which a figuration, or an individual, emphasizes immigrant or African origins depends on context and changes over time. For example, data from the interviews suggest that Arab-ness is less important today than it was 20 years ago. Many of the riverain participants acknowledged the hegemony of an immigrant or Arab identity; however, they simultaneously questioned its legitimacy, stating that they see themselves as African. Similarly, the legitimizing power of religion appears to have waned. The Islamists I interviewed were skeptical of, even cynical about, those who use Islam and an Islamic pedigree to legitimize power.

Processes of migration within Sudan are also significant to understanding intra and inter-figurational relations (Spaulding, 1982). The riverain economy became monetized in the 1800s largely due to the demand of the Ottoman colonial administration for taxes paid in coin. Land was fragmented, commoditized, and then monopolized by a new elite who benefited from the colonial system, while subsistence farming became unsustainable. Moreover, the cost of Southern slaves dropped, slave ownership increased, and tenant labourers were unable to
compete. During the *Mahdiyya* (1885–98), the Khalifa persecuted those who rebelled against his regime, resulting in the killing, starvation and displacement of large numbers of people; and many riverain Sudanese found themselves without land or livelihoods. Men from these communities, *jellaba*, as Westerners and Southerners call them, migrated to the peripheries to trade, often in slaves, or to seek their fortunes in other ways. The forays of the *jellaba* set the stage for colonial relations between their riverain figuration and other peoples of Sudan.

During the *Turkiyya* (1820–85), *Mahdiyya* (1885–98), and the Anglo-Egyptian condominium (1899–1955), more and more riverain Sudanese moved to Omdurman and across the Nile to Khartoum. In the British colonial period, investment — in industry, commercial agriculture (especially the Gezira cotton scheme), education, and a government bureaucracy — in and around Khartoum combined with declining rural livelihoods to drive migration (Sharkey, 2003). In addition, dams along the Nile flooded Danaqla land, pushing the Danaqla people out of the far north. National borders could not confine these processes of migration. In the post-colonial period, in part because of economic recession, political oppression, and their high levels of education, many riverain Sudanese migrated from Sudan to the Gulf and to the West (IOM, 2011).

The processes of internal and external migration severed riverain Sudanese from their traditional lands and livelihoods (Spaulding, 1982). Land lost some of its social and cultural importance. Furthermore, livelihoods went from being primarily subsistence-based — the grandparents and, at times, the parents of most of the participants were farmers or petty traders — to being defined by capitalist relations. A consumer culture took hold. “Sudanese are pious, but now we’re more materialistic, less interested in the mystical. All over Khartoum there are huge houses and cars.” explained Taban, a politician. Also, Grace, an academic, said, “They came back [from Saudi Arabia] and splashed out their money.” This desire to accumulate and display wealth, incentivized exploitative relations of production; slavery is the most notable historical example. It also incentivized economic activities that revolve around the quick extraction of wealth (rent seeking is the most extreme example), rather than sustainable growth and reinvesting profits locally. These shifts in relations with land, in relations with labour and goods, in relations with community, especially with the move from rural to urban areas, dramatically transformed riverain life. The interviews clearly showed that tribe has become less important, especially for
those in Khartoum and outside of Sudan. Adams (1984) describes the process whereby “Ja’aliyin and Juhayna have become practically generic terms for riverain farmers and Bedouins respectively, and have lost any specific tribal significance” (p. 558).

However, rather than belonging to the places they migrated to, riverain Sudanese experienced them as foreign. Safia, a scientist, noted, “Being in the centre is just the circumstances. We didn’t have a place to go back to. It is not that I want to belong [to Khartoum]. I want to go back there [to the North] if it was possible.” Daffāla, an artist, echoed this feeling and described migration as alienating and individualizing for riverain Sudanese:

When they come [to Khartoum], they come with few advantages, come with nothing, no culture. Because of how they come, the mind loses its ability for understanding…. They were looking for something to protect them, they lost their tribe, their family, and so were looking for political parties to join for protection. It’s like looking for tribal protection. They were very weak, just graduating from university. In the city you are not known as a person or as a figure, you may want to be among others. This is a feeling that has really annoyed me, no one knows me. You come to the city for a certain purpose. New places you have to start again and again. You are struggling to find a place.

Many riverain Sudanese are immigrants. Not only when they moved abroad, which they have done en masse, but also when they moved within their own country. Through moving to the centre, they became immigrants. As they do not belong in their new location, they have little stake in what goes on, beyond narrow self-interest. Furthermore, as their ties with the broader community have been compromised, they lack accountability to anyone but their own family. If belonging to Khartoum or Sudan is not possible, dominating it is. The experience of migration prepared riverain Sudanese to take up the role of colonizer, as it did for immigrants to the Americas and other settler colonies.

Riverain Sudanese are not the only peoples of Sudan to migrate. Migration from the peripheries to the centre has also affected inter-figurational relations. A historical driver of this migration, especially from south to north, was slavery. Men from the southern reaches of Sudan were

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64 They may have loyalty to their neighbourhood; but, to an extent, neighbourhoods are also extensions of kinship networks and comprise people of similar backgrounds. Moreover, these loyalties are waning as well.
captured for the slave armies of Muslim dynasties in and beyond Sudan and women for use as concubines and domestic workers (Rolandsen & Daly, 2016). Slave labour became indispensable to agricultural production in riverain areas (Spaulding, 1982). While the enslavement of other Muslims was prohibited, the enslavement of non-Muslims was condoned by religious authorities. Thus slave-raiding expeditions targeted the non-Muslim peoples of the Nuba Mountains and what is now South Sudan. Slavery dramatically severed individuals from their original figurations and incorporated them violently and unequally at the edges of the figurations of their riverain masters. Intensive slave-raiding also transformed, weakened, and contributed to the destruction of the figurations from which slaves were raided; and it exacerbated conflicts among figurations in areas where slave raids were carried out (Beswick, 2004).

The British banned slavery in Sudan when they conquered it in 1899; though the practice was tolerated for decades longer (Jok, 2001). The older research participants remembered their families owning slaves. Former slaves and their descendants have been incorporated into Northern figurations in a number of ways. The Malikiyya, the decedents of military slaves, form distinct communities across northern Sudan. Incorporation through marriage (of enslaved women to riverain men) has occurred at all social levels. Some of the participants who are members of elite riverain families acknowledge ancestors who were slaves. Many emancipated slaves stayed with their masters, some receiving wages, some not; and they were often subject to exploitation similar to what they experienced as slaves (Sharkey, 1992; Sikainga, 1996).

The prohibition of slavery in Sudan coincided with the industrialization of agriculture and other industries that required manual labour. Conflict, famine, and lack of investment and economic growth in the peripheries continued to push individuals from areas previously targeted by slavery, to riverain farms and, eventually, factories. Thus, labour migration from the same areas targeted by slavery, but also from Darfur, has increased the population of those from the peripheries at the centre. Darfurians now make up a substantial component of this pool of dark-skinned manual workers. Although Darfurians are Muslims and, thus, not enslaveable under Islamic law; and, though, historically their peoples were slavers rather than slaves; now they too are derogatorily referred to as ‘abd (slave).
This migration has also resulted in diffusion of culture. Power differences have facilitated Arabization of the peripheries from the centre. However, cultural transmission is reciprocal; and cultural traditions of the peripheries also influence those in the centre, including riverain figurations. As Sikainga (2011) explains:

> Former slaves and their descendants [in the centre] expressed their grievances and resisted their subordination through popular culture and other activities. These included religious rituals such as *zar,* as well as music, dance, dress, and other expressions, through which they created a counter discourse against the hegemonic paradigms of the Arabic-speaking northern elites. (p. 14)

The resistance and transgressions in this process are significant, and it is imperative that the description of relationships between these figurations reflect this. Nevertheless, the internal migration of people of the peripheries to the centre, first as slaves and then as manual labourers, has contributed to their figuration becoming subordinate to the riverain figuration.

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, Sudan’s external borders do not reflect geographical or social barriers, and people pass freely across them. Migrants have not only been Arab. People have migrated to Sudan from the Middle East and North Africa; from Eritrea and Ethiopia to the east; and from West Africa, in particular. For hundreds of years, West African Muslims travelled through Sudan to Arabia on *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). As Faisal, an academic said, “The *hajj* route kept continually bringing people.” Often these pilgrims stayed in Sudan, either temporarily, to work and save money to complete their pilgrimage, or permanently. These West Africans, referred to as Fallata, settled all over the country. In the centre they, along with Southerners, Nuba, and Darfurians, have worked as agricultural labourers. There is also a small but wealthy Coptic Christian community in Sudan. While in part native, the community is largely composed of migrants from Egypt (Abdel Salaam Hassan, 1995). Despite being in Sudan for hundreds, if not thousands, of years, their communities are still considered foreign. Although some of these “immigrants” are incorporated into the hegemonic figuration and wield power, their foreign status (and in the case of the Copts, their religion) lessens their influence and ability to speak up again genocide; and they themselves are vulnerable to discrimination and, as a community, potentially being targeted for destruction.
In summary, riverain figurations in Sudan claim a foreign, especially Arab, identity to consolidate their power. However, the correspondence of Arab-ness to power is not perfect; riverain Sudanese aspire to an appropriate balance of immigrant-ness and local identity. Furthermore, the value of the currency of Arab identity depends upon context and has changed over time. Arab-ness is constructed. In Sudan it is more cultural than genetic. An Arab preference predates colonialism. Yet, during the colonial periods meeting with European theories of race, it intensified and was formalized. The resulting ideologies of Arab supremacy legitimized the riverain elite’s monopoly on power in the post-colonial period. Internal and external migration by riverain men, before and during the colonial periods, alienated riverain Sudanese from their traditional lands, livelihoods, and communities, preparing them to become colonizers. Similarly, migration has prepared people of the peripheries to be exploited. The internal migration of people of the peripheries, first via slavery, then as manual labourers and also as displaced persons fleeing conflict, has placed them in a subordinate position. However, these figurational relations should not be viewed as a simple and stable binary. This hierarchy is resisted, transgressed, and complicated.

From Centre/Periphery to Internal Colonialism

Structural inequality along centre/periphery lines receives a strong emphasis in academic and popular discourse on Sudan. The idea of centre/periphery inequality may describe the current situation in Sudan, but it does not explain it. Moreover, the concept of centre/periphery can naturalize relations of exploitation. Geography seems Immutable, although it is clearly not. People are moving all the time, and the borders of Sudan could be redrawn at any point to make the centre periphery and the periphery centre; indeed the sultanates in Darfur were their own political and economic centres until the beginning of the 1900s. Rather than simply labelling some places “the centre” and others “the periphery,” a theory that reveals the ways these relations have been constructed is needed to understand how to deconstruct them. In this chapter and the next, I present the contribution of theories of colonization to understanding these relationships.
In *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Memmi (1965) claims that, “The colonial situation manufactures colonialists, just as it manufactures the colonized” (p. 56). I argue the same is true for riverain Sudanese. The patterns of population distribution, trade and migration I described above, in combination with the land severance and civilizing processes I discuss below, have alienated riverain Sudanese from a locally rooted identity. Riverain Sudanese have recreated themselves as Arab and more recently even European. This alienation and recreation of identity has facilitated them acting as colonizers. People of other figurations, who have retained their native ways of being, have been relegated to the complementary role of colonized. While the colonizer is cosmopolitan, powerful, and developed, the colonized is primitive, dependent, and exploitable. The colonized are a problem to be fixed or, if that is not achievable, something to be done away with entirely. The colonizer claims the resources and sometimes even bodies of the colonized and justifies this by arguing that the subsistence agriculture and pastoralist livelihoods of the colonized are not putting those resources to good use anyways. In Sudan this pattern of relationships, personified by the *jellaba* trader, began during the precolonial period with economic exploitation (especially slavery) and cultural domination. Colonial relations were then consolidated during the *Turkiyya* and the Anglo-Egyptian condominium, with the expansion of capitalism and the establishment of colonial institutions, that persist in Sudan to this day. Throughout modern history, land in what is now Sudan has been usurped and inter-figurational conflict has been fermented. Finally, in the postcolonial era, colonial relations have been sustained by multiple administrations, whose diverse ideological leanings and policies (ranging from socialism, to neo-liberalism, to Islamization) have accommodated a steadfast commitment to colonialism. People of the riverain figuration apprenticed in the colonial administration set up by the Egyptians and the British and inherited the role of colonizer from them upon independence. This is not colonialism in the classical sense, in which a people from a far-off-land usurp the sovereignty and resources of an Indigenous people. Rather, it is internal colonialism, a relation of exploitation between regions within a state (Casanova, 1965). The metropole, rather than being outside of the country, is at its centre, in and around Khartoum.

Most of the participants agreed that there is inequality in Sudan along centre/periphery lines. However, the colonizers’ position is not only unequal to the colonized. There is not merely uneven development or “marginalization,” as many of the participants claimed. The riverain Sudanese figuration dominates and exploits the peoples of the peripheries. Furthermore, in
colonial contexts, as Mark Levene (2005) argues, colonial relations lend themselves to genocide. If members of peripheral figurations refuse to cooperate in their own exploitation — or, in the words of many of the participants, if they “rebel” — colonial relations allow for these figurations to be destroyed. These colonial relations also explain how riverain Sudanese, if they do not themselves commit or order genocidal acts, stand by and do nothing about them. Even when they do not support a particular genocidal act or policy, riverain Sudanese remain a colonial creation, Memmi’s (1965) colonialist. To sustain their position of privilege, riverain Sudanese need the system, the status quo, to remain in place. Not only is the colonizer unlikely to act against their own interests and challenge genocidal processes, they are unlikely to act against their identity, their subject position that is created by these relations of exploitation.

**Relationships with Land**

Barta (2000) argues that in a colonial context relationships with land are central to relationships of genocide, and he focuses on the land of the colonized who are targeted by genocide. However given that colonial processes in Sudan are mercantile, Sudan presents a different case. As explained, people have been the most significant resource extracted from the peripheries. That those targeted by genocide have been taken away from their lands may be more significant than that land has been taken away from targeted peoples. Moreover, how riverain Sudanese relate to where they are from has prepared them to take up a colonizing role that facilitates genocide.

There is a finite amount of fertile land along the Nile where riverain Sudanese originate from, and this limits the number of people who can pursue agricultural livelihoods in this space. Moreover, the amount of land available for cultivation fluctuates depending upon the water levels of the Nile and farmers’ ability to channel the river for irrigation and to prevent flooding. The limited availability of land, in combination with Islamic influenced land inheritance practices, which require land to divided among the heirs of an estate, have led to extreme land fractionalization, making riverain Sudanese particularly vulnerable to land severance. Furthermore, the scarcity of land may explain why individual ownership of land is far more common (at least until recently) in riverain areas than in other parts of Sudan which in turn facilitates its incorporation into capitalist production (Awad, 1971).
Processes to alienate riverain Sudanese from their land (or traditional ties to land) began gradually under the Funj (1504–1821) Sultanate.65 Grants of lands were made by the sultanates to nobles and religious figures who often identified as Arab (Spaulding & Kapteijns, 2002). Alienation from land along the Nile continued under the Turkiyya and contributed to many riverain Sudanese losing access to land and leaving their areas to seek their fortune in other parts of Sudan as jellaba. In the second colonial period, land ordinances (which were among the first ordinances implemented by the British) actually helped riverain Sudanese peasants maintain and even re-establish their claims to land (Awad, 1971). However, where the opportunity presented itself, as it did with the massive Gezira Irrigation Scheme, the British sought to alienate riverain Sudanese from their land so it could be integrated land into the global system of capitalist production. However rather than being eliminated, relations with land were transformed for the purposes of manufacturing a controllable peasantry who could be compelled to produce a very limited number of cash crops (especially cotton) as raw inputs into British industrial production: land was rented from the original owners, compulsorily of course, to be farmed by tenants, from Gezira, but also from other parts of Sudan and abroad:

One distinctive feature of the Gezira (and of the smaller schemes that preceded and prefigured it) is the extent to which the British ignored pre-existing patterns of land use and social organization… The Gezira Scheme represented an attempt not simply to remake or reform rural Sudanese society, but to create a (colonial) Sudanese society: a homogeneous society of hardworking and disciplined peasants. The British did not try to transform local practices so much as obliterate them, starting literally from the ground up, with new systems of production and productive relations of their own design. (Bernal, 1997, p. 452-3)

The massive flooding caused by the damning of the Nile and resulting displacement in the North of Sudan also brought about transformations in the identities of riverain peoples:

Over a period of seventy years about 60 per cent of the territory of Nubia has been destroyed or rendered unfit for habitation, and about half of the surviving Nubian-speaking people have been obliged to find new homes either within or outside their traditional homeland. It is doubtful if any of the numerous cataclysms visited upon the Nubians in

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65 And in the West also under the Fur (1603–1874) Sultanate.
earlier times were comparably destructive of their society and economy. (Adams, 1984, p. 651)

Also, significantly, land distribution in Sudan is very egalitarian in comparison to other colonized societies. Riverain Sudanese have not tended to accumulate enough land to become wealthy off of agriculture (Awad, 1971). Men who want to seek their fortunes must leave the land and pursue other livelihoods in other places. In other words, the land relations of riverine Sudanese have prepared them to become colonizers.

It is important to note that alienation does not need to be absolute to facilitate this transformation into colonizer. It may be partial and or temporary: ownership may be converted into tenancy; men may migrate but leave their families in their home villages; and families who have resided in the capital for a few generations “may actually ‘own’ a sliver of land that someone else in the family is farming, or they or their ancestors may have sold (perhaps have been coerced to sell) or entrusted to a neighbour or kinsman” (Body, personal communication, December 11, 2018).

What is important is that some riverain Sudanese (men) have an interest in leaving their lands to pursue livelihoods elsewhere. Historians have identified this reoccurring pattern of migration as far back as the Christian period, when “great numbers of able-bodied men probably turned from farming to slave-raiding as a lucrative source of livelihood.” (Adams, 1984, p. 505). Yet for contemporary purposes it is the migrations of the Turkiyya, again to enslave women and men of the peripheries, that forged the colonial relations that riverain Sudanese now find themselves in.

Moreover, rather than victims of the Turkiyya, Adams (1984) argues that:

In some respects they [Nubians] were in fact the major beneficiaries of Mohammed Ali’s [the ruler of Egypt] regime… the Dongolawis and Ja’aliyin found special opportunities in the slave trade; the bush-empire which became the provinces of Bahr el-Ghazal and Equatoria were largely of their creation. (p. 625)

The fact that one of the most powerful figures of that era, the slave trader turned pasha and governor Al-Zubayr Rahma Mansour, was a Ja’ali is evidence of this.66 Furthermore it is not merely the participation of riverain Sudanese in slavery that is notable: “the education and literacy to which the Nubians had long aspired were of far more practical value than in the feudal

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66 In fact, he was arguably more powerful than the British ruling Sudan at that point.
age, and they were able to move into the ranks of the growing clerical and merchant classes,” who ran the colonial system (Adams, 1984, p. 625).

Turning to the land of the colonized of the peripheries, under the Anglo-Egyptian condominium, the process of making land available for capitalist production accelerated; and under the 1905 Land Settlement Ordinance, all lands “alleged to be waste, forest, or unoccupied” (Taha, 2016, p. 11) — in effect, much communally-held land — was designated government property. The 1970 Unregistered Lands Act, entitled “the government to use force in safeguarding ‘its’ land and encouraging the accumulation of land by a minority of rich investors (both local and foreign)” (Ayoub, 2006, p. 14). These legislations facilitated the eviction of communities from their lands by (often rent seeking) authorities. Lands were then sold off to elites (often from the centre) or were used for infrastructure and development projects (Abdelkarim, 1992; Komey, 2008). This process, which started in the centre where it alienated many riverain Sudanese, continues to unfold in the peripheries today:

By 2005, the total area under mechanised farming had increased fifteen fold. In addition, vast tracts of land have been allotted to private capital investments since the 1990 Investment Act, substantially cutting rural communities’ rights to land and dislocating people from their homeland. The displacement caused by mechanised farming remains a major source of grievance and conflict, reinforcing feelings of neglect, marginalization, and social repression; as well as sealing off nomadic routes, water points, and pastures, fostering a culture of land-grabbing and creating large landless groups who are forced to work as precarious wage labourers or to migrate to urban centres. (Ayoub, 2006, p. 14)

Furthermore, vast agricultural land concessions have been, and continue to be, granted to foreign investors, placing the land into relation with foreign figurations (Harrigan, 2014; Taha, 2016). Not only are Sudanese being alienated from their lands, the land itself is becoming alien.

Land is not only being usurped from farmers. Many in the peripheries derive their livelihoods from livestock and some are fully pastoralist or nomadic. These peoples depend upon traditional relations with the land, which provide them the right to access pasture and water seasonally. These rights are extinguished once land is privatized. With the loss of land and water access
rights, livelihoods and, therefore, the people who depend upon these livelihoods are threatened with destruction. An interdependent, yet sometimes conflictual relationship between farmers and pastoralists and among pastoralists (e.g., cattle raiding) is a feature of intergroup relations throughout much of Sudan. These conflicts have intensified with the expansion and mechanization of farming, desertification of rangelands, privatization then fencing of farmland, the supply of firearms, and government policies and interference (Abdul-Jalil, 2014; El Amin, 2016; Young, Osman, Aklilu, Dale, Badri, & Fuddle, 2005). In many parts of the country, the government has used the legitimate fears and vulnerabilities of “Arab” pastoralists to mobilize them to attack and pillage “African” farmers associated with rebel groups (Young et al., 2005). This mobilization was observed between the Misiriyaa and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army\textsuperscript{67} in the South in the 1980s and between the Misiriyaa and the Nuba in the 1990s; and it has taken to scale in the war in Darfur in the past 10 years (de Waal, 2004).

These conflicts, which have resulted in population displacement and land occupation, have, in turn, facilitated and likely dramatically increased the pace of land usurpation (El Amin, 2016; Komey, 2014). Furthermore, due to the lack of law and order during conflicts, land has been taken with impunity. All of these colonial processes contribute to figurational destruction or, in other words, genocide (See: Chapter 2).

**Intersectionality and a Radial Distribution of Figurations**

The concepts of nation, group, tribe, and community set up binaries: *in-groups* and *out-groups*, *us* and *them*. A group is defined, in fact only makes sense, in opposition to those it excludes, those who are apart from it. In Sudan, the designations of colonizer and colonized seem appropriate, and psychological theories of in-groups and out-groups seem relevant (and I use these theories in my discussion of “othering” in the next chapter). Yet, I argue that a bounded and dichotomized way of thinking can also cloud our understanding of relations of colonial genocide. In Sudan, instead of a simple “in-group” “out-group” binary, there is a radial distribution of figurations, with hegemonic figurations at the centre. In the previous section, I argued that the

\textsuperscript{67} The Sudan People’s Liberation Army is the rebel army of Southern Sudan that opposed the government during Sudan’s Second Civil War.
geographical designation of centre and periphery is inadequate to explain the colonial relations between the riverain figuration and other figurations. However, when I employ these designations as a metaphor for the distance of figurations from the centre of power, they clarify inter-figurational dynamics while reflecting the relational complexity of the Sudanese context.

In addition to geography, a number of dimensions determine the distance of figurations (and the individuals who make up these figurations) from the hegemonic centre: local/immigrant; African/Arab; Black/White; rural/urban; civilized/primitive; leader/follower; master/slave; government/rebel; educated/uneducated; modern/traditional; subsistence/capitalist; poor/rich; ally/enemy; and Islamic/secular or Christian or Pagan. While it is possible to construe these dimensions as binaries, they are in fact continua. These continua can correspond with each other, though they never align perfectly and shift depending upon context. It is the imperfect alignment and dynamism that allow some individuals, and whole social figurations of the peripheries, to incorporate themselves in the hegemonic figuration at the centre and others to be ejected from it. Abdullahi Osman el-Tom (1998) describes this dynamism in reference to the Berti, a Western tribe that through this process has become severed from its language, and it is evident in the research interviews.

Riverain Sudanese, such as the Ja’aliyyin and Shaqiyya, place themselves in the middle of both the African/Arab and the Indigenous/immigrant or foreign continua. On the other hand, the Nuba, and Southerners prior to separation, epitomize the African end of the continua and have been among the most persistently and intensively targeted for genocide. As previously mentioned, paradoxically, the Danaqla have managed to claim the status of native African and Arab at the same time. However, their status according to other dimensions — urban, civilized, educated, modern, rich, and leadership in politics and business — consolidates their claim to a place at the centre. A number of the participants felt that, until recently, Darfurians were close to the centre, as they have both Arab and African influences and are Muslims (in contrast to the Pagan/Christian Southerners). However, the conflict in Darfur, over the past decade and a half, has altered their status. Most Darfurians, or rather many of the figurations found in Darfur, are now identified (and have identified themselves) as more African and are, thus, further from the

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68 This differs from Edward Said’s (1978) description of othering, in which Europeans place themselves on one end of a continuum superior to Orientals (or in this case, Africans) at the other end.
centre. Darfurians also feature in one of Sudan’s most high-profile episodes of genocide. The Fellata, who trace their origins to West Africa, and the Eritreans and Ethiopians, are marked as immigrants and African no matter how many generations they have been in Sudan. On the other hand, the Coptic and Greek Christians are also immigrants, but seen as members of the Arab elite.

There are instances where paradoxes arise and, despite its complexity, the radial approach cannot locate figurations in relation to each other. For example, some tribal figurations become simultaneously marked as foreign and local. The Beja figuration from eastern Sudan seems irrefutably African – culturally, by descent, and due to their connection to a traditional territory within Sudan – but because of their ties across the border with Eritrea and Ethiopia, they are at times viewed as foreign. Most significantly, South Sudanese, who were classified as local and African prior to separation, are now marked as foreign; and they were always viewed as alien to the North of Sudan.

In terms of physical characteristics, Arab-ness is often conflated with lightness and brings status; but, if you are too Arab or too light, you become peripheral, an Egyptian or European colonizer. For example, when I was in Khartoum conducting research interviews, attempts were made to publicly discredit as Turkish, a long-standing and very light-skinned member of the regime who had recently joined the political opposition. This occurred despite the fact he is from one of the founding families of Sudan’s political elite. Many Christians claim Syrian descent, but privileges tied to being of Arab descent are overshadowed by discrimination against Christians and not being local or, as one of the Coptic participants put it, “not having a tribe.” While the Copts are close to the centre due to their economic power, their political influence is precarious. Sara, a Coptic participant, provided an example of the consequences of having an immigrant identity, particularly as it relates to witnessing genocide targeting other figurations:

The response [to the situation in Darfur] is to do what we’ve always done. We are not political. We don’t publicly make statements, especially as immigrants…. We are Sudanese 100% but also immigrants. It’s not like we have roots here, so we do not have the right to speak or intervene.

69 He claims Moroccan and Egyptian ancestry.
Pastoral Arab figurations are also in an ambiguous position. As I explained earlier in this chapter, the privatization of land presents a grave threat to their livelihoods and continued existence as peoples. Furthermore, figurations with strong Arab lineage, such as the Rashayda, are looked down on for maintaining “primitive,” Indigenous-like, nomadic practices. Other Arab pastoralists, such as the Baqara, are low in status for the same reason. However, through intermarriage and political alliances, they have become closer to families of the centre. Moreover, by responding to the government’s call to form militias to fight “African” rebels, they have acquired military power, which they have used to demand space at the centre. The genocidal attacks of some Baqara against the Nuba, the Dinka, and other tribal figurations of Darfur are a paradigmatic example of why a simple binary view does not explain relations of genocide in Sudan. These complex figurational dynamics have made it especially challenging for outsiders, including scholars of genocide, to understand how genocidal processes have unfolded.

The acceptability of intermarriage with those of the hegemonic figuration, is an indicator of a figuration’s closeness to the centre, specifically the marriage of a son of the peripheries to a daughter of the centre. Physical proximity to the centre (i.e., Khartoum) and whether an individual or social figuration inhabits a rural or urban space is also important. One of the participants speculated on the classification of the farmers of Tutti Island, an Island in the Nile between Khartoum, Bahri, and Omdurman. They are native to Khartoum and inhabit a shrinking rural enclave in the midst of a massive city, but are they peripheral? Should people from urban areas of the periphery (e.g., al Obeid or Port Sudan and, and maybe Nyala before the war in Darfur) and rural areas that are relatively close to Khartoum (e.g., Gezira or White Nile), be considered peripheral to the centre? Participants noted that there are centres within the periphery (informal settlements around Khartoum) and power differences among those of the periphery as well.70

Of course, individuals, or rarely segments of communities, can and, to an extent, do leave their figuration behind and move physically (by migrating to Khartoum) and socially to the centre. For example, the elite of the peripheries. Livelihoods constitute figurations, and ethnicity or tribal identity in Sudan is extremely malleable. For example, in rural Darfur, (with some exceptions)

70 While I address this briefly in the context of processes of victim blaming, this research does not focus on relations among figurations of the periphery.
farmers are almost by definition “African” and pastoralists “Arab.” An Arab who loses their cattle and takes up farming becomes African, and an African who decides to raise livestock as their primary livelihood joins an Arab group and becomes Arab (Young et al., 2005). This can be seen among the urban elite as well. Sara, a business person, described the prejudices people of the peripheries who migrate to Khartoum face, then paused to clarify, “This doesn’t apply to the Darfurian professor who’s been here for 21 years.” The Darfurian professor has moved closer to the centre, as an individual only, through education and migration. Another example is the very wealthy Zaghawa businessman Sideeg Wadaa from Darfur. The conditional tolerance of riverain Sudanese for exceptional individuals, such as the Darfurian professor and the Zaghawa businessman (“as long as they don’t marry our daughters or sisters”) usefully masks discrimination, rather than undermines their hegemony. For example, Mahmoud, an academic, repeatedly denied that people from the peripheries face discrimination, claiming that the richest people in Khartoum are Darfurians. In the next chapter, I discuss the way this exceptionalism, which is used to refute a more general systemic discrimination, contributes to standing by to genocide.

This mapping of figurations describes the context of this research and explains its focus. It enabled me to identify those who are part of the hegemonic figuration and those who are of the targeted figurations. My focus is on those of the centre, the hegemonic figuration, and how they have stood by to processes of genocide. Certainly, many others have stood by to genocide, individually and collectively; and others, including some Baqara from the peripheries, have been recruited to carry out mass killings and spread fear. However, it is the hegemonic figuration that drives the process of genocide, and it is in their name and for their interests that other figurations are being targeted for destruction. In my view, the hegemonic figuration generally includes people of the Ja’aliyyin, Shaiqiyya, and Danaqla tribal figurations; but I also interviewed a small number of elites who are Fur, Masalit, Coptic, and Habbaniyya to understand the views of people from the periphery who have been incorporated in the centre. All of the participants live in Khartoum.

Regarding figurations targeted for genocide, though the Fellata, Ethiopians, Eritreans and Copts (all “immigrants”) have been discriminated against, my focus is on figurations that have been constructed as native to Sudan and Africa. I argue that it is this particularly colonial dynamic, a
dynamic that requires contrasting the colonizer of the centre with the colonized of the peripheries, that provides the most explanatory power in understanding the genocidal processes that have unfolded in Sudan. Genocide, according to its legal definition, can also target figurations based on religion; some genocide scholars argue that political affiliation should also be included in definitions of genocide. Communists, Socialists, and Christian Democrats were targeted during the Holocaust, as were moderate Hutu politicians and journalists during the Rwandan genocide. Yet, these may be strategies to facilitate genocide of the primary targets. Their use does not cast doubt on the genocide of the Jewish people, the Romani, and the Tutsis.

In some contexts, such as during the First and Second Sudanese Civil Wars, religion has shaped the constitution of Sudanese figurations: Northerners as Muslim, Southerners as secular/Pagan/Christian. Furthermore, political opponents of the regime, riverains among them, have been harassed, detained, tortured, and killed. However, I did not explicitly probe the question of religion in this study\(^\text{71}\) and intentionally overlooked political figurations as targets for genocide. That being said, evidence of intersectionality (of religion and region of origin) and the persecution of political opposition leaders from the hegemonic figuration, does not detract from the argument that these genocidal processes target figurations that have come to be defined as African.

**Connecting with the Literature**

My findings on the complex radial configuration of figurations in Sudan departs from genocide studies literature and the colonial genocide literature, which, for the most part, assume that a distinct, ideally essentialized, binary is a necessary prerequisite for genocide. Four of Stanton’s (1998) influential “8 States of Genocide” reflect this assumption: Classification, Symbolization, Dehumanization, and Polarization. Analysis that emphasizes the modernity of 20th and 21st century genocides (Bauman, 1991) and the post-colonial literature reflect this binary assumption as well. Said’s (2003) work, which I draw on in Chapter 5, focuses on the construction of binaries; yet, genocide(s) in Sudan have been possible without them.

\(^{71}\) Participants either did not discuss religion or saw it as irrelevant now that the South has separated, assuming that everyone who remained is, or should be, Muslim. There are Pagans and Christians who are Indigenous to the North as well as significant populations from the South who remained in the North and migrants from Eritrea and Ethiopia.
The radial configuration of figurations contributes to understanding the functionalist approach to genocide that is evident in Sudan. Unlike an instrumentalist approach\textsuperscript{72}, a functionalist approach does not require the extermination of a peoples to be preconceived and precisely orchestrated. Instead, genocide may be a process driven by “bureaucratic underpinnings and socio-economic configurations” that gradually builds up to extermination (Levene, 2005, p. 93). According to a functionalist approach, physically eliminating a peripheral group is one of a range of “strategies” contemplated by a possibly factionalized group of colonizers, rather than an inevitable course of action. Riverain Sudanese are likely a minority or small majority. They depend on people of the peripheries for their wealth, and they must form alliances to hold onto power. Through destroying the bonds that hold these figurations together, the alienated individuals who remain can be re-engineered into a more easily exploitable under-class. When a figuration of the peripheries refuses to cooperate with their own exploitation, they are attacked; and, if necessary, they may be exterminated.

Genocide literature is biased towards genocides committed by Europeans, European colonizers, and colonized peoples who have been indoctrinated into a European racialized ideology (e.g., Rwanda). Though Sudan fits into the last category, and the data in this research demonstrates racist ideologies absorbed through colonialism and neocolonialism, local elements are clearly at work. Establishing that genocide is possible through mechanisms other than binaries is important not only to improve our understanding of the Sudanese situation but to prevent genocide in Sudan, through combatting denial. Claims that everyone in Sudan is “Black,” and that divisions between figurations were created by the British, are used inside and outside of Sudan to argue that Sudan has never experienced genocide (Mamdani, 2010) and to encourage those looking on to stand by and do nothing. As researchers address the Eurocentric bias in genocide literature, a greater diversity of structures that facilitate genocide will come to light.

**Conclusion**

The analysis presented in this chapter supports my focus on understanding how those of the Ja’aliyyin, Shaqiyya, and Danaqa tribal figurations of Sudan’s centre stand by to genocide

\textsuperscript{72} I discuss the instrumentalist approach to genocide in Sudan in Chapters 5 and 6.
targeting figurations constructed as African or non-Arab at its peripheries. Peoples’ location across space and in place affects relationships among Sudanese figurations and this, in turn, facilitates riverain Sudanese standing by and doing nothing about genocide. At the beginning of this chapter, I argued that riverain Sudanese do not bridge vast distances to form relationships with other peoples, except to exploit them. Due to this physical separation, riverain Sudanese do not have to witness genocidal acts. This is consistent with the claim in genocide studies literature that physical separation facilitates standing by and doing nothing (Barnett, 1999; Staub, 1989).

Riverain Sudanese no longer move much within Sudan; but they did in the past, migrating from their homes to the centre. Through this process they adopted a hybrid Arab or immigrant/African identity and claimed this identity as superior to the African-only identities of other figurations. This identity shift began in the precolonial era through Arabization, and during colonization it was further shaped by the racial ideologies propagated by the Egyptians and then the British. Having rejected their own African-ness, riverain Sudanese are less inclined to respect the African-ness of others. My description of this lack of respect for other peoples’ ways of being (in this case, African ways) foreshadows my discussion of processes of “othering” and its contribution to standing by in the next chapter. The literature on bystanders and genocide provides little insight into this process because it neglects colonial genocide. However perhaps the importance of loss of indigeneity is self-evident, and thus overlooked, because paradigmatic colonial cases involve the colonizing people crossing bodies of water to reach the colony and establishing permanent settlements once there.

Riverain Sudanese see their own figuration as superior; yet, they do not position themselves in opposition to those of the peripheries along the single dimension of race. Their figuration monopolizes the space at the hegemonic centre of a radial of multiple intersecting identities, such as: native/immigrant; African/Arab; Black/White; rural/urban; civilized/primitive; educated/uneducated; modern/traditional; poor/rich. Each dimension is a continuum with opposing poles, rather than a discrete dichotomy. Along some of these continua, riverain Sudanese claim the hybrid centre (i.e., Afro-Arab) rather than the far ends of the poles. Furthermore, challenging the idea of distinct binary identities, powerful individuals from the peripheries are incorporated in the hegemonic centre when they move sufficiently close to it along these continuua. For example, when they become more modern, educated, rich, or urban.
These processes of incorporation, the formation of conditional alliances with peripheral figurations, and the exploitation of people of the peripheries allow the riverain Sudanese figuration to hold onto power. This radial configuration, rather than a distinct binary defined by a single dimension of identity (e.g., race), makes it possible for riverain Sudanese to deny that different figurations exist along tribal lines ("We are all Sudanese"). As such, they can deny that the peripheral figurations are targeted for genocide and so, do nothing about it.
Chapter 5

Sudanese Figurations

In El Geneina, West Darfur, where I used to live, when running into someone you might spend well over a minute in greetings and then hold hands throughout the conversation that follows; relationships are important. This Sudanese relationality creates the complexity, not to mention the paradoxes, that so challenge khawajin like me, in our efforts to learn and write about Sudan. Even though I did not ask participants about this directly, a large majority talked about how riverain Sudanese relate to each other, leading me to conclude that relations within the hegemonic riverain figuration are as important to how they stand by to genocide as relations between them and those of targeted figurations. A second paradox is that the efforts that riverain Sudanese make to connect with members of the targeted figurations often contribute to their standing by and doing nothing about genocide.

Blood Runs Thicker

According to my participants, family (or to be more technical, kinship) is important to standing by to genocide. This may seem obvious; but in a culture of academic inquiry that privileges the public over the private, the importance of kinship, particularly in the economic and political realm, needs to be emphasized. Kinship relations bind, even define, the riverain figuration in Sudan. In the words of Hawa, a politician, “Everyone has a small family, a bigger family, and even bigger, my tribe, then my country, then regions — African and Arabian — then the world. All these are circles around me.” Kinship relationships can extend as far as you need them to. Where you draw the line is a matter of expediency. You can ignore distant relatives if you choose, and your family can come together with another through marriage. While families may be characterized by similarities between their members — of language, political beliefs, and religion — they can also accommodate diversity. Referencing her home region just south of Khartoum, Tahani, a humanitarian worker, explained that this applies to ethnic diversity, in particular:

Gezira was quite a melting pot. There was diversity within my family. There were chances to see how we perceived and saw differences related to race there…. As I started
learning about my family history – at some point they expect you to know your lineage – I came across family members. But that did not change things [i.e., levels of racism within her family]. (Were these people from the West?) It’s a genuine melting pot. Slavery. Members of my family are slaves, and I have family members who are Fur [from the West]. You could see the racial variety in the family.

Kinship figurations bring people into relation with others of different, sometimes conflicting, tribal, political, social, cultural, economic, and religious figurations. Endogamous marriage practices (i.e., marrying into one’s kinship figuration) are breached in order to cement relations between powerful families and, by extension, their tribes. This has the potential to build solidarity among different figurations; in the case of Tahani, through her grandmother’s family in the Nuba Mountains. However, as I expand upon below, even if they are related to them by blood or marriage, this diversity and hybridity does not seem to preclude riverain Sudanese feeling contempt for members of targeted figurations. At the same time, kinship divides figurations. While riverain men may take a second, third, or fourth wife from outside their figuration, riverain families refuse to marry their daughters to men of the peripheries.

Kinship figurations in Sudan exert strong influence. To an extent they determine who you are. This is demonstrated clearly in the way participants’ families practically predetermined their vocation:

[Ours is] a well-known political family. In the Graduates Congress [a colonial political assembly], we had six members, my father and five uncles.” (Abdullah, politician)

“My family was in the business of media.” (Talib, journalist)

“I always had in my heart NGOs [non-profit organizations] and charity. My mum was doing that.” (Mia, former humanitarian worker)

“I got the business side from my family.” (Abdulrhaman, business person)

Riverain Sudanese are influenced by their kinship relations well into adulthood, in the way they conduct themselves socially; where they live; the type of work they do; whom they marry; and,
importantly, for the issue at hand, how involved they are politically; relations of kinship condition how riverain Sudanese react to genocide. As Babiker, a university administrator, emphasized, “We need a new generation, but this generation are going to be raised by the same riverine parents.” Latané and Darley (1970), argue that a “bystander effect” is achieved, in part, by perceived pressure from the group to do nothing. A number of participants spoke of the explicit directions they received from their families to refrain from standing up for people from the peripheries.

The telling of history — family history, local history, and the history of Sudan as a whole — is a family practice. Given the dearth of Sudanese history taught in schools, this family instruction is especially important. As with marriage and blood, these histories, often told by older women in the family, connect and divide riverain Sudanese from other figurations. In my interviews, I was told the histories of two prominent riverain families that emphasize their close relations with Darfur. Yet these family histories also narrate the betrayal and massacre of their ancestors by people from other tribes. Stories about the reign of al Khalifa (1885–1899), from al qarab (the West, as in Darfur and Kordofan), during the Mahdiyya, and his brutality were related by a number of participants. Genocide scholars have proposed that telling history can be used to incite genocide. For example: the myths in the context of the Holocaust about Jewish people killing Jesus (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, n.d.); the “genocide myths” that the Serbian and Croatian people told prior to the war and genocidal massacres in the Balkans (MacDonald, 2002); and the ethnic mythology of Hutu extremists in Rwanda (Kaufman, 2006). Children’s acculturation into racism also occurs less formally, through observation of the way family members speak and behave towards people from the peripheries: “You feel it [racism], you start knowing it when you are so young. You can find out these things from children,” says Zaid.

While family is associated with ideals of care, relationships within families, like any relationship, are shaped by power. Capital, or power, is accumulated and distributed through kinship networks. The practice of endogamy, especially for women, further concentrates capital. It keeps the bride’s wealth and inheritance within the family. Endogamy is not only practiced by rural agrarian families, trying to keep land and livestock in the family, it is common among the political and business elite as well.
Similarly, hiring practices keep wealth in riverain families. While formal efforts have been made within the public sector to provide employment opportunities to people from the peripheries, participants spoke of private firms employing only family members at the management level. Business people who aspire to be more Westernized as well as those who favour traditional Sudanese business practices, both admitted to employing and providing opportunities to “family members.” Sara explained that her family’s business had worked hard to hire people based on merit rather than kinship; yet, in a new business venture she partnered with a family member, “because I can trust him.” Lara Mann’s (2011) research demonstrates that this practice persists amongst Sudan’s largest and most professionalized businesses, even while they aspire to adopt international best practices in human resource management.

In addition, this concentration of capital occurs: through charity, as Mia, Naim, and Tahani remarked, they give to impoverished family members and to people in their “home” area; and through government services, as the findings of “The Black Book” (2000; 2002), which were later confirmed by Cobham (2005), demonstrate. Riverain Sudanese do not intentionally seek to distribute capital through their families in this manner. According to Naim, a humanitarian worker, it happens because you respond to people who come to you for help, and naturally these are those to whom you are already tied. These are primarily kinship ties; but they can also be ties through employment, religious associations, and, to an extent, school. However, that kinship is the strongest tie is reflected in the practice of fortifying relationships by referring to friends, colleagues, and even acquaintances, using kinship terms, such as, akhui (my brother) or khalti (my aunt [mother’s sister]).

Many of the participants argued that it is imperative to focus on kin above all else, due, at least in part, to the Sudanese state’s failure to provide services for its citizens and the difficulties of life in Sudan. This regard for kin, certainly exceeds their regard for people they do not know and who live in distant parts of the country they had never seen. Some of the participants (the politicians among them, in particular) told me that the solutions to the country’s problems lie in strengthening political institutions. When I shared this opinion with Tahani, though, she disagreed: “Believing that the system will fix it? Here we don’t believe that. It is the family, not the state [that will]. The logical engagement with the state is apathy.” Economic reciprocity, especially through kinship networks, is a widely practiced coping mechanism in Sudan. For
people living in poverty, reciprocity ensures their survival. However, reciprocity also further concentrates wealth in Sudan, because riverain elite share with their less well-off relatives.

Furthermore, many institutions in Sudan are family affairs, including businesses, political parties, universities, and religious orders. Since the majority of people with access to capital are riverain Sudanese, and they distribute their capital through family relations, and intermarriage with people of the peripheries is discouraged, capital has remained concentrated in the centre. This is true of the public as well as private spheres. State institutions and political parties have become formal cloaks to disguise hegemonic kinship figurations. There is no faith in the state’s ability to care for people, so members of the hegemonic kinship figuration, who have access to public capital, take matters into their own hands and redirect capital to their kin. In a political and institutional context, this behaviour is conceptualized as anti-democratic, nepotistic, and corrupt; but when viewed in the context of kinship relations, it is reframed as an expression of care and support: representing family interests; distributing wealth to family members; and, in turn, being supported by family. This reframing may be a reaction to, what social psychologists call, cognitive dissonance (Kahn, 2009); riverain Sudanese, a people who value generosity and egalitarianism, experience this dissonance when they behave in ways that are selfish and discriminatory. Changing the moral frame, invoking an ethic of homophily and care, makes it easier to overlook the resulting injustices. It allows riverain Sudanese to uphold the value of generosity while concentrating national wealth in the hands of their kin. As Mahmoud said, far from being greedy and selfish, they accumulate in order to redistribute. Yet, redistribution occurs only within limited circles.

The participants described not only a neo-patrimonial state, but a neo-patrimonial society. Patrons, whether politicians, employers, civil society leaders, religious leaders, or academics, distribute capital through their private social networks, especially kinship networks. Those who benefit, then owe a debt and are obligated to reciprocate in some way. For example, Alex de Waal (2015) describes the way political leaders in Sudan, whether in power or opposition, use the resources they accumulate in rent seeking (benefits they accrue through their political connections) to ensure the loyalty of their armed followers. These resources (and weapons) flow through kinship networks because family members are more loyal. And, importantly, their loyalty comes at a lower monetary cost.
Thus, mutuality is valued and practiced in Sudan, and it is realized intra-figurationally through kinship networks. The study findings suggest that the strong relationships among members of the hegemonic riverain figuration are associated with weak obligations towards people of targeted figurations. This is consistent with psychological research that proposes that humans show loyalty towards and preference for those we classify as part of our in-group and view out-group members negatively by comparison (Kahn, 2009). We feel a responsibility to stand up for some people but not for others. It is in this way that members of the hegemonic riverain figuration do not intervene nor interrupt genocidal processes in the peripheries. Furthermore, as riverain Sudanese benefit, in general, from intra-figurational mutuality, and directly from patrons within these networks, they are unlikely to challenge the system that supports them or the genocidal actions of their patrons. Similarly, Esquith (2010) and Verdeja (2012) argue that those who stand by to genocide are complicit through association, as members of the hegemonic figuration that the perpetrators of genocide act on behalf of. The strength of the intra-figurational ties of riverain Sudanese make this complicity more acute.

**Tribal? Us?**

As extended kinship networks, these figurations can be described as tribal. The hegemonic riverain Sudanese figuration significantly overlaps with the Ja’aliyyin, Shaiqyya, and Danaqla tribal figurations. Many Western analysts prefer the less relational term, “ethnicity.” However, the participants challenged the conflation of tribe (i.e., extended kinship network) and ethnicity (i.e., shared cultural heritage, history, language, traditional territory, mythology, cuisine, dress, art, or physical appearance). There can be significant ethnic diversity within a tribe; and there is diversity, even discord, within Sudan’s riverain figuration. Through marriage, a family, and by extension a tribe, can accommodate ethnic diversity and, especially, what the participants refer to as racial diversity. Furthermore, many of the riverain participants denied or downplayed both their ethnicity and tribe. Looking closely at their denial, it became clear that these two constructs differ, and that the concept of tribe brings value to my attempts at a relational understanding. The concept of tribe is often rejected by academics because of its colonial associations, but it is precisely the colonial implications that I try to explicate in this study. Focusing explicitly on
tribes (and race, See Chapter 10), rather than euphemisms such as ethnicity, helps me achieve this goal.

Of the 31 riverain participants who explicitly discussed tribe (i.e., used the word), only 11 mentioned it in relation to themselves or the tribes they belong to; while 20 participants mentioned it in relation to tribes of the peripheries; and 10 mentioned tribe as a concept, or in reference to the whole country. Six participants talked about a time in the past, before they knew the tribes of people in their neighbourhoods, schools, or workplaces. Interestingly, two participants (one who grew up in a communist family in Omdurman and one who grew up overseas) said that they did not learn what tribe they were from until late adolescence. In summary, the riverain participants were more likely to view people of the peripheries as “tribal,” than themselves.

Given that I, myself, did not use the word tribe in the interviews (other than to clarify or probe a participant’s response, after they first used the word), these findings suggest that tribe is an important aspect of standing by and doing nothing about genocide. However, participants’ views on this are contradictory. Sara, a business person, argued that tribe is important: “Fundamentally this is a tribal country. You are always defined by tribe.” While, Daffala, an artist, suggested the opposite, “Identity is not this kind of tribal thing”; she argued that “These issues of the tribe will disappear.” With the exception of the Nubians (who themselves are exceptional among the riverain in their efforts to revitalize their Nubian identity), few of the riverain Sudanese participants named their own tribe or acknowledged the privileges that arise from their membership in a riverain tribe.

Given the participants’ tendency to use euphemisms for tribe (e.g., centre, our villages/areas, jelaba, ‘awlad al-balad [sons of the country], Northerner), it seemed that for some, the idea of having a tribal identity is a source of embarrassment; a primitive throwback; something to overcome in order to be modern, civilized, or consolidate their position as colonialists. For example, Mia, a humanitarian worker, asked, “Why condescend to tribe?” Taban, a politician, referred to Southerners as people with “different tongues and scars.” There is embarrassment

73 Please note that as this is a qualitative study, the numbers presented here are not generalizable. Furthermore, there is some overlap in the categories, as one participant could have discussed “tribe” in different contexts within the same interviews.
about tribe, rejection of it, and alienation from it. Wessam, an academic, explained that there is even a term to refer to tribally alienated elite, *hankesha*, “Sudanese expatriates within.” The participants did not necessarily experience this alienation as negative. Some participants indicated ambivalence towards it or even a preference for it. They resent the traditionalism and poverty of the villages; they are severed from their Nubian languages (two of the three most powerful riverain tribes have lost their languages completely) and cut off from their tribal music and literature; they have only tenuous connections to a traditional territory and land (much of the Nubian’s traditional land is under water due to the damming of the Nile); and they do not return to live in their home area. Instead of looking to tribe, many riverain Sudanese look towards power; modernity; and conspicuous consumption in Khartoum, the Gulf, or the West.

Furthermore, changing marriage practices are transforming riverain identities. For example, Faisal a professor, said, “My wife has nothing to do with my own tribe. My children didn’t marry in their families. None has a connection with the family”. The colonial education system in the decades leading up to Sudan’s second independence also contributed to this by creating an educated, urbanized, Westernized, riverain elite, pejoratively referred to as, *Effendiyya*, meaning lords or masters. There have been attempts to build new identities, in particular, an Omdurmanian identity and an Islamist identity, but these identities have faltered and, above all, failed to incorporate the people of the peripheries.

The participants described the peripheral areas of Sudan as tribal and the centre as civilized through colonization, urbanization, capitalism, education, and globalization. They refer to riverain people as racially and tribally unmarked, of normative and superior (colonialist) identity, in contrast with the inferior, tribalized, and racialized identity of the colonized peripheries. Presenting a riverain identity as default and normative brings to mind theories of “Whiteness” that address race in a Western context (McIntosh, 1988; Nakayama & Martin, 1999). Because it is normative there is no need to name it. This explains how two of the participants grew up not knowing they had a tribe. Similarly, Deng (1995) argues that Sudanese culture has been redefined as riverain culture. Yet, with the embarrassment, alienation, and disconnection there is a paradox. Capital in Sudan is accumulated and distributed in ways that strengthen relations amongst members of three main riverain tribal figurations: Ja’aliyyin, Shaiqiyya, and Danaqla.
Thus, while tribe is used; it is, at the same time, denied. Further research is needed to understand how this paradox is sustained.

It is also illuminating to look at the way tribes are used, but not spoken about, in the political realm. One of the most dramatic political acts of the past twenty years in Sudan was the release of the two-part essay, “The Black Book” (2000; 2002). The first volume of this anonymous document was handed out after Friday prayers and then disseminated through photocopying and word of mouth. It shows that, since independence, senior political appointments have been monopolized by people from the Northern Region of the country (50% to 80% of appointments), from a figuration that, pre-separation of the South, made up 5% of the total population. Furthermore, all Sudanese presidents, since independence, have been from this region. “The Black Book” also boldly defines this “circle” in explicit tribal terms: “the entire Northern Region was dominated by only three ethnic groups, which also dominated the whole country. These were the Shaygia, the Jaalyeen, and the Danagla.” (emphasis added) As Prunier (2005) explains, “The Black Book”:

said nothing to the average Northern Sudanese that they did not know already. What created a shock were not the contents of the book, but simply the fact that an unspoken taboo had been broken and that somebody (obviously not a walad al-beled) had dared to put into print what everybody knew but did not want to talk about. (p. 77)

“The Black Book,” is widely credited with igniting a political and military uprising in Darfur. Illuminating tribe powerfully revealed the unequal relations among Sudan’s social figurations, and the colonial dimensions of those relations. “The Black Book” experience demonstrates that acknowledging tribal figurations is a first step towards moving people from standing by and doing nothing to standing up against genocidal processes, at least by those targeted.

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74 As I explained in Chapter Four, there is actually no reliable data or reliable way of projecting historical data, to estimate the size of Sudan’s tribal figurations at present.
“The slaves from the West will come murder us in our homes”

The field of postcolonial studies, established by Said (2003), is built on the premise that “othering” the colonized enables colonialism. Similarly, genocide scholars argue that othering of a targeted figuration enables genocidal processes (Bauman, 1991; Pergher et al., 2013). By othering I mean not just interacting with those of another figuration in ways that establish them as fundamentally different, but the constitution of one’s own figuration through this process, i.e., defining who “we” are in opposition to “them.” The participants not only described those of Sudan’s targeted figurations in these terms, a few explicitly named this phenomenon. For example, Tahini stated, “There’s this sense of otherness.” “How did that happen?” I asked. “Geographical space” she replied, “but it can’t just be that.” Geographical separation is indeed important (See Chapter 4); but even when physical space is shared, othering occurs. I will return to how the participants’ use of othering connects to critical and social science theories of othering at the end of this chapter.

As a Canadian I have been struck by how egalitarian Sudanese, including riverain Sudanese, appear to be. For example, when a high-ranking individual walks into a room they greet everyone present, including the tea lady and the driver. Given this, it must take significant work to tolerate the dissonance of egalitarianism in the face of extreme inequality. In this section I argue that this social work takes the form of segregation; social distancing; stereotyping (including racism); discrimination (including racial discrimination); and vilifying the other.

Segregation and distancing.

As Tahani said, to a certain extent, the other is easy to distinguish because they live far away. However, millions of people of the peripheries have been displaced to the centre, often because the figurations they belong to are being targeted for destruction. Segregation is employed when members of different figurations share the same physical space. For example, figurations from the West, South, and East are relegated to a “Black belt” (Hassan & Ray, 2009) of informal settlements around Khartoum. Getting to and from the centre of Khartoum is difficult for them because of poor and expensive transportation infrastructure, and they feel conspicuous when they are in riverain parts of town. Segregation is also evident in the market and the workplace. In the
private sector, people from the peripheries face discrimination when they apply for professional and service positions (due to the legacy of slavery, they are seen as best suited for manual work); and specific trades have become associated with certain tribal figurations. However, many spaces are not physically segregated, and other forms of distancing come into play. For example, one participant spoke of a woman from the peripheries who works and lives in his aunt’s house and is not allowed to use the same dishes as members of the family or guests. Portraying people of the peripheries as diseased and unclean is used to justify this segregation. The irony of having someone you view as contaminated live in your house and interact with you in sometimes intimate ways is overlooked.

Social distancing is facilitated by differences in education and class. The riverain factory owner has daily interactions with, but is socially distant from, his Darfuri factory workers; as is the riverain professional and the office driver from the Nuba Mountains. However, a few of the riverain participants have schoolmates or colleagues, social peers in other words, who are from the peripheries. How do they remain detached from the lives and concerns of their peers and claim to be unaware that the government is bombing civilians in parts of Sudan’s peripheries? Of course, stories of these atrocities are suppressed or misrepresented in the Sudanese media. But at some point, the riverain participants must have been called upon to say shahada (express condolences) for the family member of a colleague killed in such atrocities. In fact, a few of the participants had. To their embarrassment, apparently the social chasm between them and their peers of the peripheries is so great that they failed to carry out this fundamental acknowledgement of another’s humanity.

Keeping those of the targeted peripheries socially distant keeps them outside of what Fein (1984) calls, one’s “universe of obligation.” Social distancing enables riverain Sudanese’s lack of empathy towards the other. Furthermore, it shields them from information about the peripheries. In a context where censorship is ubiquitous and social networks are the way people stay informed about public affairs, social distancing has a significant impact on standing by. If you do not know about genocide then you cannot be expected to do anything about it.
Racism.

Racism also creates social distance. However, only a minority of the riverain participants talked about anti-Black racism, and then spoke mostly of overtly racist speech, particularly names used to dehumanize people with darker skin. Specific examples were given of discriminatory hiring practices and taboos against intermarriage of riverain women with darker men from the peripheries. A few participants describe racism as a system that legitimizes discrimination and violence, for example, “This [war in Darfur] is a racist war.” However, the majority of participants did not refer to Sudan’s history of slavery. Few conceded that the legacy of slavery is the racism of today. The participants responded to racism in different ways. Abdullah, a politician, appeared resigned to racism, which he claimed is “something you have to accept and deal with and accommodate yourself to.” On the other hand, a few participants have taken actions to address racism, for example, calling out family members and colleagues for the way they speak about those who are not riverain and trying to remedy racist hiring practices.

The importance and meaning of race in a Sudanese context is contested by researchers and political actors, both within and outside the country. Some, like Mamdani (2010), claim that it is a foreign concept that has been imported, or imposed, on the Sudanese; that it mischaracterizes the Sudanese situation or recreates it in a mould that serves Western neocolonial interests (i.e., to vilify Arabs and justify the West’s war on terrorism). However, others place racism at the centre of their analyses of conflict and political and development processes in Sudan (Hagan & Rymond-Richmond, 2008; Totten, 2012; US State Department, 2004). The information I collected about riverain Sudanese’s views on race, though limited, suggests a number of possibilities, some of which are conflicting: race is not a significant issue in Sudan (most of the participants did not speak of it); Sudan suffers from colourism rather than racism; racism is internalized, as Black Africans, all (or nearly all) Sudanese are subjected to it, particularly in their relationships with the Arab world; racism intersects with other forms of oppression (See Chapter 4); racism, particularly systemic racism, is practiced but denied by riverain Sudanese; and racism is embarrassing to talk about or express to outsiders like me, especially for participants who aspire to be Western in their outlook.

Members of my Guidance Circle from the peripheries, many of whom related stories of being targeted by, or witnessing racial discrimination, clearly feel that race is part of the picture. Based
on the data, I can confidently say that in Sudan race means different things to different people in different contexts; and its effects on inter-figurational relations is contested. Moreover, the importance and meaning of race is, in and of itself, a cause of conflict.

**From stereotyping, to polarization, to victim blaming.**

Stereotyping requires one to reframe a collection of individuals as similar to each other, according to certain characteristics. In a Sudanese context this process of homogenizing individuals is extended to homogenizing multiple, diverse figurations with no significant cultural or historical ties, i.e., all peoples of the peripheries. As Ahmed, who works in the cultural sector, said: “All of the areas are the same for me. I couldn’t visit any of them.”

Stereotyping, in turn, facilitates polarization. Aziz, a civil society leader, said, “Before we asked who people were in order to find a relative in common with them, now we do it in order to position ourselves against them.” These processes of polarization shape and are shaped by violent conflict in the peripheries, but also manifest themselves in day-to-day social conflict amongst people living and working together in Khartoum. For example, a car accident involving one of the riverain participants and someone from Darfur, escalated into a heated argument because of stereotyping and inter-figurational tensions.

The extent of polarization makes blaming people of the peripheries for their own disadvantage, indeed for the problems of the country as a whole, easy. Victim blaming, especially of leaders from figurations targeted for genocide, was evident in many of the interviews. For example, Tijani, a business leader, said:

> Politicians [from the peripheries] helped with the misunderstanding. They believe that these people [in Khartoum] exploited the other places [of the peripheries] and are enjoying while others are poor. They are making propaganda. It’s not true.

Those targeted by genocide are viewed as complainers who create problems out of nothing. Furthermore, they are held responsible for creating the problems that cause their suffering. For example, people from the peripheries are blamed for underdevelopment in their regions: They started armed insurrections, and now the war is consuming the resources that could have been
used to provide services and infrastructure to the peripheries. This of course distracts attention from the underdevelopment that preceded armed conflict, and who is responsible for that.

**Violence.**

Given the extent, scope, and persistence of violence in Sudan, I expected violence to be a focus of my interviews on relations between riverain Sudanese and people in the rest of the country; but it was not. Perhaps this is because violent conflict, as long as it is kept away from the centre, is so normalized. For example, the participants consistently described war as the continuation of politics by other means. While violence was viewed as distant, it is still there and can still be used to engender fear, particularly fear of reprisals. One of the participants, Abdulrahman, a business person, remarked:

> There is genuine fear [of the peripheries]. In 2009 when Khalil Ibrahim\(^5\) entered [i.e., attacked] Omdurman, people were scared. It’s a class thing, the extreme poverty. People here benefitted a lot from the boom years. The standard of living improved so much. If they come into Khartoum and see us living in a home like this? We’re worried about the mob mentality. What happened when John Garang\(^6\) died, schoolgirls were raped, people murdered in their homes.

There is fear that violence from the peripheries might spread to the centre; and, especially since the separation of the South, there is growing anxiety about increases in other forms of violence, particularly crime inside Khartoum. It is striking that non-violent break ins suffered by wealthy Khartoumers seemed to inspire more concern amongst some of the participants than the ongoing bombings in the Nuba Mountains and Darfur.

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\(^5\) Leader of the Justice and Equality Movement, an armed rebel movement from Darfur.

\(^6\) Leader of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement, an armed rebel movement that began in the South, and later Vice President of Sudan.
Exaggerated relations

There is a history of connections between riverain Sudanese and members of figurations targeted by genocide. For example, there were agreements between the Funj Sultanate and tribal figurations in the South in the seventeenth century (Beswick, 2004). However, the Mahdiyya is the example the participants most often referred to as a historical moment when Sudanese came together. Babiker talked at length about Muhammad Ahmad bin Abd Allah from Dongola, who declared himself the Mahdi (messianic redeemer of Islam) in 1881 and united tribal figurations across Sudan to overthrow the Turkiyya, bringing about Sudan’s first independence. The Mahdi attracted followers from the Muslim north, east and west, and from the non-Muslim Dinka to the south. The descendants of the Mahdi formed the Umma political party, which until recently depended upon the Ansar, a loyal, largely Darfurian and Kordofanian, political/religious constituency. Though relations established in the nineteenth century continue to the present day, many of have eroded. The participants debated whether contemporary institutions, such as political parties, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and the media, have maintained or renewed these inter-figurational connections.

Political parties.

The participants discussed numerous political movements, including the Sudan People’s Liberation Army under Dr. John Garang; the National Democratic Alliance,77 the National Islamic Front in its early days (forerunner to Sudan’s current regime); and most recently, Sudan Call.78 With varying degrees of success, these political movements tried to bring those of the centre and the periphery together. Farouq, a civil society activist, explained how even the Sudanese Communist Party, which has struggled to attract a constituency from outside of Khartoum, attempted to articulate policy that considers the interests of those of the peripheries. The youth demonstrations in Khartoum of 2012 and 2013 included actions in solidarity with communities being bombed by the government in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile.

77 This political movement formed in 1989, in opposition to the then new regime, led by Omar Hassan al-Bashir.
78 An umbrella union of political parties, armed rebel movements and youth protest groups that formed in 2014 in opposition to the current regime.
Opposition activists that I interviewed talked of the way the shared experience of persecution brings them into solidarity with activists from targeted figurations. It was during his time in jail that one of the participants had the opportunity to learn about the peripheries and build relationships with activists from those parts of the country. While all of this sounds encouraging, the analysis of “The Black Book” clearly demonstrates that these efforts have been insufficient. Representation of people of the peripheries in the political movements of the centre has not translated into a Southerner, Westerner or Easterner leading the country. To paraphrase Abdulatif, people of the peripheries are welcomed as members of political parties, but those parties would never let them lead.

**Education.**

While political movements engage a very small number of Sudanese (though often those with influence), education and livelihoods facilitate relations among larger numbers of Sudanese. Many of the participants talked of school and university as the place where they encountered, and sometimes connected with, people from the peripheries. For example, El Tom, who works in the cultural sector, said, “Nyala. I know it from university. I had a classmate from there. That’s what’s good about university.” Musa, a professor explained, “Education brings Sudanese from all corners [of] the modern economy. It’s transforming and modernizing, bringing those from different backgrounds together.” However, when I probed more deeply, many, including Babiker, a university administrator, acknowledged the limits of education’s integrating potential:

And still, the integration among the students is minimal. Still they tend to come together, they do not mix with others. This shows you the lack of sensitivity [of riverain Sudanese]. And the periphery is afraid of rejection. They also come with complexes and preconceived ideas.

During the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, education, particularly through boarding schools, was enormously effective in building solidarity among students from different parts of the country. In fact, these institutions are credited with facilitating Sudan’s second independence movement.

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79 While the anonymous authors of the “Black Book” identify as members of the political opposition and are making an argument to justify a political position, drawing from Sudanese government’s own datasets Cobham (2005) has verified many of their claims.
However, nearly all the students who attended these institutions were riverain. Unfortunately, this educational legacy has not been sustained or expanded to foster inter-figurational relations in the postcolonial period.

Livelihoods.

Relations in the domains of economics and livelihoods are also key to understanding inter-figurational relations more generally. Participants talked at length about the way their work brings them into contact with members of targeted figurations. As previously mentioned, work is the only reason some of the riverain participants had had the opportunity to visit the peripheries, as politicians; as journalists; as artists on tour or for artistic inspiration; as activists, to attend meetings with other activists; as development workers; as military personnel; as clinicians, to deliver health services and to gain professional experience; as educators, to deliver educational services; as researchers, to conduct research and gather input; but more commonly, as business people, to access markets. For the most part, these are visits or short-term appointments. In contrast, large numbers of people from the peripheries move to the centre to work as professionals and labourers. After they arrive, they often remain in Khartoum, sometimes for the rest of their lives.

The diversity of workplaces affects whether members of different figurations have the opportunity to mix. Private sector workplaces, which are largely a family affair with riverain Sudanese in the professional and management positions, re-inscribe segregation. However, government sector workplaces and international agencies, which have more open hiring practices and sometimes affirmative action programs, are more diverse and more likely to bring Sudanese of different figurations together (Mann, 2011). Though, as mentioned, inter-figurational relations can still be characterized by significant power differences in these workplaces.

Economic relations are not just brokered within a firm, they are formed between independent economic entities, including independent producers, traders, manufacturers, investors, and retailers, among others. As mentioned, relationships of interdependency between farmers and pastoralists facilitate and incentivize inter-figurational conflict resolution. For example, while Misiriyya pastoralists may quarrel with Nuba farmers, they endeavour to restore good relations
with them because they depend upon them for their staple foods (i.e., sorghum and millet). Similarly, the Nuba appreciate having access to meat and being able to send their animals to graze with the Misiriyya. While this is a localized example, though replicated in many parts of the country, economic interdependency is also a feature of more formal and differentiated economic systems. For example, it was hoped that after the separation of the South, the dependency of the North on revenue from Southern oil and the dependency of the South on the pipeline running through the North and to Port Sudan to get their oil to market, would prevent war between the two states; and, arguably, it has.

It is a mistake, however, to assume that any type of economic relationship with the centre is beneficial to people of the peripheries. In line with dependency theory (Wallerstein, 2004), it is important to consider whether economic relations exist between figurations yet are exploitive; or there is a lack of economic integration with the peripheries, in other words an absence of relations. Evidence suggests a combination of the two. While the manufacturing and services sector only make up a tiny portion of the Sudanese economy, the centre owes its wealth to the rural areas. Historically the jelaba made their fortunes from, often exploitative (particularly in the case of slavery), economic relations. In fact, all of the businesses I connected with through this research traced their origins to a jelaba trader who profited from trade with the peripheries and invested the profits in enterprises in the centre, including agriculture, manufacturing, retail, and import/export. Similar patterns can be observed in more recent times. Extracted resources, such as petroleum and minerals (gold especially), as well as lucrative forest products, such as gum Arabic, are found in areas far from Khartoum, often on the traditional territories of targeted figurations. However, investments in mechanized agriculture, manufacturing, and infrastructure are made in the centre to benefit riverain owned businesses (The Black Book, 2004).

Some of the business leaders I spoke with claimed that economic investments are made in the peripheries as well. However, in the case of agriculture, they conflate rural with periphery. As discussed in Chapter 4, the rural areas and the peripheries intersect in important ways, but they are not interchangeable. Rural areas of the centre, such as Gezira, Northern State, or White Nile (where riverain Sudanese hail from), are not the same as rural areas of the periphery, where figurations are targeted for genocide, such as Western and Eastern Sudan; the Nuba Mountains (in South Kordofan); and, formerly, Southern Sudan.
With the exception of livestock, commercial agriculture is concentrated in relatively well-off rural areas in the centre and exists, to a limited extent, in the peripheries, such as, South Kordofan, on lands that have been bought by people from the centre. Commercial agriculture in the rural centre has resulted in exploitative relations, including usurping of land, unsustainable livelihoods for tenant farmers, and a vulnerable class of landless agricultural workers. Yet, there are strong relations between riverain Sudanese in these rural areas and Khartoum. These agricultural communities of the centre have seen returns in terms of employment and services in their areas. For example, Gezira, the sight of one of the largest agricultural schemes in the world, had a very strong public education system in the second colonial period and after independence. The same cannot be said of employment opportunities and services in oil producing areas of the South, such as Upper Nile and Unity State.

Gold extraction, in particular artisanal gold mining, which has been difficult for elites and foreign interests to control, is more complicated. Gold from the North and the Northwest now generates most of the country’s foreign currency and is probably the reason Sudan’s economy has not completely collapsed with the loss of oil revenue after the separation of the South (Manson, 2012; International Monetary Fund, 2016). Abdulrahman argued that gold in Northern State connects and brings mutual benefits to local communities, migrant Darfuri artisanal miners, refinery owners from Khartoum, and local and national governments. He argued that, in addition to putting money in the pockets of Darfurians, it has led the Sudanese companies who run the refineries to fund local health and educational services. However, the same benefits cannot be seen in North Darfur, where artisanal mining is reported to fuel armed conflict (Kumar, 2015). Furthermore, as the government brings this sector under its control, if past behaviour is any predictor, they will attempt to redirect profits to the centre.

**Culture.**

Economic relations in Sudan have always gone hand in hand with the diffusion of culture. The most obvious example of this is the Arabic language, which went from being the language of a few immigrants to a *lingua franca* used for trade, to the mother tongue of many of Sudan’s tribal figurations. Thus, migration to and within Sudan has led to the diffusion of culture among
figurations. This diffusion includes Arabization, first of riverain figurations and later, to a lesser extent, of figurations in the rest of the country. It also includes the adoption of cultural practices of the peripheries by riverain Sudanese in the centre. Immense numbers of Southerners were brought to the North through slavery and then came on their own for work and to escape conflict. Their presence and influence in central Sudan has created new cultural practices that are now seen as distinctly riverain (Sikainga, 2011).

Daffala, an artist, claims that the cultures of the figurations targeted by genocide are the shared inheritance of all Sudanese, not just the Nuba; the Masalit; the Beja; the Bari (before separation of the South); or the Rizeyqt:

So, the disappearance of the painting and music of Nubia is a loss to the country. It has to be documented in the library. And, we conserve it not as something antique, but as something that has continuity and can inspire those who are looking for their source and origins. So, it can be used by the coming generations. For example, we have suffered from losing handicrafts. We could have created institutions for these things.

As a result, riverain Sudanese have a responsibility and vested interest in preserving cultural practices across Sudan, in other words, in standing up to cultural genocide. The participants from the cultural sector maintain some of their closest relations with members of targeted figurations and have some of the harshest critiques of the centre, specifically the government’s assimilationist policies. However, Daffala’s statement in defence of culture betrays the colonial privileging of cultural artifacts over the peoples who create them. He suggests documenting, preserving, and appropriating the cultures of figurations targeted by genocide, rather than ensuring that the people who comprise the figurations survive.

A related example is an article published by the respected Sudanese linguist, Al-Amin Abu-Manga (2006). In this article, he calls for greater resources to study and document the threatened and endangered languages of Sudan; but he does not mention ending the bombing and starvation of the peoples who speak these languages, or implementing educational and cultural interventions to increase the number of speakers. I discussed this issue with Emira, a journalist, in the context of the performance of music and dance from Darfur, the Nuba Mountains, and Eastern Sudan on Sudan TV, alongside propaganda justifying war targeting their areas. As
Ahmed, who also works in the cultural sector, said: “The Nuba dancers are pretty and with power, but at the same time you are bombing the origin place of this dance…. It’s a kind of schizophrenia.”

A number of participants focused on the cultural similarities between hegemonic and targeted figurations. Similarities in cuisine, Arabic as a lingua franca, and a shared faith in Islam were mentioned. While Sudan became less culturally diverse with the separation of the South, the cultural differences across what remains of Sudan are still astonishing. This applies to religion, as much as it does to culture. Non-Islamic African and Christian religious practices persist in the North, including amongst Muslims. Yet, many participants presented Sudanese culture as relatively uniform. This raises concern that similarities among figurations are being evoked to erase, rather than connect across, difference. It is also important to consider critically whether the similarities that do exist are due to the affinity of Sudan’s peoples, or are coerced and forced processes of Arabization and Islamization.

**Social connections.**

The participants spoke of other connections with targeted figurations, including, friendships, membership in the same Sufi religious order, and connections through marriage. For example, Tijani, a business person, said that “My father went up to [———, in South Kordofan], got married there and had a child…. Until now they come from there when someone dies.” However, when I asked if his family from Khartoum reciprocates by visiting family members in South Kordofan when someone dies, he replied, “no.” As discussed above, diversity is accommodated within riverain figurations. Inter-figurational connections, as important as marriage and blood, are actually common. Eleven of the 40 participants mentioned being connected to figurations of the peripheries through relatives. However, these connections do not seem to prevent riverain Sudanese from othering members of figurations targeted by genocide and, by extension, their own relatives. Furthermore, relationships may subordinate even as they connect. Familial relations are not egalitarian by nature. In fact, given hierarchies of age and gender within families, the opposite is more likely the case.
A mask for subordination.

Despite evidence of unequal and uni-directional relations, some of the riverain Sudanese I interviewed insisted that relations between the centre and the periphery in Sudan are egalitarian. The most ubiquitous example was reframing exploitative relations, such as slavery as benign, i.e., slaves were given equal rights and were like members of the family. This view is out of step with testimonies of those who were enslaved and their descendants, historical record, and conditions of inequality elaborated on by opposition politicians and academics (Jok, 2007; Sharkey, 1992). Participants also invoked equality by emphasizing their own rural and modest roots and insisted, that like those targeted by genocide, they are also suffering. Yet, again they conflated rural areas of the centre, such as Gezira or Northern State, with rural areas of the periphery.

Though, certainly life in Khartoum is, in many ways, more challenging than life in London or Dubai, it was incongruous to hear one wealthy and powerful person after another, like Tijani with his four-story villa, say, “We are always living in hardship” or Naim, with his luxury car, say, “We are poor.” Responding critically to this, one might ask, who is this “we”? Others living a comfortable and sometimes opulent life in Khartoum, or those who are starving in Eastern Sudan and fleeing from bombs in the Nuba Mountains? How can one sustain this belief, if it is the former; and on what grounds can one claim solidarity, if it is the latter? The rhetorical move of claiming solidarity with people of the peripheries is familiar from the discourse of Sudanese officials, who defend a range of human rights abuses and unequal allocation of government funds, whether in dialogue with UN and international humanitarian actors or through the media: “We Sudanese cannot afford to meet the needs of all our citizens.” In response, one might ask, is it that we Sudanese do not have the resources, or is it that these resources are subsidizing the standard of living we riverain Sudanese currently enjoy and so are not available to share with the peripheries?

It is important, however, not to be too cynical about these claims of connection. Two of the participants, Muneer and Mia, mentioned connecting with members of targeted figurations by trying to put themselves in their shoes. Aziz provided an example of the triumph of a sense of shared humanity in his description of the riots following John Garang’s death: “there were Southerners and Northerners being killed, but they [Northerners] still hid individuals
[Southerners], including those they had no previous relationships with." This is an example of feelings of connection translating into life-saving action. These claims of connection, while tenuous and sometimes disingenuous, may be first steps towards undoing the othering I described above. Though perhaps not enough on their own, inter-figurational connections are likely necessary for interrupting genocide.

“We are all equal”

To conclude this chapter, I relate the analysis of Sudanese figurations to sociological theories of capital and power.\textsuperscript{80} Paraphrasing Bourdieu, Thorpe (2013) writes:

Economic capital is the amount of monetary resources and property agents possess; whereas cultural capital refers to knowledge about certain types of artifacts and practices—material and ideal—as well as comprising more embodied forms, such as education. Social capital denotes the social networks within which agents are enmeshed and along whose lines valorized forms of capital flow. (p. 110)

Capital is also “interconvertible”; it can change from one form into another. Bourdieu only mentions political capital in passing, so I rely on Casey’s (2005) definition of political capital (based on Bourdieu) as “the sum of combining other types of capital for purposive political action” (p. 7) to theorize power in this realm.

\textbf{Social capital.}

According to Bourdieu, social capital is a type of power that can be used to accumulate other types of power, including economic, cultural, and political capital. Individuals accumulate social capital through establishing (and maintaining) relationships and through participating in social networks. However, one’s ability to convert social capital into other forms of capital does not simply depend upon the strength and number of relationships one has, it depends on whom the

\textsuperscript{80} Definitions and classifications of capital within social science and popular literature are contested. As such, I selected those that reflect the way participants discussed power, contribute the most analytically, and are compatible with my focus on relationality.
relationships are with and how much economic, cultural, and political capital they have. As I explained above, being part of a kinship network in Sudan allows Sudanese to benefit from the resources of other family members and requires that they contribute their own resources if asked. Furthermore, some kinship networks (or rather their members) have accumulated more capital than others. The aristocratic Mahdi family is an archetypal example. Members of the extended Mahdi family have greater social capital, through their wealthy and powerful family members, than someone who is not a Mahdi. This social capital is used by less powerful members of the Mahdi family to request economic assistance, mentorship, employment, or political favours from more powerful members. On the other hand, members of the Mahdi family have experienced a decline in their social capital vis-à-vis Darfurians. However, this is rarely a problem because Darfurians do not possess many of the resources that the Mahdis need.  

Social capital is often perceived as beneficial, not only for individuals but for communities and wider society. However, because it is relationally determined, the benefits that result may be reserved exclusively for the members of one figuration and not accessible to members of other figurations. This bounded solidarity explains why riverain Sudanese have been successful in creating common goods for the centre and have worked hard to keep them from people of the peripheries. Furthermore, Portes (1998) argues, that as resources and opportunities are passed on to the next generation in the upper classes, social capital works to increase and entrench inequality.

Social capital explains, according to Portes, how: “ethnic niches emerge when a group is able to colonize a particular sector of employment in such a way that members have privileged access to new job openings, while restricting that of outsiders” (p. 13). As Waldinger (quoted in Portes,

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81 Darfuri votes at election time are an exception. The Mahdi’s political party, the Umma Party, can no longer count on Darfuris for political support in a democratic election.

82 Unlike economic and cultural capital, social capital is intangible, “it inheres in the structure of [one’s] relationships” (Coleman, 1988, p. 98). Moreover, social capital does not work as a simple two-way exchange of assets; it can result in redistribution of other types of capital, in ways that seem altruistic and produce common goods. The selflessness with which parents transfer economic and cultural capital to their children is the most obvious example of this altruism. An example of a common good created through social capital is community safety and security. Furthermore, exchanges of social capital do not require direct relations. Simply identifying with another’s experience is a source of social capital that can lead: “wealthy members of a church to anonymously endow church schools and hospitals; members of a suppressed nationality to voluntarily join life-threatening military activities in its defence; and industrial proletarians to take part in protest marches or sympathy strikes in support of their fellows” (Portes, 1998, p. 33).
suggests, “the same social relations that enhance the ease and efficiency of economic exchanges among community members implicitly restrict outsiders” (p. 15). This is analogous to the riverain figuration’s colonization of the formal economy and institutions in Khartoum, keeping those of the peripheries out. Further consideration of social capital suggests that the strength of intra-figurational relations, in other words, the flourishing of social capital within the tightly knit kinship figurations of the centre, is neither irrelevant to nor in contradiction with the paucity of, what Putnam (2000) calls, bridging social capital (i.e., social capital created by inter-figurational relations between the centre and the peripheries).

Finally, research on social capital suggests that, “community or group participation necessarily creates demands for conformity” (Portes, 1998, p. 16). As I argue in the context of kinship groups, the abundance of social capital within the hegemonic figuration may actually prevent its members from speaking up against genocidal actions targeting the peripheries. Furthermore, genocide scholars hypothesize that the extent to which a society values deference to authority could also be a factor in understanding bystander behaviour (Staub, 1989). While this is usually interpreted as deference to political authority, in a Sudanese context it may apply to deference to social authority. As I argue at the beginning of this chapter, political structures are, in many ways, an extension of kinship structures. Deference to the wishes of the ruling elite is not just a metaphor for deference to the wishes of one’s family’s elders; for many of the participants the ruling elite are their fathers, uncles, and grandfathers.

Social capital also influences the bystander effect described by Latané and Darley (1970). One would expect that perceived pressure from the group to do nothing would be higher in a context where in-group relationships are strong and conformity is expected. While Latané and Darley describe a cultural imperative to mind your own business emerging from the social alienation that individuals experience in a modern, urbanized society, riverain Sudanese may experience a different, though analogous, cultural imperative: To mind only the business of their own social figuration.
Economic capital.

The Sudanese participants spoke of economic relations with people of the peripheries but said little about how these relations (or lack of them) affect the accumulation and distribution of economic capital (money, property, and other economic assets). Sura explained that people of the peripheries have abundant natural and human capital, in other words, resources and labour: “The Blue Nile, While Nile, Darfur, Kordofan, these were wealthy areas. But there was no development, services, education.” Many participants attributed regional underdevelopment to the lack of relations between the centre and the periphery. In Mia’s words, “they are ignored.” Naim, Abdullah, and Muneer said that they are “neglected.” Furthermore, most participants were not forthcoming about the underlying causes of disparity. When I asked, their explanations tended to be circular, i.e., there is poverty because there is no development; there is no development because there is no infrastructure or services; there is no infrastructure and services, because the government has no money; and the government has no money because the country is poor. Moreover, the participants blamed disparity on marginalization rather than exploitation. Strikingly, none of the participants, communists included, drew on dependency theory (Baran, 1957) to explain this economic disparity. John Garang, the late leader of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army, used dependency theory to argue that the elite in Sudan are colonizing the rest of the country (Natsios, 2012). Surplus capital is not reinvested in peripheral areas to purchase new means of production (raw materials as well as tools, machines, and infrastructure, among others) that generate economic activity. Rather, surplus capital is extracted from the peripheries to enrich the centre.

Many of the participants who acknowledged disparity maintained that it is unintended. It is just the way historical and economic processes unfolded, or it is a curse of geography. For example, Haroun, a politician, explained, “It’s not right to say that certain regions got development. Dams and agricultural development happened in the centre because you want to generate resources. You go to the area where you can do this easily”. However, historically Sudan supported vibrant economic centres outside of the Nile valley, most notably in Darfur. Sura called these areas “rich.” Adam spoke of the time before Sudan’s second independence: “The rural areas were more appealing than the city. People from rural areas didn’t come to the city because everything
needed was in the rural areas.” So clearly the inaccessibility and lack of development of the peripheries is by design, not only because of geography.

The representation of disparity as unintentional can be seen in the participants’ use of passive voice. “They are neglected” said Abdullah, a politician; but neglected by whom? They fail to name the responsible party. Abdelrhaman, a business person, explained that, “People here [in Khartoum] benefitted a lot from the boom years”; but who ensured that they benefited? According to Malik, a former senior civil servant, “Rural areas lack infrastructure”; but he does not mention who decided where the infrastructure was built. When the responsible subject is named, their action is described using benign terms. Naim, a business person, remarked, “Those in Khartoum [who] were in power weren’t focused on developing Sudan” (emphasis added). Daffalah similarly said: “The regime has one problem that’s hard to understand, they employed their people and forgot others” (emphasis added). Thus, the responsible party (in this case, the government) is portrayed as absent-minded rather than a genocidal. Taban and others blamed colonization of the past rather than contemporary processes: “Southern Sudan was closed to the North and wasn’t allowed to develop. When Sudan declared independence, such a discrepancy, the contrast was too much. No railway, no roads.”

However, few participants acknowledged that the status quo persists because it is perpetuated in the here and now, and that they themselves play a role in its perpetuation. When it comes to determining responsibility, we readily attribute an action to an intention. A lack of action or continuing with business as usual is easily dismissed as unintentional. This gives the impression that the problem of disparity is inevitable, intractable, or nothing can be expected to change under the current regime. We have to wait for the revolution; and, until then, there is nothing we can do, as Aziz said, “We are not free to do what we want.”

**Cultural capital.**

Speaking of cultural capital, Babiker, a university administrator commented, “Education is a means of inequality unfortunately.” Participants spoke of Western education reaching riverain Sudanese earlier, giving them a head start; and other figurations have been unable to catch up. The British colonial public schools, established at the dawn of the twentieth century, were
initially attended only by children from the riverain centre, because the schools were built in their area. Members of the hegemonic riverain figuration converted their education, a form of cultural capital, into social, political, and economic capital, which they, in turn, reinvested in education. They advocated with the colonial administration and then the Sudanese government to build more and better public schools in their areas for their children.

In the 1970s, access to public education finally expanded. However, as groups from the peripheries started entering the public-school system, the riverain elite moved their children into the private system. With their children no longer benefiting from the common good, the riverain elite no longer had an interest in contributing to it. Spending on public education was reduced from between 30%–50% of the GDP in the 1970s and early 1980s, to only 2% of the GDP in 2009 (World Bank, 2015). Of course, the quality declined. The educational experiences of participants from different generations demonstrate the result of this perceived deterioration in quality, with an increased demand for private education and education abroad. While participants from the oldest generation, except for their advanced degrees, had been educated in the public system in Sudan, starting out at traditional Islamic *khalwi* schools, most participants from younger generations attended private schools and often foreign universities from the undergraduate level.

Certainly, formal Western education is not the only form of cultural capital with value in Sudan. *Khalwa* have been accessible across much of Northern Sudan for hundreds of years. Furthermore, there are local mediums for acculturation. However, with the advent of Islam, the Arabic language and literacy became increasingly valued. In addition, with the establishment of a colonial administration and the proliferation of global capitalism, Arabic, English, and a Western formal education purchased more economic, political, and social capital than Indigenous knowledges. That being said, the combination of both colonial and Indigenous knowledges, a combination more likely to be possessed by Sudanese of the older generation, is seen as valuable.

While many of the participants focused on the way education facilitates the accumulation of capital; significantly, they said little about the way education destroys cultural capital, how it makes people ashamed of their traditional ways of being and knowing, and how this can weaken
and even destroy cultural figurations. Participants described colonial processes that alienated riverain Sudanese from their culture but said little about processes of Islamization and Arabization that targeted the peripheries prior to colonialism and continue to the present day. Attempts to forcibly assimilate Nuba in the 1990s are an example of the explicit deployment of education as a weapon of genocide. Yet, none of the participants mentioned this.

**Political capital.**

As I explained above, “The Black Book” (2004) shows that since independence, people who were originally from the Northern Region of Sudan have monopolized the presidency and senior political appointments. Before “The Black Book” was released, everyone knew this; but few riverain Sudanese would admit to it. Thirteen years later, most acknowledge the lack of political power sharing. Even those who have been at the very centre of political power, in other words those responsible for this exclusion, admit it. They acknowledge that communities of the peripheries are disenfranchised and voiceless: “I think the government doesn’t care about them because most can’t reach or talk in a loud voice,” said Omnia, an activist. According to Emira, a journalist, the media is part of this, “The sort of news coverage on our show is about government activities. They don’t deal with problems in the regions.” The participants talked about insufficient political representation, but they also mentioned that representatives of the peripheries are disempowered: “They dismantled local structures, it was social engineering actually to make sure that gave the chance for new tribal powers to ally with the government,” said Talib, a journalist.

However, amongst some of the participants, a paternalistic attitude is betrayed by the political roles they envision for other figurations: The centre provides benign leaders, the peripheries political constituents. Well, not always benign leaders, as this story narrated by Mahmoud, an

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83 However, as I have mentioned, non-hegemonic cultural capital is not without value. The culture of figurations targeted by genocide has currency. Nuba organize wrestling tournaments in Khartoum; *zar* rituals embrace African forms and content; Sudan TV and National Congress Party rallies feature singing and dancing from all areas of the country; and one of the country’s most popular singers, Abd el Gadir Salim, is from the Nuba Mountains and has popularized traditional songs of the West. Moreover, despite the sustained and often brutal Islamization policy of the Al-Ingaz (salvation) regime, which viewed most forms of cultural expression, especially traditional forms, as heretical, Sudanese culture from areas targeted by genocide is in demand.
academic (with an interjection at the end from a colleague of his who sat in on the interview) demonstrates:

Mahmoud: I was a student union leader at University of Khartoum and wanted to make a road map for revolution against Nimeiry. I heard about the famine [in Darfur]. We went to Geneina [in West Darfur] in 1972. There we found a lot of people coming from Chad and dying in front of our eyes. They were looking at us and thinking, “You will do something for us? But you won’t.” We took pictures, [because] they haven’t the energy to make the trip to Khartoum. We returned to Khartoum and met with students of Darfur [at the University of Khartoum] and said we have to make a demonstration. This was orchestrated by us, the Shabab [youth] Revolution.

Me: So, this is a great example of solidarity between those of a political movement in Khartoum and those of Darfur. Why isn’t this happening now?

Mahmoud’s colleague: (laughing) He [Mahmoud] used them [the people of Darfur]! They were not working together! He used them!

On a larger scale, both the Umma party and the National Islamic Front have been accused of using people from the peripheries. Other tactics employed have included “divide and rule”:

“There were tussles between the settled and the nomads,” said Faisal. “They ran elections through the tribes [so they would compete amongst themselves]. It sharpened the crisis more than any time before,” he continued. Participants also talked about the deceit of politicians of the hegemonic figuration. I asked Ahmed to describe how the government relates to people of the peripheries: “Makira [sly]. Sitting on a table and gambling with others, being nice, sometimes not nice.” Babiker adds:

We’ve been with this regime for 26 years, lying from day one, and still they [the people] believe. It’s still working. It’s a tactic to buy support. These ways of relating are all characteristic of a colonial form of governance.

It is also important to consider political power in the context of inter-figurational relations. Arendt (1966) argues that even when genocide occurs in totalitarian societies, genocidal regimes appeal to populist sentiments and remain sensitive to popular opinion. Along these lines, Babiker explained that:
The problem of Sudan is the Sudanese, not the government. We had real democracy at a number of different times. Whether you say people are blindly following or being deceived this is the will of the people. We tasted government with rule of law and rule of lawlessness. All dictatorship and democracy we tasted, and so something is wrong with the people.

Babiker’s analysis suggests that riverain Sudanese are standing by and doing nothing because they, on some level at least, support the genocidal path their government has taken. In other words, they are implicated.

**Violence.**

The discussion of power has, to this point, omitted its most obvious manifestation, physical violence. It is said that the Sudanese government restricts its use of violence to the peripheries; and, indeed, the majority of participants spoke of violence in this context. In fact, this pattern has historical roots. During the time of slavery, a distinction was made between *dar al hab* (land of war), the lands where slaves were raided from in the South; and *dar as-salam* (land of peace), the Muslim dominated parts of the north.

However, riverain Sudanese are not unaffected by violence. It connects Sudanese figurations in complex and important ways. At various times, people of the peripheries initiated armed rebellions to protest the unequal distribution of capital, described above. But, rather than addressing these grievances, the riverain dominated government has responded with violence. There is, of course, exhaustive literature on how violence has affected figurations of the peripheries, some of which is discussed in Chapter 3. Yet, participants also identified ways in which armed conflict has affected their relationship with people in other parts of the country and within the riverain figuration itself.

The inter-figurational violence has been polarizing, as I explained above in my discussion of othering. War has diverted resources from economic development and social services: “All of Sudan is underdeveloped because of the war going on,” said Hawa, a politician. It has encouraged an authoritarian political climate, driven by security and military actors: “The voice
of economists goes up when there is no war, and politicians listen and do what is recommended…. When suddenly war or security problems happen, then their attention is shifted. We do not have their attention,” said Malik, a former senior civil servant.

Young men of the centre have also been sent to fight these wars in the peripheries, often against their will. However, the middle class and the poor have disproportionately served in the military, and the result has often been that people of the peripheries fight each other. Darfurians are said to be disproportionately represented in the military; and since the 1980s, the government has recruited militias from the peripheries, mostly from “Arab” tribes, to wage “counter-insurgency on the cheap” (de Waal & Conley-Zilck, 2006). War has also kept riverain Sudanese from visiting the peripheries and displaced hundreds of thousands of people from war affected areas to the centre.

War in the peripheries has also created fear in centre, fear that war will spread to Khartoum, and fear that people of the peripheries will seek revenge. Sadeeg, a humanitarian worker and former journalist, spoke of this fear:

There was this fear of this infection, as if they fear to speak of war because of the fear it will move to their area. My fear is that the place I’m living in, my willingness that this place will be safe. The fear that we will have the same sad story of war in the centre…. Even if we show solidarity with them [Darfurians], there is a fear that they will come tomorrow and say that we created their suffering.

The fear of crime in the centre, and the belief that it is growing, is a corollary of this, though al Tom, who works in the cultural sector and as a journalist reporting on these issues, pointed out that crime mostly affects the poorest of the poor in Khartoum, most of whom are from the peripheries, not the elite whom I interviewed.

A further concern that participants expressed, about the violence in the peripheries contaminating the centre, is the increasingly violent way in which the state is dealing with riverain Sudanese who resist. Staub (2010) writes that those perpetrating genocide are intolerant of opposition to their genocidal plans, even by members of their own group. Indeed, steps taken by riverain Sudanese to speak up for those of the peripheries have been met with violence. Riverain Sudanese are proud of their history of non-violent intifada (popular uprisings), which in 1964
and 1985 overthrew military regimes. The perception has been, paraphrasing one of the participants, that the police in Khartoum use rubber bullets and tear gas against protesters, while in the peripheries they use live ammunition.

In part, in response to the perceived vulnerability of young men, young riverain women are leading and participating in direct action in larger numbers. However, legally sanctioned floggings and the treatment of female activists in detention, including sexual assault, show they are increasingly vulnerable. Riverain Sudanese opposition is certainly subject to detention, torture, disappearances, and execution (judicial and extra-judicial). However, a similar disparity is noted in the severity of this type of violence against dissidents of the centre versus those of the peripheries. The experience of two political alliances, the National Democratic Alliance in the 1980s and 1990s, and Sudan Call more recently, suggest that the shared experience of being targeted by government violence can bring the political opposition of the centre and the peripheries together.

**Connecting with the Literature**

The findings in this chapter engage with a number of aspects of the genocide literature and question some accepted conventions. The findings challenge the idea that, “Bipolar societies are the most likely to have genocide” (Stanton, 1998). In fact, my research suggests that denying tribal and racial differences altogether can contribute not to coexistence but to standing by and doing nothing, when peoples of the peripheries are targeted. The idea that denial of race perpetuates racism has been explored in Critical Race Theory (Halewood, 2009; Warmington, 2009). The fact that genocide studies do not draw on this literature is problematic.

Even when they admitted that there are differences among Sudanese, the participants did not essentialize difference as the genocide literature or the literature on the sociology of stereotyping suggests (Hall, 1997). They do not perceive difference as inherent to the other, or unchanging. Though the data indicates that Sudanese racism reflects elements of a European ideology of essentialized racial difference; it is grounded in local theories of human difference that are far more dynamic, flexible, and relational. Paradigmatically, many riverain Sudanese described
themselves as hybrids, a concept that, in and of itself, challenges the idea of discrete categories. Contrary to Bauman’s (1989) supposition that genocide frames those of the targeted figuration as a “certain category of human beings [that] cannot be incorporated into the rational order, whatever the effort” (p. 65); in Sudan processes of genocide coexist with processes of incorporation, though these are often for the purpose of exploitation, most paradigmatically in incorporation as slaves/domestic workers and slaves/manual labourers. Elimination can be the punishment for failing to cooperate in one’s exploitation. The participants’ views on the category of tribe, similarly reveals how discourses of colonization and local theories are entwined with processes of genocide in Sudan. While this research suggests that essentializing may not preclude other types of othering, and may not be necessary for genocide, it is important to concede that the participants were likely careful to avoid portraying themselves as racist.

The findings diverge from the genocide literature in a number of ways; however, the finding that strong relationships among the hegemonic figuration contribute to weak obligations towards targeted figurations is in line with social psychology group identity theories that the field draws on (Edgren, 2012; Kahn, 2009; Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002; Staub 1989). The finding about the norming of the hegemonic figuration and the corresponding othering of the targeted figurations similarly conforms to the literature. However, the concurrence of othering with moves to connect with people of the targeted figurations reflects the coexistence of processes of incorporation and elimination. These paradoxes explain and are explained (at least in part) by a pervasive culture of denial. In many theories of genocide, Stanton’s (1998) in particular, denial of genocide is described as a stage that follows extermination. In a protracted and episodic type of genocide like Sudan’s, denial is omnipresent.

**Conclusions**

In this chapter, I argue that kinship is important in shaping Sudanese figurations, but this concept is flexible; expediency defines whom one claims as family. Family relations divide and connect figurations, and families condition how riverain Sudanese react to genocide. Capital is accumulated by, distributed, and redistributed through kinship networks, rather than the state; and formal institutions mirror these networks. Through these processes, capital has become more
concentrated in the elite families of the centre. The very strong relationships of members of the hegemonic riverain figuration practically create the very weak obligations they have towards members of targeted figurations.

Kinship networks are tribal, and the concept of tribe contributes more than that of ethnicity to understanding the colonial dynamics at the centre of this study. Yet, the riverain participants denied both and were ambivalent about the importance of tribe. For some, belonging to a tribe runs contrary to their self-image as modern. They presented their figurations as normative, themselves as detribalized colonizers, and those of the peripheries as the tribal colonized. They may have resisted acknowledging that exploitation occurs along tribal lines because consciousness of this leads to resistance.

Geographic separation is important to standing by, but even when physical space is shared, people of the peripheries can still be othered. Social distancing leads to lack of empathy for the concerns of the other as well as lack of knowledge of their experiences. Conflicting views of the importance and the meaning of race has a significant impact on both intra and inter-figurational relations in Sudan. All figurations of the peripheries tend to be painted with the same brush, despite their diversity. Stereotyping, in turn, facilitates polarization, and the extent of this polarization facilitates blaming those of the peripheries for their own disadvantage, indeed for the problems of the country as a whole. Though the violent conflict between the centre and the peripheries was not often discussed, fear of the other was a preoccupation of some the participants.

Figurations from different parts of Sudan have formed alliances at various times in history, but these have eroded and recent attempts by institutions to revive the connections have failed. Political and educational institutions have attempted to facilitate inter-figurational relations; however people of the peripheries are still denied political leadership opportunities, and segregation among students from different regions is the norm. Riverain Sudanese travel to the peripheries for work, but mostly just to visit; and inter-figurational relations in the workplaces of the centre are characterized by power differences. Both the lack of economic interdependency and presence of exploitation contribute to inter-figurational conflict.
The cultural practices of the peripheries have influenced the centre and are the shared inheritance of all Sudanese. Though some riverain Sudanese work to conserve cultural practices and artifacts, they may stand by to the genocide of those who created it. Others evoke similarities among figurations to erase, rather than connect across difference and reframe unequal and unidirectional relations with the peripheries as egalitarian. While some claims of solidarity seem disingenuous, it is hard to fault the attempts of a few of the participants at perspective taking and appealing to a sense of shared humanity with people of the peripheries.

The abundance of bounded solidarity and the paucity of bridging social capital explains why riverain Sudanese create common goods for those in centre, while keeping them from those of the peripheries. The social capital within the hegemonic figuration also restrains its members from speaking out about the genocidal actions of in-group members. The participants represent economic disparity as non-exploitive, the result of negligence rather than intentional action, a curse of geography, a crime without a perpetrator, the legacy of historical injustice, and something they can do nothing about. They acknowledge that the cultural capital of education has been a means of inequality; yet they say little about the way education destroys the cultural capital of figurations of the peripheries. Most participants acknowledged the lack of political power sharing and the ways in which political representatives of the peripheries have been disempowered. Yet, in the end, they are more comfortable with the centre leading and the peripheries following. It is also important to concede that, despite living under an authoritarian government, riverain Sudanese still have political capital, and they could use this to dissuade the government from genocide. Violence is, of course, omnipresent in these relations. While it is predominantly directed at those of the peripheries, it can be used to dissuade those of the centre from acting.
Chapter 6
The Habitus of Riverain Sudanese

“The opposite of love isn’t hate, it’s apathy.” (Le Carré, 1968, p.50)

In Chapter 4, I positioned different figurations in Sudan in space; and in Chapter 5, I explored how members of the hegemonic figuration relate to each other and to members of targeted figurations. In this chapter, I deal directly with (in)action or, to use relational language, the interaction of standing by and doing nothing. On the one hand, these chapters move from the macro level to the micro level; on the other hand, they explore exactly the same thing — power laden relational networks — from different perspectives. For example, the interactions I explore in this chapter create the relationships I wrote about in Chapter 5.

My working assumption at the outset of this research was that riverain Sudanese are standing by and doing nothing about genocide in Sudan. The participants concurred. In line with Bourdieu (1990), they described the dispositions and tendencies of the riverain Sudanese figuration that organize their perceptions of targeted figurations and their failure to intervene to stop genocidal processes. In this chapter, after discussing the participants’ perceptions of the (in)actions of members of their figuration, I share what they said about the habitus of standing by to genocide. I begin by describing the ability of riverain Sudanese to act, move on to discuss their knowledge of the targeted figurations and the impact of genocide on them, then outline how they feel about people of the peripheries and their relationships with them; and end by exploring what motivates riverain Sudanese to stand by or stand up.

(In)action

My working assumption that members of the riverain figuration in Sudan stand by to genocide targeting people of the peripheries is based on four and a half years of living in Sudan; a review of the literature on challenges the country faces and of genocide studies research (Staub, 2010); and consultations with academics and activists from figurations targeted by genocide. I do not
assume that all members of this figuration are doing nothing to interrupt processes of genocide all of the time. Rather, I suspect that the lack of action by many, most of the time, may be important. As I explained in Chapter 3, I aim to understand the relationships within which doing nothing is realized, rather than simply labeling certain people or groups bystanders.

Knowing firsthand the difficulties of working on issues related to genocide in Sudan, I was prepared for the research participants to disagree with my working assumption, or to tell me that, given the circumstances, they and their peers are doing as much as they can. However, when I asked them, “What are Sudanese doing or not doing to address the problems you’ve described in this relationship [between those in Khartoum and areas outside]?” most of the participants acknowledged that, as individuals, organizations, and sectors, riverain Sudanese are standing by and doing nothing:

“Me myself, [working in the cultural sector] I am not [doing anything].” (Ahmed)

“But civil society is not reaching out.” (Aziz)

“The Communists have nice analysis without solutions.” (Farouq)

“They [youth organizations] are not doing anything…. They aren’t focusing and don’t want to focus on Darfur…. Darfur isn’t even one of the issues. So, for them it’s totally outside of the box of their things. (Zaid)

“If I received one [a video about atrocities in Darfur] I wouldn’t share it on social media.” (Gareebullah)

“I think they [our grandchildren] will feel shame. The media didn’t fill the role they should have, a role in raising awareness, a role in advising government and civil society.”(Talib)

“(What would you like to be doing?) Contributing in some way. (Again, why do you say that when you are doing work on these issues as a humanitarian worker?) I get a salary
for it. I don’t know if this sounds weird. I’m not responding to voices of people, not necessarily. It’s not people telling me to do that, it’s donor agreements.” (Tahani)

“The Sudanese business community didn’t get involved [in speaking against the crisis in Darfur].” (Naim)

Staub (1989) claims that bystanders are unlikely to self identify, except perhaps by what they are not (i.e., perpetrators of genocide); yet, some of the participants are acutely aware and freely acknowledge the role they play in genocide. For example, Emira, a journalist, said: “Of course you feel so much involved, you are so depressed. Sometimes you feel part of this, you are a witness, this you keep.”

As habitus, standing by includes not only the failure to act, but going about business as usual and acting in a way that sustains an unjust status quo. Barnett (1999) writes about the Holocaust that: “The illusion of ‘normalcy’ was crucial to ensuring that bystanders not question their own passivity” (p. 28). As I described in Chapter 3, many techniques of genocide employed in Sudan have been normalized, from the physical atrocities that have been committed in the context of perpetual armed conflict, to the eradication of languages that is tacitly endorsed by international agencies that provide funding to Sudan’s Arabic-only education system. The colonial nature of genocide contributes to this normalization. Malik, a former civil servant, described the preservation of the status quo: “Beginning since the time of the British, development programs were concentrated in specific areas… Subsequent governments maintained the status quo. There was no intentional, clear policy of departing from this.”

In addition to concentrating development and resources in the centre and maintaining a colonial approach to governance, actions that perpetuate business as usual mentioned by participants include, disseminating government propaganda (if no one knows about genocidal acts, then no one feels outraged and moved to push for change); discriminatory hiring practices (with the same type of people in place, the same decisions are made); and migrating out of Sudan (if one remained, there may not be a choice but to push for change). Areas of inaction include, failure to build relationships; to engage the peripheries economically; to raise awareness and educate others; and to address governance problems. Echoing the previous chapter, participants went
beyond simply saying that more relationships and greater intimacy are needed; they spoke of the need for knowledge, institutionalization, and democracy in their relations with members of targeted figurations. They also recommended that riverain Sudanese start acting as allies to people of the peripheries. Some participants mentioned that people of the centre should make efforts to visit the regions targeted by genocide, and others said that more intermarriage is necessary.

Economic inaction included not investing in and developing the peripheries. Educational inaction ranged from not teaching and learning about the history, culture, current events, and everyday lives of people from all parts of Sudan, to not educating others to end racial discrimination. Most of the participants felt that educational, cultural, and media institutions are simply not doing their jobs. The journalists I interviewed bemoaned the lack of coverage of stories outside of Khartoum and the lack of analysis of the relationship between the centre and the periphery. Of all professional groups I interviewed, journalists were the most likely to speak of the denial of genocide as a problem.

Inaction in relation to governance was identified by close to half of the participants. They noted that members of the hegemonic figuration are not voting, advocating, making political institutions more representative, protesting, or overthrowing the government (which they did in 1964 and 1983). They did not speak up about the government’s development, infrastructure, or aid policies, nor are they advocating for peace in the peripheries. Finally, a significant minority of participants expressed concern about a pervasive culture of talk without action among members of the hegemonic figuration: “In the past, for years people got used to talk without doing things; [they are] becoming politicians. They are discussing issues but not doing.” said Safia. Speaking against “racism is just a hashtag,” Zaid told me; “but believe me it’s not affected what’s going on. It’s just speeches, but not real.”

The participants agreed that standing by and doing nothing is a pervasive problem, yet they could still provide examples of when they and others had stood up in some of the areas mentioned above. To reiterate, although standing by is significant in the Sudanese context, this does not mean that some people are not standing up some of the time. With regard to addressing discrimination, the participants noted (not always with approval) measures of affirmative action,
as well as increased opportunities within the civil service for people from the peripheries to stay and work in their home areas due to government decentralization. It is notable, though, that these government policies were adopted in response to intense pressure from people of the peripheries, specifically in the context of peace negotiations, and not as a result of advocacy on their behalf by the hegemonic figuration. In terms of actions to address governance problems, most of what the participants reported was achieved by actors outside the government, suggesting that the government is not proactive nor open to reform on these issues. In the economic sphere, business leaders mentioned business interests that their fathers or grandfathers had in areas like Darfur; their distribution networks that access different parts of the country; and a small number of entrepreneurs who are currently undertaking high risk and innovative business ventures far from Khartoum (though usually not in the real peripheries). In the area of education, the participants focused on what individuals have done or on individual projects (often dependent upon foreign funding), rather than on systemic or institutionalized actions. The efforts of participants in the cultural sector, who are independent of foreign funding (not to mention innovative) and work collectively, are an exception. Technology, especially social media, was mentioned as facilitating this type of educational work. The educational examples that the participants shared are external to formal institutions and include identifying books (especially) and forms of media by and about Sudanese and peer-education in the context of inter-personal relationships. Tahani, a humanitarian worker, provides an example of the latter:

I remember in a [conflict affected town in the peripheries] having a colleague from Khartoum. It’s not a conservative area. There is alcohol, intermarriage [between Muslim women and non-Muslim men], how they practice religion. This colleague said to me “Wow these guys have a long way to go”; and I said, “It’s the other way.” We started discussing some of his understandings and belief systems.

One particularly inspiring example of action to interrupt processes of genocide was given by a very young lawyer, Zaid, who is also involved in a charity. Zaid had agreed to take on a very sensitive and complex case, pro bono, to defend the rights of people from the peripheries, living in Khartoum, against government actions. None of the experienced lawyers in his firm were interested. He was not paid for his time on the case and because of its sensitivity, the case was kept secret, so there was no possible benefit to his reputation. Zaid knew little about the situation outside of Khartoum, and why there is war in many parts of the country; but he knew a few
Darfurians and was concerned about racism. Zaid also stood up (unsuccessfully) when his boss refused to hire Zaid’s law school classmate because he is Darfurian. When I ask Zaid why he took on the pro bono case, he was confused by my question and answered simply, “because they [the government] are doing something illegal.” Zaid’s story illustrates that habitus conditions, but does not determine, one’s interaction. There is scope for ethical and altruistic action, and sometimes relatively little needs to be in place for someone to decide to stand up.

**Ability**

While acting according to habitus is reflexive, acting in contravention of it undoubtedly requires a consciousness of agency and an evaluation of whether or not one’s actions are likely to be effective in interrupting genocidal processes. The immediate reaction of most of the participants to the idea of contravening habitus was that it is simply not possible. In fact, close to half of the participants spoke of the various reasons that they and their peers are unable to act. Less than a quarter of the participants talked about having the ability to act.

A large minority of the participants spoke of being too overwhelmed with other responsibilities or struggles to stand up for peoples targeted by genocide. Reflecting on his own experiences in politics at the highest level, Abdullah said that:

> There is a lot that I could have done and didn’t. I was so busy and entangled with problems of [political] survival at the centre. It’s like we are people in one ship. Someone took control and locked the doors and so we forgot about other parts of the ship. We were so focused on the guy who has taken control of the ship [presumably President al-Bashir], we don’t think about the rest. This conveys the general meaning. Right now, we are so busy with this National Dialogue that may be irrelevant to those of the peripheries.

While some explained their inaction as due to getting caught up in the responsibilities of day-to-day life, it would be inaccurate to characterize all of the competing preoccupations as self-centred. If one considers the extent and diversity of grievances in all parts of Sudan, it is difficult not to have sympathy for riverain Sudanese, who feel overwhelmed and do not know where to start in trying to solve the country’s problems. Anyone I know who has had anything to do with
Sudan has had similar feelings. It is argued that the violence in Darfur became genocidal, in part, because the Sudanese government (and others) were preoccupied with negotiations to end the Second Sudanese Civil War (Prunier, 2005). Furthermore, the feeling of being overwhelmed is not simply the result of competing responsibilities; it is about feeling unequipped to tackle such large and complicated problems. “I feel idle,” said Mia, a former humanitarian worker. “It’s too big for me to do anything about it.” Linked to this is the participants’ claim that they do not act because, in Taban’s words, “Nobody knows what to do.” These are the words of one of the most powerful and, purportedly, astute politicians in the country. Participants mentioned lack of capacity, as well as “intellectual laziness” (particularly amongst politicians); ineffectiveness (especially among civil society); and lack of power to influence the oppressive regime as reasons for not acting. However, some participants (notably the business leaders I spoke with) acknowledged that they have influence, and yet have chosen not to use it. Speaking to this inaction, Abdulrahman, a businessman, said, “They [his peers] think like us, don’t recognize that they are influential.”

The extent of these problems not only deters members of the riverain Sudanese’s figuration from taking dramatic actions, it deters them from taking manageable, low risk, and possibly highly effective actions. Relational analysis shows that — because we are networked together; and power is multi-dimensional, distributed, and mobile across that network — a localized action, even by a relatively powerless individual, can trigger dramatic transformation when it is done in the right place, at the right time (Kasper, 2013). A popular contemporary example is the Arab Spring that was triggered by Tunisian, Mohamed Bouazizi, an unemployed petty trader, who tragically doused himself with fuel and lit himself on fire.

Academics in Sudan are able to speak publicly and write critically about the government (I, for one, have been allowed to do this research). There is a certain tolerance for direct action in Khartoum, as Sara noted, “the Blue Nile guard84 […] they’re not going to get shot in the streets,” if they demonstrate. Yet, on matters related to the peripheries, relatively little is said or done. Moreover, if one applies the argument that colonial genocides are more society-led than government-led (Levene, 2005; Palmer, 1998), then riverain Sudanese’s silence about their

84 She’s referring to riverain Sudanese.
government’s genocidal actions appears more like support for genocide. In other words, the complicity of riverain Sudanese may be much deeper than the word bystander generally connotes.

As discussed in Chapter 5, many of the participants identified the lack of relationships between the riverain and targeted figurations as an underlying cause of the problems their country faces. Yet, even some of the most politically critical and engaged among the participants admitted that they have very few friends or collaborators from groups targeted by genocide. My analysis of genocidal relations suggests that a lot could be accomplished in Sudan through interpersonal dialogue on issues of racism and processes of internal colonialism. This could be carried out with no funding and, if done informally, without attracting the attention of the security sector. However, the participants seem almost paralyzed when it comes to reaching out beyond their own figuration. To illustrate, Wessam, a committed activist who writes on these issues, stopped me in the middle of our interview and said, “Rochelle, you’ve worked and lived with Darfurians. Tell me, what do they really think of us?” My response was, “maybe you need to ask them.”

However, I do not want to be dismissive of Wessam’s incapacity. I have myself experienced the same fear and paralysis in reaching out to and forming relationships with Indigenous peoples in Canada. I still agonize about bringing up certain issues in conversation with my Indigenous friends and colleagues. Yet, I was surprised, given all of the challenges in Sudan, that this incapacity still appears to be so important. The participant interviews left me wondering whether the fear riverain Sudanese have of facing their countrymates of the peripheries is greater than their fear of the current regime, reportedly one of the most oppressive in the world (Freedom House, 2017). I wonder if habitus may be more powerful than the tools wielded by an authoritarian state.

Knowledge

“When the truth is replaced by silence, the silence is a lie.” (Soviet dissident poet, Yevtushenko)
When I began this research, I viewed knowledge as separate from action, and less important and less powerful. While as an educator I can attest that “knowledge is power,” the activist in me believed that “talk is cheap.” However, adopting a relational perspective has challenged this view. Knowledge and our utterances, whether directly through speech or through other media, is interaction. With a nod to Paolo Freire (1970), knowledge is not a thing that is deposited in your mind, like money in a bank; it connects you to others, it connects you with the world. Tahani’s statement about listening exemplifies this:

It’s an issue of listening to others. Like now these debates between people of colour and white people [in the US]. Them not listening and acknowledging experiences. I cannot imagine years of being ignored, not being accepted, ridiculed for your culture and language by the whole community. Your society and feelings never acknowledged, never brought to light.

Furthermore, knowledge is not separate from action at all. Writing on bystanding, Verdeja (2012) argues “speech is itself a form of action…especially because genocide depends upon codes of silence” (p. 160). Our most deeply held knowledge is that which is inculcated through experience, though our doing and having things done to us. Thus, the themes about knowledge that the participants raised — ignorance, silence, avoiding information, and denial — reflect how disconnected they are from members of figurations targeted by genocide.

**Ignorance.**

A prominent theme in the literature on bystanding, with particular relevance to the Sudanese situation, is lack of awareness that genocidal violence is being perpetrated (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012). This bears upon the complicity of those standing by: How can you be held responsible for genocide, if you have no idea that it is going on? In most states where colonial genocides have occurred or are taking place, very few individuals and virtually no institutions acknowledge them; thus, lack of awareness is profoundly important. A number of participants shared experiences of being confronted by their ignorance; for example, Abdullah said that:

One of the facts that was shocking to me going to the South [of Sudan] and negotiating [on behalf of the government] with the South and being an intellectual as I am, is that I
knew very little about the South before going there, and despite this, I stood out as an expert. The intellectual community didn’t bother about the South.

Yet, I sensed no shame about their ignorance; at most, they were mildly embarrassed.

When most of the participants spoke of the peripheries, there was a generalness, a lack of detail in their knowledge, as though they were speaking about a different country. This applied to what they knew about conflicts in the peripheries, the situation generally outside of Khartoum, the history of the country, government administration, and government/private sector engagement as it pertains to the peripheries. While crude information — a report that hundreds of civilians were killed or a single eye witness account — may be enough to motivate action to stop a mass slaughter, throwing light on disparity in development spending requires careful and sustained collection, and responsible analysis of information. Certainly, genocide in Sudan includes the former types of actions, but arguably more suffering has been caused by the latter.

**Misinformation and disinformation.**

This ignorance is not just the lack of information, but mis- and dis-information. Perpetrators of genocide and their supporters may take measures to ensure that the general public is confused and misinformed about genocidal processes. They may disseminate propaganda or “spin” information that does leak out about genocidal acts (Staub, 1989). Tahini, a humanitarian worker, discussed propaganda during the war in the Nuba Mountains in the 1990s:

[The war] was reported positively [in the media], as though it was for their protection. Men were being drafted. There was propaganda, a weekly Friday show with [Hassan el] Turabi [the ideological leader of the regime]. Vulgar propaganda. This was not a simple war of bad and good. You know there is a cause there because there is the propaganda.

Tahini went on to explain that due to lack of relations between figurations and lack of communication, people have false ideas about others in different parts of the country. There was disagreement amongst the participants about the effectiveness of propaganda, whether it is effective only against people with less education, with riverain Sudanese, with government supporters, or when confirming the stereotypes people already hold. Gareeballah, who is popular
on social media, believes that propaganda succeeds not in convincing people of the government’s version of events, but in causing people to doubt the truth, which in his case was the version of events he heard on international media. “How do you know what to believe?” I asked him. “You don’t,” he responded, “unless you are there.”

Silence.

The genocide studies literature on bystanding suggests that codes of silence mean that those standing by may never hear of the atrocities that are committed in their name (Barnett, 1999; Bauman, 1989; Kahn, 2012; Staub, 1989). Furthermore, they themselves may protect those perpetrating genocide and, by extension, themselves by consciously or unconsciously hiding genocidal acts (Barnett, 1999). When I introduced my research topic to Abdullah, a politician, before I had a chance to start asking my research questions, he said to me:

I remember when I first went to the South, Francis Deng, you know of him? He suggested that we need to pay attention to what’s not said versus what is said. We don’t say things about what embarrasses us. The job of the peacemaker is to try and understand what is not said. There are good reasons for doing things and then there are real reasons. The question is why people don’t speak, why is it embarrassing?

Looking at Sudan and Canada side-by-side, and factoring in my own perspective and those of my Guidance Circle members, has illuminated some of these silences. Not speaking, results in not knowing. One of the first questions in my interviews is, “How did you come to know of Darfurians and Darfur?” and the answer Abdulrahman, a business person, gave as did many others was, “I didn’t.” The participants talked about silences in their family, silences amongst their friends, silences in school, silences from the government, and silences in the media because of censorship. I also heard from participants who created these silences, in particular, journalists like Emira: “We had a huge amount of information we couldn’t broadcast in Sudan.” On the other hand, many of the politicians I spoke with were silent about being silent.

85 Francis Deng, is a prominent diplomat from the South, who has held high level appointments in the government of Sudan and the United Nations.
The media, but especially the educational curriculum, since the current regime took power in 1989, has been politically contested. The regime has attempted to perpetuate their version of the story of Sudan and the Sudanese. Yet, because of logical inconsistencies in this story, or because educators disagree with the official line, very little is taught in schools or universities about Sudanese history and contemporary politics: “We were not taught about Sudan. We were taught some theory and then some case studies of projects [outside of Sudan].”

Some of the participants did try to speak up. I heard about the consequences of not keeping silent from editors who had their newspaper runs seized, members of civil society who were intimidated, and worse, and from scientists, like Safia, who told me about her experience:

For example, an environmental assessment for ——— that I was part of. We were doing the community consultations, and the government was upset that we told them [the community] about the [project]. But we have to tell them! We were criticized for talking about this, also [talking about it] in the newspaper and TV. They [the government] said, “They [the community] will say this land belongs to us.”

While many identified keeping silent as a problem, I was surprised that some advocates of speaking up still felt it was better to keep quiet about certain issues, and not only the ones you would expect, such as criticism of the President and the word genocide. But slavery appeared to be an issue. When I told Gareeballah, a young person active on social media, that “Some have suggested to me that it’s better for the younger generation not to have a memory of slavery, for it not to be talked about,” he responded, “I kind of agree […] Talking about it won’t heal things.”

Gareeballah’s response, and the zeal with which former opposition leaders undertake censorship when they achieve power (e.g., the Sudan People’s Liberation Army after the separation of the South), suggests that the practice of silence is endemic. In fact, Heather Sharkey’s (1999) historical overview of journalism in Sudan demonstrates that censorship and government control are more central to the practice of journalism in Sudan than many other practices that are often held up as definitive of the sector.
Avoiding.

Despite official and unofficial attempts to stop people from knowing about genocide in the peripheries, information can and does filter out. Yet, access to this information does not inevitably lead to improved knowledge. Writing about genocide, generally, Staub (1989) and Verdeja (2012) argue that information about genocidal acts may be available to those standing by; however, they avoid accessing it, in other words, they look away. Two-thirds of the participants discussed how, even when it is available, information is ignored: “I don’t agree that people don’t know about this. A lot of people are going around the country getting information,” said Aziz, a civil society activist. And Hawa, a politician noted that: “Now with developments in the media, TV, phones, they are all exposed to the world outside.” In the mid 2000s, the international media outlets consistently carried messages about genocide in Darfur. Even without modern information technology, Sudanese vociferously employ their social networks to exchange information, counteracting some of the effects of government manipulation and curtailment of the media. With these alternative channels available, Emira, a journalist, believes that, “Really if you wanted to know [about the crisis in Darfur] you could.”

The participants themselves tie lack of knowledge about what is going on in the rest of the country back to a colonial mentality. Khartoum is the metropole, and the peripheries (“colonies”) are of peripheral interest. Knowing about places, such as Darfur, Blue Nile, or the Nuba Mountains, is as important to members of the hegemonic figuration as knowing about what is going on in foreign countries; but with their relatives scattered across the globe, it is often less important. The participants pointed out, again and again, that there is more interest, knowledge, and sympathy for the goings on in Palestine, than there is for Darfur and Darfurians: “They [university students] talk about children in Gaza, not in Darfur,” said Babiker a university administrator. There is also more willingness to take action. In fact, in my interview with Taban, a politician, I had difficulty steering the discussion away from international politics towards politics in Sudan, including: Asians and Latinos in the US, the wars in Syria and Yemen, popular political engagement in Egypt, reconciliation in South Africa, tribalism in Saudi Arabia and Libya, US/Iranian relations, and even the French revolution. At least in terms of the impression he wished to present to me, knowledge of the rest of the world is more important than knowledge of people in Sudan being targeted with genocide. It is possible that Taban did this because he
knows less about Sudan’s peripheries than he does about the US, the Middle East, and Europe; however, given the extent of his complicity in genocide, it seems more likely that he wanted to distract me from my focus on genocide. In fact, a number of interviewees attempted to steer me away from talking about these uncomfortable issues. For example, Mahmoud, an academic who has had an ideological impact on the current regime, said that, “Most Sudanese go to the Gulf,” when I asked what happened in the relationship between those in the centre and those in areas outside of Khartoum. He did not return to my topic, until I rephrased the question a number of times. Moreover, Omnia, a civil society activist; Daffala, an artist; and Abdulllah, a politician, explicitly told me that they did not want to talk about Darfur. We ended up speaking about another figuration targeted with genocide instead.

**Denial.**

Denial features in the genocide literature as a stage that follows an episode of genocidal violence. It appears most clearly in Stanton’s (1998) eighth and final stage of genocide; however, denial is endemic at every stage of Sudan’s protracted genocides. 86 “We have chosen to be in a state of denial,” said Abdulllah, “sticking to old ways and beliefs, pretending as though nothing has changed and things weren’t a problem in the first place.” Emira, a journalist, described denial as a kind of reflex that those with the government have when confronted with information that implicates the regime. Emira went as far as calling the media a “denial system.” She said that while some truly believe the government line and deny information about genocide out of disbelief, others know that the government is lying. Mass rape of women in the peripheries is identified as an atrocity that is especially difficult for Sudanese to believe, and easy for the government to deny.

Other examples of denial include, that every president of the country has been riverain87; that the government has neglected development in Darfur; that racism is a problem and that communities from different parts of the country are segregated. It is sometimes surprising who the denial

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86 These simple stages of genocide do not apply well to Sudan and, possibly, to any protracted genocide.
87 One of the participants claimed that Abdulllah Karim, the second prime minister, is Darfuri.
comes from. For example, Mia, who has worked in the humanitarian sector, travelled to Darfur and supported interventions to try and end atrocities there. She told me the following anecdote:

We had a meeting with the new Country Director [of an international NGO] who was explaining something about a specific scenario. The amount of melodramatic words, it was like a movie. It’s there, but the way she explained it, the drama. I questioned her professionalism. The report from a French NGO included a quote from an IDP [Internally Displaced Person]. It was so dramatic I thought maybe I should give them a call and ask them to shut up. A quote from a Darfurian about how they were being exterminated because of their skin colour. They were spicing it up, looking to offend.

Mia’s words here, even in writing, demonstrate that the knowledge that the participants spoke of is not a cold accounting of facts. Their feelings around these issues, which I explore next, shape what they come to know.

**Feelings**

Slovic (2012), a psychologist, suggests that:

Research shows that the statistics of mass murder or genocide, no matter how large the numbers, fail to convey the true meaning of such atrocities. The numbers fail to spark emotion or feeling and thus fail to motivate action. (P. 20)

The participants spoke about a wide range of emotions in relation to standing by and doing nothing, and in relation to members of figurations targeted by genocide. They reported to me not only about their own emotions, but about the emotions that they thought others of the hegemonic figuration experience. Among the emotions the participants mentioned, the negative ones predominated. However, a few of the participants spoke of positive emotions, caring and hope, in particular; and a large minority spoke of not feeling anything at all. The discrete negative feelings that the participants discussed are diverse. Negative and “not in control” feelings included, worry and fear, as well as embarrassment and helplessness. Agitated feelings included, shock and stress. Negative and passive feelings included, sadness and despair, as well as feeling
static and dead; while negative and forceful feelings were anger, hate, and disgust. The negative thoughts were primarily mistrust, but also guilt and shame.

I am reluctant to argue that the specific types of emotions exhibited and described by the participants are important to standing by to genocide. Climate change communication researchers are also interested in how people stand by and do nothing (Smith & Leiserowitz, 2014). They have found that while specific emotions, both negative and positive, are associated with support for climate and energy-related policies, different emotions appear to be associated with responsiveness to different risks; for example, climate change, radiation, food safety, or terrorism. Whether a specific emotion elicits action, or not, may be highly dependent upon context. On the other hand, a study by Barhight, Hubbard, and Hyde (2013) that looks at emotions related to standing by and bullying among children, encourages me to draw a conclusion. Children in their study who exhibited an emotional affect of any type, in other words a physiological reaction, were more likely to be identified by their peers as upstanders than those who exhibited no emotional affect at all.

In line with this, a large minority of the participants, like Gareeballah, who is popular on social media, think that among riverain Sudanese “Not feeling is the issue.” Furthermore, Abdulrahman, a business person, connected this lack of emotion in relation to peoples targeted by genocide to the lack of action among members of the complicit figuration to stop genocide: “But the North didn’t care and didn’t do anything,” he said.

**Motivation**

None of the participants, including the ones who had been arrested and tortured for their activism, said that they stand by and do nothing because they are afraid of the regime. This runs contrary to one of the central explanations of standing by and doing nothing in the genocide literature (Bar-On, 2001; Barnett, 1999; Coloroso, 2007, Staub 1989 & 2010). When the participants mentioned punishment by the state through arrest, torture, and other forms of persecution, it was as a contextual consideration, rather than a motivating factor. Furthermore, outside of family influence, the participants did not explain their standing by as resulting from
obedience and deference to authority. This is surprising, considering how prominent this factor is in genocide literature on bystanding, especially in the context of hierarchical systems, such as government bureaucracies (Barnett, 1999; Bar-On, 2001; Coloroso, 2007; Kahn, 2009; Milgram, 1963; Staub 1989; 2010). However, even though the participants did not speak of it, deference to authority may be at play after all. As obedience is so ubiquitous in family relations in Sudan, it may condition riverain Sudanese to be obedient in other contexts as well. It may also be so reflexive, that it is unconscious.

Participants rarely expressed fear for their own personal safety; yet, a number of them, especially the business leaders, freely admitted that they were fearful of being punished economically, i.e., having their assets seized, being blocked from doing business, or losing their jobs. I spoke with one of the members of my Guidance Circle, Magdi el Gizouli, about this. He felt that fear of punishment exists, even when the participants did not speak of it; yet, he said that,

There is a greater fear of facing up to a truth that when recognized with all its consequences would also mean losing advantages. You mentioned some of that when you talked about fear of the peripheries and violence. Is it not also fear of losing an established order?

In other words, the devil you know is better than the devil you do not, especially when you may be related to them. This echoes my discussion of the normalization of colonial genocide in Chapter 3 and my discussion of (in)action earlier in this chapter.

A small majority of participants discussed self interest as a motivation for standing up or standing by. Economic interests, especially greed, were mentioned. Participants talked about being motivated by fear of economic hardship, but also about how members of the hegemonic figuration benefit economically from the status quo: “The fact is that the private sector are letting the government do what they want. [X and Y] aren’t, and thus are not making profits and are going out of the country,” Mia, who moved from humanitarian work to a job in the private sector, explained. Fear of provoking the ire of the regime is a motivation, but so is benefiting from a corrupt and exploitative system that rewards those who are complicit.

Benefits enjoyed from the status quo include, profiting from exploitative economic relationships, which Abdelrhaman, a business person, hinted at: “People here benefitted a lot from the [oil]
boom years. The standard of living improved so much. If they [from the peripheries] come into Khartoum and see us living in a home like this” there could be backlash. Individuals, businesses, and certain sectors of the economy have profited from the periphery’s misery. Hundreds of millions of dollars of humanitarian aid, which flowed into the country every year in the mid-2000s, generated jobs and contracts for goods and services, in Khartoum, for the most part.

In addition, there is a more generalized privilege that I discussed in Chapter 4, which is achieved by simply being a colonizer: “I remember the first time I was called a jellaba,” recalled Tahani, a humanitarian worker. “It wasn’t just a difference in terms of tribe and language, but in terms of benefits and privileges.” On the other hand, some of the participants claimed that everyone is suffering from the status quo. As I suggested in Chapter 5, some of these claims seem disingenuous, such as the elites who argue that all Sudanese are poor. However, employing a relational view, it makes sense that the suffering of some affects all.

The unaddressed poverty of the peripheries has led to a decline in the centre. There is a decline in public goods; public services; and social control, which has led to a rise in crime not only in the peripheries but in Khartoum. In addition, the federal budget is devoted to war rather than development, resources and markets cannot be accessed due to insecurity and lack of infrastructure, international economic sanctions have been imposed, and the poor image of the country internationally has contributed to this decline. Though none of the participants is happy with the status quo, most did not speak of the benefits that members of the hegemonic figuration have accrued, and whether they could keep them if genocidal processes came to an end. Among the participants standing up to genocide is perceived as acting in contravention of their self-interest.

Intrinsic motivations (i.e., fatalism and an inner commitment or drive) that impact standing by or standing up, were less frequently mentioned than expectancy motivations (i.e., being guided in one’s actions by an external goal). As Gareeballah stated: “I wouldn’t oppose the government, not because I’m scared, but because there’s no point.” Muneer, a humanitarian worker, said that “People have lost vision and are holding onto someone else’s vision.” As a group, the participants balanced their focus on self-interest with a focus on ethics. This included acknowledging their responsibilities as well as denying them.
Abdullah, a politician, spoke of how difficult it is for Sudanese to “confess or admit to a problem.” He suggested that this is a barrier to correcting injustices in the country. Excuses are made, and others are blamed, especially the government. Babiker, a university administrator, was critical of this:

The problem of Sudan is the Sudanese, not the government. We had real democracy at a number of different times. Whether you say people are blindly following or being deceived, this is the will of the people. We tasted government with rule of law and rule of lawlessness. All dictatorship and democracy we tasted, and so something is wrong with the people.

Some of the participants blamed people of the peripheries for their own suffering. Victim blaming, especially of leaders from figurations targeted by genocide, is evident in many of the interviews. For example, Tijani, a business person, said that: “Politicians [from the peripheries] helped with the misunderstanding. They believe that these people [in Khartoum] exploited the other places [of the peripheries] and are enjoying while others are poor. They are making propaganda. It’s not true.”

Some of the participants were motivated to stand up by a sense of responsibility. For Muneer, it came from a sense that, “I was privileged to get an education, skills and [so I must] put this to use to make the country better and address its challenges.” He spoke of family inculcating this sense of responsibility. Babiker talked of the role of universities in teaching responsibility; whereas Zaid, a youth volunteer, identified his motivation as the result of the failure of the government to carry out its responsibilities: “I think all the organizations and civil work activities I’ve done are because I am the responsible one in Sudan; the government doesn’t do anything, not a thing.” Some, like Emira, a journalist, acknowledged the collective guilt of the hegemonic figuration for genocide, because of their unearned privilege at the expense of people of the peripheries, or simply because they do not know what is going on.

Farouq, a civil society activist, spoke at length about the need to reorganize civil society along different lines and proposed that taking responsibility needs to be the focus of this process, which in turn, will interrupt genocidal processes. He provided the example of youth-based organizing:
In 2013, with Nafir [a community, youth-led humanitarian response], this was issue-based politics. We went for aid [to help those in Khartoum but from the peripheries whose neighbourhoods were flooded] but with a clear political message. I was clear with what I was saying. This was a social responsibility, a duty, not charity. It was political but framed to be understood by activists. We had 3000 volunteers in 3 days.

Though it began as a solidarity-based humanitarian response, Nafir became the basis for organizing direct action in Khartoum, by Khartoumers, to oppose the government’s bombing campaigns in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile.

As discussed in Chapter 5, kinship networks are highly effective at inculcating a feeling of responsibility among Sudanese; however, whether their “universe of obligation,” (Fein, 1984) includes those outside of the riverain figuration remains a question. For many it does not. When I ask Gareeballah how he feels about standing by to genocide in Darfur, he responded that: “It’s like a child crying and you don’t jump up to get them. But they are not your child.” Gareeballah felt something for Darfurians, but because they are not his kin (or kin like) he did not feel responsible to do anything for them.

**Connecting with the Literature**

Of the three chapters on Sudan, the findings in this chapter engage the genocide literature most directly. First, challenging what scholars in the field have found to date, many of the participants see themselves not only as bystanders, but acknowledge the role they play in genocidal processes. The data suggests that, in line with colonial genocide scholarship (Barta, 2000; Levene, 2005; Moses, 2004; Palmer, 1998), Sudan fits the mold of genocide that is more society-led than government-led. Consequently, riverain Sudanese may stand by, in part, because they support the government’s genocidal intent, if not their precise methods. Furthermore, acquiescence to genocide is closely tied to riverain Sudanese’s desire to maintain a status quo that privileges them, even if only relative to people of the peripheries.

Concerning knowledge of genocide, the findings reflect many of the themes found in the literature on bystanders, including lack of awareness (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012); propaganda
(Gaunt, 2012; Koonz, 2003; Staub, 1989); codes of silence (Barnett, 1999); and looking away (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012). However, in the Sudanese context denial may be endemic rather than a discrete and final stage of genocide. The findings on the absence of emotional affect among the riverain Sudanese participants are consistent with the psychological research that genocide studies draw on (Edgren, 2012; Slovic, 2012). However, more research is needed to understand the implications of the specific types of emotions, predominantly negative, that the participants reported. Fear (Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008) and obedience (Milgram, 1963) are not prominent themes in the research. Yet, I hesitate to conclude that neither are important. In fact, both may be implicit in the Sudanese context, and thus hard for participants to articulate.

**Conclusion**

Most of the participants acknowledged that riverain Sudanese are standing by and doing nothing about genocide. But the problem is not just inaction. Some of the participants also acted to sustain an unjust status quo. Inaction includes failing to build relationships, to engage the peripheries economically, to educate others about what is going on in the peripheries, and to be politically involved in general. Across the board, talk without action is a problem. The participants also provided examples of riverain Sudanese standing up, though many of these were isolated actions and resulted from external pressure to do the right thing. These examples of upstanding illustrate how habitus conditions, but does not determine, standing by.

The participants claimed that they are unable to act. Given the extent of Sudan’s challenges, being overwhelmed seems a reasonable explanation for inaction; however, clearly some are not acting to the degree that they could. Furthermore, they have refrained from taking even modest action, such as forming friendships with people of the targeted figuration. The participants’ responses suggest that habitus may be more powerful than the tools wielded by the authoritarian state in deterring action, though they reinforce each other.

Among riverain Sudanese participants, ignorance about the peripheries is normalized and the practice of silence is endemic. The picture participants cobbled together about the peripheries is too general to be useful. The problem is not just lack of information but false information. Even
when propaganda is not convincing, it confuses “the truth.” The peripheries are not discussed, and although people are punished for speaking out on some issues, self censorship is a bigger part of the problem. The participants avoid accessing the information that is available about the peripheries. They avoid discussing these parts of the country because they lack prerequisite knowledge or because it makes them uncomfortable. Their discomfort about their relationships with the peripheries also leads to denial, which has become almost reflexive. The way the riverain Sudanese participants construct knowledge about the peripheries is consistent with a colonial mentality. It is as though the peripheries are a foreign country.

Social psychology research suggests that the way riverain Sudanese participants feel about the peripheries may be strongly related to their inaction (Barhight, Hubbard, & Hyde, 2013). Negative emotions about people of the peripheries and their relationships predominate. Yet, perhaps it is the lack of any emotion at all that is more important in understanding how they stand by and do nothing.

Surprisingly, fear of the regime does not appear as a prime motivator for the (in)action of riverain Sudanese. Rather, the desire to maintain a status quo that benefits them and their economic interests seems more important. Regarding self interest as a motivator, some participants claimed that everyone in Sudan is suffering from the status quo. While it is true that everyone is suffering from the decline in public goods, standing up to genocide is still seen as acting in contravention of one’s interests as a riverain Sudanese. Furthermore, participants focus more on extrinsic rather than intrinsic motivations for (in)action. The fact that people of the peripheries are not kin (or analogous to kin) may be part of the challenge of motivating riverain Sudanese to stand up. Among the participants there is both an acceptance and denial of their ethical responsibilities. Victim blaming is a common manifestation of the latter, with some arguing that more attention needs to be paid to inculcating a sense of ethical responsibility among riverain Sudanese.
CANADA
Chapter 7
“O Canada! Our home and Native land”: Relations in Space and with Place

To state that geography is important to Canada and Canadians is to repeat a cliché so ubiquitous that it is enshrined in the first line of our national anthem. Still, non-Indigenous people disregard the fact that their relationships with Indigenous peoples are the result of their (non-Indigenous) homes being built on stolen “Native land.” In this chapter, I look at the way Canada’s peoples are physically situated in relation to each other. I also consider the different ways that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people relate to land. Demography, population distribution, and different relationships with land have contributed to the social engineering of the “settler” in opposition to the “native.” This dichotomy facilitates genocide targeting Indigenous peoples and helps explain how non-Indigenous people stand by and do nothing about it. These discussions of the ways in which Canada’s peoples are situated in space and place set the stage for my exploration in the following chapters of how members of the non-Indigenous figuration relate to Indigenous figurations, and how non-Indigenous people are disposed towards doing nothing to interrupt genocide.

Canada: The Land and the People

Like Sudan, Canada is big. In fact, it is the second biggest country in the world. Relationally, though, it is not just its vastness or its average population density, which is among the lowest in the world, which needs to be considered. Relationally, it is the country’s lopsided population distribution that is important (See Figure 6). Most of the population live in urban areas (81%), and 66% live within 100km of Canada’s southern border with the United States (Statistics Canada, 2017). As a result, most non-Indigenous Canadians have little to no experience of large parts of their country. The predominantly urban livelihoods and lifestyles of non-Indigenous people, further distance them from the land and from people with land-based ways of life. The rest of the country, in fact the majority of it, is very thinly populated, and largely by Indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples’ settlement patterns are very different from non-Indigenous people’s
(See Figure 5). Approximately half of Indigenous peoples live outside urban areas, in places that are often remote and northerly (The other half live in urban areas, as I discuss below). As important, is the minimal investment by the government and private sector in transportation and communication infrastructure to connect Indigenous communities to the rest of the country. This lack of infrastructure combined with the distributional differences, contributes to segregation in Canada along Indigenous/non-Indigenous lines.

Figure 6. Population distribution and infrastructure in Canada. Copyright 2017 Koen Van Rossum

Non-Indigenous Canadians, by definition, are Indigenous to somewhere else, not to the land on which they have settled. They are alienated from the places they came from; and, due to their urban settlement patterns and livelihoods, they are alienated from the land in Canada and, by extension, from the peoples Indigenous to this place. Because of their weak relations with land, non-Indigenous people have difficulty understanding and respecting Indigenous peoples’
relatively strong and multidimensional relations with their ancestral territories. This alienation from land factors into the way non-Indigenous people have perpetrated or stood by to the usurping of land and resources from Indigenous peoples and the destruction of Indigenous peoples’ land-based livelihoods. As aliens, non-Indigenous people have, in turn, alienated Indigenous peoples. Non-Indigenous people’s relationship with land does not make their usurping of Indigenous territories and attacks on land-based livelihoods inevitable, but it makes them easier.

*Figure 7.* Non-Indigenous settlements. 1630, 1770, and 1823. Copyright 2017 Koen Van Rossum

Popular narratives state that Canada’s contemporary population distribution is simply a reflection of “the cold,” proximity to trade routes, or the availability of arable land (Geopolitical Futures, 2016). However, the distribution of human beings in this way on the land came about recently,
and not all peoples in Canada exhibit the same settlement patterns. This is apparent when comparing the territories of Indigenous language groups, pre-European colonialism (See Figure 6), and the settlements and routes relevant to the fur trade, with contemporary population distribution (See Figure 5). It is no accident that Indigenous peoples live far from non-Indigenous people. Pre-colonialism, and up until 200 years after the arrival of the first settlers, Indigenous settlements were central rather than peripheral. During the fur trade era, trading posts, and the settler colonies that followed, were established in close proximity to Indigenous communities. However, as the Canadian state came into being, and capitalism gained a foothold, settlers settled further south and closer to each other. Many Indigenous communities were relocated, sometimes voluntarily, sometimes coercively, to reserves far from settler colonies. Indigenous people were then forcibly and coercively kept on reserves and out of non-Indigenous communities (RCAP, 1996).

Thus, the population distribution of non-Indigenous Canadians, and their relationship with the land, is not just economically driven and did not come about through happenstance. It is in part the result of an intentional government policy of fostering capitalism (See Chapter 10). This policy depended upon a land transforming (agriculture, forestry, and extractive industry) economy and a land alienated (urban) lifestyle for settlers. It also depended upon keeping the settlers and the communalistic natives apart. The dominant narratives of Canadian history — building the Canadian Pacific Railway across the country; mass settlement of the prairies in the West; and, of course, confinement of Indigenous peoples to reserves — all revolve around the engineering of settlement patterns.

The engineering of settlement patterns is a tenet of Canada’s history; however, the story of how Aboriginal people went from being 100% to only 4.3% of the total population, in the land now called Canada, is a skeleton in the closet. The study participants are aware of this dramatic demographic shift; yet few risk trying to explain how Indigenous people, who once comprised the entire population of the continent, became such a small minority. Deb, a civil servant, spoke of the effect of this demographic imbalance on relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people: “It’s maybe a smaller population, maybe it’s easier to ignore.” None of the

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88 I use the term Aboriginal here and throughout this chapter to refer to a definition used by the Canadian government in the context of their research and policies.
participants spoke of potential linkages between the collapse of Indigenous peoples’ populations and genocide.

Demographic statistics (e.g., death rates, birth rates, immigration numbers, the size of the government Indian Registry, and the number of individuals who self identify as Indigenous versus the number of people with Indigenous ancestry [a potential measure of assimilation]) can aid in understanding genocide. Yet, these statistics are not a simple reflection of reality. Following Foucault (1980); through classifying, registering, and counting Indigenous (and other) people, the government brings them into existence. However, with the power to create comes the power to destroy. Using these same administrative tools, the government has tried to eliminate the Indigenous figuration by terminating the Indian Status of individual Indigenous people (Palmater, 2011).

Thus, the counting of indigeneity is not an objective undertaking. However, neither is it an unopposed act from above. Those being counted either cooperate or resist, and within (and sometimes pushing against) the limits imposed by the Canadian state, they construct identities for themselves. Some Indigenous people do not self identify to government representatives as Indigenous, and they are invisible in the census numbers cited above (See Andersen, 2016). Reflecting this invisibility, the teachers I spoke with for this research believe that they have taught Indigenous students without knowing it. As Indigenous peoples’ efforts to resist assimilation and discrimination meet with success, the numbers of individuals willing to be counted as Indigenous by the government has grown (Galloway & Grant, 2013).

People, especially Indigenous people, are moving in Canada. Populations are growing or shrinking and Indigenous people are deciding to self identify or not. Moreover, legal decisions are forcing the government to change how it engineers Indigenous peoplehood (Daniels v. Canada, 2016). This study was carried out during a time of significant, even dramatic change in relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, and these demographic changes are part of that. While demographic statistics provide insight into genocide, they also reflect resurgence. The Aboriginal population is increasing at a rate four times faster than the non-Aboriginal population. The urbanization of the Aboriginal population is also increasing (in 2011, 56% of the Aboriginal population resided in an urban area) (Statistics Canada, 2013).
However, even the measurement of this resurgence can be used against Indigenous people. Statistics showing that Indigenous populations are recovering have been used to deny that genocide has occurred (Fontaine & Farber, 2013); though, logically, population recovery does not disprove an earlier population collapse. In fact, by definition, recovery is predicated on an earlier loss.

Natives and Settlers: Language and a Peoples’ Relationship with the Land

In beginning my discussion of the Canadian context, I have used certain terms for specific figurations, to differentiate peoples. I have also alluded to the way identity is constructed and not fixed. Before continuing, I will interrogate these constructions.

According to many Indigenous teachings, from time immemorial, diverse and distinct peoples lived throughout Turtle Island (North America); and most still do. They have their own ways of constructing identity, within and across social figurations, considering familial ties, clan, settlement patterns, political traditions, language, cultural and livelihoods practices, and territories. There were no “Indians,” “Natives,” or “Aboriginals” before settlers arrived (Vizenor, 1994). These are colonial constructions. There were and are many diverse and distinct Indigenous peoples. These different peoples, in turn, have had different relationships, at different times, with newcomers from other parts of the world, especially Europe, and now with the Canadian state. Therefore, in discussing genocide in Canada, we must consider numerous figurations, not merely one undifferentiated figuration called Indigenous. We must look at relations between settlers; their governments; other institutional figurations (churches, businesses, etc.); and different Indigenous figurations, be they Beothuk, Cayuga, Dene, Innu, or Nuu-chah-nulth, to name a few. We must also consider the territories of these Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, as well as the treaties signed between them, which set the terms for inter-figurational relations.

In Canada, the term Indigenous is now commonly used by Indigenous activists and academics, as well as their non-Indigenous allies, to refer collectively to the Inuit; members of First Nations; the Métis, who descend from communities where First Nations and Europeans intermarried; and,
potentially, to people with First Nations or Inuit ancestry. I use the term Indigenous people, the plural of person, to refer to individuals who belong to one of the figurations that are Indigenous to Canada (e.g., “approximately 80,000 Indigenous people live in Toronto.”). Indigenous peoples is the plural of people, and I use this term to refer to more than one Indigenous figuration (e.g., “representatives of Indigenous peoples from across Canada provided input to the report that was submitted to the United Nations.”). The terms Indigenous people and Indigenous peoples come with their own problems. They still collapse diverse and distinct figurations and diverse individuals into single categories. However, the terms have been employed to resist the labeling conventions of the colonial British, and then Canadian governments, and to build solidarity among peoples, who have had analogous experiences with colonialism and the modern nation state. Though, more recently, the term Indigenous has been coopted by the Canadian government.

Conventions of colonial labeling are highly relevant to processes of genocide. Colonial labeling ignores, or occasionally misappropriates, the terms Indigenous people use to refer to their own figurations and assigns foreign, often racialized, and derogatory labels (e.g., “Red Indian,” “Eskimo,” “Native”). Though a linguistic process, colonial labeling affects more than just language. By re-“engineering peoplehood” (Gallab, 2011), the colonialist usurps the right of Indigenous figurations to name themselves and to determine their own membership. The colonial state attempts to expunge their relationship with and sovereignty over their lands and people (especially children) and undermines their treaties with other sovereign peoples (including the colonial state). These processes of colonial labelling work to essentialize, naturalize, and administrate the identities of “native” and “settler” to create a division of “us” and “them.” This social process is analogous to the simple and automatic psychological process, often cited in the genocide literature, of distinguishing in order to show preference for in-group members over out-group members.89

Once hegemonic control over identity management is secured, the settler colonial state is in the position, if it so chooses, to administrate Indigenous peoples out of existence (Anderson, 2000; Lawrence, 2004 RCAP, 1996). In fact, genocide achieves the ultimate dichotomy, the present

89 Kahn (2009) provides a fairly comprehensive overview of the group identity research that is widely cited by genocide scholars.
settler and the absent native. Elimination of the native can be accomplished by transforming the Indigenous identity of a particular figuration into something benign that lacks the power to assert its sovereignty; introducing targeted policies that decrease the birth rates and increase the death rates of figuration members; coercing and forcing assimilation of figuration members into the hegemonic group; and removing members from the figuration in order to reduce its size, until it is no longer a threat or ceases to exist entirely.

A number of technologies of modernity (Bauman, 1989) are used to manage Indigenous identity in order to establish and entrench the settler/native dichotomy. These include written history; laws (e.g., the Canadian Indian Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. I-5); personal identification documents and registries (i.e., Indian Status cards and the Indian Registry); and “scientific” research. Demographic statistics, such as the statistics I referred to in the previous section, act on populations, not just the individuals counted, in this way. Through knowing Indigenous peoples, the government constitutes them as either distinct figurations numbering in the hundreds, or as one monolithic figuration, according to its needs; and it can, similarly, un-constitute them. The notion of “Indian bands” and “Status Indians” is an example of the former, and the federal government declaring the Sinxit First Nation extinct is an example of the latter (Keating & Laanela, 2016).

I draw attention to this oppressive and persistent dichotomized construction, not only because it facilitates genocide, but because I must contend with it as a Canadian-settler researcher of British decent, researching in this context. I have to locate myself and my research, in relation to this dichotomy and the processes that establish it. At the same time, I need to acknowledge and speak about the figurations that have been constructed. But how can I do this without further naturalizing settler and native, giving more power to something that contributes to the very processes of genocide that I seek to interrupt? In relational terms, how do I acknowledge these structures, of which I am a part, without further entrenching the way they distance and set me against Indigenous people in Canada? Certainly, constructing identities is not inherently colonial. Potent figurational identities predate colonialism and have persisted despite colonization. In this research, I do not go much further than acknowledging these problems. However, in Chapter 11, I discuss the potential contribution of dynamic, complex, and paradoxical theories of group
identity formation, especially those Indigenous to what is now Canada, to interrupting genocidal processes.

I have explained how the engineering of peoplehood has affected those on the Indigenous side of the dichotomy. But what of the other side, the settler? As mentioned, this research requires me to locate myself, to acknowledge, and to problematize my own people. There are a myriad of terms I could use to name my people in this research: settlers, immigrants, newcomers, colonizers, guests, among others. Being of immigrant ancestry seems important to the participants. Without having been asked directly about it, close to half of the participants talked about being immigrants themselves, the number of generations their family has lived in Canada, or how those new to the country have a different type of relationship with Indigenous people than those whose families have been here longer. However, only the few participants who were born abroad call themselves immigrants. On the other hand, only the few participants who are politically active on Indigenous issues use the term settler.

In the spirit of remaining open but critical, the term non-Indigenous seems the most appropriate in the context of this research. By adding the prefix “non” to Indigenous, I assume the lack of relationship members of this figuration have with the land they live on and with its Indigenous people. I also eliminate confusion about how many generations one can remain an immigrant. Some activists and academics may criticize me for using a depoliticized term like non-Indigenous, rather than a term that acknowledges complicity, like settler. However, the participants themselves did not speak in very relational terms (at least compared to the Sudanese participants). Furthermore, I remain convinced that in the context of this research, it is important for me to use language that leaves space for the participants to articulate how they see themselves in the context of their relationships (or non-relationships) with Indigenous peoples.

While linguistically my use of the terms Indigenous and non-Indigenous, suggests that these figurations are discrete, in lived experience, and in this research, they overlap. For example, one of the participants, who self identified as non-Indigenous, has Métis ancestry, and all of the Indigenous members of my Guidance Circle have non-Indigenous ancestors (European, in
particular), which they make a point of acknowledging.\textsuperscript{90} However, despite this overlap, these categories remain meaningful to people; and while they are contested and subject to change, there is strong consensus about them.

Finally, as I write, I try to avoid using the term Canadian, except when I distinguish between the Canadian and Sudanese participants. The term Canadian designates a relationship with a specific nation state, through the mechanism of citizenship and a connection with the settler colonial project that produced (and continues to produce) Canada as a nation state. Though most Canadians are born into this figuration and, thus, see it as “natural”; it is a construction, and a relatively recent one. In this research, immigrant Canadians; people of colour; and, I would add, Indigenous people, seem able to perceive this construction more easily.

Being Canadian is, on its surface, a mechanism for accessing specific rights vis-à-vis the state. It is associated with other figurations, including linguistic (English and, nominally, French); geographical origin (Europe, especially Britain and France); geographical residence (a Southern urban centre); class (the ubiquitous middle class in which everyone claims membership); religion (secularized Protestant and, nominally, Catholic); and race (white), to name a few. While I had no racial or ethnically-based exclusion criteria for participant recruitment, and made efforts to recruit Canadian participants of non-European origin or racialized individuals, in the end, the participants reflect a hegemonic version of Canadian-ness, that speaks English, is of Northern European origin, is white, self identifies as cisgender and straight, is upper middle class, and lives in a southern city.\textsuperscript{91}

But, what of Gitxsan Canadians, Maliseet Canadians, or Inuit Canadians, to name a few examples. Today the Canadian state views those Indigenous to this land as Canadian, and many Indigenous people claim a Canadian identity. Nevertheless, for most of Canada’s history, Canadian and Indigenous were exclusive categories. Indigenous people were denied the rights of Canadian citizenship unless they gave up their Indigenous rights and, in many ways, their

\textsuperscript{90} This also reflects how being Indigenous is not solely a question of ancestry but also of community acceptance, cultural knowledge, and participation in one’s Indigenous community.

\textsuperscript{91} Most of the participants did not disclose what, if any, religion they belonged to. A proportionate number (using StatsCan statistics as a guide) identified themselves as being of Jewish decent (i.e., not necessarily religiously practicing). In addition, one of the participants lived in the north, another was a naturalized Canadian from the US, a third immigrated as a child from Scotland, and a fourth was an American living and working in Canada but grew up in and lived most of their adult life in Latin America.
identity, through “enfranchisement” for “Status Indians” and “scrip” for Métis. For these reasons, and others, some Indigenous people disavow Canadian identity. Respecting the wish of some Indigenous people to not identify as Canadian, I write about Indigenous people or peoples in Canada rather than Indigenous Canadians. This move signals my respect for people’s right to self identify, and not my disavowal of Indigenous people as Canadians.

**Indigenous Peoples, land, and the Land**

With the issues of language unpacked, I return to the relationship between peoples and place, with a focus on Indigenous peoples. Relationships occur in a particular place. We are always in relationship with the land we find ourselves on; and that, in turn, shapes who we are, and our relationships with others. As Greg, a teacher, noted, the relationship with Indigenous people is “going to affect you in some way, and it has affected you in some way, because we’re living on that land” — Indigenous peoples’ land.

While formally, at least, being a part of the Canadian figuration only requires recognition of one’s citizenship by the state, being part of an Indigenous figuration places one in multiple intersecting relationships vis-à-vis family; clan; cultural practices (which may connect people across different figurations); language; traditional knowledge; and a specific ancestral territory.\(^92\) In the case of Inuit, and some First Nations, this relationship with a specific piece of land is also enshrined in a treaty with the Crown.\(^93\) However, a more fundamental relationship with traditional territory, a relationship that precedes colonialism, connects Indigenous peoples with an area much larger than the areas the First Nation’s government currently controls.

Related to these very different ways of constituting a people are fundamentally different understandings of land. *land* (sic), in a non-Indigenous context, is an object that you can commodify; while the *Land*, according to many Indigenous worldviews, is a subject you are in

\(^{92}\) As previously discussed, being part of an Indigenous figuration may, though this is contested, mean a particular legal status.

\(^{93}\) According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, “In a monarchy, the Crown is an abstract concept or symbol that represents the state and its government. In Canada, a constitutional monarchy, the Crown is the source of non-partisan sovereign authority and an integral part of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers that govern the country.” (Harris, 2006)
relationship with, and through that relationship, the Land constitutes its people and vice versa. I argue that it is this different understanding of Land/land, rather than competition for specific parcels of land, that defines this relationship of genocide. The participants talked about treaties that were and are being signed to share the land; they talked of usurping land and the colonial justifications for doing so (the land was not being “utilized properly”); they talked of the forcible relocation and then confinement of Indigenous people on reserves; they talked of land claims; they talked of the remoteness of reserve lands and the resources and economic benefits that could be derived from them; they talked of the vulnerability of some reserve lands to natural disasters; and one participant talked of his desire to see communally-held Indigenous Land converted into fee-simple land that can be freely bought and sold. In other words, for the most part, the non-Indigenous participants talked about land as natural capital. Only Brian, a human rights activist, who has spent time learning from Indigenous activists and communities about Land in the context of their worldview, suggested that it is more than that. His Indigenous colleagues told him:

Look we’re being offered to be moved from this piece of land to that piece of land, and we’re being told it’s equivalent. It’s not equivalent because our stories are about this piece of land (right), and this is where our ancestors are buried…. [There is a] spiritual and economic and social [connection] to that piece of land.

A large majority of the participants spoke of the importance of land; but, for the most part, their understanding did not reflect the way Indigenous people describe their relationship with Land (Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2014); or how this relationship is defined legally in treaties. Echoing my discussion about population distribution, and, in part, reflective of the data mapped in Figure 5, most participants spoke of how far away and inaccessible Indigenous communities are. While this is true of many “on reserve” communities, their perception that all, or even most, Indigenous people live far away is refuted by data showing that more than half of Indigenous people live in urban centres (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2016).

Along similar lines, the participants readily associated Indigenous people with reserves, not their pre-colonial territories, which extend across Canada. This lack of recognition of traditional lands helps explain how non-Indigenous people stand by to the usurping of land. It also explains why they do not recognize how seizure of traditional territories contributes to genocide. Furthermore,
the participants blamed Indigenous people, living apart from non-Indigenous people, for the lack of relationships between the figurations. Though this was rarely stated explicitly, the implication was that if Indigenous people would move closer, the relationship with them would improve. Beliefs about population distribution relieve non-Indigenous people of responsibility for their lack of relationships with Indigenous peoples and the policies enacted by the government, which in many cases pushed Indigenous people off their lands and onto reserves. These beliefs also erase the majority of Indigenous people, who, in fact, live right next door, in the same urban centres as non-Indigenous people.

Following from this failure to recognize how the Land constitutes Indigenous peoples, for the most part, the non-Indigenous participants appeared ignorant of the implications of usurping land in terms of genocide. For many Indigenous peoples, when their relationship with the Land is severed, their figuration as a whole begins to fall apart (Barta, 2000; Coulthard, 2014; Samson, 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Usurping land is not simply a denial of the resources necessary for the survival of individuals of the group, or even a livelihood that is central to that group’s identity. Removing Indigenous peoples from their Indigenous Land, cuts them off from themselves and each other; and this, in and of itself, is a devastatingly effective technique of genocide. Barta (2000), who writes about genocide in Australia, sees land/the Land as definitive in, what he calls, “relationships of genocide”:

At the center of this relationship — both in consciousness and in actuality — was the land. Both peoples, the Aboriginal inhabitants and the invaders, needed the land. Because of the uses for which each people needed the land, and because of the cultural gulf in understandings about the land, coexistence was impossible. (p. 247)

The vast majority of the participants view relationships between Indigenous people, non-Indigenous people, and land based on their view of land as natural capital. However, there were exceptions. Greg, a teacher, was unusual in that he spoke about how the land itself puts non-Indigenous people in relationship with Indigenous people, through treaties; but also through the meanings the land holds for those who are Indigenous to it. Greg described the experiences of

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94 This reasoning is analogous to an abusive friend moving in with you, then throwing you out of your own house, and then turning around to blame you for the deterioration of the relationship, because you moved so far away.
students in an Indigenous studies class, as they learned about the meanings that different places in Toronto hold for Indigenous people (I assume Ojibway/Anishinaabe or Six Nations):

So, they go and they interact with an Elder, they get to hear the stories of the places that they know through a very different lens than they’d hear from anybody else. So, on that level, that’s sort of that piece of…as this stuff starts to become more accessible, as the knowledge becomes more accessible for teachers and for students, from my perspective, those relationships become important…. There’s understanding of what these places were and/or are. Like on the river, it’s no longer this place that was the hill, it is the place that is the burial mound.

Through acknowledging the meaning of a place to its people, non-Indigenous people form a relationship with Indigenous people. In this case, a relationship with an Indigenous Elder established the high school students’ relationship with the Land. Going forward, with the Elder’s permission, the non-Indigenous teachers who participated may be able to invite subsequent generations of students into this relationship. Another initiative, Ogimaa Mikana (leader’s path), which replaces Toronto street signs with the Anishinaabeg names that carry the Anishinaabeg meanings of those places, also builds an inter-figurational relationship through Land.95

In summary, conflicting beliefs about land — land versus the Land, non-Indigenous versus Indigenous peoples’ relationship with land, and reserve versus traditional territory — are a barrier to respectful relationships and acknowledging genocide. However, this challenge is also an opportunity. Educating non-Indigenous people about the meanings Indigenous people ascribe to different places can build relationships through land.

### Local Versus National Perspectives

As previously mentioned, the size of Canada has contributed to the diversity of its peoples (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and, in turn, different experiences with genocide. There is a growing body of academic work on genocide and Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in

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95 In this vein, it is important to acknowledge my relationship with this initiative. Susan Blight, one of my guidance circle members, along with Hayden King, is behind this project.
Canada that accommodates this diversity by focusing on local processes. Examples include, Woolford’s (2015) investigation of the Fort Alexander and Portage la Prairie Indian Residential Schools, Samson’s (2014) article on the Innu in the context of land claims, Hubbard’s (2014) examination of the genocidal implications of the extirpation of the Plains Bison, and Logan’s (2015) writings on the Métis. Some of these scholars (e.g., Woolford, 2015) argue that their localized focus is preferable because it allows them to look at knowledge in context; to trace face-to-face relationships, which is more straightforward; and to achieve specificity by focusing closely at the local level, which instils confidence in the validity of the research.

Much of this locally focused research looks at situations where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are in conflict with each other. But what of the non-Indigenous people in Canada, likely the majority, who claim to have few or no face-to-face relationships with Indigenous people? I, for one, have never formed an interpersonal relationship with an Indigenous person through conflict over the land or resources I lay claim to. Yet, I have relationships that deeply inform how or whether I stand by to genocide. Like all Canadians, I have lived on land that is either subject to treaty or unceded. As a citizen, I am also in relationship with Indigenous peoples across Canada through their nation-to-nation relationship with the government, and through treaties. Furthermore, constitutionally, the federal government is primarily responsible for Indigenous issues. This explains the national response to local Indigenous/non-Indigenous conflicts. As Simon, a former civil servant, commented: “I mean, let’s face it, an Oka or a Dudley George being shot, here in Canada, those aren’t just local events, they’re national events.”

Beyond this, non-Indigenous Canadians seem predisposed to making gross generalizations about Indigenous people and peoples and acting based on them. National policies and institutions have a major impact on Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations. Furthermore, similar colonial patterns appear across diverse and disparate spaces in Canada. The macro parts of the picture are clearly important to understanding processes of genocide. Moreover, relationships do not exist only between people who share physical space, who can see each other face-to-face. They can be mediated by the media, the education system, and by other institutions. For these reasons, I decided to make this research national in scope.
The hypothesis behind this decision, that national level relationships are important, is supported by my findings. The dominant experience of the non-Indigenous participants of relationships with Indigenous peoples is not local. As discussed above, the land on which the relationships take place is not viewed by the participants as particularly important. I enthusiastically agree that work, including research, needs to be done to bring place back into relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada, and to engage with and validate distinct local Indigenous figurations. However, I still maintain that understanding the land alienated experience of non-Indigenous peoples is critical.

Employing a national focus also allows me to examine the question of proximity and how it facilitates standing by and doing nothing. As Deb, a civil servant, explained:

_The work that we’re doing from Ottawa is very removed from what’s happening [at the community level].… So, I always disliked being part of that big headquarters piece, because I know policy needs to be developed, but somehow, and you’re back to that whole big distance between what’s going on in communities and where you are._

Linda, a journalist, said something similar to explain why she often fails to get her national news editors interested in newsworthy stories about First Nations. “They are in one place [Toronto], they don’t travel, they’re not in the field.” Thus, while relationships at the national level are important, the nature of relationships at this level is part of the problem. A tenet of the genocide literature posits that physical separation from those being targeted by genocide may contribute to the passivity of those standing by (Barnett, 1999). Problems with Indigenous people are far enough away to feel abstract rather than real. Furthermore, while challenges are big enough to require federal government intervention, they are small enough (because Indigenous people have less power) to ignore.

A national approach to researching this issue does not necessarily compound the problem of homogenizing Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) people’s experiences. The study data highlights the geographical diversity of experiences, not just of Indigenous peoples, but of non-Indigenous people. For example, the participants felt the likelihood of forming a relationship with an Indigenous person is greater in some parts of the country than in others. The chances were seen as low in Toronto; it has the fourth largest number of Indigenous people of any Canadian city, but
they make up only 0.7% of the population. The chances were believed to be higher in the prairies (Alberta, Saskatchewan, or Manitoba); the north; or in any community adjacent to a reserve. For non-Indigenous Canadians national level relationships are important. This national level focus, in turn, helps explain how non-Indigenous people stand by and do nothing as Indigenous issues are de-prioritized at the national level. A national focus also draws attention to the impact of physical proximity and geographical diversity on inter-figurational relationships.

Connecting with the Literature

In the genocide literature, Canada is referred to as a colonial genocide (Woolford, 2009; Woolford, Benvenuto, & Hinton, 2014; Totten & Hitchcock, 2011). The findings presented in this chapter are consistent with this subtype of genocide. In particular, Barta’s (2000) conceptualization of “relationships of genocide” resonates with the different relationships that settlers and Indigenous peoples have with land/the Land. Similarly analyses that view genocide as a manifestation of modernity (Bauman, 1991) seem relevant. I acknowledge that in Canada, we should speak of genocides in the plural and build relationships at the local level (See Woolford, 2009); however, the participants were far more concerned with relations at the national level, suggesting that these also need to be considered.

Aspects of the colonial genocide literature are relevant to standing by (See Chapter 2); yet, its more critical orientation is discordant with the literature on bystanders to genocide. Despite this, the findings in this chapter are consistent with the psychological theories of group identity that the literature on bystanders to genocide draws on (Staub, 1989; Tindale et al., 2002); and the observation that physical separation from those being targeted by genocide contributes to the passivity of those standing by (Barnett, 1999; Staub, 1989).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I argue that the standing by of non-Indigenous people is explained by the way members of non-Indigenous and Indigenous figurations relate to place (land/the Land); and their whereabouts in relation to each other. Due to the size of Canada, non-Indigenous people’s
settlement patterns, livelihoods, and experiences of migration, they have a weak relationship with the land they live on. This makes it easier for them to alienate Indigenous peoples from their territories. The participants acknowledged that the uneven population distribution of the country has been socially engineered; yet they ignore the genocidal ways through which Indigenous peoples were made minorities in their own land.

There are many different and distinct Indigenous peoples in Canada and, following from this, different relationships of genocide. However, the engineering of personhood erases these distinct Indigenous figurations and creates a native/settler dichotomy that differentiates the native and, in turn, facilitates their elimination. While illuminating these dichotomizing processes is essential to researching genocide, doing so also risks re-inscribing them.

Being Indigenous means having an ancestral (and ideally ongoing) relationship with a specific territory. Simply acknowledging this relationship is a way for non-Indigenous people to connect with the original peoples of the land they live on. However, most of the non-Indigenous participants did not think of indigeneity, land, and relationships in this way. They focused instead on the physical remoteness of Indigenous peoples and the barrier it is to relationships. Most of the participants felt connected to Indigenous peoples not because they live on their land, but through shared Canadian citizenship or the fiduciary responsibilities of the federal government. These national level relationships are most important to the non-Indigenous participants and help us understand how non-Indigenous people stand by and do nothing. At the national level Indigenous people are a small minority, they seem far away, and their concerns are of low priority.
Chapter 8

Make Yourself Comfortable: The Intra- and Inter-figurational Relations of Non-Indigenous Canadians

What relational dynamics follow from non-Indigenous Canadian’s shared experience of alienation from land and physical separation, real or imagined, from Indigenous peoples? In this chapter, I begin by considering the relationships within this non-Indigenous figuration that impact Indigenous peoples. I then move to the relations, and significant lack of relations, between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples. As with riverain Sudanese, cognitive dissonance — the uncomfortable contradiction of having a positive self image while, at the same time, being complicit in genocide — affects how the non-Indigenous participants relate with members of Indigenous figurations. I end this chapter with an examination of the unequal distribution of power within and between these relational networks and consider the nature and amount of power that each figuration has.

Exceptions That Prove the Rule

*Feeling exceptional [as a liberal White person] is a privilege in itself.... Exceptionalism contradicts systematic truths and seems to solve the most deeply embedded social problems.*

Ann Power, music critic, on White singer Adele’s attempt to show solidarity with African American singer Beyoncé after Adele won the 2017 Grammy Award (2017, para. 12, emphasis added).

The Sudanese participants were sensitive about naming the hegemonic figuration, admitting that there is such an entity as riverain Sudanese, and acknowledging that social identity is important. Yet, despite this, without naming it, they spoke easily and at length about the characteristics of their figuration, particularly its internal relations. On the other hand, the Canadian participants did not hesitate to name their figuration as non-Indigenous. Yet, they struggled to characterize
the relations that constitute it. While in both cases the participants conflated their figuration with their national identity (non-Indigenous with Canadian and riverain with Sudanese), non-Indigenous Canadians did not seem to have a figurational identity outside of their national identity, a non-Indigenous “nation” beyond the state. Similarly, while the participants spoke about being influenced by family, friends, and institutional figurations, they were unable to describe the dimensions of the non-Indigenous figuration as a whole.

This suggests two possibilities. One, that non-Indigenous Canadians are a social figuration only in a very limited sense. This conclusion makes sense in the context of their being a relatively new people comprised of immigrants from many different cultural and social backgrounds, who struggle self consciously to differentiate themselves from the peoples of other settler colonial states, such as the US, Australia, or New Zealand. Alternatively, the participants’ inability to describe their figuration suggests that non-Indigenous Canadians have normalized their figuration to the extent that they cannot see it. This second possibility is supported by the fact that of all participants, it was Deb, an immigrant from the US, married to a racialized immigrant, who spoke most clearly about the Canadian non-Indigenous figuration. Had I succeeded in interviewing racialized and newly immigrated non-Indigenous Canadians, I may have obtained a better picture of the characteristics and contours of this White hegemonic figuration. However, these perspectives are missing from this research. I should also acknowledge that, unlike in the Sudanese interviews, I conducted the Canadian interviews as a cultural insider. It is possible that while the Sudanese participants felt the need to be explicit in describing the riverain figuration to me, the Canadian participants simply assumed I possessed the knowledge of the figuration I belong to.

Some genocide scholars argue that societies with “collectivist cultural frames” encourage standing by to genocide (Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002). The participants’ discussion of the intra-figurational relationships of non-Indigenous Canadians (i.e., how non-Indigenous Canadians relate to each other) focused on the individual, rather than the collective; their own experiences; and how they position themselves within the political landscape of the non-Indigenous figuration. The data affirms my assumption that Canada (or at least its non-Indigenous part) does not fit the collectivist mould and suggests that theories of genocide that have emerged from the
types of genocides Oyserman and Lauffer’s (2002) study may not be relevant to contexts like Canada, where “individualistic cultural frames” dominate.

In Canada, family is not a microcosm of the non-Indigenous figuration in the way it is of the riverain Sudanese figuration. However the personal experiences of the Canadian participants’ suggests that family influence is important. Family has socialized some of the non-Indigenous Canadian participants to stand in solidarity with Indigenous people. as Pete, a journalist, noted, “my parents taught us early in life not to, you know, people are people and it doesn’t matter about everything else.” Alternatively, some participants had to overcome the prejudices of their family: “We were raised to believe that you don’t cavort with the kids on the [First Nations] reserve.”

Participants’ personal challenges and trauma appear to help them empathize and work in solidarity with Indigenous people. Gloria, a teacher, saw having a racially diverse social network as important: “Knowing some people who are not White and the same as you, that might be helpful.” Furthermore, for three of the participants, being Jewish may have affected how they view and relate to Indigenous people. A number of the participants spoke of becoming aware of the concerns of Indigenous people through witnessing discrimination. Deb, a civil servant, and Ken, a journalist, referred to discrimination against African Americans (Deb is American and Ken studied in the US). Greg, a teacher, and Pete, a journalist, recounted witnessing discrimination against Indigenous people. Simon and Heather suggested that their experience of working in the social services sector early in their careers explains why they work on Indigenous issues within government.

As I discussed in Chapter 3, the study sample is not representative of the entire Canadian population and largely focuses on politically liberal, urban, middle to upper class Canadians. While the participants did not seem particularly aware of their figuration as a whole, they were aware of their position within it. Othering of Indigenous people was evident in the interviews (and will be discussed next); and the participants differentiated themselves from other non-Indigenous people within the non-Indigenous figuration along political lines. Though the

96 Though participants did not say much about class or as much about geography, I suspect these are relevant as well.
participants did not use the word *polarized*, the way they spoke of other non-Indigenous people suggests polarization within the non-Indigenous figuration. Deb’s comment below demonstrates the impact of this polarization on relations among the non-Indigenous people in ways that facilitate, or do not facilitate, solidarity with Indigenous people:

> Our social circle is more progressive and more liberal and more open to those kinds of ideas [i.e. respect for Indigenous people], so I don’t hear a lot of it [negative talk about Indigenous people], except for a few friends. I have old friends in this neighbourhood that I’ve known since we moved here. One is this woman who’s married to a lawyer and they’re very conservative, and that’s where I hear the trashing of First Nations, you know she’s from Alberta [often viewed as a conservative province], he’s an Indian,\(^97\) for God sakes, but he’s very successful here.

Values are related in a complex way to political orientation. Participants position themselves and others within their figuration according to the values they hold. For example a commitment to social justice is associated with solidarity with Indigenous peoples. Simon, a civil servant, makes an interesting point about the way institutional values (in his case the values of the federal civil service) can align, or not, with personally held values and how these values affect relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Despite this clear and consistent differentiation within the non-Indigenous figuration between those who are in solidarity with Indigenous people and those who are not, the participants still felt that the non-Indigenous figuration, as a whole, is implicated in the oppression of Indigenous people. This is in line with Esquith’s (2010) and Verdeja’s (2012) argument that though standing by is not directly an act of genocide, people who stand by are complicit through association as members of the hegemonic group in society, the group those perpetrating genocide act on behalf of. Due to this complicity, the participants felt the need to distance themselves from their own figuration, from their own identity even, if they wanted to form relationships with Indigenous people. Greg articulates this most clearly:

> (Do you feel that in order to build those relationships you need to, as you put it, “individualize yourself out of your own group?”)…. I wish I didn’t need to, but I think

\(^97\) i.e., he is from India.
right now I do. I think there’s still a great deal of justified tension and mistrust between the groups…. I think it’s a sad statement that as a non-Indigenous person, I need to show that I don’t have some sort of weird ulterior motive…. (so you’re seeing those ulterior motives as being intrinsically linked to being non-Indigenous or White, depending on how you want to define it, identity?) Yeah.

Bandura (1999) argues that in genocidal contexts those standing by disengage the psychological controls in place to regulate their moral behaviour. They do this in order to resolve the cognitive dissonance created by, on the one hand, seeing oneself and, by extension other in-group members, as good; while on the other hand, perpetrating or acquiescing to behaviour that is clearly immoral. Reframing genocidal acts as benign, justified or even moral, distancing oneself from the acts physically or psychologically, and dehumanizing or blaming the victims for bringing genocide on themselves are techniques mentioned in the genocide studies literature for managing cognitive dissonance. However, in this study, the finding about disavowal, the move by non-Indigenous people to differentiate themselves from their own figuration, to, in effect, other themselves from their own people, suggests a different strategy; a strategy that focuses on relationships within the complicit figuration, rather than relationships with the targeted figuration.

The participants identified two ways this differentiation from their own hegemonic figuration is accomplished: Through gaining expertise on Indigenous people; and, more significantly in the data, through embracing challenge. As I discuss in Chapter 9, learning more about Indigenous people is seen as potentially transformative of the relationship the non-Indigenous figuration has with Indigenous peoples. However, possessing this knowledge is also the way people who desire relationships with Indigenous people differentiate themselves from other non-Indigenous people. Similarly, people who reach out beyond their figuration are seen as risk takers. Reaching out beyond one’s own figuration is a challenge in terms of finding the time to do it; challenges one’s values and beliefs (characteristics that define social figurations); creates challenges in one’s interpersonal relationships (one becomes obligated to speak up against discrimination, which can create social tension); and challenges one’s professional skills and capacities.

98 This in itself is problematic, as demonstrated by Said (2003) and Smith (1999). The colonial trope of knowledge of a colonized people facilitates their domination.
I elaborate on these issues in Chapter 9, when I discuss habitus. I introduce them here to highlight that it is seen as exceptional for non-Indigenous people to interact with Indigenous people. The very nature of the hegemonic figuration is viewed as antithetical to this, so much so that the participants feel that they have to try to make themselves non-non-Indigenous in order to do so. The critical problem with this disavowal — what research on settler colonialism and critical citizenship studies conceptualize as a “move to innocence” (Tuck & Yang, 2012) — is that while it may (arguably) facilitate individual relationships between figurations, it does nothing to reconcile inter-figurational relationships. It also does nothing to transform the hegemonic figuration in ways that interrupt genocidal processes.

**More Connections Needed**

In the face of these challenges with space and demographics, as well as the cultural and legal barriers I discuss in subsequent chapters, interpersonal relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people still occur. Some of the participants talked of the relationships they have with a person who is Indigenous, and how that relationship shaped how they view and relate to Indigenous people in Canada more generally. Most of their interpersonal relationships with Indigenous people have come about through their work. For example, by reporting on a story about Indigenous people, by implementing a government program in First Nations communities, or by advocating with Indigenous activists and communities for human rights. For some of the participants these relationships were confined to work; but some spoke of friendships that have lasted over decades. One non-Indigenous participant now takes her children to ceremonies in First Nations communities. Another spoke of how chance involvement with a project addressing Indigenous issues led to a career working with Indigenous communities.

Most of the participants said that they had no relationships with Indigenous people growing up, but a few talked about relationships in childhood. Those who did, like Greg, a teacher, described childhood relationships with Indigenous people as consciousness raising experiences:

> We had a couple of students in our school who were Indigenous. They [the other non-Indigenous students] were totally racist, like racist terribly [towards the Indigenous]
students in the school. They joined, they were only in our school for a couple years and then left for obvious reasons.

Participants, like Greg, who had relationships with Indigenous people in childhood, were reflective in how they talked about their relationships with Indigenous people as adults. Yet, even the participants who have significant relationships with Indigenous people spoke of finding them challenging. Greg located these challenges in his own mindset: “I guess like a stereotype threat, I’ll sit down to talk to an Indigenous person and wobble all over the place.” He is still figuring out how to overcome these challenges and struggles to articulate why he behaves so awkwardly with Indigenous people and why he needs “permission” to deepen his relationships with the Indigenous community. Yet, Greg viewed himself as responsible for doing this work.

On the other hand, Deb, a civil servant, viewed the challenges as stemming from the context in which she relates with Indigenous people. She explained that her ministry engages with First Nations governments and agencies:

Mainly we do a lot of videoconference or they come to us, ‘cause they have money now. But it’s very, it’s always a formal meeting space with these senior people. They don’t bring the people that we work with on the operational side [to Ottawa to meet with us], so it’s kind of odd, it’s very odd.

Deb’s concerns emerged from the modality of these relationships as mediated by technology and governed by hierarchy. Simon, a retired civil servant, on the other hand, spoke of the effect of differing mandates and cultures in government departments on the way relationships with Indigenous people develop, including a social services type relationship with the Ministries of Indigenous and Northern Affairs and Health, adversarial relationships with the Ministry of Justice, and virtually no interpersonal relationships with Finance and Treasury. In his experience, the greater the opportunity for interpersonal relationships, the greater the understanding non-Indigenous civil servants develop about Indigenous peoples; and the more distant the relationship, the more “myths and misperceptions take hold.”

The interviews suggest that institutions play an important role in facilitating relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Deb, for one, spoke of having relationships with Indigenous people only through work. However, these relationships create challenges.
Institutions enshrine power differences; non-Indigenous people are often the ones with the most institutionally-derived power. While Indigenous communities may be experiencing trauma and intergenerational trauma from past victimization by institutions (schools, child welfare, the health system, and the police, to name a few); the history of these relations may have been erased from institutional memory. As a result, non-Indigenous employees are likely to repeat past transgressions and not understand why communities are distrustful of their efforts. Furthermore, institutions do not adhere to values in the same way that individuals do, despite the fact that we often expect institutions to uphold ethical standards in the context of relationships with Indigenous people. A government does not feel guilty, though the people who work for it might. This research likely overemphasizes the institutional dimensions of relationships, because I recruited participants with certain professional affiliations and asked about them in interviews. Yet, many relationships in Canada between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people occur within institutional contexts.

Relationships, including institutional relationships, can be interpersonal, but they can also be mediated. An Indigenous journalist, writer, artist, public figure, or teacher can form a connection with and have influence over a large number of non-Indigenous people. This one-to-many relational modality could compensate for the demographic imbalance that reduces the chances of non-Indigenous people connecting with Indigenous people. However, the imbalance is not solely demographic. As I discuss in detail later in this chapter, there is also an imbalance of power. Indigenous people have been systematically excluded from positions of influence that could provide them with a platform for building mediated relationships with non-Indigenous people. Mona, a journalist, illustrated how demographics and power work together; the relatively small percentage of Indigenous people in Toronto can be used to rationalize excluding media stories by and about Indigenous people:

So the big, big ones [ethnic communities], we are endeavouring to build relationships, build contacts within those communities and tell those stories back, and the Indigenous peoples, and this is where I’m being honest, it’s important, we’re told it’s important, but in a city like Toronto relatively speaking the numbers are so small and we’ve got to tackle the big groups first…. No one’s ever said “We’re not going to do that story because who cares? It’s only about a demographic that’s so small that it doesn’t matter.” Like no one’s
ever been, no one’s ever said that. It’s not at that level. It’s more, “oh God, yeah, we need to get to it” (nervous laugh).

Similarly, Heather bemoaned the lack of media attention and popular interest in the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools. The media could be mitigating the effect of this demographic imbalance, building one-to-many relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples; yet, its neglect of Indigenous stories actually decreases the chances of mediated relationships forming. The education system, which I discuss in Chapter 10, has similar effects on relationships.

The relationships that the participants have with Indigenous people are sometimes challenging, but the lack of relationships is clearly more of a problem. Simon addressed this in the context of the institutionalized government relationships he is most familiar with:

> What has bothered Indigenous people so far, you have a number of treaties in the north, and the frustration is that there are no government-to-government relationships on an ongoing basis. I think they [Indigenous governments] find that they’re still in the lobbying business, nothing changes, ‘cause you can make that agreement, but the agreement is not going to cover all contingencies, and I’m afraid that the attitude within government is, we don’t want to talk to these guys, they’ll be raising issues, they’ll be asking us for more money. It’s just (or holding us accountable for what we’ve already promised and not delivered?) Yeah, exactly.

Thus, even when a relationship is clearly and formally acknowledged, in this case in a treaty or a legally binding agreement between governments, non-Indigenous institutions, or rather the people that comprise these institutions, avoid their relational responsibilities. It is no surprise then, that in contexts where relationships are not formally sanctioned, they often do not develop. Though demographics and geography are frequently given as excuses for the lack of relationships, there are clearly institutional and institutionalized challenges and, especially, attitudinal shifts that need to occur. These attitudes are not only a factor in understanding the absence of relationships. They persist in the minds of those non-Indigenous people who actually attempt to build relationships.
Thus, while interpersonal relationships appear to be important, they are not the only catalyst for motivating non-Indigenous Canadians to intervene to stop genocidal processes, nor are they sufficient. For example, one of the participants, a journalist and editor, has throughout his career covered stories in Indigenous communities; he proclaims, in his articles and to me, that he builds respectful relations with the Indigenous people he interviews, as individuals. However, the policy changes he editorializes, which he claims have the best of intentions, would erode Indigenous rights, particularly communal land rights. So while more interpersonal relationships are clearly needed, the behaviour of non-Indigenous people in these relationships is also crucial. As Indigenous people in Canada can well attest, relationships can have negative as well as positive effects.

In her extensive outreach to non-Indigenous Canadians, Indigenous and child rights advocate Cindy Blackstock (2009a) appeals to “Canadian” values. One of her articles, for example, is entitled, “Reconciliation in Action: Educators and Students Standing in Solidarity with First Nations Children and Canadian Values” (2012). Similarly, a large majority of the participants spoke of the importance of, what I call, “conceptual relationships.” These include relating to Indigenous people as rights holders, acknowledging the ways in which we are all connected, striving to see things from the perspective of Indigenous people, and appreciating Indigenous peoples.

Brian talked at length about the process human rights advocates in Canada underwent to finally acknowledge Indigenous people as rights holders: “I do think that once Indigenous peoples named their struggle as a struggle for human rights, it opens new ground for partnership and solidarity; and I think that it becomes a lot clearer for non-Indigenous people.” While Brian spoke explicitly of human rights, referring to international human rights instruments, other participants implicitly referred to human rights with statements like Pete’s, “people are people”; they also pointed out that access to rights (e.g., education) is helping to ameliorate imbalances in power, bringing Indigenous and non-Indigenous people closer.

In a different vein, Deb, who works on public health issues, believes that as part of the same ecological system, we, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are all connected, as she explained:
People are beginning to understand that you don’t want a pocket of unhealthy people, you are all British Columbians, and I think the Ministry of Health is beginning to see that, and that’s why they’re really buying into this [promoting the health of Indigenous people] and really working strong together with the First Nations Health Authority.

Ellen has a related conceptual approach, and thinks in terms of a social network, rather than an ecological system. She believes that if the rights of some are threatened, it puts everyone at risk, “and society cannot tolerate that [Indigenous women are going missing and being murdered], because if that’s happening in your society anything can happen.” Connection is also evoked in the sense of sharing a place. For example, Linda, a journalist said that: “This is our country and these are people in our country, it’s as simple as that.” Greg, a history teacher, took this idea of connection one step further, by considering relationships across time and the relevance of historical relationships with Indigenous peoples, which he considers genocidal, to his non-Indigenous students today.

Another basis for relating that does not require an interpersonal relationship is perspective taking. Unlike the human rights and connection examples that appear, at least at first, to be intellectual entry points for relating; for Heather, a civil servant, perspective taking is emotional. Through her work with the federal government, Heather has been engaged with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process. She described her emotional response to the process:

> It’s very, very painful to hear what parents endured and children, obviously as well, who were sent away. At this stage in my life, as a parent, hearing the stories from parents who saw their children leave on planes or dogsleds, never to come back; and to understand that that was only in some cases 40, 50 years ago. It’s really overwhelming sometimes.

Heather also mentioned that some of her non-Indigenous colleagues in the civil service have developed an appreciation for Indigenous ways of knowing through their work. This appreciation, in and of itself, drives them to relate with Indigenous peoples in better ways.
Not One of Us

As with face-to-face relationships, the conceptual modes of relating are accompanied by challenges as well. As I explained in my discussion of the Sudanese context, relationships manifest differences in power; and despite the positive connotations of the word *relationship*, they can have negative dimensions. For example, some ways of relating that the participants raised fit a colonial pattern. While in the previous section I focused on the positive aspects of relationships; in this section, I consider othering, the intellectual justification of colonialism (Said, 2003). Othering is, in part, the denial of relationship; yet, it is also characterized by particular interactions. I present the participants’ discussions of othering sequentially, progressing from blaming, to distancing, to separating, to differentiating, to discriminating. However, othering does not manifest in a linear fashion. A single interaction can simultaneously display any number of these processes, in any particular order.

Participants repeated a refrain that problems in their relationships with Indigenous peoples “hit close to home.” In saying this, the participants acknowledged the feeling of being confronted with an uncomfortable truth, a critical contradiction, that of belonging to a country committed to human rights, which blatantly and systematically denies them to Indigenous peoples; a country that stands for tolerance yet commits genocide. Addressing the reason he does not teach about genocide in Canada, Greg said,

It’s one of the most difficult pieces for me because (long pause) one, it’s closer to home; and two, it’s (long pause) because it’s close to home, instead of looking and saying those Armenians and Turks distrust each other. [I have to ask,] what does it look like between myself as a White male and Indigenous people?

Acknowledging that grave violations may be occurring in Canada, puts the state’s and, by extension, the participants’ own righteousness and moral superiority into question. Given how central human rights and diversity are to Canadian identity, living with this cognitive dissonance takes significant psychological and social work. As Gloria, also a teacher, said “I think it’s really hard for Canadians. We have this sense of being a just people. We think we couldn’t have done that [i.e., treated Indigenous people badly]. We don’t like to think that we, as a country, can

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99 Here Greg referred to the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923.
possibly do anything so bad systemically.” It is this dissonance that causes the participants the discomfort that drives them to blame, distance, and separate themselves from Indigenous people.

**It’s your fault!**

One of the ways that non-Indigenous people manage this dissonance is by blaming Indigenous people for the problems they face. As Greg explains, victim blaming is made possible by ignorance or denial of the context of colonialism and genocide:

> I think that’s why this history is so important, because when you take it in the vacuum of, I’m here. I look around I see these [Indigenous] people abusing themselves. What’s wrong with them? Well, let’s learn the history of how we may have gotten here to this point.

With the context of colonialism and racism denied, the circumstances and actions of Indigenous people are seen as simply part of who they are. This racialized view, articulated by some of my participants, echoes the discourse of the eugenics movement in Canada, which considered Indigenous people to be genetically predisposed to any number of problems.\(^\text{100}\) It explains the persistence of government policies and legislation, most overtly the *Indian Act* (RSC, 1985, c1-5), that define Indigenous people as a racial group. Similarly, Greg and Deb reported that their non-Indigenous friends and colleagues say things like, “What’s wrong with them?” or, “They’re just losers, and that’s where they belong [i.e., in prison].”

Alternatively, some of the non-Indigenous participants viewed the problems Indigenous people experience as inherent to Indigenous cultures. For example, Ken, a journalist, stated that Indigenous people are lazy because of their “screwed up society.” This culture blaming recalls the rationale for policies of cultural genocide, such as the Indian Residential School System (TRC, 2015), or the Sixties Scoop (Kimelman, 1985). A prevalent manifestation of this is blaming Indigenous communities for insulating their members from the rest of Canadian society and failing to acculturate them to the capitalist economy (Awgu, 2013). Those who hold this view claim that Indigenous people want to be geographically and socially isolated on reserves,

\(^{100}\) Indigenous people were forcibly sterilized in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia as a result, from the 1920s to the 1970s.
and they resist integrating into non-Indigenous institutions (e.g., schools). For example, Ken complained about a “social collectivism” in Indigenous communities “which reminded me, in a sense, of Soviet communism.” He went on to talk about a northern First Nations community that he visited for a story he was writing:

There’s an appalling lack of any kind of business sense, and that was predominant, and also a vision of life that really emphasized a connection to the land, that in some cases encouraged people to forsake the opportunities that, in a globalized society, only come from engaging with urban society and job opportunities and educational opportunities, and what not.

Greg shared a similar perspective that he has heard voiced by some recent immigrants: “This is the land of opportunity. Why can’t these people take advantage of these opportunities? They’re wasting their lives (a similar immigrant experience, right?); yeah, and so it’s their [Indigenous peoples] own fault.” The arguments that Ken voiced and Greg conveyed are consistent with a capitalist discourse that blames the poor for their poverty (See Chapter 10). Connected to the characterization of Indigenous people as lacking initiative, is the view that they are exploitative, as an opinion Greg conveyed demonstrates: “They are sucking the state dry…[they] don’t contribute anything”; and Ken’s argument that “reserves are one big welfare state.”

Despite doing so himself, Ken felt that, in the current political climate, it is less acceptable, even amongst conservatives, to blame Indigenous people for their problems. However, Brian, a human rights advocate, felt that blaming Indigenous leadership, sometimes for their incompetence but often for corruption, is still par for the course, as he commented:

Anytime that anyone raises the basic, the systemic, chronic underfunding to services to First Nations, and its consequences, poor quality schools, you’ll have a government minister jump up…to start either making insinuations or outright accusations that the problem is in Indigenous leadership.

Along similar lines, Ken blamed the quality of housing on many reserves on First Nations governments for not establishing building codes. However, unlike Linda who is also a journalist, Ken did not directly blame corrupt chiefs for these problems. In a more nuanced way, he argues that there is an elite political class of chiefs who resists changes in government policy and
accountability, because this could undermine the power and authority they derive from distributing the resources allocated by the federal government. Brian called this line of argument racist. First, he argued, it overlooks the extent to which the federal government bears direct responsibility for the mismanagement of funds spent on reserves today and over the past 150 years. Second, he stated, it ignores the fact non-Indigenous governments probably experience higher levels of corruption than First Nations governments; it is just that the standards of accountability for First Nations governments are much higher. For example, “nobody goes to that as the first and primary explanation” for economic inequality between Atlantic Canada and the rest of the country.101

Stay away!

Many of the participants were careful not to blame Indigenous people for the ways in which they are disadvantaged in Canada. However, they still reacted to the attack on their positive self concept as Canadians and used other techniques to manage the resulting cognitive dissonance, distancing, in particular. When contemplating uncomfortable truths about Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations, Linda, a journalist, reframed the situation as follows: “This is the Third World right here in our country.” In other words, these types of problems are not supposed to happen in a place like Canada, so these places are not really Canadian. By reclassifying Indigenous communities as foreign places, Linda allowed the exception of Indigenous people’s status to prove the rule that Canada is the best country in the world to live in. Like reclassifying Indigenous communities as “third world,” many moves to distance Indigenous people have geographical dimensions. For example, most of the participants viewed violations of Indigenous peoples’ rights as occurring on remote reserves, or “out West” in urban ghettos. Yet Mona, who works in Toronto, is critical of this view. In our interview, I suggested that the legacy of Indian Residential Schools may not feel as relevant to Torontonians, who live in a place where Indigenous people are less visible. She responded, “but it’s not probably as far away as you think it is, when you start pulling the threads in terms of what the impact is.”

101 Over the past few decades the economy and average incomes in Atlantic Canadian have been substantially lower than in other Canadian provinces. As a result, these “have not” provinces receive more in federal transfer payments than they contribute to federal revenues.
The isolationist argument blames Indigenous culture, rather than the various provisions of the *Indian Act*, which, under threat of legal sanction, forced Indigenous people onto reserves and excluded them from non-Indigenous communities and institutions. It also ignores the widespread, and often intense and violent, racism Indigenous people face when they enter non-Indigenous society. Those who share Ken’s views, similarly ignore legislation that forbade Indigenous people from trading outside their communities (*Indian Act*, 1930); legislation that has denied, to this day, education in Indigenous communities on par with what the rest of Canadians receive (Auditor General, 2011); and has appropriated assets (Freeman, 2010) that could have been used as capital for investment.

I spoke with Pete, a journalist who has reported on many stories in Indigenous communities far from Canada’s urban centres, about the potential of media to bridge these distances. However, the ways in which these stories are covered can actually make the distances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people seem even bigger. Pete confessed that he has been complicit in exoticizing Indigenous people. When his news editors in Toronto rejected a story he pitched about the devastation of livelihoods in a northern community by a government policy, he suggested asking the people he interviewed to speak in Inuktitut and wear “animal skins”:

> I could have easily have found English [speaking] people to talk to me, but I used Inuktitut, ‘cause I knew that’s what they wanted for me to get the story on, because it was sort of cute then.

Irrespective of Pete’s good intentions — he wanted Inuit communities to have a platform to voice their grievances — he and his news network, self consciously, portrayed Indigenous people as a distant “other.”

Reframing Indigenous people as a social underclass, particularly in the city where they are uncomfortably close, also contains and distances them. For example, Ken claimed that the, “Aboriginal population in urban centres tends to coalesce in a working class or lower.” He then reinforced the stereotype of Indigenous people as dependent on social services, claiming that a story he did on Indigenous social-service providers in Toronto portrayed the experience of urban Indigenous people. Moreover, after erasing the Indigenous people who are closest to and most
like him (i.e., middle and upper class), he distanced himself from Indigenous leaders and intellectuals by saying he is suspicious of them.

When confronted by uncomfortable truths, especially when the conversation turned to genocide, a number of the participants shifted the conversation to a context outside of Canada, ideally one where the situation is believed to be worse. Rather than distancing Indigenous people, they distanced themselves from the uncomfortable reality of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in Canada. In these cases, distancing is akin to avoidance. For example, despite promoting herself as an advocate for Indigenous content in the classroom, Helen would not say anything in our interview about the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada, despite this being the topic of the research. She, instead, veered off to other subjects, such as World War II and curriculum theory, and other contexts, such as Columbus and Bartholomew de Casas. I concluded that either the topic was too close to home for her to discuss or she does not know much about it. Perhaps it was both. Ignorance and discomfort are connected. Avoiding knowing about Indigenous people may result from the feelings of discomfort the topic triggers. Furthermore, Helen, a leader in her field of education, may feel acutely uncomfortable that she is ignorant about a topic she herself said she should be teaching. Thus, in this way, distancing stands in the way of non-Indigenous people learning about Indigenous people.

The participants also pointed to proximity in the opposite direction, of being too close, as affecting the way non-Indigenous people see Indigenous people and the issues that affect them. For example, Brian, a human rights advocate, related the following:

I often hear people in NGOs saying it’s so complicated in Canada [with Indigenous peoples]. The organizations are so complex, the policies are so complex, and I’ve never seen any reason to think that it’s more complex here than anywhere (laugh). I just don’t see that, and I think it’s a matter of being closer, and that you see the divisions and the tensions being played out in the media here.

Non-Indigenous people find themselves close to an issue, even implicated in it; yet, they do not have the cultural and historical knowledge to make sense of it. Linda suggested that when Indigenous people are close, it is difficult to bring these issues into focus. For example, persistent inequality is taken for granted by non-Indigenous Canadians; and, as a result, they have trouble
seeing it. From further away it seems possible to get a clearer view. Linda talked of the excellent coverage that Qatar-based, Al Jazeera has on Indigenous issues in Canada.

I have referred to the physical segregation of Indigenous people on reserves, but segregation also occurs off reserve. Through legislation and policy, segregation has been enforced to different degrees over time. Significantly, only one of the participants discussed this issue. Social segregation ensures separation in the face of close physical proximity. As Brian recalled: “I grew up in Nova Scotia in the 1970s, 1980s and, although I may [have] been adjacent to a Mi’kmaq community, I had no exposure to Indigenous culture.” Even in institutions where these communities come together, non-Indigenous people (and also Indigenous people), may be socialized to stay apart, like Greg’s two Indigenous classmates who, according to him, left his school due to the ostracism and racism they experienced.

Thus, exclusion has social as well as physical dimensions. Social inequality leads to exclusion, in other words, exclusion from opportunities and participation in the wider society. Furthermore, exclusion has an affective component. For example, Gloria, a teacher, talked about “nobody caring,” something that manifests in discrimination, another dimension of othering. Simon explained that, as a civil servant, he saw “nobody caring” manifest in the federal government’s failure to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996):

It was a real challenge to get anybody’s attention…. The frustration of, on the one hand, seeing desperate need and, on the other hand, not being able to a priority on the issue that one wanted within government.

I have discussed how geography helps contain problems with Indigenous people; however framing problems as being in the past, or the cause of today’s problems being historical, also relieves one of feeling complicit. This is reinforced by the refrain that, we must “move forward”; and Indigenous people should “get over it” and stop talking about historical injustices. This argument, of course, ignores the influence of the past on the present, including intergenerational trauma suffered by Indigenous people; the disadvantages and social privileges that non-Indigenous people inherited from their ancestors; as well as the persistence of discriminatory historical policies in the present, such as the Indian Act (1985, RSC, c1-5). Corntassel (personal
communication, July 9, 2014) explained that this historicization is also inconsistent with his worldview, “from a Cherokee [perspective] we have a phrase, ‘learn to live in a longer now, learn your history and culture and know that that’s part of who you are now. So that suffering is ongoing, it’s not [over], it’s part of our collective consciousness, it’s not just something that happened in the past.’” Moreover historicizing genocide can be yet another way of justifying standing by. As the former Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, recently said in an interview:

I wasn’t willing to do it [apologize for removing Indigenous children from their homes and placing them with non-Indigenous families]; not because I didn’t understand there had been a lot of injustices, not because I didn’t realize they had been a disadvantaged people, but I just don’t believe that the current generation should apologise for things done in earlier times. (AFP, 2014)

With Indigenous people distanced, physically or temporally, non-Indigenous people can more easily keep themselves apart: They are not responsible.

**Not like us.**

Separation or exclusion are also facilitated by discourse about how different Indigenous people are from non-Indigenous people. Phil, a civil servant, recalled:

Growing up in rural Manitoba …that was my first sense of the Aboriginal or Indigenous people in Canada…. They were different, different values, different religion, different everything, so they were seen as a cultural threat. (emphasis added)

Half-hearted attempts to include Indigenous people through tokenism reinforce rather than counter differentiation. Ken spoke of a Cree man he interviewed, as being educated, skilled, entrepreneurial, and ambitious — traits Ken clearly values. Though Ken may have intended to convey that Indigenous people are equal to non-Indigenous people, the effect of this description sets this man up as an exception that proves the rule. In fact, many of the participants emphasized the personal attributes of individual Indigenous leaders, as defying stereotypes of Indigenous people as poor, uneducated, traditional, stupid, or lazy, setting them up as exceptional. Similarly, the effect of seeing Indigenous people as different from non-Indigenous
people in “everything,” goes beyond acknowledging that they have cultures that are distinct, to painting them as strange “others.”

Linda’s perception of Indigenous people’s experience of death speaks to the belief of some non-Indigenous Canadians that these differences are fundamental: “Death is treated so differently. It’s so…death is so normal in their world, and so sadly common that it’s become a normal part of life.” Linda’s reframing of death in Indigenous communities as “normal” provides insight into how Indigenous people dying at higher rates than non-Indigenous people is tolerated in Canada, how differentiation can lead to discrimination, and the belief that Indigenous people’s lives matter less.

The “R” Word

Though all of the participants were concerned about the relationship between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people, and even sympathetic to the challenges Indigenous people face, a majority did not speak of these relationships in terms of racism or discrimination. These same participants often professed to being overwhelmed or mystified by the reasons Indigenous people in Canada face so many challenges. A few of the remaining participants described racism as being at the core of how non-Indigenous people relate to Indigenous people; a structure that explains the extensive, though on the surface disconnected, ways in which Indigenous people are disadvantaged. After reciting many of these disadvantages, Gloria arrived at systemic discrimination as the explanation for them: “I don’t understand how people can come to any other conclusion,” she said, “I don’t get it.”

So, then why do so many non-Indigenous people miss systemic racism? Some consider racism as racist speech alone. For example, Deb, a civil servant, supported the assertion that “most people are pretty much aware of the issues and are not racist in [her government] department,” with the observation that most have never said negative things to her about Indigenous people. Perhaps these participants are blind to discrimination because they lack interpersonal relationships with Indigenous people and so do not hear about the explicit forms of discrimination that they face on

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102 I make a similar argument in Chapter 3 about genocide as structure.
a regular basis nor see the effects of implicit discrimination. Brian is the only participant who
described the way that implicit racism works as a lens, shaping non-Indigenous people’s
perceptions of Indigenous people and their experiences. It is important, he argued, because it
affects Indigenous people’s ability to access all of their rights. However Brian is atypical among
the participants, in that he has spent extensive time speaking with non-Indigenous people about
Indigenous peoples’ human rights. Often hearing racist discourse has led him to reflect on how
racism works. He is also the only participant to recognize that systemic racism is premised upon
an ideology of racial superiority.

Phil, is a retired civil servant who spent most of his career working on Indigenous issues, and
thus is uncommonly familiar with the Canadian government’s policies towards Indigenous
people. Phil spoke of the ways that, historically, racism has been institutionalized. He explained
that this institutionalization required that Indigenous people first be racialized. This was
accomplished through transforming the relationship between the Crown and a multitude of
distinct Indigenous nations, to a relationship between the Canadian state and alienated
Indigenous individuals. Following from this denial of Indigenous nationhood, the alienated
Indigenous individuals who survived were infantilized. Viewed as needing protection and
tutelage, they were given fewer rights than other citizens and were subjected to extreme forms of
control and discipline. Phil identified some of the core institutional instruments of oppression,
the manifestations of systemic discrimination, that have shaped the relationship between
Indigenous people and the Canadian government, the genealogically-based Indian Registry, in
particular.

In a different institutional setting, the teachers I interviewed described how racism works inter-
generationally in the education system, with teachers transmitting racism to their students.
However, the teachers argued that refraining from making racist comments is not sufficient, as
students bring racist views to the classroom. So if racism is to be interrupted, they suggested,
anti-racism education must be institutionalized.

The wide acceptance of the unequal treatment and status of non-Indigenous people in Canadian
society, to this day, facilitates the implementation of racist polices. In other words, a racist
culture enables institutionalized racism. In Brian’s words, racism is something non-Indigenous
Canadians “take for granted.” Some participants observed that the current mindset has deep historical roots and has persisted over many years, contributing the belief that this is the “way things have always been.”

The Way Things Have Always Been

In Chapter 3, I showed the way that capital — social, economic, cultural, and political — and violence have been employed by members of the non-Indigenous figuration to destroy Indigenous figurations. Sometimes their attempts have succeeded, and sometimes they have been thwarted. Here, I link this analysis to the participants’ views on the impact of power on Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in Canada, relations that are often genocidal.

Economic capital.

Usurpation of land, destruction of livelihoods, and consequently poverty and dependency characterize genocide in Canada. Non-Indigenous people have used their economic capital to commit genocide, and genocide has been pursued through robbing Indigenous communities of economic capital. Many of the participants were aware of some of the economic impacts of these genocidal processes. In fact, poverty is central to the way many of the participants view Indigenous people: “Poverty, so that was my first sense of the Aboriginal or Indigenous people in Canada,” as Phil, a civil servant, stated. Furthermore, poverty is the focus of the relationships that the participants from the civil service have with Indigenous communities. They talked of the disproportionate representation of Indigenous people among social services users, and the dependency of Indigenous governments on federal funding.

Pete, a journalist, went so far as to link the impact of poverty back to physical techniques of genocide saying that Canadians starved many of “their” Indigenous people to death. However, only Greg, a teacher, talked about the systematic destruction of Indigenous peoples’ land-based livelihoods in “the purposeful destruction of buffalo herds out where I grew up” in Manitoba, which led to starvation. Furthermore, few participants drew connections between land usurpation and the destruction of livelihoods and the poverty that many Indigenous people and communities
experience today. There is little acknowledgement of the economic privilege that non-Indigenous Canadians now enjoy because their ancestors usurped these natural resources, nor that Indigenous land continues to be exploited in ways that advantage non-Indigenous people directly and indirectly. In other words, non-Indigenous people do not see how processes of genocide have created an inequitable distribution of economic capital.

While some of the participants understood that creating dependency was a deliberate strategy of the government to facilitate usurping of land and pacifying Indigenous populations; others, like Ken, a journalist, and Rob, a teacher, presented this dependency as an unintended consequence of failed processes of assimilation and a generous welfare state. According to Ken,

They don’t have the motivation really for job skills and that sort of thing because it’s a welfare state. They’re given enough money to live and in some cases buy flat screen TVs and sit around and do nothing. In the same way that I would sit around and do nothing if someone paid me to do that. That’s probably what I would do. It would ruin my life.

However, other participants dismissed this view and expressed concern about the stark disparities in wealth and well-being of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Yet, both views can lead to paternalistic responses. Despite tending towards solidarity with Indigenous people, Pete, a journalist, expressed concern about whether Indigenous people are responsibly managing their resources: “There’s [Indigenous] people that abuse it [their fishing rights] obviously.” Ken, on the other hand, is unabashed in his paternalism. He advocates unilaterally converting land on reserves into fee-simpe land and claims that this would stimulate economic growth. This type of policy would violate treaties; is opposed by most First Nations leaders; and could facilitate the further usurping of Indigenous land, greater economic disparity, and continuing genocide (Pasternak, 2014).

**Political capital.**

The participants did not mention that Indigenous people lack political capital; it was just assumed, possibly due to the fact that Indigenous people are a small minority in an electoral system based on representation by population. However the participants did not discuss the historical context for political marginalization. “Status Indians” did not have the right to vote or
run for political office federally until 1960; and traditional political structures were systematically attacked, re-engineered, and, to this day, function to rob Indigenous peoples of political power (RCAP, 1996).

Not only are Indigenous peoples denied power over their own affairs, the participants agreed that the wider Canadian public, to whom Indigenous people are subject, lack interest in their needs. As Will, a journalist who focuses on national politics, put it, Indigenous issues do not “move votes.” Political parties also have no need to develop a distinctive, never mind transformative, political platform that addresses Indigenous peoples. Will added that “if I sign on 100% with the agenda of the protestors of [the Indigenous rights movement] Idle No More, I don’t know what party I’d vote for at the next election.” Some Indigenous leaders and communities were initially enchanted with the Liberal party, which in 2015 replaced a Conservative government widely seen as antagonistic to Indigenous concerns. Yet, with little in the way of change in its substantive relations with Indigenous peoples, there is extensive cynicism about the “feel good” public relations statements of the Liberal government (Peries, 2017). Ignored by politicians, Indigenous issues have been left to the (mostly non-Indigenous) bureaucrats.

The people that I interviewed admitted that, in the absence of any political vision, they simply maintain a status quo that Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians alike are unhappy with. Many of the participants acknowledged the historical policies that affected genocide. However, they have a more difficult time seeing that, because of this lack of political will, a system with genocidal capacity remains in place. Phil commented, about both politicians and bureaucrats, frankly addressing this political neglect:

Ministers who get appointed to the federal government, to Indigenous Affairs, or provincial government Aboriginal Affairs: it’s like the kiss of death. Like, “God Jesus what did I do wrong that I should end up here?” Cause it’s a loser. You’re going to be pilloried by the clients, people that you’re supposed to be serving. You’re going to be pilloried by the general public and hated by political colleagues, because you’re going to bring out these nasty things to them, that they hate to deal with. Or you’re going to become a person who justifies all this terrible stuff, and that’s a terrible thing anyways.
Understandably this lack of political interest and bureaucratic capacity leads to concerns about accountability. However, as Rob’s, Linda’s, and Pete’s comments demonstrate, members of the non-Indigenous figuration focus on the lack of accountability of First Nations leaders instead, leaders who, at the end of the day, are merely implementing policies imposed on their people.

The ways in which this political power has been wielded by members of the non-Indigenous figuration have had relational consequences, creating a legacy of mistrust. This betrayal in the political realm has spilled over into other realms. Encouragingly, most of the participants appeared to be aware of this. In particular, they referred to the failure of the Canadian government to honour treaties: “We sold a bill of goods to [Indigenous] people and then [we] never followed through on anything,” Gloria said. Moreover, in light of the Indian Residential School System, Greg realized that “the education system is not trusted.” Interpersonal relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people outside of these institutional settings have also been affected. Pete and Linda spoke in depth about the importance to their work as journalists of building relationships of trust with members of Indigenous communities. They conceded that when conflicts escalate, and communities become polarized, such efforts are insufficient to overcome a century and a half of betrayal and resulting mistrust.

Deb, a civil servant, believes that this mistrust is not misplaced and that betrayal is as much a contemporary as a historical phenomenon:

> I feel like there’s a different culture in the department, there’s something different at AANDC [Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, currently Indigenous Affairs], and I don’t know what it is, but when we talk to them they’ll say “Oh this needs to be done, we need to change this, and you put too much money on the table for that community, and we have to reduce it because there’s not that many people living there.” “Okay. Did you tell the community?” [I reply] “Oh, no. They’ll be the last to know” [they reply].

Simon, a very senior retired civil servant, wanted to speak to me because he sees himself as complicit in a more recent betrayal of Indigenous peoples: A cap of 2% in annual increases of budgetary transfers to First Nations. This cap, which was instituted in 1996, was not lifted until 2016, 19 years after the deficit that was used to justify the cap was paid down, and long after
transfer payments to provincial governments had returned to pre-deficit levels. This funding cap has contributed to the infrastructure crisis most First Nations face across Canada, a crisis that has resulted in contaminated drinking water, substandard and dangerous housing and schools, and significantly less funding for education for Indigenous students than for Canadian students (Auditor General, 2011).

Simon, who was involved in negotiating this cap, believed at the time that it would be lifted once Canada’s deficit was paid down, and convinced the Indigenous leaders he dealt with of the same. However several years afterwards, when he went back to his department to ask why the funding cap had not been lifted, he was told that there was “nothing in writing” saying it would be. Simon felt that he had played a role in deceiving First Nations into accepting a measure that has been incredibly harmful and resulted in further disparity, and, I would argue, has furthered processes of genocide. Feelings of mistrust extend into political organizing outside of government. Both Brian and Ellen discussed the types of alliances that should have, but have not, been made between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous civil society (Nadjiwan & Blackstock, 2003).

The unequal distribution of political capital between Indigenous and non-Indigenous figurations is important because political capital converts into other forms of capital. Government spending and economic policies continue to disadvantage Indigenous figurations. The participants roundly agree that equality of outcomes for Indigenous people have not yet been achieved. A number of the participants referred to “the gap” between indicators for well-being for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Brian suggested that equity, rather than formal equality (which in many cases has not been achieved), should be the standard, as he explained: “If you underfund service to the people of greatest needs where the delivery of services is the highest cost, you don’t need to invoke the notion of a corrupt government to say things aren’t going to work.”

**Cultural capital.**

Assimilationist government policies take aim at Indigenous peoples’ cultural capital. The Indian Residential School System, in particular, has been called cultural genocide (TRC, 2015). With cultural capital, the quality not just the quantity of capital is important; not how much knowledge
one has, but which knowledge, the knowledge of the colonizer or of the colonized. If one views
cultural capital only in quantitative terms, then the drive by the French, British, and then
Canadian colonial project to assimilate Indigenous people could be interpreted as empowerment,
as giving Indigenous people knowledge of the hegemonic culture. However, the effect of
assimilation has been anything but equality for Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, some, though
certainly not all, of the participants acknowledged that empowerment was not the real intention
of these policies, even if it was sometimes justified in those terms.

An analysis of cultural capital also reveals what motivates non-Indigenous Canadians to support
assimilation. Around half of the participants conceded that a civilizing impulse underpins how
non-Indigenous and Indigenous figurations relate to each other. The unquestioned consensus
within the settler state of Canada is that Indigenous ways of being have no legitimacy. The
steadfast belief in the superiority of a European-derived civilization is not only a thing of the
past. David Newland (2012), in his article on racist responses to the grassroots movement for
Indigenous rights, Idle No More, provides the following examples of what ordinary Canadians
say:

“If First Nations and Inuit people choose to live way out there in the bush, it’s their problem.”
(para. 9)

“Native people need to get with the times and join the rest of Canadian society.” (para. 15)

Reading the following statement from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
(2012), it is not surprising that this is the predominant view:

For much of our history, all Canadian children — Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike —
were taught that Aboriginal people were inferior, savage, and uncivilized, and that
Aboriginal languages, spiritual beliefs, and ways of life were irrelevant. Aboriginal
people were depicted as having been a dying race, saved from destruction by the
intervention of humanitarian Europeans. Since little that was taught about Aboriginal
people was positive, the system led non-Aboriginal people to believe they were
inherently superior. (pp. 2-3)
The sense of cultural superiority that generates the civilizing impulse is virtually unquestioned because the cultural capital that the non-Indigenous figuration wields is so great. This is a textbook example of Gramscian (1971) cultural hegemony: The colonizers culture is viewed as better and more advanced, not because it objectively is, but rather because it is associated with those who are powerful. Some of the participants considered this colonial mentality problematic; while others, like Rob, a teacher, maintained a belief in civilizational progress: “Maybe living in a situation like today, it’s possible that you can never return to that stewardship traditional lifestyle.”

Though Phil refused to use the word “genocide,” he linked this civilizing impulse to processes of figurational destruction. According to Phil, it is an “impulse, which is, there’s no place in modern society for certain expressions of the way Aboriginal communities are organized.” He talked of the political shift in the mid 1800s, from viewing Indigenous people as nations to treating them as dependent individuals. In a similar vein, Deb said that despite policies of nation-to-nation relations, Indigenous people are often still treated like a “vulnerable group” or ethnic minority.

Do the participants appreciate the way this distribution of cultural capital has impacted Indigenous peoples? To an extent, yes. Gloria demonstrated a conditional awareness in the following statement:

I have no personal experience, but what you read about is a lot of…. When your culture’s stolen from you, you don’t speak the language, can’t communicate with people, you devalue the culture, you don’t know what your identity is […] and I say that because I don’t…identity is not something I think about that much, so I don’t. I just take it for granted. I am who I am, and I don’t feel like anyone is oppressing me, so it’s no big deal to me, but I can recognize how it can be.

Gloria acknowledged the reality for many Indigenous people and also acknowledged her privilege as a member of the hegemonic figuration that prevents her from fully appreciating that reality. Mona, a journalist who is of Métis heritage but does not identify as Indigenous, has direct experience of this reality, and thus her knowledge of it is embodied in a way that for Gloria it is not. She talked about her sense of loss and desire to know more about her heritage:
The Métis French connection is on my father’s side and he was orphaned at a very young age and grew up in a terrible, terrible, terrible upbringing, which he managed to overcome and enjoy a great deal of success, personal, professionally…. But it was more from what I would like to know, but can’t ever find out, because there’s no one around to talk to. But I knew there were stories out there, I heard some of them through my dad and through some of his family that he managed to connect back with when he became a young adult and later adult. But there was always this sense of…. I’ve got some stories, but it was just a taste, and I’ve always wanted to know more.

Finally, Rob made the point that the destruction of cultural capital is not just the loss of static cultural artefacts, it is the loss of cultural sovereignty, of control over how cultural change occurs.

The physicality of power.

Economic, political and cultural forms of capital go a long way in describing how power mediates relationships. However, in relationships, physical bodies can and do act upon each other. Physical and sexual violence manifest this physicality, and as described in Chapter 1, Indigenous people are subject to higher levels of these types of violence than any other peoples in Canada. Moreover, these types of violence against Indigenous peoples are widely condoned. However, it is not just physical and sexual violence that manifest this physicality. Regimes of discipline and control do as well, and they too structure relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous figurations. While regimes of discipline have been largely implemented by the Canadian state, they should be viewed as administrative, not political. As I explained above, Indigenous people have been made dependent and are under the control of the Canadian state; and, it is through the state’s institutions that this power is exercised.

Foucault (1978) calls this type of power “biopower,” i.e., the power “to make live and let die” (p. 241). Indigenous people are made through discipline within institutions, such as the reserve, the Indian Registry, residential schools, jails, Indian hospitals, mass adoption, and the child

103 For an in depth discussion of biopower and genocide in Canada see: MacDonald & Gillis, 2017 and Morgensen, 2011.
welfare system. Through these institutions they have come to be Indians (and then Aboriginals, and now Indigenous peoples). As Indians, they have been made to live in particular ways; and, if they fail to conform, they may be left to die from starvation, suicide, disease, accidents and interpersonal violence. Deb provided insight into how Canada’s public health policies and programs do this; while Phil spoke of how institutions for regulating heredity (the Indian Registry, Indian status cards, enfranchisement policies) have and are attempting to distinguish, separate, and then eradicate indigeneity. This biopower acts at the level of the individual on the Indigenous body; and at the level of the population, attempts to extinguish Indian status and the public health interventions that Deb referred to show how it operates. Moreover, Foucault (1978) considers the child as an ideal target of this biopower, which explains why Indigenous people are infantilized, treated like dependents, subjected to paternalism and why Indigenous children, in particular, are preyed.

Foucault (1978) describes biopower as the “hegemonic effects of individual force relations” (p. 94); in other words, it is not unified. While biopower against Indigenous people is certainly centred in and wielded by the state, and is legally sanctioned, the state has also infiltrated Indigenous communities to such an extraordinary extent that this power is everywhere, and there is no escaping it. The omnipresence of biopower, constantly working to re-engineer Indigenous people and peoples, places Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people in a very particular relation with each other. As Brian, a human rights advocate, explained, “just the denial of Indigenous people’s own decision-making powers, so the refusal to respect and work with Indigenous people in their capacity of making their own decisions, and their own institutions, their own means.”

The paternalistic stance of the state, and those who work for it, towards Indigenous people translates into a paternalistic attitude among non-Indigenous people more generally towards Indigenous people. One manifestation of this paternalism is the way non-Indigenous people represent themselves as tax payers who pay for the social services and other benefits that Indigenous people enjoy: “A lot of people — they just see it [Indigenous people] as a line item on their tax bill” (emphasis added), said Ken, a journalist. On the other hand, as I expand upon below, there is a disavowal of responsibility by non-Indigenous Canadians, the constituents who elect and continue to elect governments who enact policies that result in the abhorrent treatment
of Indigenous peoples. This is not to say that non-Indigenous people are not subjects of biopower as well, they certainly are (a crucial point I return to in Chapter 10); but they have already been created in a certain mould, conformed to a certain subject identity, and are actively disciplining themselves. On the other hand, the means by which Indigenous people are subject to biopower are, relative to non-Indigenous people, more overt; more visible; and, crucially, Indigenous people have been resisting this power.

The rationale for subjecting Indigenous people to this discipline, engineering them in a particular way, has not been to assimilate them into the mainstream, or centre of the non-Indigenous figuration. The belief that there is something essentially different about Indigenous people, which that could contaminate the hegemonic non-Indigenous subject identity remains. The intention is rather to incorporate them into the peripheries of the hegemonic figuration, as its lowest class. As I discussed in Chapter 7, Indigenous people are needed as the “other,” in opposition to which the hegemonic non-Indigenous figuration defines itself (Said, 2003).

In Canada, biopower does not preclude physical or sexual violence against Indigenous people. In fact, threatening violence and instilling fear is way of maintaining discipline. The crucial point again is that this violence, physical or otherwise, is not wielded in a uniform way or exclusively by the government. Rather, the violence of administrators (police, child welfare officials, teachers, and medical professionals, among others); members of the non-Indigenous community; and Indigenous people themselves is condoned by the government and non-Indigenous people in general. Encouragingly, the participants did recognize this pattern of violence in the epidemic of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women. The Canadian state does not itself rape, kidnap, and kill Indigenous women; but it has dehumanized them in a myriad of ways and condones violence against them by members of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous figurations, as well as by its own officials, ostensibly the police.

In their understanding of the way capital is distributed across Indigenous and non-Indigenous figurations, with very few exceptions, the participants underestimated the extent of the inequality, and the diversity of ways it manifests. I return to the problem that this extensiveness creates, when I discuss its impact on non-Indigenous people’s (in)action in the next chapter. A few of the participants have invested considerable energies in understanding how Indigenous
people are impacted by these interrelated forms of power; however, collectively, the participants’ knowledge about the realities of being an Indigenous person in Canada is limited. I expect that the ignorance of non-Indigenous Canadians about these issues of power has an impact on Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations.

Connecting with the Literature

In this chapter, I observe that Canada does not fit the collectivist cultural frame that genocide studies research associates with standing by (Koonz, 2003; Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002). In the next chapter, I expand on the way genocide works differently in contexts like Canada, where individualistic cultural frames prevail. Like Verdeja (2012), many of the participants believe that those standing by are complicit in genocide through association, by being a part of the hegemonic figuration that the perpetrators of genocide act on behalf of. The finding that individual non-Indigenous people disavow their hegemonic figuration, in order to connect with Indigenous people, is linked with the application of social psychology to the genocide literature, particularly theories of group identity (Kahn, 2009). It suggests that the cognitive dissonance created by the immoral acts of the in-group can be managed through separating from that in-group. While in the Sudanese context strong relationships among the hegemonic figuration contribute to weak obligations towards targeted figurations, the moves made by non-Indigenous people in Canada, who are attempting to stand up, suggest the reverse. For non-Indigenous people, stronger obligations towards the targeted figuration are associated with weakened relations with their own hegemonic figuration.

Conclusion

Non-Indigenous people in Canada stand by and do nothing about genocide in the context of intra- and inter-figurational relations that concentrate capital in their own hegemonic figuration. While the non-Indigenous participants can reflexively name their figuration, they struggle to characterize it. Instead they focus on their experiences as individuals and locate themselves, relative to others in the non-Indigenous figuration, along political lines. They see their figuration
as polarized in relation to Indigenous peoples, with those who are more liberal in solidarity with Indigenous peoples, and those who are more conservative against them. However, the efforts of some of the non-Indigenous participants to differentiate themselves from their own figuration in order to build relationships with Indigenous people suggest that the non-Indigenous figuration, as a whole, is in some way antithetical to respectful inter-figurational relations.

Unsurprisingly, participants described how interpersonal relationships with Indigenous people impact how they view and relate to Indigenous peoples. However, the interface of a demographic imbalance and the exclusion of Indigenous people from positions of influence means that relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, whether one-to-one or mediated, do not develop. This lack of relationships is the bigger problem for the participants. At the same time, relating to Indigenous people respectfully; engaging with Indigenous people as rights holders; acknowledging the ways in which we are all connected; striving to see the perspectives of Indigenous people; and appreciating Indigenous peoples are also important in the context of the relationships the participants discuss.

The participants face an uncomfortable contradiction in being part of a figuration that stands for human rights while committing genocide. They deal with this dissonance by not talking or thinking about Indigenous peoples, distancing themselves from them, and blaming them. This of course, gets in the way of the participants learning about Indigenous people. Both physical segregation and social exclusion are at play. Furthermore, the stereotyping and differentiation of Indigenous people is reinforced by tokenism. Systemic racism, which makes sense of the myriad ways in which Indigenous people are disadvantaged, is often overlooked.

The participants see Indigenous people as poor, yet, they ignore how this poverty was created. Indigenous peoples’ lack of political capital is just assumed, masking the relentless attacks on their sovereignty. There is little public interest in Indigenous issues and so little political will to reform an out dated system with genocidal capacity. Betrayal and mistrust is a legacy of how political power has been deployed. While equity rather than formal equality should be the goal Canadians strive for, the participants agreed that not even the latter has been achieved.

The quality rather than quantity of cultural capital distributed between the figurations is key to understanding assimilationist policies. Rather than being innately superior, Western culture is
simply the culture of the figuration that is most powerful. These types of supremacist ideologies justify paternalism by non-Indigenous people and the denial of Indigenous sovereignty. Finally, power is also embodied. Indigenous bodies have been disciplined and controlled, engineered, as well as violated. While Indigenous people are also subject to biopower, they do not benefit from it the way that non-Indigenous people do.
Chapter 9
The Habitus of non-Indigenous Canadians

Two friends see thousands of starfish on the beach. One picks up a few and throws them back into the ocean. The other staring at the multitudes asks, “What difference does it make?” The thrower replies, “It makes a difference to that one.” In the usual telling, the thrower is a hero. Making the small doable change. The other guy is a Grinch. But, I think the Grinch is misunderstood. I imagine he was just getting started with his questions: “Why are the starfish being beached? Will these few rescues distract us from actual solutions?” What if the thrower is complicit? A fisherman who dredges the seabed or an oilman whose work worsens climate change or even just a consumer of mussels or oil. Now it gets real. The thrower is making a difference to that one, yes; but he is also part of the problem. (Giridharadas, 2017)

Like the riverain Sudanese, the non-Indigenous Canadian participants admitted to standing by and doing nothing, but they did not think about it much. They are seemingly far less restrained than the Sudanese in their ability to act; yet, they spoke of remarkably similar constraints. Lack of knowledge also came across as integral to (in)action in the Canadian context. However, our discussions went beyond attributing inaction to ignorance and explored how non-Indigenous people’s worldview shapes what they know about Indigenous peoples and genocide. Conversations with the participants were about emotions and were, at times, emotional. The participants also identified a range of motivations for the failure of non-Indigenous people to act to interrupt genocide.

(In)action

The majority of the participants acknowledged that non-Indigenous Canadians are standing by and doing nothing (or not enough) to address problems in their relationship with Indigenous people, as the following statements demonstrate:

“I'd love to do more.” (Deb, a civil servant)
“There is no effort to see this as a major issue and to look for fundamental change.”
(Simon, a civil servant)

“I think some teachers think that it’s not important, so they’re not going to teach it. Some teachers are afraid [of] that, [so] they’re not going to teach it. And some teachers will mess around and try things and make mistakes and help their kids grow, come to some kind of understanding together. So, I think there’s three levels of not doing it.” (Helen, a teacher)

“That was a really big debate we had within the group [of journalists working on human rights], because what did this say about every Canadian journalists in the country? We’re not doing enough? Which we’re not…. There needs to be more leadership, people have to say things louder and longer. I guess I don’t do it enough.” (Linda, a journalist)

“[We] have not necessarily thought, is there an intersection between our concerns and those of Indigenous people?… So there’s really amazing stuff being done out there, collaborations, but there are also other organizations who work in that field and don’t connect with Indigenous people at all…. At the end of the day, there’s still a significant divide between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations” (Brian, a human rights worker)

Among some of the participants, “we need to do more” became a refrain.

Though I directed the participants to speak about the (in)action of their professional colleagues (and implicitly themselves), they often focussed on other types of actors. The federal government was most often identified by the participants as the one who should be acting. While Indigenous leaders themselves call for a relationship that is “nation to nation” — i.e. First Nation or Inuit or Métis nations to the Canadian government — the belief that the relationship with Indigenous peoples is solely the Canadian government’s responsibility risks excusing non-Indigenous Canadian individuals or non-governmental institutions from acting. The courts were also discussed as acting or not acting, reflecting how adversarial the relationship has become. In addition to the sectors I targeted for interviews (education, the media, civil service, and
international development/humanitarian/human rights), the churches (partly in relation to the Indian Residential School System, which they implemented); businesses; and even sports teams (in relation to racist names and logos) were mentioned as actors who should be taking action.

So what specifically is not being done? Broadly speaking the participants discussed inaction related to governance, relationships, education, and the media. Regarding governance there was a call for the government to settle the outstanding disputes with Indigenous peoples, many of which are being pursued through the courts, including land claim settlements and claims by specific groups of Indigenous people for their constitutional rights (i.e., non-Status Indians, Métis, or Indigenous children receiving child welfare services). They also include the resolution of problems that are more political in nature, such as Indigenous sovereignty; acknowledgement of colonialism; or ensuring that Indigenous communities are sustainable, self-sufficient, and more integrated into Canadian society. There were also calls to address the inadequate and, often, discriminatory provision of services, particularly, education and health services.

Although I tried to focus consistently on the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, most participants shifted the focus to “Indigenous issues.” They located the problems in Indigenous people or peoples, rather than non-Indigenous people or the relationship between the figurations. However, participants also noted broad failures in non-Indigenous Canadians’ behaviour in their relationships with Indigenous people, including failure to participate in reconciliation processes or lack of generosity. Concrete actions to improve these relationships were suggested, such as visiting and spending time in Indigenous communities and being curious to learn more about Indigenous people.

The failure of non-Indigenous Canadians to educate themselves, and each other, about Indigenous peoples and issues was identified as a particular problem. More specifically, participants noted the lack of educational courses solely devoted to Indigenous issues, the lack of Indigenous voices in the classroom, the lack of teaching about Indigenous worldviews, and the fact that when such learning opportunities are available they are optional and not mandatory. Some of the teachers I spoke with identified the lack of educational resources addressing Indigenous issues as a barrier. At the same time, they argued that materials are available, but educators refuse to use them. Similarly, the teachers I interviewed argued that including
Indigenous issues in the curriculum is simply not enough. As Gloria commented, “the system runs on individual teachers, it doesn’t matter what’s written in the curriculum. It does, but it doesn’t.”

The failure to teach about genocide was also discussed: “I’ve not ever taught a case study of North America, which I should do at some point,” said Greg who teaches a course on genocide. However, he also made the point that there is resistance among teachers to teach about genocide in any context. According to Greg and Helen, most teachers do not want to teach about genocide; school leadership is reluctant to approve teaching a course on genocide at their schools; and there has been resistance from school boards, the Ministry of Education, and community groups on this matter. So, be it the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationship or genocide itself, creating resources and changing curriculum without simultaneously helping teachers and administrators to reform their practice cannot be expected to promote change.

Inaction by the media is also identified as a problem. Part of this is simply the absence of media coverage about Indigenous people. Journalists do not seek these stories out and some of the reporters I spoke with claimed that their editors have been reluctant to accept the stories about Indigenous issues that they pitch to them. This is identified as a problem across news, current events, and editorial coverage. As Will, a national affairs columnist, admitted, “I have actually often tended to avoid covering the issues because I think they’re best left to specialists.” However, concern is also expressed about the efforts exerted by journalists who are providing coverage on Indigenous issues, that not enough time is dedicated to describing the history and context in which news stories unfold, context the public is usually unaware of because it was never a part of their education. Furthermore, journalists often do not seek out a diversity of Indigenous perspectives, and instead expect token individuals to speak for a diverse community of people.

As some of these examples of failures to act demonstrate, standing by is not just the absence of action, but also the way in which actions are carried out. As Phil and Simon, both civil servants, said, within the context of government, some things are being done, and the bureaucracy is busy. However the big, especially political, issues that could lead to substantive improvements are not being addressed: “It’s really hard to try and move things forward, so you just put your head down
and you just do whatever you can in your own little area, forget about the rest,” said Phil. In the same context Heather talked about the need for concerted and sustained efforts, or as Mona, a journalist said, consistent efforts. However, as Gloria pointed out, in reality, efforts are, “not across the board…. [They are] uneven…[and] it’s really hit and miss.” The lack of follow up on words with action is identified as a particular problem. Deb, a civil servant, criticized former Prime Minister Steven Harper’s apology on behalf of the federal government for the Indian Residential School System: “Well that’s not enough, you sort of see Steven Harper doing that [apologizing], he’s not really doing anything afterwards. So it doesn’t really mean anything.” Pete, a journalist, talks about the appointment of token Indigenous representatives to boards of companies working on Indigenous territory, an action he calls condescending. In these conversations token efforts appear to be the way that non-Indigenous people do something, without actually doing anything; in other words, without interrupting genocide.

Along the lines of tokenism, as political pressure to address these relationship problems grows, a response can be to do as little as one can get away with, as Rob, a teacher, described:

There’s some teachers that kind of rush through that part [about Indigenous people]. They put it off, and it’s like that chapter in the book that is not as important as some of the other ones, and so maybe they do it as a last minute lesson, but it’s not really related to an evaluation, or you are not going to be assessing anything for evaluation later.

This behaviour is exhibited by individuals and, as Simon explained, is also systemic:

Paul Chartrand one of the Royal Commissioners summed it up this way in a recent symposium. He said, “government wants peace at the cheapest price”, and I think that’s a fair comment. There is no effort to see this as a major issue and to look for fundamental change.

If one sees genocide as habitus, as a way of relating that is reflexive, unconscious even, as a process that has taken on a life of its own, then the inaction that allows this process to move forward becomes an act of genocide; and acting as though everything is normal becomes a form of inaction, a failure to interrupt genocide, and the facilitation of its perpetuation. The extent to which these processes are institutionalized and bureaucratized contributes to this. As Brian
explained, action may be used to create the appearance of doing something to stop genocide, when in actual fact it has no effect, it maintains the status quo:

It’s really easy to get bogged down [with the Ministry of Indian Affairs] in, well this much money is being spent, there’s this program and this program and that program, and it all sounds like the government is doing something, and it’s fairly hard to package a [critical] analysis of that.

The genocidal process in Canada has been set in motion by several hundred years of action\textsuperscript{104}, and it has its own momentum. Particularly because it is so institutionalized, and to a great extent just business as usual, this process can be allowed to run its course without much additional effort and genocide will be accomplished. A paradigmatic example of this is the eradication of Indigenous languages. Nothing more needs to be done to ensure that many of the Indigenous languages currently being spoken are eradicated. It is positive action, not refraining from doing bad things, that is needed to save them.

On the other hand, Indigenous peoples are struggling against genocide; and, in order to maintain the status quo, their resistance must be met. Government policy and legislation that is clearly discriminatory serves this purpose. This action to preserve the status quo manifests in ways that appear benign and every day. Failure to reform discriminatory policy and practice can be understood as the fault of a lumbering bureaucracy. Thus, while action may not be required to commit genocide, and perpetrators of genocide in Canada may be a thing of the past, as Brian explained, action is still needed to keep the genocidal structures in place, to resist change:

When the government really digs in its heels, and it fights against something as basic as an international human rights instrument, fights against a case, tooth and nail, like the one Cindy Blackstock brought to the Human Rights Tribunal [concerning underfunding of Aboriginal child welfare], or refuses to take any form of really substantial action on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women…. The sheer weight and power that the government brings to bear in any [case], whether it’s a process of litigation or a process

\textsuperscript{104} This is not to say that the action has always been consistent or in precisely the same direction. However, it does seem that historical shifts in Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations, to use a nautical metaphor, amount to tacking: periodically changing direction in order to maintain course towards a destination.
of negotiation. That you have government lining up against the rights of Indigenous people in a very adversarial way, using the full weight of its resources to stall, drag out.

Significantly, much of the government’s resistance is around issues of rights. The failure to implement rights that are already protected; legislation that violates Indigenous peoples constitutional rights; or resistance to attempts to expand or strengthen their legal protection (e.g., ratification of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People). Furthermore, as Simon argued, the Ministry of Justice, rather than working to ensure justice, is among the most adversarial arms of government in its relations with Indigenous peoples. The courts on the other hand, have been growing allies.

However, these policies of the Canadian state are driven by popular opinion, rather than the public being controlled by a government intent on genocide. Furthermore, public opinion polling, during the height of Idle No More, found that around two-thirds of Canadians feel that Aboriginal people are treated well by the government, and that they brought their problems upon themselves (IPSOS-Reid, 2013). This suggests that non-Indigenous people are either very ignorant of their government’s policies, or that they support policies that continue to threaten the survival of Indigenous peoples. Hate speech (a crime under Canadian law) online, including incitement to commit genocide using mass killings, was reported to have increased in the wake of the Idle No More movement for Indigenous sovereignty in late 2012 and early 2013 (Mallick, 2013). This shows that the desire to get rid of Indigenous people persists amongst Canadians.

According to Levene (2005) and Palmer (1998), colonial genocides are society-led more than they are government-led. Emma LaRocque (2010), who has analyzed discourses of hate speech against Indigenous people in Canada, argues that there is a connection between these words and acts of violence against Indigenous people, as discussed in Chapter 8.

Though my research focuses on the inaction of non-Indigenous people, this inaction must be viewed in the context of the actions to further processes of genocide that are still being carried out. A number of practices, which I have previously noted — denying genocide, victim blaming, a paternalistic stance, and polarizing Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples — are all action dependent. Though I argue that these actions are habitus, it is incorrect to interpret them as always being unintentional or unconscious or covert. My findings suggest that on some level,
non-Indigenous people are aware of what they and others like them are doing. Even Rob, who himself engages in victim blaming of Indigenous leaders, said that: “It just feels like there’s some sort of effort out there, by the federal government, to create this perception that Aboriginal people are not able to manage themselves properly.” Furthermore, he argued that even if it has not been their intent, the effect has been to polarize Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. While the federal government may be generating these negative messages (Simon used the word “propaganda”), the media also plays a role. Through the course of our interview, Linda, a journalist, came to the conclusion that she and other journalists are perpetuating negative views of Indigenous people and their communities by focusing disproportionately on negative news stories. Quantitative analysis of media coverage supports this conclusion. In Ontario, the media is seven times less likely to cover Indigenous stories than would proportionally reflect the population, and the tone of coverage is disproportionally negative (Pierro, 2013).

Nevertheless, participants pointed to actions being taken to promote reconciliation through improving relationships, educating, restoring justice, and providing balanced media coverage. At the same time, they noted that non-Indigenous people have only recently started to take such actions and that more of these actions are needed, particularly in the case of media. In the context of building relations with Indigenous people, simply acknowledging the presence of Indigenous people in Canada was mentioned as a place to start. Beyond this, participants proposed working in ways that show solidarity, rather than paternalism, towards Indigenous peoples, including listening, following the lead of Indigenous communities, and working collaboratively. While government apologies were acknowledged as a start, some also called for actions to redress injustices and make amends, including humanitarian response during times of disaster, as well as providing opportunities and resources to “close the gap” between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people created by these injustices.

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105 A follow up study three years later showed a substantial improvement in tone, from negative to positive news stories, but there was no improvement in representation (Journalists for Human Rights, 2016).
Ability

Among the participants who spoke about not being able to act, many expressed feeling overwhelmed. For the most part, they are busy with other responsibilities, and do not feel they have the time to work on their relationships with Indigenous peoples. Gloria acknowledged the need to integrate Indigenous history in Canadian history classes taught in the department she oversees, but she does not do so, because:

All the other teachers would expect me to make the changes and then, [they’ll say], “Oh, if she’s going to teach Canadian history, she’ll just do all the work.” But I do it for civics [already], so I don’t want to do it for Canadian history.

The participants also talked about being overwhelmed by the scale and scope of the problems in the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. In reference to civil servants Phil said that:

People are maybe cynical, that maybe it [improvements] will never happen, like we have the current situation, it’s gone on for a couple of hundred years, so you say, “Well look, if we did this, will it really lead to something better?” There’s a lot of people who’ll say “Oh, yeah, right, [it] hasn’t so far. Probably not in my lifetime. So, I don’t want to support it.”

Civil servants, like Phil and Heather, are not looking at these issues from afar. They have extensive, direct experience working on Indigenous issues, and to a lesser extent with Indigenous communities. Advancing Indigenous rights and well-being within government is difficult, and as Heather, who has been working directly with Indian Residential School survivors, attested, it is also emotionally overwhelming.

Feeling, often justifiably, overwhelmed is compounded by not knowing what action to take. It is easy to assume that there is always a clear and unimpeded pathway to action to oppose injustice. However, this is simply not the case, especially when confronting genocide as structure. Blight (personal communication, July 23, 2014), Logan (personal communication, August 8, 2014), and Wesley-Esquimaux (personal communication, July 4, 2014), all felt that the question, “But what do I do?” — that non-Indigenous Canadians ask when confronted with genocide in their own
country — while sometimes little more than an excuse for inaction, was often legitimate.\textsuperscript{106} Participants in every professional category echoed this sentiment. Simon pointed out that the failures of the federal government to agree on and implement any substantive plan in partnership with Indigenous governments has been devastating to this relationship and to Indigenous communities across Canada. The absence of a larger plan means that the actions of those at lower levels are often uncoordinated, ineffective, and even at cross-purposes.

The participants who work in large institutions, teachers and civil servants, said that not knowing what action to take is compounded by waiting indefinitely for other things to happen, so that they can move forward in their own capacity. They talked specifically about actions that need to be taken at a higher level, often political actions, but also about actions that require more expertise than they themselves feel they have. In the context of a hierarchical system, like a government bureaucracy, theories of obedience and authority may provide additional explanations for the reasons individuals do not intervene (Barnett, 1999; Bar-On, 2001; Coloroso, 2007, Kahn, 2009; Milgram, 1963; Staub 1989; 2010). Brian and I spoke about what it would take for teachers to start teaching about genocide in Canada:

\begin{quote}
For 90\% of the population of teachers, and for 90\% of the population of students [they need the government’s acknowledgement of genocide in Canada]; that’s where change will come. (So their responsibility follows the government taking responsibility?) Yeah.
\end{quote}

Institutional leaders constrain the actions of those under them. Simon, a retired civil servant, talked about his belief that civil servants want to do the right thing; but that the civil servants working under the Conservative Harper government (which was in power when I conducted these interviews) were limited in what they could do because of the government’s antagonistic position towards Indigenous people.

This is all complicated by the fact that Canada’s history and present is littered with the, supposedly well-meaning, actions of non-Indigenous Canadians that contribute to processes of genocide, notably the Indian Residential School System and the “Sixties-scoop.” Wesley-Esquimaux (personal communication, July 4, 2014) calls this the “violence of benevolence,” and Blackstock (2009a) refers to it as, “the Occasional Evil of Angels.”

\footnote{106 See Blight; Logan; Wesley-Esquimaux.}
**Knowledge**

Both the non-Indigenous Canadians and the riverain Sudanese that I interviewed talked extensively about the role knowledge plays in shaping their relationships with Indigenous peoples in Canada and the peoples of Sudan’s peripheries, respectively. Many of the same themes, including ignorance, silence, and avoiding information, are found across contexts. However, unlike the Sudanese participants, the Canadians said very little about denial and demonstrated less of it; though this could merely be a reflection of participant selection. Instead they talked of avoiding knowledge. They spoke in more depth about the specific types of knowledge required to improve their relationships with Indigenous people that are, by their very nature, challenging; and they also spoke of the epistemological challenges inherent in these types of knowledge.

**Ignorance.**

A prominent theme in the literature on bystanders, with particular relevance to the Canadian situation, is lack of awareness that genocidal violence is being perpetrated (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012). This bears upon the complicity of those standing by: How can one be held responsible for genocide if they have no idea that it is going on? In most states, where colonial genocides have or are taking place, very few individuals and virtually no institutions acknowledge it; so lack of awareness is profoundly important. A very recent Canadian example is revelations of nutrition experiments performed, without informed consent, on malnourished Indigenous children in the 1940s and 1950s, in which sufficient food and dental treatment was withheld (Mosby, 2013).

Most of the participants spoke of the ignorance of non-Indigenous Canadians about Indigenous peoples, and a minority acknowledged their own ignorance as well. Some, like Gloria, a history teacher, spoke about the latter at length:

You know I’m no expert in any way…. I don’t say I understand this because I really have very little first-hand knowledge, just from being a newspaper reader, a news watcher, a teacher, a reader…. I know way more about the Spanish Conquest than I do about
Canadian Aboriginal History…. I know it’s something I need to do more [to address]. I just don’t know that much.

Helen, also a teacher, advanced another explanation, “you don’t know what you don’t know.” Many are ignorant of their own ignorance; and this, in and of itself, is a barrier to people learning more. At the same time, she spoke of a subconscious awareness among non-Indigenous people of their complicity in what has been going on, suggesting that on some level they really do know and perhaps should be held responsible for their ignorance. Again, as in Sudan, two explanations for ignorance were advanced: One focuses on lack of information, and the other on misinformation and disinformation. I address the latter first, as the former leads to a discussion of silences and erasure, which follows this analysis.

**Misinformation and disinformation.**

Those perpetrating genocide and their supporters may take measures to ensure others are confused and misinformed about genocidal processes. They may disseminate propaganda or “spin” information that leaks out about genocidal acts (Staub, 1989). For example, Kalant (2004), in a study of the armed stand-off at Kahnesatake/Oka between the Canadian military and Indigenous protesters, describes how the Canadian government, through the media, evoked “national myths” of Canadians as peaceful and orderly and painted the Mohawk as criminal and “American” (a grave insult to Canadians), to ensure public support for their position.

The strategies used depend upon the extent to which those perpetrating genocide control or have the cooperation of various mediums for information sharing, be it mainstream media, the education system, new information technology, or simply information communicated by word of mouth through personal networks. Bystander theories have arisen out of the experience of totalitarian political regimes that are able to exert considerable control over mediums for information sharing. Canada, on the other hand, purports to have a free and independent media. Rather than being coerced into silence, consistent with a society-led genocide, the media appears at times to collude with the government in spreading disinformation.
Mis- and disinformation also prevents non-Indigenous people from acquiring knowledge that contradicts what they already believe. With increased narrowcasting of our news-source selection, there are more opportunities for people within Canadian society to choose information sources — which editorially lean in the direction of their political persuasion — and to remain ignorant of or not consume contrasting views and opinions. The meaning we make of the information we do receive is shaped by the prevailing ideology or dominant set of ideas in society, which in critical theory is called, “hegemonic discourse” (Gramsci, 1971). Social psychologists use the term “social representations,” (Tindale et. al. 2002) in a very similar way. Ervin Staub (1989) explains that these result in a “relatively uniform definition of reality. If everyone seems to be thinking the same way, it stifles doubt or resistance” (p. 65). We discount information that challenges what the dominant set of ideas in our society tells us to believe. As Linda, a journalist, said, “I bet you, a lot of people who [in seeking explanations for the challenges in our relationship] chalk it up to stereotypes and again they, tune out” when media coverage challenges these stereotypes. Brian illustrated this by providing the example of a member of the public who wrote to complain about First Nations’ chiefs. In so doing, they cited as evidence a report by a provincial government Ombudsperson. When Brian looked up the report, he found that it contained no criticisms of First Nations governments and, rather, criticized the provincial government for redirecting funds earmarked for desperately needed services for First Nations children:

What the person read into it was that narrative, was the corruption of the chiefs. (So the discourse about corrupt chiefs is so strong that we see it even when it’s not there?) Yeah, this is what we readily read in. So, even somebody who is not trying to insinuate that [chiefs are corrupt] for political purposes; nonetheless, it’s read in between the lines of what they’re saying.

Brian’s example describes a version of the myth that the participants most frequently referred to or advanced themselves that Indigenous people receive a disproportionately large share of the country’s resources, and that they are impoverished because they themselves have mismanaged these resources. This particular myth draws on stereotypes that Indigenous people are lazy and

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107 This is, of course, simultaneously an example of the victim blaming discussed in Chapter 8.
incompetent. It is also used as a justification for withholding funds for services from Indigenous governments, which compromises services further, and for usurping Indigenous land.

There is a complementary set of positive myths about non-Indigenous people. Reflecting the processes of “othering” I discussed in the previous chapter, non-Indigenous people define and elevate their own figuration through differentiating it from another. One example of these myths is that non-Indigenous Canadians, particularly those who are White and of English or French descent, are benign. As Simon said, we are “always good, we didn’t kill Indigenous peoples, we traded with them.” Regan (2010) terms this, the “peacemaker myth,” an unquestioned assumption that non-Indigenous people’s relationship with Indigenous people is based on non-violence, which causes non-Indigenous people to discount genocidal acts. As Brian remarked, there is also a stereotyping of Indigenous people as unjustifiably angry: “We hear about those natives all the time, they’re always angry…. They’re [non-Indigenous people] tired of hearing Indigenous [people] in the news yelling about land claims.” The complement of this is that non-Indigenous people are more calm and rational. The teachers I spoke with hear these complementary sets of stereotypes repeated by students and other teachers, and the journalists and civil servants hear them from their colleagues. A number of the participants employed these stereotypes themselves.

Linda illustrated her own role in perpetuating the stereotype of Indigenous leaders as corrupt:

We did an amazing series of stories a few months ago…. There were all these houses in St. Martin that were condemned and, instead of destruction campaigns to get rid of these houses and rebuild proper houses, somebody sold the condemned houses and the band was making money on houses that were condemned, sorry not a band member, but they were kind of in cahoots. Anyway, so, we’re still waiting for this investigation to be complete. The Chief is involved in this.

From her telling it seems that she is not entirely clear who is responsible: “Sorry, not a band member” and “we’re still waiting for this investigation to be complete.” Yet despite this uncertainty Linda, one of the country’s most influential journalists, did not hesitate to reaffirm the stereotype that Indigenous leaders are corrupt.
Access to information.

While the participants viewed mis- and disinformation as a problem that others face, they willingly admitted that accessing information about Indigenous people is, or at least has been, challenging for them. Lack of information through the education system and (according to teachers) the teacher education system was most often identified as a problem. However, Ken also pointed to proximity and not being around Indigenous people as a barrier to learning directly from them. Of the sources of information about Indigenous people that were identified, Indigenous sources were mentioned most often; followed by learning “on the job,” since a significant proportion of the participants had work that brought them in contact with Indigenous people, or at least Indigenous issues); followed by books, education, and the media. Very few talked about family as a source of information.

All of the teachers mention the lack of Indigenous perspectives in what they learned about historical events and contemporary issues in their own education. While participants may have learned about an isolated issue affecting certain Indigenous people, there was a lack of awareness of the bigger picture of colonialism. In fact Deb, a civil servant, said that while she works to address specific challenges that Indigenous people face, “I feel like I’m inadequate in terms of knowing some of the bigger issues because I'm not involved in those. I'm so focused on [the particular] work.” This lack of knowledge of how all the pieces fit together, or the underlying causes of the disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, or as argued in the previous chapter racism, all provide a powerful explanation for ignorance of genocide, particularly denial that this process is intentional.

Silence, erasure, and avoidance.

Codes of silence mean that those standing by may never hear of the atrocities that are committed in their name. Furthermore, they themselves may protect those perpetrating genocide and, by extension, themselves through consciously or unconsciously hiding genocidal acts (Barnett, 1999). The reluctance of the Canadian government to release publicly files relevant to the Indian Residential School System (Galloway, 2013a) and to the contemporary Aboriginal Child Welfare System (Galloway, 2013b) are examples of this.
Information about genocide may be accessible to those standing by, yet they avoid accessing it (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012); in other words, they look away. Moreover, information may be compartmentalized within society, for example stories of Indigenous people’s lives that do not easily fit negative stereotypes are rarely reported in the mainstream media. Susan Dion (Dion & Dion, 2009) has coined the term, “perfect stranger,” to describe non-Indigenous Canadians who “claim” ignorance about Indigenous people in order to get themselves “off the hook.” Similarly, Anna Haebich (2001), in her article titled, “Between Knowing and not Knowing,” analyzes the “apparent collective amnesia” (p. 70) of non-Indigenous Australians about the “Stolen Generation” of Indigenous children adopted out of their community.

To use Gloria’s words: “What you omit is sometimes as important as what you teach.” She went on to discuss the silence, erasure, and avoidance of “bad things” in the teaching of Canadian history. Brian went so far as to call these omissions, “foundational to the history and the character and the legal status of this country.” Heather, who is interested in historiography, pointed out that these omissions are so systematic and so significant that they are actually an entry point for teaching Indigenous history. Heather similarly noticed the omissions in her studies in public health at university:

Considering my degree was all about health promotion and health behaviours, and the fact that there’s such a disproportionate difference in health status for Aboriginal people, it’s striking looking back now to see that there wasn’t much discussed.

Glen talked of the silence about genocide in Canada in the context of teaching about genocide, particularly in reference to the Indian Residential School System and its links with Article 2e of the Genocide Convention (A/RES/260, 1948) that defines the removal of children from their community as a genocidal act. This omission is so glaring that Greg’s students make the connection between genocide and Indian Residential School System without him pointing it out. Though the Indian Residential School System would be the most relevant example of genocide for Canadian students, in the context of the Toronto District School Board’s genocide course, it is only included at the initiative of individual teachers (and at the time of the interviews, no teaching materials on the topic were available). At most, Greg reported, students are allowed to do an independent research project on genocide in Canada. The participants mainly focussed on
silences in teaching about Canada, but Brian also mentioned the media where, when he was a journalist, “many stories [about Indigenous people] were going uncovered.”

Silences are often glaring enough to suggest that non-Indigenous people have taken active measures to erase or avoid talking or learning about the nature of their relations with Indigenous peoples. Greg talked about an experience he had with a course that took students to visit and learn about the Indigenous histories of places in their city, Toronto. Through this experience he was confronted with the erasure of Indigenous peoples’ presence on the land:

It was like those people and that history never existed…. Seeing that sort of physical removal of the history of the place, and for me that connected a lot to that removal of identity and legitimacy; Well, where is the evidence? Well, it was all destroyed.

He went on to talk about the erasure of non-Indigenous collective memories. He spoke of how Indigenous people are visible to him in some places and not others, contrasting the cities of Winnipeg and Toronto. This is not because there are no Indigenous people in Toronto, but because Indigenous peoples and their histories have been erased there. This type of erasure is similarly accomplished through exoticizing Indigenous peoples, for example by having students solely focus on the names, languages, and territories of tribes, or traditional styles of dress and livelihoods. Rob, said that as an educator he tries to combat the erasure of focusing only on how Indigenous people lived in the past, and ignoring their presence in the present.

While silences and erasures go some way towards explaining the ignorance of non-Indigenous peoples, both in contemporary and historical contexts, there is much to suggest that this is partially wilful ignorance, that non-Indigenous people are avoiding knowledge that is upsetting and even implicates them. Gloria explains that:

We are colonizers. You can’t really deny that. But I think it’s got some kind of psychological resonance that the average Canadian doesn’t want to deal with, because it comes with a lot of baggage.

Brian educates others about the violation of Indigenous peoples’ rights in Canada, and he finds it frustrating how little impact this information sometimes has non-Indigenous people. The example above of how even when people are confronted with new information about Indigenous
people they avoid assimilating it, if it contradicts the beliefs they already hold, also supports this point.

Part of the problem with this wilful ignorance is that people are unwilling to make the effort to find out. Above, I quoted Ken saying that he avoids covering Indigenous issues in his opinion editorials because it is outside of his realm of expertise. However Mona, also a journalist, took issue with this type of justification:

It’s 2014! It’s like, I don’t know about this community and I should! What I mean, that’s the part I can’t quite get my head around either, with journalists who are supposed to be the ones who are pushing the boundaries. Let’s talk about the stories that people don’t know about!

In fact, it is investigative journalism, the type of journalism that questions assumptions, seeks out information that is being withheld, interviews more than just the usual suspects, that journalists hold up as the pinnacle of their profession. However, non-Indigenous journalists are part of the hegemonic culture they report on. They reflect its values and are controlled by its power dynamics. For example, Pete referred to the way abuse by those who are powerful is often widely known before it is spoken about publicly (he used the example of Bill Cosby, that it was common knowledge in certain circles that he had abused women; and, yet for a long time no one would write about it). Pete also pointed out that horrendous and widespread abuses in marginalized parts of the globe occur without registering on the world’s collective conscience, such as the extremely high rates of rape in the Congo. He believes that these phenomena help explain how the media often ignores important stories about Indigenous peoples in Canada:

Look what happened up in Northern Ontario, in the reserves up there, and the deplorable conditions there. Has that much changed that it’s so good now that we don’t report about it? I don’t think so.

The participants also spoke about wilful ignorance within government. Simon remarked that the lack of very basic information about Indigenous communities, particularly datasets that would allow for comparisons to be made with non-Indigenous communities, enables bureaucrats to remain ignorant about systemic discrimination and reflects the fact that Indigenous people simply do not matter politically.
The participants not only observed this pattern of avoidance, they exhibited it. Helen spent most of our interview avoiding talk about her relationship with Indigenous peoples and their histories through her teaching. Perhaps, given her leadership roles and her self-identification as a cutting-edge educator with leftist leanings, she was trying to hide her failure to live up to her responsibilities. She also blamed the orality of Indigenous history for its erasure: “With Indigenous history [the problem] is that some of that’s oral, so actually getting access to that is a little more difficult for kids.”

The severance from stories and erasure of history as an erasure of identity is most obvious for people like Mona, with Indigenous ancestors (See Chapter 8). However Rafael Lemkin articulates this as a loss for all Canadians and the world:

Our whole heritage is a product of the contributions of all peoples. We can best understand this when we realize how impoverished our culture would be if the, so-called, inferior peoples doomed by Germany, such as the Jews, had not been permitted to create the Bible, or to give birth to an Einstein, a Spinoza; if the Poles had not had the opportunity to give to the world a Copernicus, a Chopin, a Curie; the Czechs, a Huss, a Dvorak; the Greeks, a Plato and a Socrates; the Russians, a Tolstoy and a Shostakovich.

At the end of this chapter, I examine the important role of feeling personally invested, of being connected, in motivating non-Indigenous people to stand up.

The challenge of complexity.

As mentioned above, the participants had differing views on whether the ignorance of non-Indigenous Canadians is justifiable. A number of the explanations that were given for this ignorance address the nature of the knowledge that non-Indigenous people should, yet do not, have about the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationship. To begin with, a large majority of the participants felt that the relational issues are complex and confusing, even perplexing. And, it

108 My own recalled experiences of learning about Indigenous peoples in primary and secondary school are entirely from non-written sources: stories told by my non-Indigenous grade eight teacher of the South African ambassador defending apartheid as no different from Canada’s reserve system; a speech in my high school by scholar, anti-racist activists, and Indigenous rights advocate, Rodney Bobiwash; the songs, dances, and oration of a Hopi teenager during a school assembly. While orality may be challenging for some history teachers to navigate, the fact that these educational experiences still register in my memory is a testament to orality’s effectiveness.
was not only the participants who lack awareness of these issues who said this. Phil and Brian, who have worked directly with Indigenous communities for decades, spoke of this complexity: “I don’t think these are simple problems. With Indigenous people, it’s more complicated because there isn’t a single Indigenous governance model. There isn’t a Quebec [Canada’s francophone province], there’s 700 different bands under the Indian Act,” Phil said.

However Brian cautioned against taking this type of explanation at face value. The level of relative ignorance — particularly cultural ignorance, but also historical ignorance — of even those who are deeply engaged in these issues, contributes to this perception of complexity. Other Canadian issues are probably equally as complex; however, non-Indigenous Canadians have the cultural competency and years of formal education to navigate them with relative ease. When they engage with Indigenous issues and people, non-Indigenous Canadians feel as though they are on foreign ground.

Phil provided a different perspective and considerable insight into the reasons non-Indigenous Canadians find Indigenous issues confusing: “My sense is that the Government of Canada has this confounded or confused.” He explained that the federal government lacks the “willingness to try and make significant changes that would allow for robust Indigenous governance,” and this has led to a confused mixture of policy responses. It is not Indigenous people who are confusing, but the way the Canadian government relates to them that is. I would take this further and add that, on the one hand, this confusion may result from the tension between the original genocidal intentions of the settlers towards Indigenous peoples and the structures that remain in place to implement genocide; and on the other hand, the adjustments that have been made to the structure (at least on the surface) to accommodate the rights and recognitions that Indigenous people have won (particularly sovereignty).

Pete’s comment below relates to the confusion created by the paradox of Canada being a supposedly human rights respecting society that simultaneously perpetrates genocide against Indigenous people:

109 According to the Canadian constitution, the French speaking province is recognized as a distinct society with a special status and rights.
It’s always perplexed me why…[whether] I’m born on one side [of] this line or the other will determine whether or not my suicide rate is 10 times higher [than] the other side or I’m more likely to be sexually assaulted or something like that.

Echoing my discussion in the previous chapter about racism, genocide makes sense of diverse, seemingly unconnected interactions. As Wolfe (2006) asserts, genocide is a structure not an act. Before the artists of the Renaissance discovered how to draw the human form in ways that were true to life, they had to dissect a human body to understand the skeletal and muscular structures that lay beneath. The outward appearance was not sufficient.

**Objectivity, balance, and paradox.**

An additional concern that the participants raised about knowledge in the context of this relationship was biased information. While many were concerned that bias leads to the under-representation of Indigenous perspectives in educational curricula and the media, others feared that education and journalism was being construed as Indigenous solidarity work. These participants felt that educators and journalists should be guided by an ethic of objectivity. Ken and Pete are both journalists from different ends of the political spectrum. Ken’s opinion editorials advocate policies that offend many Indigenous people, and Pete presents himself as sympathetic to Indigenous grievances. However, they both expressed the same misgivings about what they saw as a lack of objectivity in reporting on Indigenous issues that privileges Indigenous perspectives. Pete spoke of such reporters as “Activists who think they’re journalists.” However, he admitted that objective journalism is easier to speak about in theory than in practice: “I mean you’re doing a story about residential school victims, it’s kind of hard to be balanced right?” Pete’s comment gets at a larger question: If Canada really is a genocidal society, is it even appropriate for a journalist to be balanced about this?

As with journalism, the participants’ views on balance and objectivity in education reflect their beliefs about the goals of education. Should education enculturate students through imparting the hegemonic knowledge of their society? Teach critical thinking skills? Or promote students’ moral and social development? Rob seems to be a proponent of teaching critical thinking skills. He described how this goal impacts the way he approaches the issue of balance:
And the thing is that in our democratic society, if we’re really doing things the right way, we’re supposed to incorporate different views from different points of view. And so that includes our kids and that includes the families of our kids too. We all have a stake at the table, and we’re all different politically, and we can’t run away from that. So, I think to get up here and teach kids one perspective is probably not a great idea, because I think that for me, I don’t think you want to have kids thinking that you’re trying to push some agenda.

To many non-Indigenous people the idea of objectivity is a laudable, if not easily achievable, goal. However, the idea of objectivity is not ideologically nor culturally neutral (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). It is rooted in a hegemonic Cartesian, modernist worldview that posits that a knower can and should construct knowledge about the world free from relational constraints, from a disembodied vantage point. The problem with this type of knowledge is that it fails to register phenomena that are complex and contextually defined. This becomes a particular problem when you want to use knowledge in the real relational world. Furthermore, the knower, once disembodied, is freed of the relational ties that hold them accountable. A Cartesian view sees knowledge as value neutral, when in fact knowledge can be used to help or hurt. Constructing knowledge is an valuational exercise, and all knowledge carries values.

Even if it were possible or desirable to be objective, the participants faced paradoxes and dissonances in their relationships with Indigenous peoples that actually deterred them from looking at both sides. Helen, a teacher, explained: “I’m still on the fence, I’m still grappling with this issue. I haven’t quite resolved it yet, so I’m just still… (How do you teach about it?) Exactly, so how am I supposed to?” As previously discussed, psychological literature includes theories about how we handle “being on the fence,” as Helen put it, about how we reconcile contradictory views of reality and integrate knowledge of the negative impact of our interactions on others in a way that is incongruent with our self-evaluations, which are by-in-large positive. Some of these theories resonate with what the participants said, as Brian illustrates:

A lot of Canadians, part of their sense of national identity is one of respect for human [rights], respect for rule of law, good governance. The belief in those values can also create a barrier to recognizing when those values aren’t being upheld because it’s too dissonant to say, well how can this be happening in my country?
The participants use the word “psychological,” to describe these processes: “Psychologically, it’s too much guilt to handle,” Gloria said. One way non-Indigenous people react when confronted with these contradictions is to “other” Indigenous people. This othering impacts not only their relationships with Indigenous peoples, it impacts what they come to know. Rather than revising the view non-Indigenous people have of themselves and their society as rights’ respecting, they invent, or at the very least reframe, the truth about Indigenous people.

Historicizing genocide can also be understood as a strategy for managing these juxtapositions. On the one hand, filling the silences and recovering the histories of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations that have been erased, helps Canadians understand how things have come to be the way they are: The past is never past. As Deb, a civil servant, said, non-Indigenous people “haven't understood the history of Indigenous people, and that whole piece is missing, the whole history of colonization and residential schools and the [inter]generational effects, and intergenerational impact.” On the other hand, dealing with this history in isolation from present inequities and injustices historicizes genocide. In its crudest form this manifests in the invective that Indigenous people should “get over” colonialism. This view of knowledge erases, not necessarily what happened in the past, but the continuity between the past and the present and, therefore, the abuses still being perpetrated today. There are subtler and politically correct versions of this, such as the firmly established maxim of historians not to judge the past by the standards of the present, a conviction that Helen shares, though at the same time problematizes:

They (students) can’t put 21st century values on [the] 15th century. Because people can’t. And two kids [I teach now] have actually gotten to that point where they can actually see where…but this was not unusual for the time. As long as they can understand, that doesn’t mean we say it was okay, ‘cause it was not.

Feelings

Knowledge is never just cognitive. While few of the participants considered emotion as a way of knowing, emotion was often palpable in their answers to my questions and in the tone of their voices. They also explicitly spoke of emotions.
As with the Sudanese participants, the feelings the Canadian participants discussed (their own and those of other non-Indigenous people) were predominantly negative. Negative emotions and thoughts (e.g., upset, frustration, guilt, shame); negative and passive feelings (sadness, regret, depression, disappointment, pain); and fear predominated. It is important to note that the fear they spoke of is not fear of Indigenous people in particular, but fear of making a mistake in the process of taking action and, for example, being called out for being racist; and fear of the unknown, in other words, of challenging the status quo. As Gloria said: “I think people don’t want to teach it [the history lesson she designed on the Indian Act] because they are afraid.” That the teachers are those who talked the most about this fear, highlights the importance of knowledge to these relational problems.

A large majority of the participants suggested that the term “genocide” may upset non-Indigenous Canadians. “They get their back up…. It’s too much guilt to handle…. [It produces] hot resistance, active resistance,” Gloria, a teacher, said. The term “genocide” has “a metaphysical context to it,” as Phil, a civil servant, said; “it has a lot of emotive impact on people.” Participants also reacted to the word themselves, for example, Helen said that, “that terminology, just, I’m not comfortable with [it] to be honest.” Significantly, though, participants effectively acknowledged that genocide occurred, without using the word; for example, Phil spoke of an “impulse, which is (pause) there’s no place in modern society for certain expressions of the way Aboriginal communities are organized.” A question that I did not ask, but should be explored in future research, is whether these responses to the word “genocide” simply reflect a lack of knowledge about what the word denotes, or whether the connotations of the word are so problematic that it cannot be rehabilitated.

Greg’s teaching experience suggests that the emotions elicited by the term are inherent to the concept of genocide, no matter the context. He pointed out that even talking about genocide outside of Canada is fraught:

So I started teaching the genocide course 5 years ago. I brought it to this school. I had to have six meetings with my principal, get a letter from a superintendent, get a letter from the head of equity in the TDSB [Toronto District School Board]…. People recoil, like I have student teachers come [every year], and I always leave it ‘til last [when I interview them]. Inevitably when I say the genocide course they’re terrified, they won’t go near it.
It’s like, you don’t want to mess it up. It’s really, like, overwhelming. This was the same feeling of my colleagues, actually last year when I took the year off…. Somebody else had to teach it, so nobody would touch it. One person, I found out in the circuitous way that people do, said that it went against their religious values to teach the course, whatever the HELL that means. I know personally it doesn’t mean anything.

Given the emotions elicited by the topic of genocide, I was cautious about probing the participants’ responses. However with Phil, a long term civil servant who works on Indigenous issues and has both a depth of experience and a level of engagement in these relations, I felt it appropriate to dig deeper:

Me: You mentioned the emotional impact of term “genocide,” I mean, from what I know and what you’ve told me about your level of involvement with Indigenous peoples, you know what the emotional impact has been on them of these processes. And so part of me wonders why we shouldn’t expect non-Indigenous Canadians to have to deal with something emotionally difficult in terms of how we characterize these things.

Phil: Perhaps it’s just my background as a public servant and more academic; I’m not a politician, so I’m not trying to rally people behind a cause or get them to march or move in a certain direction (but I’m sure you’ve been), my role has often been one of seeking accommodation, understanding. If you want people to understand something, then it’s often best not to start with an emotive statement that results in an emotive reaction. So, (well taken) I spent many years negotiating [provides examples], and my history of those negotiations was you want an agreement that would allow people to move forward. You try and find language that is going to try and allow people to see the possibility of solutions that they collectively buy into, rather than emotive or metaphysical language.

Significantly, relatively few Canadian participants (especially compared to Sudanese) spoke of the absence of emotion, not feeling anything about Indigenous people or their relationship with them. This is encouraging (or at least more encouraging than the Sudanese findings) given Barhight, Hubbard, and Hyde’s (2013) finding that children who exhibit emotional affect in reaction to bullying are likely to be identified as upstanders. On the positive spectrum of emotion, hope and caring were expressed, but only by a minority of participants.
Motivation

The participants spoke of growing concern among non-Indigenous people about their relationships with Indigenous peoples. However, a large majority still spoke of the lack of interest. Heather mentioned that concern for Indigenous peoples “ebbs and flows,” depending upon whether a particular Indigenous issue is in the news. A majority of the participants referred to self-interest as a motivator for non-Indigenous Canadians to act or not act. Non-Indigenous people may themselves benefit from acting to stop genocide, or they may benefit from the status quo. By acting, they may risk their own self-interests.

A minority of the participants said that non-Indigenous people are directly affected by these relational problems; however few articulated clearly what that effect is. Again participants tended to focus on Indigenous people rather than the relationship as the problem. There is a sense that a marginalized population living in poverty holds back the economic and social development of the society as a whole; in other words, given the status quo, Indigenous people are a burden that all Canadians have to bear. The clearest and most prevailing manifestation of this is the perception that Indigenous people are a drain on the public coffers and, by extension, take money out of the pockets of non-Indigenous Canadians, as Ken, a journalist, argued. He added, “the guilty White tax payer, the GWT is probably the dominant way that I say that most educated Canadians think of the issue.”

In a similarly negative vein, the view of Indigenous people as a burden is tied to the view of Indigenous people as a threat. Deb provided the example of the way communicable diseases can develop in conditions of poverty that prevail in many Indigenous communities and then spread into the non-Indigenous population. Phil spoke of the crisis at Oka/Kanasatake in 1990 as an example of how the failure to address grievances can lead to violent conflict. Simon talked of the way Indigenous people have sometimes been able to leverage these threats to the interests of non-Indigenous people to advance their agenda. He mentioned Cree politician, Elijah Harper’s blocking of the Meech Lake Accord (amendments to the Canadian constitution) on the grounds that Indigenous peoples were not consulted about the proposed amendments.
In fact, many of the ways in which non-Indigenous people benefit from acting, or not acting, to uphold the status quo are related to land, water, and resources. The interests of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people with regard to resources were seen to be in conflict. As Greg said: “I didn’t do it [genocide], but we benefit from the legacy of the actions of those who did.” To resolve this conflict a sacrifice by either party is required and because of their sense of entitlement, and lack of generosity, non-Indigenous people are unlikely to back down. As Simon’s discussion of the importance of Indigenous people being able to leverage the power they have in certain situations suggests, action must be incentivized, positively or negatively. Unfortunately Indigenous people infrequently have the power to do this.

In addition to there being few rewards, there are risks to acting in solidarity with Indigenous people. A large majority of participants talked of the political sensitivity of these issues. Speaking about the international development sector, Ellen said that “people feel that it’s a highly mined area, in the sense of that it’s highly political and that there’s a lot of internal politics, and that it's very difficult to navigate and that it will backfire for organizations.” Even the national political affairs columnist I interviewed felt that writing about Indigenous issues is too political. This politicization makes those who see themselves as technicians especially wary of Indigenous issues. The perception is that not only are technical fixes insufficient, but as a non-Indigenous technician they will be punished for wading out of their depth; it will put them in conflict with others; it will make them unpopular; and they will be viewed as disloyal and as biased, a label technicians can be particularly averse to having. Many of these beliefs are supported by specific stories that the participants told of what they observed when a non-Indigenous person, who made efforts to take action in solidarity with Indigenous people, was punished.

Phil spoke not only of individual risks, but saw this as being about the whole social order:

I think that’s true of a lot of issues in life [that people aren’t willing to address]: women’s rights issues. Over the years a lot of people said, gave lip service to it, but when they talk about it, they don’t want to change the role of the sexes and [the] way in which we work. So they [these issues] don’t get resolved. It just seems like the cost is too much and nobody wants it.
Though not many of the participants considered taking these types of actions as being in their own interest, a majority talked of how engagement with Indigenous peoples comes from being interested, from being committed. It may be because of a related personal experience, for example, Ellen talked of growing up abroad in a context that has also been labeled as genocidal;\textsuperscript{110} the perceived importance of these issues and the desire to learn the truth about Canada and achieve reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is something that participants fell into by accident, at least initially, but found interesting and stayed involved. Phil pointed out that non-Indigenous people working on Indigenous issues within government are often, “people who’ve got really strong social commitments based on even religious background or social philosophy or political philosophy.” This statement emphasizes the intrinsic nature of these types of motivations. However, using himself as an example, Greg suggested that interest does not always lead to action. One can simply wallow in guilt.

Moving to a more external locus, thinking or hoping that something, especially something good, will happen because of one’s efforts was also discussed as a motivation. As with other sources of motivation, these expectancy motivations can either encourage or discourage action. Ellen, who sees the challenges Canada is facing in the context of her work in international development, believes that, from a technical point of view, the problems are fixable, easy to fix even (e.g., providing communities with clean water, improving education). However, lack of political and public will to improve this relationship means that those considering taking action feel discouraged as, for political reasons, their efforts may not lead to improvements. In reflecting on action and inaction, a number of participants concluded that one has to ignore all of this and “just do it,” just start taking action without worrying about where it will lead.

No domain of motivation elicited as many participants to speak at such length, as ethics. This included discussion of how non-Indigenous people accept and deny responsibility. A large minority acknowledged that non-Indigenous people are responsible for taking action to improve this relationship, mostly out of a sense of collective guilt as non-Indigenous, especially White, Canadians. However as Gloria said, not all Canadians want to accept that “we are colonizers” and the responsibilities that follow from that acknowledgement. Blaming Indigenous peoples for

\textsuperscript{110} To protect Ellen’s confidentiality I do not specify which country.
the discrimination they suffer, which I discussed at length in the previous chapter, is a prime example of this. There was some, but not a lot, of discussion of one’s responsibility to future generations, which surprises me, as I specifically asked about this issue.

Perhaps because I directed participants to speak about their professional peers, professional responsibilities vis-à-vis Indigenous people are prominent in their responses. These responsibilities relate in complex, and sometimes contradictory, ways to the responsibility to interrupt genocide. For example, Linda talked about a journalist’s responsibility to, “expose the powerful and what they’re doing to afflict the non powerful”; while Pete, a journalist as well, talked about the responsibility to “get it right” and to present both sides of a story. Simon, on the other hand, talked in great depth and with concern about the professional responsibilities of government bureaucrats, in particular the responsibility to “speak truth to power.” However, when I asked about the ethical responsibilities of journalists, Will, who sees himself as a technician, challenged me. He prefaced his response with, “I sure hope that there’s a lot of journalists who disagree with me about how to be journalists,” and went on to say that:

I’d like to push back, generally, against the notion that journalists function as primarily altruistic. A journalist’s function is primarily to tell stories, which are intrinsically interesting…. Everyone I know who got good at this, got good at it because they liked telling stories and the particular content of the stories is almost always secondary to that first impulse.

Thus, while the technician has much to contribute to improving this relationship, their motivation may be completely amoral.

As I stated previously, the denial of responsibility was also spoken about by a majority of participants. Some non-Indigenous people felt un-impacted by this relationship, seeing it as an Indigenous, not a Canadian issue. Others asserted that the relationship is primarily between Indigenous peoples and the federal government. Non-Indigenous people, as individuals, are on the sidelines. Sebastian, a public intellectual, disagreed strongly and said that all of us, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, are parties to the treaties of the land on which we now live. We are all treaty people, and our responsibilities flow from those treaties.
Another common move was to make excuses for not acting. Some drew on the institutional environment they work within for these excuses, such as an issue being outside of their jurisdiction or mandate; they are only responsible for a small part of what is a much larger problem; it is a political not a technical issue and so must be handled by those higher up; or there is “nothing in writing” that commits them to action. Even those who were willing to advocate within these institutions are wary of using up their capital: “You can only push it so far,” said Deb.

At times, participants defended their inaction as an act of solidarity. Respect for Indigenous sovereignty can be used to justify a whole range of excuses for not getting involved in “Indigenous issues.” Ken went further, claiming that his proposal to privatize Indigenous lands is motivated by respect for Indigenous sovereignty, which he defines as not creating dependency. Significantly, through claiming that one’s intentions are benign, or even good, one arguably erases the crime of genocide, a crime that requires genocidal intent. Heather herself stated this as the reason she does not feel genocide has occurred in Canada: “I think that there were people that thought they were not doing the right thing, but people thought the policy was the right thing to do, sadly. But the intent was better outcomes not death.” Given how prominently deceit figures in this relationship, it seems reasonable to question whether the stated intentions of non-Indigenous people, like those I interviewed, are in fact their real intentions.

The participants described being motivated or demotivated in a variety of ways by feelings of comfort or discomfort. Much of this was about discomfort with challenging the status quo, i.e., the status quo in terms of political and institutional arrangements, and in terms of who Canadians believe they are. Phil discussed this in the context of the proposal that came out of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (1996) to explore amalgamating and integrating “Indian bands.” While the current arrangement does not work in a myriad of ways, keeping First Nations small and divided is “nonthreatening,” and so the government is unwilling to change it. In a different domain, Gloria considered Indigenous epistemologies, or ways of knowing, as threatening: “People like us, the non-Aboriginal people, maybe even subconsciously, I don’t know, we don’t want to give some things up.”
Another reason why non-Indigenous people avoid taking action is fear of conflict, and where it may take them. Simon spoke of the attitude required to undertake this type of work: “You have to be able to live with and embrace uncertainty and be as inclusive as possible. (Well that can be scary, scary for people.), Yeah.” This discomfort is not caused by cognitive challenges alone. As Heather related, based on her work in the north of Canada with survivors of the Indian Residential School System, genocide causes pain. Forming relationships with Indigenous people who have been targeted by genocide to address these issues opens non-Indigenous people up to that pain.

In Chapter 8, I discussed, in detail, the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous figurations, and the ways in which they facilitate standing by to genocide. The question of motivation brings us back to relationships. While the Canadian participants seemed to think far less relationally than the Sudanese participants, significantly those who have been most active in standing in solidarity with Indigenous people, acknowledge the importance of relationships as a motivator: “Indigenous people in Canada, they’re going to make it happen, and then we’ll have to be a part of it (right), which is great,” said Ellen.

Relationships with Indigenous people are indeed important, but relationships with other non-Indigenous people who are similarly taking action are as well. Following from the fear of challenging the status quo and the importance of relationships, the desire for conformity with the wider community was named as a motivator. Pete explained why he thinks individual media outlets are unwilling to break newsworthy stories on Indigenous people: “Very few of them will do something by themselves.” Wesley-Esquimaux (personal communication, July 4, 2014) said that we often need someone we respect to give us “permission” to take an action that goes against our habitus. Furthermore, these are problems that require collective action. Ellen talked of how non-Indigenous Canadians tolerate the intolerable treatment of Indigenous people in their own country, and that a cultural (i.e. a collective) shift is necessary: “We should build that culture in Canada...It should not be right for us not to do it.”
Connecting with the Literature

Consistent with the way scholars characterize colonial genocide (Levene, 2005; Moses, 2004; Palmer, 1996), the data suggests that in Canada genocidal processes are driven by popular opinion, rather than an authoritarian government intent on genocide. Following from this, those standing by and doing nothing can be seen as especially complicit. Not fitting the mould of Nazi Germany, the context within which most research on bystanders has been carried out, one might expect that the conclusions reached in that literature would not apply to Canada. However, theories of obedience and authority (Milgram, 1963) resonate, especially with the habitus of those working within government and the education system. Surprisingly so do conclusions about the role of the media in facilitating acquiescence (Koonz, 2003; Staub, 2010). However, rather than being censored or an instrument of propaganda, the media appears to collude in spreading disinformation about Indigenous people. Codes of silence (Barnett, 1999) and the avoidance of information (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012) about genocide are similarly important. Furthermore, hegemonic discourses (Gramsci, 1971), or social representations (Tindale et al., 2002), also cause non-Indigenous people to discount or reframe the information they do receive about processes of genocide.

Where the research on bystanders to the Holocaust falls short, the scholarship on colonial genocide facilitates our explanation of the habitus of non-Indigenous people who stand by. Viewing genocide as a structure, rather than an act (Wolfe, 2006), makes sense of how non-Indigenous people tolerate genocidal acts. Diverse, seemingly unconnected, interactions when seen in isolation appear reasonable, benign, charitable even; how they work together to destroy Indigenous figurations is easily overlooked. Acknowledging that genocide against Indigenous people in Canada has agents (Finzsch, 2008), rather than perpetrators, and is functional rather than intentional (Broszat, 1981), has implications for our understanding of the complicity of those who stand by and do nothing. Interestingly, though, this functional characterization of genocide implies less culpability for the perpetrators and suggests that those who stand by are more complicit, particularly when the structure of genocide is made clear to them.
Conclusion

In this chapter I describe the ways in which non-Indigenous people in Canada are conditioned and organized to perceive and interact with Indigenous peoples and genocidal processes. The participants acknowledged that non-Indigenous people are standing by and doing nothing, or at least not enough, about genocide that targets Indigenous peoples. They, in turn, distracted from their own inaction by focusing on the inaction of others, particularly the government. They pointed to actions that address “Indigenous issues,” rather than non-Indigenous people’s responsibilities, or their relationship with Indigenous peoples, or genocide. They revealed that standing by is not just the absence of action but is also the perfunctory way in which actions to interrupt genocide are so often carried out. Furthermore, in the Canadian context, inaction that allows genocidal structures to remain in place and genocidal processes to unfold, becomes an act of genocide in and of itself. Though habitus, these (in)actions are sometimes intentional, conscious, and overt. Non-Indigenous people have started to take action to interrupt genocide, but only recently and not sufficiently, and not always appropriately. Furthermore, these actions have yet to lead to substantial material improvements for most Indigenous people.

According to the participants, non-Indigenous people fail to act to stop genocide because they are overwhelmed with other concerns. This is compounded by not knowing what action to take. In an institutional context this is often because they lack direction from higher up, or their actions are being more explicitly constrained.

While ignorance was considered by some participants a reason for standing by and doing nothing, self awareness of one’s ignorance appeared to be the bigger problem. Furthermore, unlearning myths and stereotypes must occur first, before new and contradictory information can be assimilated. The participants also lacked a contextual framework to make sense of the genocidal acts they do hear about. The education system can be blamed for the participants’ lack of information about Indigenous peoples and the relationship between the figurations, but not knowing any Indigenous people also contributes to the problem. These findings suggest that silence, erasure, and avoiding learning about “bad things” has become an important part of the way non-Indigenous people construct Canada and themselves as a people.
As with other types of (in)action, these epistemological processes are sometimes active and wilful, as the non-Indigenous participants try to manage the discomfort and the fear generated by knowledge that implicates them in genocide. While some of the participants are taking responsibility for seeking out knowledge about Indigenous people and sharing it, others are not. Though the issues relevant to genocide in Canada may not be inherently complex, the level of cultural ignorance, and the confusing ways in which the government relates to Indigenous people, makes them seem that way. Some of the participants were concerned about the bias of information sources in favour of Indigenous people. This supports a Cartesian worldview and an unquestioned faith in objectivity that, in and of itself, is part of the problem.

The feelings that the participants identified vis-à-vis their relationships with Indigenous people are predominantly negative, including negative thoughts, negative and passive feelings, and fear. Relatively few of the participants spoke about not feeling anything about Indigenous people at all, though only a few have positive feelings.

The level of interest the participants have in Indigenous issues varies. While high profile conflicts motivate action, Indigenous people rarely have the power to bring these about; and when they do, non-Indigenous people usually pursue zero-sum resolutions. The participants perceived few rewards, and more risks (mostly political and social) to acting in solidarity with Indigenous people. Personal concern for Indigenous issues is motivating, as is a sense of optimism; however the political and social context often discourages the participants from acting.

Feeling responsible, and guilty about not meeting this responsibility, are prominent motivators. However the professional and institutional responsibilities of the participants do not always align with their desire to interrupt genocide. Furthermore, avoiding feeling uncomfortable incentivizes maintaining the status quo. The relationships the participants have with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who are acting are motivating, while the desire to conform with those who are complacent is demotivating. It is likely that some of the constraints on action articulated by the participants are significant, while others contrived to justify their complicity.
Chapter 10

The Colonial Mesh

Figurations are not just composed of people. Radical relationalists (Powell, 2013) argue that they encompass the non-human world as well. Inspired by Shawn Wilson’s relationality (2008), I extend this conceptualization, and posit that the figurations I am researching are also constituted by ideas. Like all relationships, the connection between people and ideas is reciprocal. We generate ideas; and they in turn shape, even create us.

In this chapter, I break from looking at Sudan and Canada separately to explore how the same network of interconnected, transnational, and colonial ideas contributes to the standing by of members of complicit figurations in both contexts. This network of ideas is a complicated, mutually enforcing, relational mesh. The data suggests that it includes the ideas of capitalism, liberal values, the nation state, “modern” bureaucratized institutions, formal education, and race. Although each of these colonial ideas has generated its own field of study, these transnational threads are mutually dependent, reinforcing, and intertwined. They also accompany each other; historically they arose together. Separating out individual strands from the mesh is not only difficult, it is ill-advised. In unraveling this macro-level figuration, it loses its shape, and thus its meaning. Rather than being homogenous, unified, and unchanging, each of these ideas is the product of related strands of thought. Chrisjohn and Young’s (2006) analysis of the Indian Residential School System (IRSS) in Canada provides considerable insight into this:

The greatest strength of the Standard Account [of the IRSS] is that it is not a logically coherent set of beliefs. Thus, individuals from a variety of backgrounds or with diverse interest feel free to accept some portion of it, while rejecting aspects of it they find objectionable…. But while logically incoherent, the Standard Account is ideologically consistent. That is, it embodies a world view that, while certainly not true, is at present so widespread that it has ceased to be questioned or even noticed. (p. 8)

At times, these ideas enforce each other. At times, they undermine each other; for example, liberal values have been evoked to critique capitalist exploitation (Ince, 2013); and racism has been used to argue against colonialism (Banton, 2007). However, the ability of the mesh to
accommodate paradox, and to incorporate criticism without changing its direction, is what makes it so resilient.

The colonial mesh of ideas spans the globe, penetrating local communities and individual psyches. While capitalism, liberal values, the nation state, “modern” bureaucratized institutions, formal education, and race are merely ideas; the mesh exists beyond the realm of discourse. The power-laden colonial network of ideas has material dimensions. It creates violence that results in “sickness, poverty, constructed ‘racist images and assimilative identities,’ and death” (Simpson, James, & Mack, 2011, p. 297). These colonial ideas do not magically traverse the planet on their own, rather they condition the interactions and the habitus of people who move from place to place. They compel people to move back and forth between the metropole and the peripheries. The investor and the labourer move because of capitalist relations; the soldier, colonial administrator, or now diplomat because of the nation state; the settler and missionary because of colonialism; and the aid worker because of how all these ideas create an imperative for societies to “develop.”111 These ideas transform land into resources and people into colonized/colonizers, labourers/capitalists, citizens/Status Indians/rebels/slaves, bosses/workers, educated/uneducated, poor/rich, and White/Native or African/Arab. The interactions, and even the bodies of individuals, are shaped by this colonial mesh; and their bodies, in turn, interact in ways that preserve or transform the mesh. While individuals act locally, because they are a part of this transnational colonial mesh, the impact of their actions can be global.

The colonial mesh affects different transformations in Canada and Sudan; yet, it is remarkably consistent and recognizable, no matter where you encounter it. This consistency does not indicate incidental nor coincidental similarities between contexts, but concrete connections between Canada and Sudan by way of their colonial metropole, Britain.112

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111 Note that these roles are themselves interdependent.
112 This is not to say that these ideas are Indigenous to Britain alone, rather that the colonial connection established by Britain brought these ideas about. Europeans were connected with each other, and Banton (2007) argues that the ideas of race that arose in the United States have been immensely influential in the rest of the world, including Europe.
Capitalism

In the Chapter 1, I described how the economic resources of targeted figurations in Sudan and Canada were seized and their livelihoods interrupted. Their impoverishment then facilitated political, physical, biological, religious, moral, cultural, and social techniques of genocide and the economic exploitation of the individuals who survived. On the other hand, “benefits” accrue from these economic techniques for members of the figuration complicit in genocide. My discussion of colonial capitalism here bears resemblance to world systems theory (Wallerstein, 2004). Through expropriation of land, extortion of assets, and exploitation of labour, wealth is usurped from the peripheries to fund capitalist expansion. Marx (1929) calls this process “primitive capital accumulation.” In Sudan and Canada the wealth expropriated from peoples targeted by genocide helped fund the Ottoman, Egyptian, French, and British empires. As these colonial empires declined, this expropriated wealth (or rather a share of it) was diverted by the bourgeoisie of newly formed nation states. In Canada and Sudan colonial expropriation evolved into internal colonial expropriation.

Colonial expropriation “is not a simple transfer of resources…. It denotes a structural transformation” (Ince, 2013, p. 12). People targeted by genocide not only lose wealth and a means of livelihood; their entire world — and through it themselves as a people, their very beings — is transformed and sometimes destroyed, by and for capitalism. Resistance to processes of primitive capital accumulation necessitated and necessitates not only violence but sometimes genocide. The old figurations stand in the way of the new, so they must be destroyed (Ince, 2013). Economic systems are inseparable from social, political, cultural, and natural systems; and, thus, they must be coopted or destroyed to make way for a new order (Smedley, 114 Anderton and Brauer’s (2016) recent volume begins to address this question.

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113 A substantial minority of the riverain Sudanese participants speak of how they themselves, or how those of the hegemonic figuration, have been influenced by communist ideology, not to mention the actions of the Sudanese Communist Party. While Babiker identifies communism as embodying Indigenous values – “we have inherited communism from the Mahdi”, Tariq talks of communists having “positioned themselves in opposition to tradition”. The participants present a number of criticisms of the communist movement in Sudan that are relevant to understanding the effects this ideology might have on standing by. As a vanguard type movement the Communist Party was “in a rush” and didn’t take time to listen to Sudanese from across the country and Indigenize communism in Sudan. Thus the problem was not that communism discouraged action (it did not), but that it was elitist, disparaged Indigenous societies, ignored differences other than class, and thus did not put itself in solidarity with those of the proletariat who were most oppressed. In a Sudanese context I would not see Communism as opposed to Liberalism, both are Western imports and the Sudanese Communists I spoke with speak in support of liberal values.
2007). For example, Ken, one of the Canadian participants and a committed neoliberal, spoke of the fundamental incompatibility of capitalism and Indigenous land-based collectivism. As such, he argued that it is impossible for Indigenous communities to be both economically self-sufficient and preserve their culture.

Primitive capital accumulation first targeted rural European peasants (Smedley, 2007, p. 33). Beginning in the fifteenth century, the communal lands and resources of the English countryside were fenced and privatized, their inhabitants displaced. The lands and resources now in the hands of aspiring capitalists could be combined with the cheap labour of the dispossessed to produce commodities for the growing towns, at a profit. As capitalism in Europe matured, the logic of capitalist expansion, with its thirst for more capital and more markets, necessitated colonialism. Enriched or impoverished by capitalism, Europeans settlers left their homelands to pursue or serve primitive capital accumulation, to violently extract surplus capital in what is now Canada. This surplus capital was first invested in British industrialization and later used to develop settler colonies in Turtle Island/North America.

While there was very little European settlement in Sudan, Egyptian and British colonizers targeted riverain Sudanese in ways similar to British peasants, with the same aim: To extract surplus capital.\footnote{115} Once alienated from their lands and traditional livelihoods, and assimilated into capitalism, riverain Sudanese, in turn, began violently accumulating capital from the peoples and lands of Sudan’s peripheries to develop their economy at the centre. In both contexts, when people of the peripheries complied with exploitation, they could be incorporated as subordinates (proletariat); and when they rebelled, they were targeted for destruction.

One important difference between these contexts is tied to demography. In Sudan people of the peripheries have, for most of modern history, been the majority; whereas in Canada, due to the collapse of the Indigenous population and extensive immigration, Indigenous people are a small

\footnote{115} Modest numbers of Egyptians were brought to Sudan to serve as administrators. It was through alternately persecuting and coopting riverain Sudanese that foreign colonizers were able to transform riverain Sudanese into colonizers. In Sudan, this riverain elite are pejoratively called, *Effendiyya*, which can be translated as lords. Modest numbers of Christian Greeks and Syrians accompanied the Egyptians, and then British and played a role in developing capitalism.
minority. Reflecting this, exploitation of people of the peripheries for labour has been a focus of colonial capitalism in Sudan (though land also features, especially around the Nile, and is growing in importance); while usurping of Indigenous peoples’ land has been a focus in Canada. However, in the peripheries, in both cases, the result has been the same: The devastation of targeted figurations. At times, in some places, resources were extracted through mercantile style colonialism (i.e., slaves, furs, ivory, and surface minerals), allowing Indigenous peoples to maintain nominal sovereignty over their lands, despite being exploited through market relations. Yet, as demands for other resources (i.e., agriculture, timber, sub-surface minerals, and petroleum) and Indigenous labour (in Sudan) grew, so did the imperative to annex Indigenous lands in order to extract resources more “efficiently.”

Capitalism, as an ideology and a system of economic relations, justifies genocide and masks the processes by which elites exploit land and labour for self enrichment. Capitalism diffuses responsibility, making it difficult to know who is ultimately responsible for genocide and where to focus one’s resistance. The system or the “invisible hand of the market,” not autocratic leaders or even the government, ensures that those who uphold capitalism are rewarded, and those who resist it are punished. Most riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians will protest that they are not captains of industry and are themselves struggling. However, more than just the bourgeoisie benefit from colonial expropriation. Even those who are themselves being exploited may be implicated. Although their piece of the pie is very small, they guard it jealously and are quick to view those who stand in the way of capitalist expansion as threats. Moreover, genocide impoverishes those it targets; and in a capitalist system, blaming the poor for their lot is par for the course.

Capitalism reframes greed and theft as economic development. The ideology of capitalism is linked to the ideology of progress; together, the two work in tandem to produce a powerful

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116 A reliable census with information on ethnicity/tribe has not been conducted in Sudan since the 1950s, thus this claim is very tentative. In Canada, the Aboriginal (Indigenous) population recorded in the 2011 census comprised 4.3% of the overall population (Statistics Canada, 2013).
117 In the pre-colonial and Turkiyya colonial periods (1820–1885), Muslim riverain Sudanese and Darfurians captured slaves in the non-Muslim South and brought them to the North for domestic, agricultural, and military labour and to be sold abroad. Later, land appropriation and war destroyed the livelihoods of many in the peripheries forcing them to move to the centre and sell their labour. In Canada, impoverished European, but also Asian, immigrants were more plentiful, efficient, and compliant as labourers than Indigenous people, whose populations had been decimated.
justification for genocide, through the ethnic cleansing of Indigenous people from resource rich land:

Locke claims that a system of European commerce, based on the motive to acquire more than one needs, satisfied by surplus production for profit on the market, is economically superior to the American Indian system of hunting and gathering, based on fixed needs and subsistence production, in three crucial respects: It uses the land more productively, it produces a greater quantity of conveniences, and it produces far greater opportunities to work and labour by expanding the division of labour. (RCAP, Chapter 4.1)

The belief that Indigenous people do nothing productive with their resources, stands in the way of non-Indigenous people learning about and appreciating the land-based livelihoods that Indigenous people depended upon in the past, and for some through to the present. It also stands in the way of non-Indigenous people appreciating the injustice of usurping Indigenous land. Furthermore, reframing of genocide as economic and social progress suggests that the ends — colonial capitalism — justify the means — genocide. This view is ubiquitous in defences of genocidal acts in Canada as well intentioned.

Onur Ince (2013) emphasizes the importance of capitalism being accepted as irreversible; that other ways of “organizing human communities” become represented as impossible, or at least ludicrous; and that capitalism is omnipresent and “timeless common sense” (pp. 38-39). Furthermore, “the expropriation, extortion, and exploitation of the empire [is represented] as something incidental to British capitalism, rather than its historical modus operandi” (Ince, 2013, p. 31). The solution suggested, then, is not the abolishment of capitalism, rather its moderation, which is accomplished by adherence to liberal values, which I discuss in the next section.

Of all of the ideas in the colonial mesh that the participants discussed, capitalism featured the least. I do not think this is because it is less important. Rather capitalism is the most omnipresent, and possibly the most transformational, of the ideas that make up the colonial mesh; it is so omnipresent, that it can go unnoticed. It is interesting to note who mentioned capitalism explicitly: In Canada, it was participants with fiscally conservative views who see Indigenous people’s rights as getting in the way of economic development (Ken, a journalist, in particular); and on the other side of the political spectrum, Brian, a human rights activist, who witnessed
stand offs between Indigenous communities and developers. In Sudan, it was Communists and older participants bemoaning materialism who remembered a time when economic relations were structured differently.

**Liberal Values**

In the data from both contexts, liberal values sit side-by-side with capitalism. In addition to explicitly naming liberalism, participants mentioned values, such as human and women’s rights, equality, tolerance; and, in Canada, freedom. Sudanese participants also spoke of the injustice of their freedoms being denied by their government. The way the participants in both contexts spoke of liberalism is moderated (more so in Sudan than in Canada). There is an ambivalence about individualism, framed as either a foreign import (in the case of Canada, from America) or something that needs to be balanced by more collectivist impulses. Democracy was also discussed. So how does this commitment to equality and freedom reconcile with a capitalist system that expropriates; exploits (and sometimes enslaves); and creates unprecedented inequality? Is there not a contradiction between liberalism and colonialism? Is this mere “duplicity and cynicism” (Ince, 2013, p. 25), or is something else going on?

Ince (2013) looks at the logical incompatibility between the violence engendered by colonial capitalism and liberal ideas. He argues that British colonizers (in the late seventeenth to early nineteenth century) were not blind hypocrites; but that colonial capitalism created the conditions necessary for the rise of liberal thought, in particular, the ideas of juridical equality and contractual freedom. Though colonial capitalism, which necessitates exploitation and usurpation, and liberal values seem in conflict; liberal values in fact depend upon capitalism and will bend to serve it. In the postcolonial period, the cold war provided a new moral pretext for advancing capitalism and liberal values together (Escobar, 1995). Locke, the “father of liberalism,” was an influential justifier of economic exploitation, arguing that, “Government exists to protect men in the exercise of their property rights. Thus Locke made a positive value out of the unequal appropriation of most of the wealth (capital) by a few individuals, reasoning that such accumulation was a ‘natural right’” (Smedley, 2007, p. 43). In the institution of slavery, this
ideology combined powerfully with White supremacy. I return to this issue at the end of this chapter.

As previously mentioned, the mesh of ideas is powerful because it is adaptive; and this interplay between capitalism, liberal values, and race is one example of how the mesh absorbs critique. Ince (2013) describes how the injustices of colonialism are recognized (rather than just denied) and then, through discourse, worked through. He speaks of “disavowal” (See Chapter 8), arguing that “they neither ignored colonial violence nor cynically admitted it as the trademark of the empire” (p. 27). Rather, they responded with “stories, screens, fantasies” (p. 26) and “rhetorical manoeuvres” (p. 27) that reframed atrocities, softened them, making them more palatable. The colonizers generate apologies and promises of reform, which are never meaningfully implemented, but make people feel as though something is being done.

This discursive response allows colonialism to manoeuvre around those who oppose it, attack in different directions to account for change in the prevailing political winds, while ostensibly maintaining course. In Ince’s (2013) words, liberal values “did not prevent imperial governments and settlers from being brutal and exploitative” (p. 27). Perhaps the clearest example of this is that we now talk about being in a postcolonial period, although the same types of relationships, especially economic relationships, which were in place at the height of colonialism remain. The words we use to describe them have changed, and the people running the various colonial institutions look slightly differently (though by in large they speak the same language, have the same education, and uphold the same values as the colonial administrators before them); but the policies aim to achieve pretty much the same ends.

Ince (2013) further argues that colonialism, the experience of violating the other, even to the point of exterminating them, precipitated the creation of liberal values. Again this was not to interrupt atrocities but to make the contradiction between capitalism and justice tolerable: “The violence of capital’s original beginning is the formative content of the civilized forms of equality, liberty, freedom, and utility” (Bonefeld quoted in Ince, 2013, p. 28). As such, liberalism did not create morality, as Western ethnocentrism arrogantly presumes. Rather a moral impetus, moral systems in fact, preceded liberal values; and liberalism was invented to manage the
tensions that colonial capitalism created, with a pre-existing sense of what was right and what was wrong.

The assertion that liberal values are universal, that they should be upheld by all people, is also relevant to standing by to genocide. It means that genocidal acts can be sanctioned in the name of propagating liberal values, whether those being colonized want them or not. Individualism is central to liberalism, while genocide is the destruction of the collective. In the context of child welfare, this thinking defends the individual “rights” of Indigenous children to escape their “backward” communities, over their right to grow up in their own culture, justifying the separation of children from their people, an act of genocide (See Chapter 1). Furthermore, it is behind the idea of combatting “harmful” cultural practices that accompanies many colonial projects (Cervantes-Altamirano, 2017). What is harmful is not judged according to an impartial standard (if such a thing exists), but according to what the colonizer believes to be harmful, a standard that often conveniently corresponds with that which makes the colonized more difficult to control and exploit. It is often in the realm of liberal values, that those committed to justice (from the figuration complicit in genocide) advocate for, or themselves commit, genocide, in the name of protecting the rights of children, women, and others they deem vulnerable in the targeted society. In addition, liberalism contains ideas about the civilizing power of commerce, in other words, the belief that participating in a capitalist society brings about better values, i.e., productivity and efficiency (a work ethic); rationality; the elimination of poverty; freedom; innovation; and democracy (Robinson, 2011). Formal education, which I discuss later in this chapter, is geared toward inculcating liberal values and breaking down the figuration of the colonized to produce a compliant proletariat.

There are genocide scholars who argue that liberal values, such as democracy and human rights, encourage standing up (Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002); however, the Canadian experience with genocide targeting Indigenous peoples challenges that assumption. Post-Confederation, genocide in Canada has been a democratic policy response, by governments put in place through elections, purportedly free and fair by the standards of the day. The most obvious example of this is the Indian Residential School System, which became a centrepiece of the government’s “Indian Policy” in the early twentieth century. According to Levene (2005) and Palmer (1998), colonial genocides are society-led rather than government-led. The genocidal policies of the state are
driven by popular opinion, rather than the public controlled by a totalitarian government intent on genocide. In Chapter 9 I provided examples of hate speech that demonstrate that the desire to destroy Indigenous peoples and people, persists amongst some Canadians.

In a genocidal society, power is monopolized by those who support and are perpetrating genocide. Power does not have to be highly centralized, as in a dictatorship, for this to occur. It may actually be more difficult to oppose genocide in the context of a decentralized democracy. Significant scholarship has been devoted to examining the way totalitarianism facilitates the indifference of those standing by to genocidal processes (Arendt, 1966; Edgren, 2012); but how a comparable level of indifference can emerge in a supposedly democratic society like Canada has received little attention (Powell, 2011).¹¹⁸

Overall, I was struck that the participants’ level of reticence in talking to me about genocide was similar among the Canadians — living in a supposedly free, liberal democratic state, with a commitment to freedom of speech — to the Sudanese, even among those who had been tortured for their political activism. This juxtaposition challenges paradigmatic assumptions in the literature about the role of authoritarian political systems in standing by to genocide (Fein, 1993).

**Nation State**

> “These big nation states, like Canada and the United States [and, I would add, Sudan], are too big for an identity that people can relate to.” (Teillet, quoted in Andrew-Gee, Chapter 6, para. 15)

It is no coincidence that nation states arose at the same time as capitalism. The “transformative powers of a union of capital and state power” (Ince, 2013, p. 11) overthrew pre-existing social, political, and economic systems in the metropole and its peripheries. Moreover, the colonial state legitimated the use of violence necessary for primitive accumulation; and, in turn, capitalist exploitation funded a more powerful nation state. Relationships with land were transformed. Citizenship, a relationship with the state that riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians monopolized, supplanted one’s relationship with ancestral land. Land became a factor of

¹¹⁸ Though Powell does not discuss bystanding specifically, his work addresses these contexts.
production and was usurped. Because they controlled the government, through these transformations, riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians gained control of the land and consolidated their economic hegemony (Khalid, 2003; Neu & Therrien, 2003).

Nation states demarcate borders around, but also within, their territories. Borders define the realms where liberal values are upheld in the colonizing centre, and where they are disregarded or applied selectively in the colonized spaces (Ince, 2013). Established in the colonial period these distinctions persist into the present. Similarly, citizenship has been used not only to differentiate people from outside the state territories from those within, but to justify the unequal protection of rights within and create different classes of Canadians and Sudanese. Citizenship was denied to peoples of the peripheries, to Status Indians in Canada until 1960 and to South Sudanese residents in North Sudan, from 2012 until today. As non-citizens they are easily and ironically painted as foreigners and a threat to the state. Non-citizens are far more vulnerable to persecution, violence, and ethnic cleansing and are much less likely to be defended.

Though the connection between the nation state and the standing by of members of the figuration complicit in genocide is theoretically important, the subject of the nation state hardly registered with the participants. When they discussed the nation state, it was in relation to national identity (which I asked about explicitly), but also in relation to the actions and responsibilities of the government. The Sudanese and Canadian participants described their national identity in surprisingly similar ways (given that they are so often positioned as polar opposites); yet the way they orient themselves towards the nation state differs. The Canadian participants were at times critical, at times ambivalent towards the nation state; while the Sudanese participants were conflicted. The Canadian participants either did not speak of the formation of national identity at all or described it as an organic process. Whereas, the Sudanese participants complained of the absence of nation building and their government’s failure to bring about a sense of national identity; talking about their national identity was difficult, even painful.

Despite the belief of many of the Canadian participants that their national identity has emerged organically, academic literature about Canada suggests that a radical process of social engineering has been at work (Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007). The near total assimilation of multitudes of diverse peoples into one, or at most two (Quebecois and Anglo) Canadian cultures,
over a few generations, has eradicated the Indigenous identities of settlers and Indigenous peoples alike.\textsuperscript{119} The riverain Sudanese I spoke with about the formation of their national identity believe that it does not come about spontaneously. Furthermore, they bemoaned that this process of social engineering was started, ostensibly with people of the riverain centre, but then abandoned. The relationship between nation building, social engineering, and genocide, especially in the context of the Holocaust and Nazi ideology, is widely discussed in the genocide studies literature (Staub, 1989). The blindness of non-Indigenous Canadians to nation building and the pining of riverain Sudanese for it is notable.

\textbf{“Modern” Institutions}

“Modern” institutions are the means for social engineering and the instruments the nation uses to establish and replicate itself. The size and reach of the British Empire necessitated bureaucratic institutions of unprecedented size, differentiation, and complexity. This bureaucratization replicated itself in the colonies and the postcolonial states that followed. The differentiation and specialization of knowledge and skills demanded of those working in these institutions gave birth to modern professions. Though modern bureaucratic institutions may be constituted entirely locally, they are created along colonial lines and may act in remarkably consistent ways across the world: Any teacher, lawyer, nurse, engineer, or taxi driver can tell you how easy it can be to “talk shop” with those in the same profession but from another country.

Genocide scholars, such as Bauman (1991), argue that bureaucratization facilitates genocide, not only by facilitating the planning and execution of genocidal acts on a large scale, but by automatizing genocidal processes and dehumanizing and distancing those targeted. As I have explained before, individuals are constituted by their relationships, including their institutional relationships. Moreover, institutional figurations are a logical entry point for interventions to encourage more people to stand up. Modern institutions are also figurations and, as such, an extension of the patterns of colonial relations, which I have expounded upon.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{119} As immigrants of diverse origins, Canadians, with no pre-existing, shared national characteristics, have a far more tenuous basis for nationhood than the Germans do.

\textsuperscript{120} Upon the advice of my Guidance Circles, I also included individuals linked with different institutional figurations in this study and asked participants about the roles they played within these figurations (e.g., “What are business
spoke of the complicity of institutions, like that of individuals, in genocide. However, institutions can also catalyze and further individual efforts to interrupt genocide; and, for this reason, genocidal regimes seek to control them. Moreover, the internal dynamics of these institutions, regardless of external pressures, can deter standing up. Yet, even in these contexts, there is scope for institutions, and the individuals within them, to act and interrupt genocide.

**Government.**

To govern is to have power over a population; and in some political systems, this is reciprocal with the population having a modicum of control over its government. In “modern” contexts, institutions are a means for both types of control (authoritarian and democratic) (Foucault, 1980). Colonial relations determine, but are also replicated by, political institutions, whether legislative and executive institutions or political parties. Both countries in this study seem to be able to sustain, with little difficulty, the paradox of being fairly democratic at the centre and authoritarian in the peripheries; in other words, a colonial pattern of governance.

In Sudan, people at the centre are served by a government who relates to them as citizens, while people at the peripheries are governed by a Native Administration derived from kinship relations.\(^{121}\) The tension between these two approaches explains how the rights of members of

\[^{121}\text{As I have explained, in Sudan during the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, a Western-style administration was set up in the centre for the riverain figuration, and riverain tribal }\text{nazara (plural of }\text{nazir) were politically sidelined. Meanwhile, the peripheries were governed by a small number of British commissioners, who oversaw a traditional seeming governance structure, known as the Native Administration. I write “traditional seeming,” because in the precolonial period, Sudan supported an impressive variety of governance structures, many of which were not amenable to the goals of the colonial administration. Therefore, as in the centre, the British undertook a great deal of engineering of existing structures to ensure that their needs were met. So, while some traditional elements remained (as it was the most efficient way to establish the system’s legitimacy), the Native Administration is not traditional but a colonial creation (Abdul-Jalil, Mohammed, & Yousuf, 2007).}

In the first individually oriented model of governance, atomized citizens are represented by a government that, in turn, relates to them through their rights. In the second model, leaders derive their authority through relationships rooted in kinship, which they maintain through meeting the needs of people they may know personally. There is not only a juxtaposition between the centre and the peripheries, there are also paradoxes within the centre and within the peripheries. A Westernized local administration runs parallel to the Native Administration in the peripheries. Similarly, while the centre maintains that it conforms to a system of “modern” governance, kinship ties remain important (See Chapter 5).
targeted figurations continue to be trampled, and why so few of the hegemonic figuration, inside or outside government institutions, speak up about genocide. The idea that people in the peripheries have rights that should be met by the Sudanese state did not resonate with the participants; as they put it, it is as though they are part of a separate state. People at the centre, they believe, should take care of their own, while people of the peripheries should do the same for themselves. That people of the peripheries have been left with far fewer resources to do so is not considered.

In Canada, until recently, Status Indians were excluded from the parliamentary system at the centre and were represented by colonial Band Councils, created to coopt or erase traditional governance institutions. Furthermore, most Indigenous people, who are non-Status Indians, are not subject to this system, and given their minority status, have little power to influence the governance institutions of the non-Indigenous majority. People from Sudan’s peripheries who reside at the centre are in a similar position.

Despite the similarities explained by a shared experience of British colonialism, there are certainly important and significant differences in governance institutions across these contexts, particularly in relation to liberal values. Canada’s institutions are more entrenched, have greater autonomy, and are better resourced. Though Sudan has had periods of civilian rule, and is more democratic than outsiders perceive it to be, there have been longer periods of military rule. It is currently an authoritarian state; and in its postcolonial period, the country has been in a near-constant state of civil war. A number of the Sudanese participants argued that this is the reason genocidal processes have unfolded in Sudan. They believe that until the country’s governance institutions are democratic, there is little point in talking about inequality; that with democracy, members of the hegemonic figuration will stand up for peoples being targeted with genocide.

122 The Canadian system bears some resemblance to the Sudanese system. There is a British parliamentary style system for non-Indigenous people in the centre, and Band Councils (in the past overseen by Indian Agents, the equivalent of colonial commissioners) for most Status Indians in the peripheries. This was the case de jure until the 1960s, when Indigenous peoples in Canada were enfranchised and given the right to participate in both systems. Though Band Councils are given the appearance of being traditional, like the Native Administration in Sudan, they are homogenizing colonial institutions created to coopt or erase (whichever is expedient) diverse, pre-existing, governance institutions that resist colonialism. First Nations have struggled to regain their political sovereignty and have made significant gains. Though Band Councils have wide-ranging responsibilities, like in Sudan, they have limited power and crucially insufficient resources to act on behalf of their constituencies.
Some genocide scholars make similar arguments about other genocidal contexts (Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002).

However, there are two challenges to the view that democracy will fix everything. First, during periods of democratic governance in Sudan (1955–1958, 1965–1969, and 1985–1989) no substantive progress was made to interrupt genocidal processes in the peripheries. In fact, the proposed constitution of 1968; the first Islamically-oriented constitution in Sudan; and the “Popular Defence” policy that brought the use of genocidal counterinsurgency to the South, the Nuba Mountains, and Darfur (Salmon, 2007), were conceived by democratically-elected governments. Second, Canada is often lauded for its democracy; yet, this has not stopped Indigenous peoples from being subjected to genocide. So, though authoritarianism undoubtedly shapes figurational interactions in Sudan, it does not explain why riverain Sudanese stand by to genocide.

These colonial patterns also legitimate institutions that exercise their power through violence, not only in Sudan but in Canada as well. For example, the power of, and lack of oversight over, Sudan’s National Intelligence and Security Services, which are themselves a product of colonialism (they were created by the British), and neocolonialism (their capacity was built by the KGB and the CIA). Their activities range from surveillance, to harassment, to infiltration of opposition groups, to torture and extrajudicial detention and killing (Berridge, 2013). The omnipresence of the National Intelligence and Security Services undermines the rule of law in Sudan and compels Sudanese to self-censor their words and actions. Furthermore, the peripheries in Sudan are governed by the military. This militarization has a profound impact on interfigurational relations, contributing to polarization (see Chapter 5). A simple conversation with someone from the peripheries can become grounds for an accusation of treason. Standing up for someone on the other side, through reporting on atrocities committed by the military, is deemed a criminal offence under the 2009 Press and Publications Act. Moreover, when coercive but “legal” land transfers were not possible or successful, the Sudanese Armed Forces, in cooperation with militias from Arab nomadic groups, cleared the Nuba Mountains for agriculture (de Waal, 2006) and Bentiu for oil extraction (Khalid, 2003).
While Canada is not perceived as a country that takes militarized and securitized responses to dissent, relations with Indigenous communities are an exception. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), who police most Indigenous communities in Canada, was founded as, and remains, a militarized force (Shantz, 2016). When it was established, they had the “power to arrest, prosecute, judge, and sentence offenders, making any notion of the legal protection of Indigenous people under the British Crown a complete illusion” (Dhillon, 2015, quoted in Shantz, 2016, p. 9). The RCMP has implemented, or supported the implementation, of most genocidal policies targeting Indigenous people in Canada, including land usurpation, forcible resettlement, containment on reserves, segregation from settlers, denial of livelihoods, persecution and surveillance of Indigenous leaders, perpetration and condoning of sexual and gender-based violence, and mass incarceration (Tobias, 2006). For over 150 years, RCMP officers have seized Indigenous children from their families and communities and delivered them for assimilation to the Indian Residential School System, adoption, and child welfare systems.

Indigenous activists have been targeted by Canadian Security and Intelligence Services (Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, 2013); and Indigenous direct action has been routinely met with militarized police response (Razack, 2002) or actual military response, as occurred in the Canadian Armed Forces confrontation with the Haudenosaunee at Kanehsatà:ke/Oka in 1990. The militarized response not only intimidates Indigenous people and non-Indigenous Canadians thinking of standing up, it positions peoples targeted by genocide as enemies of the state. To ally with them is treason.

Genocide in both contexts is legally sanctioned and carried out with the participation of judicial institutions (See Chapter 2). As Sunera Thobani (2007) argues, “The institution of the law made it possible for colonialists and settlers to rationalize and thus conceal violence, to systematize it in the interest of the reproduction of the nation-state” (p. 62). Capitalism requires juridical equality and contractual freedom but not necessarily for everyone (Ince, 2013). In Canada the Indian Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. I-5) denies equality, and the betrayal of treaties denies contractual freedom. In both contexts, the governments’ recourse to “legal” measures of purchase and negotiation to remove Indigenous peoples from their lands was accomplished through deceit and betrayal (Daschuk, 2013). Under various incarnations of the Indian Act, Indigenous people were not allowed to sell goods they produced on reserves; in other words, they were actually
disallowed from participating in capitalism through legislation (Neu & Therrien, 2003). Legislating injustice masks it and makes it more difficult to oppose, not least because the powers of the nation state, including the use of force, can by marshalled to enforce the law.

In Sudan, the adoption of shari’a, Islamic law has been used to legitimize genocidal actions that target non-Muslims. An example often given is a fatwa (a decree or ruling under Islamic law) that was issued to legitimize the genocidal insurgency in the Nuba Mountains (Africa Rights, 1995). The institution of shair’a law has also raised the stakes for Muslims considering standing up for non-Muslims targeted by genocide, as it has been used to label them as infidels. In Canada, legalized discrimination has been sanctioned by the Indian Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. I-5), legislation that depends upon and inscribes the racialization of Indigenous people, which I discuss further at the end of this chapter. The legal sanctioning of inequality has colonial origins as well, though from British rather than Arab-Islamic sources. In the case of Canada it can be traced all the way back to the British colonization of Ireland in the eighteenth century, where “Under English law they [the Irish] were not allowed to own land, hold office, be apprenticed to any skill or craft, or serve on juries” (Smedley, 2007, p. 38). In addition, in the Sudanese case, there was also an Ottoman influence.123

Given that government is frequently the main duty bearer and perpetrator of genocide, the extent to which other institutions mirror and support the state may impinge upon standing by. The colonial patterns I have described extend to all public institutions, especially the formal education system, which I return to later in this chapter. They are also replicated outside of government institutions, among civil society, the business sector, and the media.

Civil society.

Like political parties in Sudan, civil society organizations grew out of student associations. Given the preferential access of riverain Sudanese to education, and the underdevelopment and conflict in the peripheries, civil society organizations are largely for and of the centre.124 As I

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123 In the form of the Millet system (Cleveland & Bunton, 2009).
124 Civil society functions in the peripheries are performed by traditional institutions, including the Native Administration, and less formal community and kinship associations. Since the colonial period, civil and political rights in large areas of the peripheries have been suspended under the guise of security, making many forms of civil
discovered while working with this sector during the Comprehensive Peace Agreement period. Khartoum-based civil society institutions have minimal reach and interest in working outside of the capital and can be ignorant of civil society agencies that have formed in the peripheries. At the height of the atrocities in Darfur, freedoms were greater; yet, riverain civil society remained silent. Furthermore, riverain civil society actors are viewed with suspicion in the peripheries. A former Darfurian colleague of mine calls them NISS-NGOs (National Intelligence and Security Services, non-government organizations). Similar divisions can be seen in Canada. Mary, whose organization has recently engaged with First Nations in Canada, said that working in a sustained and community driven way with Indigenous peoples is new for her organization and her sector as a whole. The neglect of First Nations communities by the non-Indigenous, not-for-profit sector in Canada, and its consequences for the well being of these peoples, has been documented by Nadjihwan & Blackstock (2003).

Many of the Sudanese participants see civil society institutions as essential for catalyzing individuals to stand up to genocide and for ensuring that individual actions affect change, not least because unions and professional associations played an important role in organizing two post-independence intifadas that led to political revolutions. Because of their proven political power, every successive government has tried to control them. The current regime is still in power because it has been effective in dismantling or coopting these institutional threats to their authority. The Sudanese participants doubted that the coopted shells that remain of these once powerful institutions have anything to contribute to interrupting processes of genocide. Furthermore, in line with the disparity in development between the centre and the peripheries in Sudan, these institutional figurations are of the hegemonic figuration and have a poor record of speaking up for the interests of figurations targeted for genocide. However the Sudanese participants with ties to these, now largely irrelevant, institutions idealize the role they played and have difficulty acknowledging that the labour movement and professional associations have been complicit in genocide. In Canada, these institutions are not turned to, to catalyze political society organizing illegal. Attempts to form civil society institutions have, in turn, been hampered by the conflict. Those who could have become civil society leaders joined armed groups, international humanitarian agencies, or left the region to seek safety, education, and work.

125 For example West Darfur has an active and well-run youth organization that reaches across the state, has offices, staff, and a budget; yet representatives of Khartoum’s youth movements, with whom I spoke, assume that nothing is there.
revolution, but to lobby with the government and, crucially, to bring about a change in public attitudes. However, they too have a poor record of speaking up on behalf of people targeted by genocide.

**Religion.**

Religious institutions have been actively complicit in genocide. Islam and Christianity are Indigenous to neither Sudan nor Canada and forced and coerced conversion has constituted a religious technique of genocide. Religious institutions have not only executed and justified genocidal acts, they have advocated for them (Sudan: Johnson, 2000; Canada: TRC, 2015). With a reach that goes beyond and deeper into the communities of peoples targeted by genocide than any other sector\(^{126}\); significant capacity (at least historically); and theological interpretations that call followers to resist injustice, their potential to mobilize people to interrupt genocide seems significant.

Though I did not interview religious leaders in Canada, as I did in Sudan, the lack of discussion of Christianity and churches among the participants is striking, given that churches played a leading role in the Indian Residential School System.\(^ {127}\) Religion came across as being irrelevant to most of the Canadian participants. However, in some Indigenous communities, churches remain among the most powerful institutions; and in the north, in particular, they still unabashedly proselytize (Victoria Freedom, personal communication, June 16, 2014), which in this context could be viewed as a genocidal act.

In Sudan, Islamization is tied to Arabization, and both preceded colonization. However, colonization, followed by neo-colonization, brought new interpretations of Islam and Islamic institutions. Sunni orthodoxy was imposed by the Ottoman Egyptians and then British\(^ {128}\) and in the postcolonial period, the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. Both took aim at the Indigenized forms of Islam that were already in place. However, like in Canada, religious

\(^{126}\) A possible exception would be the business sector.

\(^{127}\) This is cannot be explained by Canadian’s ignorance of history alone. Following their role in running Indian Residential Schools, churches have necessarily been very engaged in reconciliation for the harm they did.

\(^{128}\) Fearing a resurgence of Mahdism, the British took aim at (and in some cases, executed) anyone promoting Messianic-type movements; were suspicious of Sufism; and promoted orthodox quietist forms of Islam that could more easily be brought under their control.
institutions are less powerful than they used to be. Idris Salih (personal communication, October 3, 2015) argues that religion is no longer of much relevance to politics in Sudan: “The Islamic Movement was sidelined, and its structure is not working. It is practically out of the political game. The religious orientation [of the regime] in practice is becoming very weak.” Salih refers to religion as simply offering “a cloud of prestige” for political leaders. According to Adam, a religious leader, “The government lured some [religious leaders] with money and positions. Those are no longer with us…. Religious institutions are controlled by pro-government forces.”

Even if religious institutions in Canada and the US have less power than they used to, it does not follow that they should not act with the power that they do have. In fact their culpability for genocide may increase the impact of their standing up against it.

**Business.**

As with religious institutions, businesses have often reached communities where governments are not present. In Canada, paradigmatically, the Hudson’s Bay Company preceded the Canadian state, as did riverain jellaba traders in Sudan. Following confederation, the Canadian government contracted (not particularly successfully) the country’s settlement to private corporations (Lalonde, 2006). Today, extractive industries in both contexts follow similar patterns to the businesses of the past. Operating in the hinterlands, sometimes they engage in ways that bring benefits to Indigenous peoples, while other times, they are complicit, or even instigators of genocidal acts (Sudan: de Guzman & Wesselink, 2002; Kumar, 2015; Manson, 2012; Travis, 2008; Canada: Gedicks, 2001).

Some of the business leaders I spoke with in Sudan have clearly been complicit. They made fortunes through business with the government that directly led to or depended upon genocidal acts carried out in the context of the second North-South civil war.129 I did not speak with members of the business community in Canada; but the participants talked about the potential for them to foster positive as well as negative relations, given the very close contacts some businesses have with Indigenous communities.

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129 This is a strong claim that requires substantiation. Unfortunately, if I were to identify this business, I would indirectly identify the person I interviewed and compromise their confidentiality.
At the same time, in both contexts, the lack of economic development in communities targeted by genocide was a concern among the participants. In fact, both countries have kept people targeted by genocide out of the national economy. In Canada, this was achieved through making it illegal for First Nations to trade off of reserves; and in Sudan through imposing inter-state tariffs and not investing in the economic development of the peripheries. This raises complex questions about the role of capitalism, whether the problem is exclusion from a system of global capitalism or exploitation in it. In Sudan, almost universally, the participants felt exclusion was the problem, while in Canada some believed that Indigenous people might not want to engage in capitalistic modes of production and preferred to seek livelihoods through other modes.

**Media.**

Journalists in both contexts (Sudan more so than Canada) suggested that the media does not report on genocide nor provide the type of coverage that would motivate others to stand up. While the journalists that I interviewed shared a commitment to uncovering and telling the truth, they had diverse views about whether journalists have any special obligation to stand up against genocide. They spoke of other commitments that may supersede this obligation, including professional ethics, telling a good story, producing government propaganda, producing content that attracts an audience, or influencing politics. Journalists in both contexts spoke of the constraints they face in their work; however, the constraints differed in Canada and Sudan. In Canada, journalists bemoaned the role of business interests in eroding the quality of journalism. In Sudan, they complained of government censorship and persecution, which in turn leads to self-censorship (though profitability does factor in). They also spoke of how the media is used for government propaganda, how journalists lack skills and power, and public disbelief about what the media reports. In both contexts, the lack of resources to report on the relationship between those complicit in and those targeted by genocide was mentioned. Furthermore, because the media is concentrated in major urban centres, it does a poor job of covering the peripheries in both countries. However, participants felt that this is less the case with alternative and social media.

130 It is important mention though that in Sudan, journalists from Khartoum can be denied permission to travel to report on the peripheries by security officials.
I am left with a clear sense that journalism is a product of the mesh of colonial ideas. Liberal values are central to the discourse of what it means to be a journalist in both contexts; but the threads of this mesh compete with, as well as complement, each other. In Sudan, the imperative to defend the nation state (or rather the regime) often wins out, while in Canada a capitalist imperative is having more impact on the way journalism is practised.\textsuperscript{131}

\textbf{Independence from government.}

Civil society, religious associations, businesses, and the media have sometimes driven genocide, advocated and participated in it; yet, the government has also exerted pressure to keep them in line. In Canada, the pressure is ostensibly through carrots. Churches were funded to run Indian Residential Schools, and government and civil society institutions are very integrated. In 1991, 56\% of charity funding came from the government, and 14\% of the government budgets went to funding charities (Sharpe, 1994); though this is less the case now. Charities in Canada are also restricted in how much they can spend on advocacy.

In Sudan the participants talked about “government businesses,” run by people who are supported by the regime or who actually hold government positions; and contrasted these with “private businesses” that try to maintain a distance from the regime. According to the business leaders that I interviewed, the former stands by and does nothing about genocide, because their interests are in step with the regime’s; while the latter does the same, but because they fear being disciplined if they threaten government interests. Though leaders in private business were eager to distinguish themselves from government business; in the end, no matter the motivation, the result is the same: Businesses stand by and do nothing about genocide. As I have argued, genocidal relationships implicating the business sector (e.g., slavery) preceded the regime currently in power.

\textsuperscript{131} I am sceptical of the rosy view that Canadian journalists have of journalism in the past. Journalism has always been shaped by a profit motive.
Is bureaucracy the problem?

Clearly, the way the capacities of bureaucracies are being directed is a concern. However, the nature of the institutions themselves has also been identified as a barrier to individuals standing up against genocide. This was more evident in the Canadian interviews, perhaps because Canadian institutions are so entrenched. On the other hand, among the Sudanese participants there is a tendency to blame many of the challenges the country faces, including genocide, on the weakness and “immaturity” of modern institutions. That being said, some of the Sudanese participants saw political institutions and the politicization of institutions as a barrier.

In Canada, participants discussed both external and internal institutional dynamics as barriers to standing up. The civil servants suggested that the civil service and those who comprise it are a broad reflection of Canadian society (Babiker said the same thing about Sudanese university professors); as such, they bring all of the same prejudices and ignorance to their work. Furthermore, institutions depend upon resources, whether funding or knowledge, and must wait for external opportunities to present themselves in order to make changes. Internal dynamics that the Canadian participants discussed concern how power is exercised, whether they are in a position to effect change or have to first “ask permission,” and prove that it is within the “mandate” of the institution to act; whether they are encouraged to “speak truth to power” and “push the envelope”; as well as the decision making processes they have to follow. Furthermore, the disempowerment of individuals by bureaucracies attracts people who are there “just to get paid” and so cannot be counted on for support. The participants suggested that the organizational culture of an institution impinges directly on the ability of individuals within the institution to form good relations with Indigenous peoples as well as impacts the operation of power, more generally, within the institution. According to the participants, the government ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) had a particularly negative institutional culture.

Among the Sudanese participants, these issues arose, for the most part, in the context of political institutions, perhaps because those working for other institutions felt so disempowered. Again

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132 After the completion of the interviews for this study, the AANDC later became Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), which was dissolved in August 2017, and two new departments were created: Indigenous Services Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada.
issues of power were paramount. Close to half of the participants expressed concern about the preoccupation of political institutions with, what Haroun terms, “political wrangling.” “They see it as politics,” said Babiker, “they do not see it as coming up with solutions.” Or as Farouq described it: “It was like movements on a chessboard.” This wrangling is not simply power plays within and between relatively stable political institutions; it is the perpetual fractioning and reconciliation of political movements, particularly opposition movements. Politicians are so busy with political survival (and the rent seeking it makes possible) that there is no time or energy left to govern. Significantly, these political games have not been confined to the political parties and have infected many other institutions, including the civil service, education system, business, media, and civil society. Being consumed by struggles for power distracts Sudanese from acting to interrupt genocidal processes and breeds cynicism amongst those who may get involved in trying to find solutions through political institutions.

Nevertheless, the participants in both contexts identified scope for institutions to stand up. The Canadian civil servants felt that their scope to act in the best interests of Canadians generally, and Indigenous peoples specifically, diminished under the Harper Conservative government. However they still shared examples of how civil servants are working within these constraints to improve relationships. In Sudan, despite persecution and repeated setbacks, the arts and cultural community is acting in solidarity with people targeted by genocide. The participants reported that there is less polarization within this community because most forms of artistic expression, whether in the centre or the peripheries, have been targeted as un-Islamic by the regime. Exemplifying this, of all the Sudanese participants, only the artists (though certainly not all) spoke of the experience or desire to live in the peripheries. Furthermore, Sudanese history provides inspiration for Sudanese institutions to continue to look for opportunities to stand up. It is through institutions after all — labour unions, professional associations, political parties, and the army — that two intifada brought down oppressive governments. Whether their capacity has been so depleted that standing up is truly impossible, or this is just a convenient excuse, is a question that remains unanswered.

133 At the time of the interviews, the Conservative government under Prime Minister Harper was in power. This may not be the case under the current government.
**Formal Education**

Bureaucracies need certain types of people to function, people educated according to a specific mould, and people convinced of the superiority of the colonial ideas that I have described. According to the riverain Sudanese participants, the relations they now have with peoples of the peripheries came about through colonial education. People of the riverain centre were the first to encounter, and for a time the only ones to attend, the British colonial schools set up at the dawn of the twentieth century. Even when people from Western and Eastern Sudan gained entry to this system, their participation was limited. In the 1970s, access to public education expanded. However, as groups from the peripheries started entering the school system, the resources were drained and the quality declined. Of the meagre resources that remain for public education, a disproportionate percentage benefits riverain communities (World Bank, 2012). People with the means, mostly the riverain elite, opt for private schools. The participants considered the differences in access to formal education as being at the root of inequalities in political power sharing, economic opportunities, as well as tensions between the centre and the peripheries.

The riverain Sudanese elites’ experience of education as alienation provides insight into the reasons why the majority of its members have stood by to genocide. According to the participants, part and parcel of the cultural severance experienced by the riverain centre through colonial education (See Chapter 4) is the physical alienation of students from their communities. The earliest schools were boarding schools; and later, families relocated to urban centres, in part, so their children could access education. An extension of this alienation has been travelling abroad for post-secondary education (which most of the participants had done) and attending school in the West or the Persian Gulf when accompanying parents who migrate abroad for work. Moreover, students do not have to leave Sudan; they can be virtually educated abroad, in Khartoum, at schools that teach British and International curricula in English.

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134 On the other hand, from the pre-colonial period until the present, Islamic khalwi schools have been accessible across northern Sudan.

135 Due to the Closed District Ordinances, which the British administrators instituted to minimized ties between the north and the south of the country, groups in what is now South Sudan had no access to state run public education. Rather, a small number of Southerners attended mission-run schools where the priority was to Christianize and Anglicize students, inoculating them against the spread of Islamic culture southwards.

136 Government spending on education was reduced from 30–50% of GDP, in the 1970s and early 1980s, to only 2% in 2009 (World Bank, 2015).
This type of education interrupts processes of acculturation and severs the riverain elite from their cultural heritage: “Most people like me don’t know anything about Sudanese culture,” said Wessam, a university lecturer. According to the participants when they migrate for school, it severs them from: their traditional lands and livelihoods; Sudanese languages, including Sudanese forms of Arabic; literature, both written and oral; as well as Sudanese religions, including Sudanese forms of Islam and syncretic religious practices. There is even a term, hankesha, “Sudanese expatriates within,” to refer to the educated elite who have lost their culture, as Wessam explained.

By mixing with students from different parts of the country, and with foreigners, education is also changing who people marry (from endogamous to exogamous patterns of marriage) and, thus, transforming riverain identities: “My wife has nothing to do with my own tribe. My children didn’t marry in their families. None has a connection with the family,” says Faisal, a professor. The alienation of riverain Sudanese from land and culture, as I argue in Chapter 4, turned them into colonizers. Through formal education in particular, “The colonial situation manufactures colonialists, just as it manufactures the colonized” (Memmi, 1965, p. 56).

In contrast, the non-Indigenous Canadians I spoke with said virtually nothing about formal education as a system and its political purpose in creating the non-Indigenous Canadian citizen, or more pointedly, the colonizer. They seem to consider the education system in Canada as just there, and it presumably has always been there. However, a cursory review of Canada’s history of education reveals similarities to Sudan. This is no surprise, given that both contexts were part of the same adaptable, yet, nonetheless, consistent colonial project. Until Canada became a dominion in 1867, most non-Indigenous people were as illiterate and “unschooled” as Indigenous people in Canada (Gaffield, 2015). As in Sudan, educational disparity in Canada was not inevitable, it was by design. From before Canada became a country, Indigenous nations consistently requested access to formal education in their communities and with respect for their culture and sovereignty; yet, to this day they suffer discrimination both in terms of educational funding and the responsiveness of the education system to their needs.

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137 The grandparents and sometimes parents of most the participants were farmers or petty traders.
138 None of the Nubian participants I spoke with speak a Nubian language, and a number of the young people I interviewed are functionally illiterate in Arabic because their education has been in English.
Like the riverain Sudanese, Canadian settlers/immigrants also migrated from their lands and cultural communities, sometimes by choice but sometimes by force, to seek better opportunities, including educational opportunities for their children. Yet, to this day, new immigrants, and even their descendants, experience Canadian education as culturally alienating (Dei & Rummens, 2010). Education in Canada eradicated the languages and cultural practices of immigrants, and as in Sudan, it was consciously deployed to create non-Indigenous Canadians as a colonizing people (Gaffield, 2015; Thobani, 2007).

The non-Indigenous Canadian participants acknowledged education as cultural genocide in the context of the Indian Residential School System, in which 30% of Indigenous children were placed (TRC, 2015), often after being forcibly taken from their families and communities. Many of the participants acknowledged that Indian Residential Schools are an integral part of a process of colonization and a project aimed at the eradication of Indigenous cultures. While the majority of the participants objected to characterizing Indian Residential Schools as genocidal, the educators I interviewed were relatively open to using the term in this context, perhaps because they were more informed about the concept and debates about genocide in Canada. Two of them had actually taught a course on genocide, and another works at a school where a genocide course was taught.

The Sudanese participants said nothing about education as an instrument of figurational destruction. They did not mention the Islamic khalwi schools that were and are deployed in non-Muslim areas to encourage conversion to Islam or switching the language of instruction to Arabic (the mother tongue of only a few tribes in Sudan, and most of the riverain tribes), which is also part of the process of Islamization and Arabization. The following quote from a 1986 policy document of the Democratic Unionist Party, one of Sudan’s oldest political parties, clearly expresses the intentions of such policies:

139 4 out of 16 participants that I asked about this gave their unqualified support for the use of the term genocide; while an additional 5 were unsure or undecided. 3 interviewees were not asked this question because time did not allow it.
140 2 of the 4 teachers interviewed were very open to the use of the term, though were unsure about using it themselves; while one teacher gave it his unqualified support.
141 One participant, an older male professor, criticized the government’s move to change the language of instruction in the South, from English to Arabic, but more as a political miscalculation than a morally unacceptable attack on Indigenous groups.
The building of Islamic centres, *khalawi* schools and modern hospitals in the South, in general, and Equatoria, in particular, is part of a well-conceived plan that has been long supported by our party. It has been our long-term objective to train Muslim cadres through whom we can ensure control over the most important political and economic institutions, so that we can reach a point when the whole area of Equatoria may be converted into an Arab and Muslim land, from which the light of Islam can spread into the jungles of Africa south of the Sahara. (Democratic Unionist Party quoted in Johnson, 2000, p. 67)

The Southerners, who are for the most part non-Muslim and less Arabized, have been the target of these efforts; however the Nuba have been subjected to the most intensive effort to implement cultural techniques of genocide, which included boarding schools for unaccompanied and kidnapped children (Africa Rights, 1995), akin to the Indian Residential Schools in Canada. Religious conversion and Arabic as the language of instruction may not constitute genocide on their own; there are, of course, dozens of nations around the world in which Islam is practiced and/or Arabic is spoken, and these peoples flourish. However, when coerced and forced and experienced in consort with other techniques aimed at destroying a people, education is a powerful weapon of figurational destruction. If formal education of this sort is not acknowledged as a technique of genocide, then riverain Sudanese are unlikely to speak out against it.

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142 *Munazamat al Da'wa al Islamiyya* was probably the best known of the education facilities run by Islamic agencies targeting Southern and Nuba in the Internally Displaced Peoples camps around Khartoum (M. el Gizouli, personal communication, April 15, 2015).

143 I did not ask the participants about this silence and so do not have an empirically-based explanation for the reason they did not talk about these policies. However, it seems unlikely that they do not realize that education has been used in this way, given that the intent to Arabize and Islamize all groups of Sudan has been proudly proclaimed by politicians in Sudan for decades, and most recently by President Omar Hassan el Bashir in the lead up to the separation of the South (Moszynski, 2011). Perhaps given the proliferation of physical violence (including the ongoing bombing of civilians in the Nuba Mountains and Darfur), participants do not think these more benign techniques for destroying groups are worth mentioning. Or perhaps, they support them. Another consideration may be that they unconditionally value education and dismiss any negative effects. Furthermore, it may be difficult for riverain Sudanese to acknowledge how education has and is being used to destroy figurations of the peripheries until they come to terms with how it has alienated their own identity.
Racialization

Racialization is the labeling of bodies as belonging to a race, and then granting or denying these bodies power, depending upon how they have been classified (Omi & Winant, 2014). Race is defined by many social scientists as a phenotypical classification (Das Gupta, 2007); in other words, it is based on one’s physical characteristics, including skin colour, hair texture, facial features, height, and body type. This is the basis upon which ethnicity, a culturally based classification, is often distinguished from race. However, in Canada and in Sudan, race is assigned according to both physical and cultural characteristics\(^{144}\) (Sudan: Fluehr-Lobban & Rhodes, 2004; Idris, 2001, Jok, 2007; Sharkey, 2007; Canada: Andersen, 2014; Deerchild, 2016; King, 2012). In Canada, legal status under the *Indian Act* (R.S.C., 1985, c. I-5) contributes to the social constructions of race. In Sudan, religion is an (admittedly, extremely contradictory) identifier of race that conflates Black with non-Muslim and, under *shari’a* law, translates into a different legal status for non-Muslims. Race is consistently “mixed up” with ethnicity, religion, legal status, nationhood, lineage, language spoken, physical appearance, economic status, and a myriad of other characteristics.

Some social scientists may dismiss this “mixing up” as the mislabelling of ethnicity as race by laypeople. I disagree. The participants consistently described these diverse ways of characterizing people as race. Treating these as discrete classification systems denies how racialization works in the real world. This mixing up explains the resiliency and flexibility of racialization, as a way of establishing the supremacy of some people and the inferiority of others. Although it may be viewed and experienced as being fixed, one’s race is dependent upon where one is situated in time and space. It is mutable and contingent upon context. Moreover, the same can be said about ideas of what a race actually is. Orthodox definitions of race do not fit what I am researching in Sudan or Canada, and separating out different markers of race is neither meaningful nor congruent with my grounded theory approach.

What distinguishes race from other ways of categorizing people is not what one believes race is, nor the characteristics one uses to determine it, but rather the connection between race and

\(^{144}\) Relying on either cultural or phenotypical characteristics would have made it very challenging for riverain Sudanese or non-Indigenous Canadians to assert their racial supremacy given the incredible diversity of the peoples targeted by genocide in both contexts.
power. Critical race theorists (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) have pointed out that what differentiates race from ethnicity, or nationhood, or tribe, is that race is first and foremost about hierarchy, in other words, power. Unlike ethnicity, or nationhood, or tribe/lineage, race serves no purpose¹⁴⁵ other than to establish and maintain supremacy, and in the contexts of this research “White”¹⁴⁶ supremacy, in particular.

**Colonial racism.**

Though participants in both contexts used the word race (in English); the meaning that they ascribe to it may not be the same. In both contexts, the participants identified “genes” or “blood” as important in determining race, as well as culture, education, and social class. In Canada, they spoke of the status of Indigenous people as inherent, either to being an Indigenous person or to Indigenous culture. They referenced or used racial stereotypes, such as, Indigenous people are corrupt, lazy, inept, backwards, insular, and exotic. They spoke of institutions being racist; race-based legislation (e.g., the *Indian Act* (R.S.C., 1985, c. I-5)); how Indigenous people became racialized; racism as a filter that shapes their view of Indigenous people; and racist speech. In Sudan, where race is very dynamic, and arguably more contested than in Canada, participants talked of the way tribes intersect, or do not intersect, with race. The stereotypes they expressed of different peoples from different parts of the peripheries were diverse, while still painting them as poor and violent complainers, who blame others for their problems, and do not take care of their own people. In both contexts, some of the participants were critically reflective about race and described processes of racialization, including the homogenizing of diverse peoples and histories of segregation, exclusion, and slavery; while most participants were not.

¹⁴⁵ While racialization is most often understood as the imposition of a racial marker onto less powerful individuals, people, or peoples, it can also be used by those experiencing oppression. For example, the Fur, Maasalit, Zaghawa, and other Indigenous and farming peoples of Darfur began identifying as Black, as their relationship with riverain Sudanese of the centre deteriorated. Indigenous people across Turtle Island and the world have reclaimed colonial labels, such as Indian or Native, in part to draw attention to their shared experiences and struggles. Race can be reclaimed by those who are racialized to make visible race-based oppression that is being intentionally masked and attributable to other benign causes (being less educated, living far from urban centres, living in a traditional way), and to make alliances with others to fight that oppression. However, this is still a reaction to the initial experience of being racialized.

¹⁴⁶ I put White in quotations to draw attention to the fact that Whiteness is not just about skin colour.
The practice of racialization may have come to Sudan and Canada from places other than Britain (the Arab world in the case of Sudan). However, the consistency of the discourse of race in British colonial policy in both places suggests common origins in Britain.¹⁴⁷ Like Said (2003), and before him W.E.B. Dubois (1915) and Arendt (1966), I argue that race is a colonial idea:

Theses of Oriental backwardness, degeneracy, and inequality with the West most easily associated themselves early in the nineteenth century with ideas about the biological bases of racial inequality…. Thus the whole question of imperialism, as it was debated in the late nineteenth century by pro-imperialist and anti-imperialists alike, carried forward the binary typology of advanced and backward (or subject) races, cultures, and societies. (p. 23)

Michael Banton (2007) argues that, “For the English, some of the seeds of a racial worldview were in place long before they encountered peoples in the New World and in Africa” (p. 31). He explains that colonial racism has its roots in the Anglo-Saxon colonisation of Ireland, the Scottish Highlands, and Wales. The English used racial supremacy to justify their genocidal response when these Celtic people refused¹⁴⁸ to adopt the Anglo-Saxon economic system and concomitant values (including the Anglican religion). Ideas of race then travelled with people.

Edward Cornwallis arrived directly from the Highland Clearances in Scotland to Halifax in what is now Canada to initiate and implement a campaign to extirpate the Mi’kmaq. New Englanders were brought to Ireland to participate in genocidal campaigns. Then the approach and the people willing to implement it were returned back to the colonies. The genocidal discourse used against the Celts is contiguous with that used against the Mi’kmaq or the forces of the Mahdi in Sudan. This back and forth of peoples between the colonies and the metropole suggests that colonial ideas of race developed reciprocally in the context of unequal relations between Britain and its colonies, rather than being a one-way movement of ideas.

Inequality and violence in the colonies, on a scale that would likely not have been tolerated in the centre, necessitated the development of Scientific Racism: the idea that race is essential, and that

¹⁴⁷ This particular form of racialization has also been imported, reinvented, and then reexported from other places, such as imperial powers like the United States (Banton, 2007)).
¹⁴⁸ Many of the genocidal policies that were implemented in British colonies originated in these contexts as well, including the banning of cultural and religious practices, political and legal disenfranchisement, land usurpation and forced resettlement, and engineering famine and refusing relief.
you can categorize and, more importantly, rank people as being closer or further from apes (i.e., animals and thus less than human), according to objective criteria, such as skull measurements. Sudan and Canada were paradises for colonial anthropologists, seeking experiences with (and the skulls of) diverse “primitive” peoples to elaborate on and test the theories of race they were developing. In fact, in Sudan there was sometimes no differentiation between the colonial administrator and the colonial scientist, as was the case with Harold MacMichael, the Civil Secretary who codified Sudan’s tribes along racial lines in, *A History of the Arabs in the Sudan* (1922).

There is not one colonial understanding of race, rather, different strands have circulated in Britain and its colonies. As with the larger colonial mesh of ideas that I have been discussing, these form a flexible but recognizable whole. Which particular strand is hegemonic depends upon when and where one is. Though colonial racialization is recognizable, it is also adaptable. For example, relabeling what was race as ethnicity is just the latest iteration of reoccurring colonial moves to depoliticize and naturalize racialization, making it harder to challenge the establishment, justifying and entrenching the ideology of White supremacy. The idea that race is innate and that some races are naturally superior and others naturally inferior — whether due to genes or culture, it does not matter — is now part of the fabric of society in Canada and Sudan. These ideas are unthinkingly perpetuated through acculturation and formal institutions. The move to claim that race does not exist — as in, it is scientifically meaningless, or we are in a post-racial future, or redefining race as ethnicity — erases oppressed people’s experience of being racialized and the discrimination that follows from that. What Thobani (2007) calls the, “politics of multiculturalism,” depoliticizes and makes it more difficult to attack the practice of racial supremacy. Attempts at depoliticization are evident in the data. Participants in both Sudan and Canada proudly proclaim the diversity of their societies. As Thobani argues, these types of liberal policies justify segregation and delegitimize the alliances that oppressed peoples form to fight oppression.
**Sudanese and Arab racism.**

I am not convinced that race is only a colonial import to Sudan. The Sudanese data supports the assertion that there is an Arab racism149 that may have a distinct history, trajectory, and characteristics. Some see Arab racism as an internalization of European ideas of race inflicted upon the Arab world through colonialism, or a necessary accompaniment of modernization and nation state formation (the racist discourse of Arab nationalist pan-Arab movements is cited). However, Bernard Lewis (1990) argues that not only did it predate European racism, it spread from the Arab to the European world. What is undeniable is that Arab and Muslim imperialist projects have penetrated Sudan, notably through Ottoman Egyptian colonization. Furthermore, there has been a slave trade of mostly Africans to the Arab world (though by no means exclusively, many Europeans and Asian people were enslaved), in the context of physical and cultural attributes used as the basis for assigning different status, even designating some as property or animals (Sharkey, 1992; Spaulding, 1982).

A matter for debate is to what extent was and is this status essentialized and social mobility possible. Apologists for racism in the Arab world mention that African women enslaved as concubines mothered Arab children. Aside from Spaulding’s (1982) challenge to this claim on the basis of historical evidence; rather than proving that racism does not exist in Arab contexts, this assertion suggests that racism dictates relations, even at the family level, and says nothing of the fate of male slaves. True, this practice looks to lineage and, in this case, exclusively paternity (rather than blood quantum, which is used in Canada); however lineage-based strands of racism have still influenced Western colonial ideas of race (Smedley, 2007). Historically, in Sudan, physical characteristics were secondary to religion and culture in determining who was enslavable and who was not; and the Black Sultanates of Darfur were pre-eminent slave raiders, traders, and owners. However, it is the more Arab-looking and Arabized riverain Sudanese who inherited the colonial state. The riverain figuration has shaped its identity in relation to, and come under the influence of the Arab world, as well as the West.

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149 Farha Ghannam (2013) claims that it is colourism rather than racism that is at play in the Arab world, which captures pervasive lateral racism. However, this redefinition seems inevitably to depoliticize the issue, as people point out that discrimination is exhibited within family members.
In the Sudanese data, the rise of racialization is referenced. Darfurians have been increasingly racialized, as tensions between them and the riverain centre increased. In addition, both Southerners and Darfurians have evoked race in order to establish alliances across tribal lines (Jok, 2007) and with sub-Saharan African and African American powerbrokers (Clark Wilson & Curtis Ellis, 2014; Mamdani, 2010). On the other hand, many scholars of the Sudan have noted a rise in Arab supremacy and trace this, in part, to ideologies of Arab supremacy emanating from the Arab world (Sharkey, 2007).\textsuperscript{150} While Indigenous or Arab roots of racism should not be precluded, at very least, Sudan’s colonial experience of domination by lighter-skinned people reinforced the equation of physical markers of race with power. Given the systematic and explicit way the colonial regime went about racializing the Sudanese population in order to rule it, in line with British colonial ideas, it is hard to discount this influence.

\textbf{Racialization’s contribution to the colonial mesh and standing by.}

Racialization made the contradiction of colonial capitalism and liberal values possible. One can deny darker-skinned people rights because they are not really people. European liberals not only borrowed ideas like democracy from the Ancient Greeks, they revived the imperial idea of “barbarians,” repackaging it as the “savage.” Though this particular word has fallen out of favour, it was used in both of the contexts I research. A book about Sudan, published in 1921, is titled, \textit{Savage Sudan: Its Wild Tribes, Big-Game and Bird-life}. Though the word savage has been discarded, the ideas associated with it remain; and as this book title suggests, so has the impetus to dehumanize the racialized other.

Colonial racism generated formal institutions — the transatlantic slave trade (the Arab slave trade, which I discuss below is different); colonial companies and administrations; race-based disenfranchisement (in the broad sense); segregation and immigration policies — however, its ideas are so manifest in the relational networks of both research contexts, that it can survive without the support of explicitly racist institutions (though these remain, particularly in the form of legislation). Prejudice is inter-related with the exploitation and destruction that capitalism

\textsuperscript{150} The Arab world was, of course, itself colonized by Europe, so this does not preclude a European origin; however as the participants themselves commented, there is a tendency to blame colonization as a way of getting Sudanese off the hook for racism.
demands. The colonial encounter played a role in constituting race, as well as the other way around. Banton (2007) also points out that, “the idea of race became associated with the idea of nation, and it proved useful to nineteenth century nationalist movements” (p. 19) in Europe. Gérard Prunier (2005) and Amir Idris (2005), on the one hand, and Sunera Thobani (2007), on the other, argue that it has been similarly important for nation building in Sudan and Canada, respectively. Jennifer Simpson, Carl James, and Johnny Mack (2011) argue that it is behind “racist immigration policies [that] were constructed with the specific aim of keeping Canada ‘White.’” (p. 298). Fatherlrhman Abdelrhman said the same of the types of immigrants (Arabs) that the government encourages to settle in Sudan (personal communication, July 28, 2014).

Race can also be deployed by people targeted by genocide as a way to legitimate their claims to sovereignty. The South Sudanese, who now have their own state, are an obvious example (Jok, 2007).

Racialization facilitates standing by in a number of ways, most obviously through creating a subordinate status of people who are not entitled to equal rights, in other words, dehumanization. There are other layers as well. Though religion is not prominent in the data, it plays a prominent role in racialization, even if only implicitly now. In the Abrahamic traditions, Blackness is construed as a curse or punishment in a spiritual sense (Banton, 2007, p. 15). Furthermore, the savage and the heathen are often conflated. Following from this, there is an association in both religious traditions between Blackness, non-Christian/non-Islamist, and the devil and ideas that those who engage in religious warfare (crusades or jihad) are not only morally absolved of killing but will die as martyrs; that the devil possesses those who do not conform to religious norms or who are dark-skinned; and that evil spirits can be beaten out of people. These beliefs are powerful in reframing oppression and remove moral restraint on violence against the dark-skinned unbeliever. Furthermore, religious conversion and cultural genocide is a possible route to salvation, not only in a religious sense, but in saving one’s life, escaping persecution, and perhaps accessing nominal privileges.

Ideas that proliferate in both contexts about the physical and intellectual dispositions of racialized peoples justify their relegation to certain forms of labour (physical and out of doors), substandard living conditions; nutrition; and services. Conversely, race is given as an explanation for higher death rates and extinction. Inferior races are prone to violence or vulnerable to
epidemics (Jahoda, 2007). In addition, racially based stereotypes about Indigenous and African women being not only sexually promiscuous, but particularly attracted to lighter men (Smedley, 2007), justify sexual violence as a technique of genocide. As Audrey Smedley (2007) writes, “It was the invention in the English mind of the savage that made possible the development of policies and practices that could be perpetuated for gain, unencumbered by reflections on any ethical or moral considerations” (p. 39). Even if it is no longer possible to express some of these beliefs (depending on the company), they still underpin the habitus of riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians, whether they are conscious of them or not.

**Conclusion**

I do not pretend to provide an exhaustive account of the ideas that comprise the colonial mesh. For example, hetero-patriarchy was not mentioned by the participants; though many scholars, including Andrea Smith (2010), have demonstrated that it is constitutive of colonialism, and gender is among the fundamental binaries in processes of othering. Moreover, the data on the colonial ideas that I discuss is limited. These ideas are omnipresent (more so in Canada than in Sudan) and the participants mentioned them in passing or indirectly and rarely interrogated them. In grounded theory research terms, these codes and sub-codes were not very saturated. As such, in this chapter, I have concentrated less on discussing the data than in earlier chapters and, instead, I have connected the work of academics who have theorized the colonial mesh to the focus of this research. I also concede that the appearance of colonial ideas in the Sudanese interviews was probably, in part, due to our use of a colonial language (English). Referring particularly to race, Fanon (1967) argues that in speaking the colonial language, the colonized involuntarily reproduces colonial ideologies.

In this chapter, I began my exploration of the mesh of colonial ideas with capitalism. Economic techniques of genocide result in the expropriation of land and labour by external and internal colonizers to fund capitalism. This transforms, and sometimes destroys, individuals and their figurations. It is the capitalist system, not the individuals who are responsible for genocide. Furthermore, the system provides those who stand by it with privileges. It reframes greed and theft as progress and is seen to be irreversible, with the goal being to manage the evils that
colonial capitalism produces rather than abolishing the system. Of all colonial ideas, capitalism featured the least in the data because it is so omnipresent as to be taken for granted.

Ince (2013) argues that colonial capitalism creates the conditions necessary for the rise of liberal values. Liberals have worked to justify the injustices of capitalism. They absorb moral critique in order to make colonial capitalism more palatable. Furthermore, liberalism sanctions cultural techniques of genocide and attacks on the sovereignty of the colonized figuration. There is also a belief that participating in capitalism brings about better values. While some liberal values would logically be expected to encourage standing up, as is assumed in some of the genocide literature, others do not. Genocide does occur in democratic societies; and this research demonstrates that liberal values do not necessarily contribute to standing up.

The colonial state legitimated the use of violence necessary for primitive capital accumulation and capitalist exploitation and, in turn, funded a more powerful nation state. Relationships with land were transformed so that land could be converted into a means of production. These new relationships provided the state with a territory. Borders between and within nation states created spaces where liberal values were upheld, and places where they were disregarded. Citizenship was a means for creating different classes within the state. The Sudanese and Canadian participants defined their national identity in very similar terms, suggesting that national identity is globally rather than locally determined. This is in line with the relationship between social engineering and genocide discussed in the genocide literature.

Colonialism necessitates bureaucratic institutions, which act in a remarkably consistent manner the world over. Bureaucratization facilitates genocide, yet institutions are often entry points for standing up to genocide. Though political systems (i.e., democracy or authoritarianism) shape how figurations interact, they do not seem to be the reason that people stand by and do nothing about genocide. On the other hand, colonial patterns justify militarized responses by government institutions and genocide is legally sanctioned. Capitalist growth and the nation state can benefit from the rule of law, without it being applied equally to everyone.

Civil society organizations, in both contexts, have few relations with people targeted by genocide and have stood by and done nothing about it. On the other hand, religious institutions have such relationships and played a leading role in colonization and genocide. Businesses follow colonial
patterns that are similar to the patterns they followed in the past. The relationships that they form have the potential to bring benefits as well as harm. Though “speaking truth to power” is often believed to drive the work that journalists do, those I spoke with noted other motivations and constraints as being more important and undermining the responsibility they may have to speak against genocide. Non-government sectors can be controlled by the government through carrots (funding) and sticks (persecution); and even when they have opportunities influence politics, whether radically or incrementally, they have stood by to genocide. The nature of bureaucracy itself is seen as a problem, more so in Canada than in Sudan. When the scope for standing up within or through institutions is limited, it is still there; and individuals do not take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

The Sudanese participants saw differences in access to formal education as being at the root of inequalities in political power sharing and economic opportunities. Education has alienated riverain Sudanese from who they are and manufactured them as colonizers. It has done the same to non-Indigenous Canadians, though the participants seemed unaware of this. On the other hand, they acknowledged the Indigenous Residential School System as cultural genocide, while the Sudanese participants said nothing about the way education, as a pillar of Islamization and Arabization policies, has contributed to the elimination of figurations.

This mixing up of what social scientists would distinguish as race from ethnicity in Canada and Sudan explains the resiliency and flexibility of racialization as a way of establishing the supremacy of some people over others. The idea of race appears in the data from both contexts and is discussed in ways that at times correspond and at times differ. Some participants are critically reflexive about race. Race is a colonial idea, and different strands of colonial racialization form a flexible but recognizable whole. An example of its adaptability is the relabeling of race as depoliticized ethnicity, a move that shields White supremacy. Race has made it possible to deny darker-skinned people’s rights because they are not really people, and has generated formal institutions, supported capitalism, and built nations. Race facilitates standing by through dehumanization and engages with religious discourses for legitimacy. In addition, religious tropes of darker-skinned people as heathen and evil may play a role in legitimizing genocidal acts, as do beliefs about their physical or intellectual disposition.
Chapter 11

Conclusion

I want my friends to understand that, “staying out of politics” or being “sick of politics” is privilege in action. Your privilege allows you to live a non-political existence. Your wealth, your race, your abilities, or your gender allows you to live a life in which you likely will not be a target of bigotry, attacks, deportation, or genocide. You don’t want to get political, you don’t want to fight because your life and safety are not at stake.

It is hard and exhausting to bring up issues of oppression (aka “get political”). The fighting is tiring. I get it. Self care is essential. But if you find politics annoying and you just want everyone to be nice, please know that people are literally fighting for their lives and safety. You might not see it, but that’s what privilege does. (Tea, 2017)

When I started this research I struggled to talk about it with anyone. With Sudanese, I was scared that if I did they would report me to Sudan’s National Intelligence and Security Services, and I would never be allowed a visa to travel to Sudan again. With Canadians, I thought I would be dismissed as crazy for using the word genocide in the context of my own society. Beyond Sudanese and Canadians I expected incredulity.

Though I hoped for improvements and wanted to conduct research that might influence relations in both contexts, and though as I began talking about my research in Sudan and Canada it became apparent how timely it was, I did not anticipate that so many themes in this thesis would burgeon in popular discourse in other parts of the world. I could not have predicted that Jordanians (I now live in Jordan) would get excited by the relevance of my findings on colonial education to class formation in their country. I had no idea that what I was writing about authoritarianism in Sudan would be relevant to the US under Trump, nor that what I learned from Sudanese journalists about disinformation would become relevant to trying to understand the impact of “fake news.” I did not know that calling out the standing by of White people to racism would be taken up by the Black Lives Matter movement, and those fighting for migrant and refugee rights in Europe. I did not expect that critiques of capitalism and liberalism would enter mainstream political discourse in the way that they have (See: McGreal, 2017). I could not have known that dictionary.com’s (2017) word of the year for 2017 would be “complicit.”
I also started this research with a lot of ideas. Foundational ideas for me. Ideas that I gained, for the most part, through relationships with Indigenous people in Canada and Sudanese. Ideas about the importance of relationship; process over outcome; context; Land; balance; subjectivity; holistic knowledge and experiential knowledge, in particular; Indigeneity, intersectionality; and power, as well as the idea that we are not yet living in a postcolonial world. Though this research has taken me to new (to me) paths and in unexpected directions, these ideas have grounded me. They have been reaffirmed by the process and outcome of this research, and my commitment to them has been tested and has deepened. These are the ideas that I have returned to, circled back to. Circling back! Another foundational idea! Congruence as well. I have sought, and to an extent achieved, greater congruence in that I have researched relationships, I have researched relationally, and my conclusion is relationality.

It is through these ideas and through working through relationships with scholars and activists targeted by genocide that I have concluded that the way riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians, like me, stand by and do nothing about genocide in our own countries can be explained by relationships:

- Relationships with place and across space;
- Relationships with others who are similarly complicit in genocide; and
- Relationships with people of Sudan’s peripheries and Indigenous people, respectively.

A mesh of colonial ideas originating in Britain facilitate genocidal relationships in both contexts. Rather than preventing riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians from standing up, together these relational networks predispose them to stand by.

**Recapitulation of the Conceptualization, Design, and Limitations of the Research**

I began this thesis defining genocide as a practice that targets the relationships that hold a people together, arguing that colonialism, rather than mass killings, are intrinsic to genocide. I reject judicially based definitions because they have proven ineffective in stopping genocide. They also bifurcate policed states like Sudan from policing states like Canada, allowing the former to
dismiss charges of genocide as neo-colonialism, and the latter to exempt themselves from judgement.

Genocide in Sudan has targeted governance institutions, leaders, and the political rights of people of the peripheries. It has expropriated their land, causing mass displacement; and through slavery and exploitative work, it has expropriated their labour. Physical techniques of genocide have included mass killings as well as genocide by attrition. Cultural techniques have included Arabization and Islamization. These techniques have led peoples targeted by genocide to turn on themselves and each other.

In Canada, land usurpation has resulted in death, dependency, and loss of identity. Genocide in the past, including mass killings and genocide by attrition, continues in Canada’s “colonial present” (Gregory, 2004). Indigenous peoples were disenfranchised and are still fighting for political sovereignty. Cultural genocide was committed by banning languages, religions, and cultural practices, and through forced and coerced schooling and conversion to Christianity. Biological absorption and administrative elimination persist. Self genocide is a legacy of these other techniques.

Genocide, like we see in Sudan and Canada, is often a strategy for achieving other aims. Not necessarily centrally planned, it is still purposeful, supported by the wider society, and carried out with an awareness of its impact on the targeted figuration. Genocide is a dynamic process structure, which cannot be seen directly. It is normalized, bureaucratized, legal, and acceptable in a liberal democratic society. Even though use of the word “genocide” has been contested in Sudan and limited to cultural genocide in Canada, the scholars and activists from figurations targeted by genocide whom I worked with feel it is accurate and important to use without qualification in the context of my research on standing by.

I define standing by to genocide as an interaction in the context of relationships that makes one complicit in genocide. Inspired by Indigenous approaches to research, connecting with relational sociology, and breaking with a Cartesian tradition, I adopted a relational approach to researching standing by to genocide. In this vein, I located myself in relation to the people whose lands I have been on, my relationship with my own community, the work and friendships in Canada and
Sudan that led me to this research, and my role as a mother. Doing so sheds light on the subjective validity of my findings and my motivations as a researcher.

My Guidance Circle brought the voices of activists and scholars from figurations targeted by genocide to my research. They strengthened its relational validity and held me accountable. My research participants brought the voices of people complicit in genocide. What I learned from the research participants reflects the time during which I interviewed them: late 2014 in Canada and late 2015 in Sudan (See Chapter 3). Thus, in drawing conclusions from the findings, I note areas where changes in the context of the research may be expected to impact how riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians are standing by to genocide.

In line with grounded theory methods, decisions about who to invite to participate in this research were determined by the demands of the theory I aimed to develop, as it developed. I located these people from figurations complicit in genocide through gatekeepers in sectors identified by my Guidance Circle members. I recruited participants from a broad range of sectors, nine in Sudan and four in Canada. A more limited focus may have produced more contextualized findings that could be more rigorously defended, however my Guidance Circle members felt a more general focus would most rapidly advance research and action to address standing by to genocide. My research in Sudan benefited from sampling from more sectors. Expanding my research in Canada to interview non-Indigenous Canadian business leaders and clergy may have provided additional insight. Furthermore, perspectives from more non-Indigenous Canadians who are openly antagonistic towards the rights of Indigenous people may have strengthened my theory.

I asked the participants in Canada to share their understanding of the views and relations of non-Indigenous people, irrespective of race or language community, and for brevity I refer to these participants as non-Indigenous Canadians. Yet, I caution against generalizing these findings to racialized and francophone non-Indigenous Canadians, whom I did not include in this research, and recommend comparable research be conducted with these populations. The research sample was predominantly middle class in Canada and upper-middle and upper class in Sudan, as such the findings reflect a relatively elite view. This choice was motivated by my assumption that members of the elite are more complicit in genocide because they possess relatively more power.
Though I was not able to analyze my interviews as I conducted them, as Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommend, my sample size is likely large enough to ensure that I achieved data saturation across most codes important to my theory. Perhaps because of this, along some dimensions, most crucially in the colonial mesh discussed in Chapter 10, I have codes that are undersaturated. However, I am not convinced that the participants are critically aware enough of these transnational relationships to provide more insight than I was able to glean.

The sensitivity of my research topic, in fact, the very nature of researching the absence of something and anti-social behaviour, has presented challenges. I addressed these by asking participants to provide “shadow data” (See Morse, Penrod, & Hupcey, 2000), to report on the views and relationships of people from Khartoum and non-Indigenous Canadians generally, rather than just self report. However, reporting on the views and actions of others brings its own limitations. Participants may have a positive in-group bias that causes them to present their peers in an overly favourable light, or a negative bias if they are trying to distinguish themselves from their figuration. Moreover, as I have stated, I am an interested party in this research. I have been forthright about the biases I bring to this research. Yet, knowing the Canadian context from the inside has helped me immeasurably in the interviews and analysis. Of course, the opposite challenges exist vis-à-vis my research in Sudan. Though I have a basic understanding of Sudanese society from having lived and worked there, there is much that I have missed or misunderstood because of the cross-cultural nature of my research there. In addition, my review of secondary research on the research topic was limited to English language literature.

For these reasons, employing a more participatory approach to this research, particularly collaborating with Indigenous peoples in Canada and Sudanese, has been important. However, I faced challenges in fully realizing my participatory vision, many of which can be traced to the fact that I analyzed and wrote up this research outside of Sudan and Canada. It is typical of Western researchers, conducting research in non-Western contexts, to write up their research at home rather than “in the field”; however, this research would have benefited from more input from my Guidance Circle members, or the research participants, that could have been easier to elicit in face-to-face meetings.

151 In particular, misunderstandings may have occurred as a result of conducting the research primarily in English.
Given the relational approach adopted in this research, ethics was integral to my process, rather than an add-on. The values of Indigenous research are fully congruent with the purpose of my research. However, they created challenging but productive tensions when applied in the context of the genocidal relations I not only researched, but researched within. Similarly, though grounded theory methods seem well suited to my needs, and fit with an Indigenous approach to research, given the relationality of the data and my approach, they also produced tensions. Grounded theory, as it is currently practiced, is not ideal for tracing relationships. It also does not attend to story. Grounded theorists are forthright that the theories they produce are merely an iteration, and that there will always be room to improve on them. Given that this is the first study conducted on this topic, there is certainly scope to further its depth and uncover new dimensions in subsequent research. That being said, grounded theory methods are particularly well suited for working in a contextually grounded way across two contexts, which led to productive cross-pollination in my analysis.

**Dimensions of a Grounded Theory of Standing By to Genocide**

My grounded theory of how riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians stand by to genocide in their own countries has four dimensions:

1. Relations in space and place
2. Intra- and inter-figurational relationships
3. Habitus
4. Colonial ideas

In this thesis, I demonstrate how these dimensions illuminate the phenomenon of standing by in Sudan and Canada. In the sections below, I link this theory to relevant theoretical work and show the contribution of the findings to a broader theoretical effort.
How members of the complicit and targeted figurations relate to place and their location in relation to each other.

Colonization, according to Matthew Wildcat, Leanne Simpson, Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, and Glen Coulthard (2014), is “the violent separation of Indigenous peoples from our sources of knowledge and strength — the Land. [This] impede[s] the transmission of knowledge about the forms of governance, ethics, and philosophies that arise from relationships on the land” (p. II). The Land is not a non-sentient object, “static or divorced from time” (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 52); it is a subject that human beings (and other entities) are in relationship with. It is part of their figurational network. “Identity for Indigenous peoples is grounded in their relationships with the land, with their ancestors who have returned to the land, and with future generations who will come into being on the land” (Wilson, 2008, p. 90). Given that this is how Indigenous peoples in Canada relate to Land, understanding and potentially reconciling the relationships between those targeted by and those complicit in genocide in a Canadian context, means considering Land.

While my research does not uncover this type of essentialist relationship in a Sudanese context, it suggests that the relationships peoples are in with place contribute to understanding and potentially interrupting genocidal processes.

The findings of this research demonstrate that relationships of standing by to genocide are never binary, they always include the space, or spaces, in which they develop. The position in and movement through space of those of hegemonic and targeted figurations facilitate standing by to genocide.

The findings confirm Barnett’s (1999) and Staub’s (1989) assertion that distance, physical and social, from genocidal atrocities as well as those targeted by them, facilitates standing by and doing nothing. However, proximity on its own is not a problem, as even vast physical distances can be bridged; and in both contexts they have been, but for exploitation. While more bridges are required, these must be bridges both ways.

Consistent with what scholars of colonial genocide (Barta, 2000) have observed, the relationships Indigenous peoples’ in Canada and peoples of the peripheries in Sudan have with land have been targeted for destruction, whether through usurping their land, or in the Sudanese case through slavery. However, my research also draws attention to how the relationships
riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians have with land have been severed, or at very least weakened. Through actual or imagined migration they have become colonizers. Consistent with Memmi (1965) the colonizer does not need to commit or conspire to commit genocidal acts to be complicit, the colonizer profits from genocidal processes because of where they find themselves in space.

Using space metaphorically, as in centre and periphery in a Sudanese context, shows that genocide does not necessarily depend upon the construction of distinct, essentialized binaries; a clear “us” and “them.” Standing by to genocide can also be facilitated by constructing peoples in a very complex configuration on a spatial field along to multiple intersecting dimensions of identity. While the Canadian case clearly employs a binary, this research draws attention to the fact that this binary is constructed. Distinct Indigenous peoples were homogenized on one end of the binary and distinct, though incredibly alienated, non-Indigenous peoples at the other.

In Sudan, great distances separate different figurations, and when riverain Sudanese make the effort to traverse those distances to connect with peoples of the peripheries it is usually to exploit them. Though there are places in the centre that members of different figurations share, physical distance between peoples is still a barrier to relationships.

To make a broad generalization, Sudanese are visitors. Visiting someone else in their home, travelling sometimes over a thousand kilometres to attend a wedding or to give condolences, is immensely important. Despite the sorry state of infrastructure outside Khartoum, the participants confirmed that people from the peripheries visit people in the centre. To interrupt the unequal power dynamic, riverain Sudanese need to return the courtesy of visiting people of the peripheries in their own homes. This can happen on an institutional level as well as a personal level. Public sector institutions have bridged physical distances and could do so again, as could civil-society sector organizations and businesses. Something akin to Domestic Fair Trade (MacDonald & Marshall, 2016) may be a route to connecting the centre and the peripheries and establishing more equal inter-figurational relations through trade. Appreciation of the culture of the peripheries, media networks that share experiences of the peripheries with the centre, not to mention transportation infrastructure, can contribute to building relationships that span physical
distances. Of course, nationalist sentiment builds bridges as well, but it usually relies on subordinating other identities.

Participants speak of how riverain Sudanese have rejected their own African-ness, allied themselves with foreign powers and created themselves as colonizers. The findings suggest that they maintain their superiority by positioning themselves at the hybrid centre of multiple, intersecting hegemonic identities with colonized ‘African’ peoples relegated to the edges, rather than at one end of an immigrant/local dichotomy. As a minority, riverain Sudanese rely on alliances with Indigenous figurations of the peripheries to hold onto power; and a hybrid, rather than foreign, identity facilitates this. Incorporating powerful individuals from the peripheries, and forming conditional alliances with peripheral figurations, strengthens rather than challenges the hegemony of the centre. This hierarchical radial-configuration of figurations, rather than a distinct hierarchical binary defined by a single dimension (e.g., race), accomplishes two things. First, it makes it possible to deny that different figurations exist and that genocide is being perpetrated. Jok (2007) writes of the riverain Sudanese claim that all Sudanese are African, especially to foreigners, “to deflect the claim that their actions are racist” (p. 6). How can you perpetrate genocide against your own people? Second, it denies the legitimacy of peoples of the peripheries to organize themselves as distinct figurations, along racial, cultural, or regional lines, and makes it easier to isolate and target those who challenge the hegemony of the centre.

The riverain identity, and this radial distribution of figurations, has been constructed to serve colonial contingencies and genocide, and it can be re-engineered to facilitate better relations. Riverain Sudanese need to acknowledge that they have become colonizers, that they built their identity as slavers and then as handmaidens to the Turks and British. They need to reject the British and Arab stigmatization of the African parts of their identity as primitive. They need to come to terms with the history of their own alienation. Though most of the original riverain languages and religion are now gone (though not completely as there is a riverain Arabic and there are riverain Islams), much remains that could be revalued. We see this happening with the Danaqla and a resurgence of their Nubian identity. Given that the new Sudanese national identity that was engineered facilitates genocide, perhaps what Tom Mboya (in Goldsworthy, 1981) called, “positive” tribalism, may be a route for the Ja’aliyyin, Shaiqiyya, and Danaqla figurations to build their identity around something other than colonizing. This re-Africanization could allow
for the decolonization of Sudanese identity, broadly, and generate more appreciation for what other tribes have to contribute. That being said, as Magdi el Gizouli (personal correspondence, February 2, 2019) has pointed out, the unconditional glorification of what it means to be Ja’aliyyin, Shaiqiyya, or Danaqla is not helpful either. Riverain Sudanese need to take responsibility for how intrinsic the practice of slavery, and I would add colonization, has been to their identity, prior to as well as during the colonial period, and reshape it along different lines.

In Canada, the participants speak of how non-Indigenous Canadians also stand by and do nothing about genocide by not bridging vast physical distances to form relationships with rural Indigenous communities, except to exploit resources and to try and “fix” Indigenous people. They also ignore the majority of Indigenous people who live alongside them in urban centers. The lack of relationships the data speaks to is also facilitated by an outcome of genocide: The reduction in size of the Indigenous population to a small minority. The solution is not just more relationships (though this might be a start) but a transformation in how power is distributed in these relations. Standing up may be encouraged if the centre of power in Canada shifted north to where many Indigenous communities are (John Ralston Saul, personal communication, December 12, 2014). If the power shifts, relationships of respect may follow.

Furthermore, the resurgence of indigeneity that is currently happening in Canadian cities (most of which are in the south) needs to be supported and expanded. Initiatives already being taken by Indigenous people to claim their place in urban centres include, restoring original place names (Blight & Taylor, 2016); commemorating the place-based history of Indigenous people and their historical encounters with non-Indigenous people (Beninger, 2017); conducting ceremony (St. Denis, 2017); nurturing the environment in and around urban and suburban areas, so that it thrives again (“Great Lakes Water Walk,” 2017); supporting architecture and public art by Indigenous people (Millette, 2016); and supporting Indigenous run businesses (Ostroff, 2017).

Genocide in Canada is possible because non-Indigenous people have severed their own Indigenous ties to land and then did not form a respectful relationship with the land on which they have settled. Like with riverain Sudanese, findings suggest that since they have rejected their own indigeneity, there is no basis for them to respect the indigeneity of others. Non-Indigenous people need to develop good relationships with the land they live on as guests,
relationships that acknowledge all the other relationships with the land, including with the peoples indigenous to that land. Responsibilities in other relationships should follow from this original relationship with the land.

The non-Indigenous people I spoke with have attempted to erase distinct Indigenous figurations and re-engineer identities into a native/settler hierarchical dichotomy. This reconfiguration makes it easier for non-Indigenous people to acquiesce to the destruction of the “native.” They also relate to Indigenous peoples at a national rather than a local level. At the national level, Indigenous peoples are considered a low priority and distant, their nationhood is denied and peoples homogenized. To address this, there needs to be a complete transformation in relationships at the national level, in terms of political representation and public service institutions. Productive work is taking place around treaties at a local and regional level, and new treaties among First Nations are being agreed on. Perhaps the idea of a national treaty to reconfigure political power and renew the relationship could be explored. There could be guarantees of governance powers at the national level and recognition in the Constitution as nations (RCAP, 1996), along similar lines to the recognition of Quebec’ as a self-determining nation.

Based on these findings and conclusions, I recommend the following entry points for further research on relations in space and place:

**In both contexts:**

- Carry out further research based on my grounded theory on the geography of standing by to genocide, research that considers issues of migration, population distribution, and the physical proximity of different figurations.

**In Sudan:**

- Explore attempted and potential processes for riverain Sudanese to explore the impact of their identity on their relationships with other figurations.
• Critically examine the assumption in Western research traditions that bounded capital (strong intra-figurational relations) weakens bridging capital (strong inter-figurational relations) and investigate whether the former can be mobilized to strengthen the latter.

• Carry out action research on modalities for riverain Sudanese to travel to the peripheries to connect with people of the peripheries on their own turf and explore how these opportunities impact inter-figurational relationships.

In Canada:

• Identify and research potential policies for shifting economic and political power, especially further north and to Indigenous communities, and for realigning power in urban centres across different sectors.

• Learn about the dynamic, complex, and paradoxical ways in which figurations are formed in Canada and investigate how more organic and decentralized processes of figural formation affect genocidal processes.

• Carry out action research towards designing mechanisms for non-Indigenous people to enter into relationships of responsibility with Indigenous people at the national level (e.g., a national treaty).

Intra- and inter-figurational relations that concentrate capital in the figuration complicit in genocide.

Like scholars who adopt Indigenous approaches to research, relational sociologists seek to overcome the Cartesian view that dominates the social sciences. This view, which works reciprocally with the colonial drive for supremacy, asserts that we must distinguish, dichotomize, and hierarchize the world along the lines of nature versus nurture; individual versus society; or, in the context of this research, in-group versus out-group. Instead, relational sociologists argue that to understand complex systems, we need to study networks of power-laden relationships formed across space and time, what Norbert Elias (1978) terms, “figurations.”
The epistemology of relational sociology is very similar to what I have described about an Indigenous approach to relationality. However, most relational sociologists do not take their relational thinking as far as an Indigenous approach would recommend, particularly in terms of considering relations with the non-human world, using the researchers lived experience as the point of departure, focusing on more than just cognitive ways of knowing, and centring on the research process rather than the outcome. Rather, in relational sociology there is more focus on relationality as a theoretical framework. That said, connecting with relational sociology provides a bridge to connect with sociologists about this research, which I welcome, as engagement with other academics, strengthening relationships with my own people, rather than disavowal, is what I aim for.

While some relational sociologists still speak of figurations as having nodes, or component parts, more radical relationalists insist that a figuration does not have irreducible units. Rather a “unit” is simply an abstraction; and the nodes of a figuration, the people in this case, are themselves figurations on a more micro-level (Powell, 2013). Thus, like groups, we as human beings are not units, islands distinct from the world around us; we are “always already enmeshed in relations of interdependency with others and cannot be understood, even theoretically, apart from [our] relational contexts” (Powell & Dépelteau, 2013, p. 2); or, based on a Cree ontology, we are “a point where thousands and millions of relationships come together” (Wilson, 2008, p. 76). Elias characterizes human beings as “open-people” with no immutable boundaries to separate us from those we are in relationship with.152

On the other hand, genocide scholarship on the bystander reinforces the dichotomy of structure versus individual agency. It has been unaffected by the significant efforts scholars of colonial genocide have made to challenging an intentionalist view of genocide, i.e., the idea that genocide is only genocide if a person preconceives and precisely orchestrates it, with the aim of

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152 These ideas resonate with some Indigenous worldviews of Turtle Island. Wilson (2008) writes of a Cree worldview, “Rather than viewing ourselves as being in relationship with other people or things, we are the relationships that we hold and are part of” (p. 80). This principle of self in relation is consistent with some African philosophies, Ubuntu for an example (Tutu, 2000). Furthermore, Sufism, an Islamic practice prevalent in Sudan, strives to transcend dualisms, particularly self and God, which Sufi’s see as “veils” that disguise an essential unity of the universe (Gülen, 2009). In both Sudan and Canada, those complicit in genocide are their relationships: Relationships with others in the same hegemonic figuration, and relationships with those of the targeted figuration. There is no separating out individual agency and structure to blame one or the other for riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians standing by and doing nothing about genocide.
eliminating a people. An intentionalist view (See Chapter 3) can also be disempowering and unidirectional, in that it posits that the interactions of an actor are inevitably determined by the structures they are embedded in. Congruent with many Indigenous knowledges, relational sociology, on the other hand, posits that action is reciprocal; in other words, it is interaction. It is also vertical because as the circular process of reciprocity moves through time, it creates a vortex.

This way of understanding agency, again in context, accounts for its complexity, its order, and its dynamism. Most significantly though, it provides far more openings for individuals to intervene and influence their world. Acting, even if the scope of one’s actions are modest, maintains or changes the dynamics of the vortex. Because of the nature of vortical motion, a single interaction can, if it takes place in the right place at the right time, even change the entire shape of the vortex.

In addition to helping me transcend the structure versus agency debate, relational sociology pushed me to address problems I encountered in my research with the idea of “group,” an idea that is at the centre of most conceptions of genocide.153 According to relational sociology, there is no such thing as an immutable “group.” Rather, there are “complex webs of interdependent human beings” (Tsikeris, 2013, p. 92). As with human beings, groups are “not static pieces of matter like rocks or furniture” (McFarlane, 2013, p. 61),154 not things, and not units. There are no fixed or essential boundaries that differentiate members of one group from another; the in-groups and out-groups, which the decidedly Cartesian literature on genocide and the bystander refers to. Rather, individuals are tied together through relationships of varying strengths. “Group” is a construction that is probably inseparable from the construction of the “nation state,” or maybe even “colonialism,” which is thousands of years old. I started this research knowing that notions,

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153 Sudanese and Indigenous people in Canada and Sudan, and their knowledges, pushed me to look at “group” as relations from the beginning of this research; but I suppose that I have been conditioned to disbelieve, and I needed permission from “my own people” (in this case, academic literature) to let go of an idea that was holding me back. I suppose that I, inevitably, did not realize the extent to which my worldview, which posits “group” as a thing (concrete, bounded, and static), got in the way of seeking out a relational understanding of the ties that bring people together (i.e., a figuration of people who are themselves figurations, turtles upon turtles all the way down). It did not help that “nationhood” is central in discourses of genocide and in many movements for Indigenous sovereignty.

154 However a radical relationalist would also take exception to this characterization of rocks and chairs as fixed (think of the dynamism of rocks over the span of millennia). Furthermore, Anishinaabemowin uses a verb rather than a noun to describe a chair, and rocks have Spirit.
such as “Indigenous” and “tribe,” were colonial; however, through this research, I have learned that “group” is a colonial artifact as well.

A Sudanese understanding of kinship and, by extension, tribe, helped me to understand this. Due to my Western worldview, at first the Sudanese participants’ focus on marriage confused me. In the middle of an analysis of the response of political parties to a crisis, why would Farouq, a civil society activist, make a statement like, “This was a rebellion of Black people who want to marry your daughters”? I began to see the limits of my thinking when extended family (a relational concept even in English) and tribe came together in the data. For Sudanese, tribal labels are often used as a flexible short hand to point the person they are talking with in the right relational direction. In the mind of a Western researcher, “tribe” is a fixed entity, a group; and, in the context of genocide research, this fixedness is a barrier to understanding. Instead, it is through tracing family relations, figurations, that understanding standing by to genocide in Sudan is possible. Many Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island also hold this relational view of “group”; “family” is understood in the extended sense, and “clan” reflects relations with those of distant “tribes.” However, this is decidedly not how the non-Indigenous Canadian participants view groups. For them “group” is a thing, like a chair, or a hat. Furthermore, the relational view in Sudan does not preclude more static ways of seeing groups.

In Sudan, strong kinship ties among riverain Sudanese appear to weaken obligations towards figurations of the peripheries targeted for genocide. Riverain Sudanese, in turn, deny the significance of tribe in order to mask the exploitive nature of relations between tribal figurations, their tribes and the tribes of the peripheries. They also paint an overly rosy picture of

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155 This brought to mind a seminar I attended long before this research began, in 2005, about conflict in Darfur. At this seminar, Anthropologist Alex de Waal spent the first twenty minutes drawing genealogical diagrams on a chalkboard because we couldn’t understand the conflict in Darfur (at that point in time at least), without understanding who was related to who and the relational dynamics three or four generations back. Though this grossly simplifies matters, one could say that in the Arab/Islamic sense, family is about patrilineal decent; and in the African sense, it is about marriage and, in many cases, matrilineality. According to Sudanese oral traditions, the group category, “Arab” came into being through a confluence of these two approaches to defining family: The intermarriage of Arab “wise strangers,” who drew religious legitimacy through claiming patrilineal decent back to the Prophet, with African women from the matrilineal royal family of Sennar (Older participant, a professor). The figuration changes with each generation, creating, subsuming, and recreating groups, as those who are not part of the family are brought in or kept out. As my Guidance Circle member, Magdi el-Gizouli, pointed out, it even changes according the situation and the individuals involved; you may use a shared group designation to justify a business partnership but then differentiate the same individual with a group designation to reject their marriage proposal. Family also explains, to great extent, how capital — social, economic, cultural, and political — is distributed and becomes concentrated.
relationships with members of targeted figurations. They keep members of other figurations at a distance through a particularly Sudanese form of racism. They perceive the peripheries as homogeneous and feed polarization, which given armed conflict is already intense.

Redistributing capital more equitably and reconfiguring intra- and inter-figurational relations in Sudan in ways that facilitate standing up requires radical change and sustained effort; but the findings suggest some realistic, and even modest, entry points. Sudanese need to uncover, deliberate over, and commemorate inter-figurational interactions that have been erased, especially those that concern slavery and the complicity of riverain Sudanese in colonialism. Engaging family matriarchs, those who tell oral history, in this work and in some riverain families valuing the “African” matrilineages could be a particularly effective way to accomplish this. As Hassan said, unlike a Eurocentric modality of history that focuses on wars, a Sudanese modality of history, which is at its core family history, also speaks of connections, relationships, mutuality, and reconciliation, through marriage, in particular. This would not only be an academic nor a national exercise, but a family one. The lineages of women from the peripheries who married into riverain families could be traced, and the stories of these African ancestors recovered, and connections through marriage established. Decolonized history books, or even an electronic depository of oral history, or podcasts of oral histories distributed through social media could be an important contribution. These means would elevate Sudanese ways of knowing, decolonize Sudanese history, and bring these histories to the next generation.

There also needs to be dialogue about the way Sudanese racism is constructed and the colonial ideas that Sudanese have internalized. This includes the material impacts these constructions have had on Sudanese of different figurations, such as enslavement, war, and poverty. It is important to acknowledge that Sudanese racism is constituted by both Indigenous racism and colonial racism. It reflects how riverain Sudanese internalize racism from Western and Arab worlds and compensate for their subordinate status by discriminating against others at home.

In Canada, this research suggests that non-Indigenous allies to Indigenous peoples disavow rather than engage with their own figuration, a move that facilitates non-Indigenous people standing by and doing nothing. To address this, non-Indigenous people need to move from seeing themselves as liberal subjects to being relationally grounded in their own families and
communities. They need to work as insiders to decolonize non-Indigenous society, to position themselves as typical and at the centre of the non-Indigenous figuration, rather than exceptional and in exile from it.

There needs to be an acknowledgement and critical engagement with how Canada and Canadians are socially engineered, and how this was made possible through a hierarchical binary. Toward deconstructing this hierarchical binary, the multiplicity of distinct peoples in what is now Canada, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, need to be acknowledged. Different inter-figurational relationships need to be formed accordingly, perhaps as a complex web, rather than a binary. I do not recommend a depoliticized multiculturalism, rather the dislodging of the hegemony of Euro-Whiteness, which could go hand-in-hand with the redistribution of power, so that it is more equitably shared with non-European and racialized guest cultures. As Tuck and Yang (2012) say decolonization is not a metaphor, and this redistribution of power requires the return of land. The non-Indigenous figuration needs to go beyond taking itself for granted, and actively work to develop an identity or identities. White Canadians, in particular, need to work to understand themselves as a community, as carriers of culture, not just as the norm and omnipresent, and not only through defining themselves in opposition to the other. Furthermore, this work must proceed with attention to political and geographical divides within the non-Indigenous figuration.

According to the participants, for the most part, non-Indigenous people do not have many relationships, interpersonal nor mediated, with Indigenous people; and when they do interact, they do not relate with Indigenous people in a respectful way. They distance themselves from uncomfortable truths and the Indigenous people who remind them of these and relate to Indigenous people in ways that are racist. They underestimate the extent of the inequality and violence that Indigenous people face, the diversity of its manifestations, and the devastation of its impact. For example, they may see Indigenous people as essentially poor and politically disenfranchised, ignoring the historical and contemporary processes that create this distribution of economic and political capital. An entry point may be formal and informal initiatives to create and promote respectful interpersonal relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, such as Canadian Roots Exchange (www.canadianroots.ca) and Circles For Reconciliation (www.circlesforreconciliation.ca).
White non-Indigenous Canadians may see Western culture as inherently superior. However, it is a product of power knowledge propagated through formal education and mass media. It is hegemonic because it is the culture of those with power. Like Indigenous people, non-Indigenous people are also subject to biopower. However, they condone it because it has afforded them supremacy, assuming that because it has been “good enough for us, it must be good enough for them.” Finally, they resist authentically engaging with the spectre of genocide in Canada.

Based on these findings and conclusions, I recommend the following entry points for further research about standing by to genocide:

**In both contexts:**

- Use social network analysis to map complicit and targeted figurations, and the relationships between them, and then explore the dimensions of standing by discussed in this research.

- Explore the impact of social media on standing by and standing up to genocidal acts.

- Investigate the theoretical implications of using figuration, rather than group, and particularly a discrete in-group/out-group binary in genocide studies and apply this conceptual approach to research on other genocidal topics and contexts.

- Carry out research in both Sudan and Canada on the economic history of relations between figurations to understand better how exploitation or marginalization have contributed to processes of genocide. A geographical referencing of this mapped onto an analysis of land usurpation might produce interesting results.

**In Sudan:**

- Carry out participatory action research that explores family/tribal histories of interfigurational interactions, including historical instances of standing by and standing up for members of a different figuration.

- Carry out participatory action research on Sudanese racism that considers Indigenous and colonial discourses of racialization and material manifestations of racism.
In Canada:

- Carry out research that explores alternate configurations of figurations on Turtle Island that dislodge the hegemony of Euro-Whiteness and how best to engineer them.
- Evaluate current initiatives to promote respectful relations among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, with a view to the replication and scale up of successful initiatives.

The predisposition of members of the complicit figurations to interact with members of the targeted figurations.

Though figurations are not fixed and bounded in the way a group is, they are still recognizable and carry meaning: “proximity in social space leads to actors having similar dispositions (habitus), which, in turn, make them disproportionately likely to form social bonds and networks (homophily)” (Crossley, 2013, p. 133). Conversely, “Variations in outlook arise through differential contact and association; the maintenance of social distance — through segregation, conflict, or simply the reading of different literature — leads to the formation of distinct cultures” (Shibutani quoted in Crossley, 2013, p. 140). It is this collective habitus that generates interactions/relationships, and our perceptions and appreciation of these interactions, that I focussed on in Chapters 6 and 9.

The habitus of riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians is their “‘second nature,’ our socially conditioned way of being in the world” (Kasper, 2013, p. 77); or “our inclination to act, to speak, to express, or to think, in a specific way” (Tsekeris, 2013, p. 98). Habitus conditions interactions, but it does not determine them; it is difficult, though not impossible, for an individual to contravene habitus in their interactions. In the context of this research, an individual may, through reflexivity, decide to stand up in defence of a figuration targeted for genocide even if they are predisposed not to.

The habitus of standing by is the core of this research. However, to a large extent, I have not been able to access this core directly through the words of the participants that I interviewed, because it is “only semiconsciously grasped” (Thorpe, 2013, p. 112). Reflecting on and talking about habitus was challenging for the participants; therefore, in my analysis, I had to discern
habitus using a variety of methods. People outside a figuration, and especially those at its limits, are often more aware of its habitus. Through conscious reflection, these outsiders may decide not to interact in ways that do not conform. Their non-conforming interactions may have been pointed out to them and they may have even been disciplined for not fitting in.

As such, in this research it has been helpful to interview individuals who are peripheral to the figuration complicit in genocide as well. Inputs from Guidance Circle members, most of whom are from targeted figurations, have also provided perspectives on standing by. Moreover, I myself could be characterized as a person on the edge of a complicit figuration in Canada, as well as an outsider in Sudan. The relational approach I have taken validates the contribution of my subjective perspective on standing by. Furthermore, being on the edge, not fitting in, is an uncomfortable place to be. In the data, a marker of going against habitus is this feeling of discomfort. Conversely a marker of conformity to the habitus of standing by seems to be feeling nothing at all about genocidal interactions with the targeted figuration.156

Looking at Sudan and Canada side-by-side has revealed absences, the things members of the complicit figurations in Canada or Sudan did not speak about, that which is unconscious and second nature to them, in other words, habitus. In this research, the habitus of standing by of Canadians was made visible by comparing what they did not say to what the Sudanese did, and vice versa. Of course this method does not work when aspects of the habitus of riverain Sudanese are similar to aspects of the habitus of non-Indigenous Canadians. In these cases, I relied upon other approaches, which I have described.

**In Sudan,** riverain Sudanese stand by in order to uphold the status quo. Governance issues have been an obsession among those advocating for change in Sudan, and this is reflected in the interviews. However, the opportunities for political action are so limited, and the failures have been so monumental, that riverain Sudanese acquiesce to the way people of the peripheries are being treated. Participants failed to see that there is significant scope for meaningful action through interpersonal relations in the private sphere, particularly within their own families, action that may be relatively safe from political interference. Following from this, it seems wise

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156 Important theoretical work has been done by Sara Ahmed (2004) on emotion and othering, which I would have liked to use to investigate these feelings. Unfortunately, the data on emotion is, perhaps tellingly, too thin to make meaningful connections.
to recommend that riverain Sudanese take a break from considering formal politics and institutional reform as means to address these issues and concentrate instead on taking modest, doable action in other spheres. The findings also suggest the need to move beyond talk to focus on restitution aimed at redistributing and divesting power, whether political, economic, cultural, or social.

Although riverain Sudanese have freedom to speak privately and publicly about many of these issues, they remain silent, ignorant, and confused about the peripheries; they avoid learning about them and deny what they do find out. Riverain Sudanese need to develop holistic, specific, and rich understandings of the places and people of the peripheries. This includes understanding how the peoples of Sudan related to each other in the past and how they relate in the present. Work in this area needs to be extensive and sustained and needs to account for the fact that people are likely to reject information that threatens their worldview and sense of self (Pluviano, Watt, & Della Sala, 2017). Embodied knowledge, rooted in physically being in the peripheries and in real relationships with people from there, may be an ideal way to build this type of understanding. Regarding education, knowledge of the peripheries must be put at the centre, rather than at the edges of the Sudanese curriculum. However, for this to occur, the curriculum must first include knowledge about Sudan, in general.

The prevailing emotion riverain Sudanese have towards people of the peripheries is not feeling anything. Contrary to what the genocide studies literature suggests, fear does not feature strongly. It is important to consider how these absent and negative feelings about people of the peripheries shape the way riverain Sudanese receive new knowledge.

In Canada, from the research I undertook, non-Indigenous people seem to look to others (especially the government) for action and do not take initiative to interrupt genocide. When they do act in relation to Indigenous people, it is in ways that are perfunctory and maintain the status quo. Non-Indigenous people hold onto myths that justify the status quo and a rosy view of themselves. They do this through avoiding knowledge, particularly knowledge of Indigenous people, and interpreting all that they learn through a Cartesian lens. Simply providing non-Indigenous people with accurate information is not enough. They must first unlearn the myths and stereotypes that they hold about Indigenous people and about their relationship with them.
Non-Indigenous people also need to contextualize this information and use a framework to make sense of it, for example, theories of colonialism, genocide, racism, or theories of Indigenous Knowledges. Non-Indigenous people need more knowledge, not just about “Indigenous issues,” but about how the ways they relate with Indigenous peoples can be colonial, even genocidal. Non-Indigenous people’s desire to distance themselves in a myriad of ways, including painting these issues as “Indigenous problems,” needs to be addressed.

The feelings that non-Indigenous people experience in relation to Indigenous people are primarily negative. Emotional and experiential knowledge are integral to building the types of understandings and motivations that could transform genocidal relations. Approaches geared towards encouraging perspective taking, such as simulations or hearing directly from Indigenous people may be useful, particularly in helping non-Indigenous learners piece together the way various techniques of genocide converge in the lives, bodies, and communities of Indigenous people. Indigenous teachers are important for this; though, of course, burdening Indigenous people with educating non-Indigenous people is also problematic.

Based on these findings and conclusions I recommend the following entry points for further research on standing by to genocide:

**In both contexts:**

- Use Sudan and Canada, and the data on these contexts, as the basis for longitudinal case studies to explore how the use and non-use of the term genocide affects standing by or standing up.

- Explore how my approach to researching different contexts side-by-side could be used to study other types of habitus.

- Carry out research on self interest as a motivation for standing up to genocide. Altruism dominates many studies of standing up (Feigin, Owens, & Goodyear-Smith, 2014), and there is often an underappreciation in this literature for the importance of self interest, and how what seems to be altruistic action is often not entirely that.
• Carry out research on how particular types of emotion influence decision making and behaviour in the context of standing up and standing by to genocide.

In Sudan:

• Carry out action research on modest and effective actions that riverain Sudanese can take to stand up to genocide, in particular, action through family, and explore how to facilitate these actions.

• Carry out action research to understand how riverain Sudanese access and make sense of information about the peripheries (perhaps including media analysis) and explore innovative channels and techniques for combatting misinformation, disinformation, avoidance, and denial.

In Canada:

• Use existing and emerging research in Indigenous Education and Indigenous representations in the media (Journalists for Human Rights, 2016; Pierro, 2013) and research on unlearning of myths and stereotypes (Dion & Dion, 2009; McCoy, Tuck, & McKenzie, 2016). Psychology research suggests that you can reaffirm myths and strengthen commitment to misinformation if you are not careful (Pluviano, Watt, & Della Sala, 2017).

• Carry out research to uncover ways to get around the negative impact of standing up on self value that results from acknowledging one’s responsibility for genocide, while still encouraging accountability. People are unlikely to adopt change that requires them to value themselves negatively.

A mesh of colonial ideas that penetrates both contexts.

A figuration is not simply made up of people. It includes the ideas that people connect to. In Chapter 10, I drew on neo-Marxist political and political economy theory as well as postcolonial and critical race theory to show how a dynamic transnational mesh of colonial ideas, including capitalism, liberal values, the nation state, “modern” bureaucratized institutions, formal
education and race, contributes to standing by to genocide. While modernity and bureaucratization are addressed in the genocide studies literature (Bauman, 1991), very little is written about the political economy of genocide (Fenelon, 2016; Satre, 1968; Tyner & Rice, 2016; Verwimp, 2013), nor formal education and genocide as it concerns those complicit in genocide. Though racialization is a central theme in genocide studies, surprisingly few genocide scholars have drawn on critical race theory. Furthermore, the findings challenge theories about the interrelationship of authoritarianism and standing by to genocide (Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002).

The colonial mesh destroys figurations that stand in its way and re-engineers relations to facilitate its relentless pursuit of profit. At the same time, it conditions those caught in its net to stand by, because resistance is not only futile, the mesh makes it impossible to conceive of an alternative. It not only alters the present, it re-invents the past, and determines the future. The colonial mesh wipes out:

abandoned attempts or quashed possibilities of different ways of organizing human communities, such as Indigenous systems of social reproduction, non-state forms of political organization, or moral economies of commoning, which, although defeated by the alliance of the modern state and capital, can remind one that the present could have been, and could perhaps still be otherwise…. [Conversely, it also masks that which is] robust and persists in the present but eludes our recognition by its omnipresence: A dominant social principle or historical logic, which, precisely because it is not recognized as historical, pervades the present as timeless common sense, such as the assumption that all property is essentially individual private property, that the state is a necessary evil, and that human beings are hardwired utility maximizers. (Ince, 2013, pp. 38-39)

The pursuit of colonial capitalism can necessitate the destruction of figurations that resist it. Capitalism’s omnipresence makes it incredibly difficult to overthrow. This system rewards its adherents, those willing to exploit others. Colonial capitalism works in consort with other ideas, such as, liberal values that are deployed to disarm objections to the destruction wrought by colonial capitalism. Rather than stopped, genocidal techniques are modified to be more palatable,

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157 Education as cultural genocide is increasingly being researched (Woolford, 2015).
but equally destructive. I also challenge the assumption that liberal values predispose non-Indigenous Canadians or riverain Sudanese to stand up to genocide (Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002). I show how the relationship between nation building, social engineering, and genocide discussed in the literature on authoritarian contexts, can also be found in democratically and nominally democratic contexts.

“Modern” institutions are required to implement these other ideas and they too work along colonial lines. Government institutions often respond in militarized, yet legally sanctioned ways, to peoples targeted by genocide. While civil society organizations and journalists (proud carriers of liberal values) turn away from peoples targeted by genocide, religious institutions and businesses often play a leading role in colonization and genocide. These non-governmental sectors are controlled by government through carrots (funding) or sticks (judicial and extra-judicial persecution); however, even when they have had opportunities to influence politics, they have stood by to genocide. As the literature on genocide and modernity suggests (Bauman, 1991), the nature of bureaucracy itself may encourage standing by in these contexts; and institutions, and the individuals who work for them, are not capitalizing on opportunities to stand up when they arise.

“Modern” institutions are not merely instruments for mobilizing people, through biopower they create a certain type of person. This research suggests that formal education has manufactured both riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians as colonizers, though Canadians are not aware of it. On the other hand, Sudanese are not aware of how education has been used as a tool of genocide, though Canadians increasingly are. The data also shows evidence of different strands of racialization, including Arab racism among the Sudanese participants; though colonial racialization is recognizable across the two contexts. It dehumanizes peoples targeted by genocide so that they are easier to destroy.

Based on these findings and conclusions, I recommend the following entry points for further research on standing by to genocide:

- Systematically draw attention in genocide research to the omnipresence of colonial ideas, rather than assume they are immutable. Consider these ideas as always present in the relational web in which genocide takes place. Researchers too can feel worn down by the
hegemony of these ideas and so acquiesce to condoning them. However, in so doing we, as researchers, become responsible for their endurance and their genocidal impacts. This is a form of standing by. Continuing to attend to power-knowledge can be helpful in addressing this colonial mesh, as can historicizing research, particularly through making connections to work by historians who use a postcolonial lens.

- Investigate further how liberal values, including human rights, may sometimes contribute to standing by to genocide; this means more research in the context of what social psychologists call “individualistic cultural frames” (Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002).

- Carry out action research (in Sudan), evaluation research (in Canada), or institutional ethnography on standing by or standing up to genocide. This research could be designed around initiatives to mobilize those complicit in genocide to stand up or could look retrospectively at institutional decisions that had genocidal consequences.

- Carry out more critical research on education and genocide, expanding beyond education as a technique of genocide, genocide education, and educational curricula, to look at how the system of formal education itself uses biopower to engineer populations who are predisposed to being complicit in genocide.

- Use critical race theory to review systematically how genocide studies literature employs the idea of race.

- Carry out research on the local construction and shaping of race by Indigenous ideas, rather than use generalized theories of race based on Western, and especially American, research in diverse contexts.

- Decolonize genocide research so that as a researcher you are not contributing to genocide. Attend to Eurocentric assumptions and approaches in genocide studies and draw on the burgeoning literature on Indigenous research approaches in order to do this (Absolon, 2011; Kovach, 2009; McGregor, Restoule, & Johnston, 2018; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). For example, in the contexts I have considered here, researchers need to let go of the idea that kinship and tribe are primitive, inevitably dying out, or that they should be actively eliminated to prevent genocide.
• Carry out grounded research on genocide in local contexts. Though genocide may occur across contexts, we cannot assume that it occurs in universal ways. Similarities do not, on their own, indicate the universality of a phenomena. I caution against validating my theory in other contexts. Instead I recommend researching this topic in a way that is grounded in the context being considered; and then, as I did, bring those findings into conversation with the one’s presented here.

**Naming Genocide**

The discourse on genocide in Sudan and Canada has now grown beyond the possibility of silencing it. Most importantly, the perspectives of Indigenous people in Canada and the peoples of Sudan’s peripheries, who continue to articulate what they are experiencing as genocide, are increasingly being privileged. However, ironically, and disturbingly, the resilience and resistance of these individuals and figurations to genocide has been used to deny that they have experienced it. When embarking upon this research a non-Indigenous Canadian human rights expert and former politician tried to dissuade me from arguing that genocide had occurred in Canada by saying I was stigmatizing Indigenous people as victims and denying their agency in doing so. In my view, denying genocide actually denies the strength and tenacity of those targeted by refusing to acknowledge the horrendous conditions they have survived and the limits that have been placed on their agency. Furthermore, telling those targeted by atrocities what type of language best describes their own experiences is also condescending.

In fact, the story of genocides in Sudan and Canada is a story of the agency of those targeted, their resurgence being the flip-side of genocide. The mostly non-violent resistance adopted by Indigenous groups in Canada when faced with elimination has included, negotiating; accommodating and making strategic alliances with settlers (i.e., treaties); and taking Indigenous culture and organizing underground. More recently, it has extended to pursuing judicial redress (during much of Canada’s history First Nations people were legally barred from retaining legal

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158 Though I generally abhor arguments about moral equivalency, this is one case where I think it is worth asking if one would similarly claim that the Holocaust in Europe or the Rwandan Genocide did not occur because Jewish people or Tutsi’s still exist.
counsel); and reclaiming geographical, political, social and cultural spaces, and power. In Sudan, violent means of resistance figure more prominently; but in addition to armed rebellion, people from the peripheries, who are the majority in Sudan, have penetrated every major institution, set up many of their own parallel structures, and forced the country to split into two in order to accommodate their interests.

Though there are important stories of riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians who have stood up against genocide, there is little evidence that genocide was mitigated by their benevolence. Genocide has most significantly been interrupted by the resilience and resistance of those targeted. This research has aimed to identify more opportunities for non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese to act in solidarity with these struggles and undo what they have played a part in doing.

In Canada, use of the word “genocide” has grown following the release of the final report of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools and the new Liberal government’s receptiveness to its analysis and recommendations. The Canadian participants’ responses to the application of the word “genocide” reflect some of the debates generated by this work. Half of the participants have been able to see past the idea that Canada’s policies to integrate Indigenous people have been well intentioned to consider the question of genocide. Also significant, participants who did not support using the term do not respond with outrage when I asked about it. However, there is acknowledgement that the term itself might make non-Indigenous Canadians uncomfortable, and that its emotiveness may or may not be helpful to the resolution of problems in the relationship. There is interestingly no concern about the legal implications. The findings warn against universalizing how people react to the label “genocide” or seeing them as simply parroting a particular discourse on genocide. The Canadian participant’s responses reflect their institutional relations, interactions with Indigenous peoples, and where they are situated in time and place.

While on the one hand, genocide implies génocidaires, and pointing the finger at someone; on the other hand, it also implies that those standing on the sides have the responsibility to do something. One of the Canadian participants Ellen, based on her experiences working on
genocide internationally, said that it is precisely the desire for reconciliation that should motivate those standing by to engage with the idea of genocide:

It’s important for society to deal with it and to be able to take the responsibility and then also reconcile with it and be better because it has done that…. Yes, something terrible happened, and let’s look at it and deal with it and see what comes out of dealing with it. It might be beautiful…. I think it will be helpful, it’s not bad, it’s helpful. It’s, in the end, a balm for societies, and I’m looking at the experience of Argentina. It’s been so powerful for them to deal with it and absorb it, and the guilt and everything that you feel.

As I have explained, due to concerns about safety (theirs and mine), I was not able to ask the Sudanese participants what they thought about use of the word “genocide” in their context. I expect some of the sensitivities may be different, as their head of state has been charged with genocide by the International Criminal Court; but they may also have similar concerns.

One of the surprising findings in this research is the extent to which my use of the term “genocide” has been, albeit reluctantly, accepted and sometimes even embraced. It is in the responsibility that the term “genocide” generates — for governments and, by extension, those who work for and engage with government (i.e., everyone I spoke with) and indeed anyone — that its usefulness resides. Genocide calls for responsibility, particularly of “the bystander,” because it encapsulates complicity in a way that other ways of conceptualizing the processes that have transpired in Sudan and Canada do not. The word comes with difficulties (See Chapter 9); however, the risk of keeping the conversation as dispassionate and comfortable as possible for non-Indigenous Canadians and riverain Sudanese is that, in the end, an honest conversation and, following from that, respectful relationships never occur.

**Respectful Relationships: Interrupting Genocide**

*Carol Off: What would you say to those White women if you could speak to them as they were going to the polls?*

*Sheila Tyson: Please come and spend some time with Black women. Let's build a relationship, go out to dinner, go to a movie, can we have lunch together, can we meet twice a week.*
Genocide is the destruction of relationships. It also occurs due to the lack and denial of relationships between those targeted by and those complicit in genocide. In both contexts, standing up to genocide requires more relationships but, as importantly, respectful inter-figurational relationships. While “relationship” is a word that evokes warm and fuzzy feelings, relationships are everywhere and are always are power-laden, and they are as likely to be exploitive, abusive, and destructive as they are to be nurturing and life giving. It would be easier if we simply needed more relationships between figurations enmeshed in genocide, but that is not the case. We need to transform the relationships that already exist, and this can be painful and more difficult than building them from scratch. Both riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians derive benefits from disrespectful relationships. The cheap domestic labour provided by women of the peripheries in Khartoum being one example, labour that only couple of generations earlier was performed by slaves.

So what types of relationships are needed? Perhaps controversially, I advocate for relationships based on self interest. Not one-sided or atomistic self interest, but self interest in relation. Not self interest that is exploitative or altruistic, but self interest that is mutual and reciprocal. Relationships must benefit all parties, and respect that those targeted by genocide may or may not want to reciprocate. They must aim to distribute power in a way that is balanced. They must be sustained because both sides need the other, not because of violence and coercion. They must be sustained over time and rooted in place because it is that aspect of relationships that invites a process of natural justice to correct relational imbalances (See Wilson, 2008). Furthermore, this is not self interest based on a sense of entitlement, rather self interest that is relationally conceived and grounded in a commitment to fulfill one’s responsibilities in the relationship in the broadest sense. For riverain Sudanese and non-Indigenous Canadians this includes responsibility for complicity in genocide.
There is a particular need for relationships that are interpersonal rather than mediated. Significant interpersonal work needs to occur and should probably precede political work. In the vast majority of cases, in the contexts I have research, those complicit in genocide cannot claim that reaching out in friendship to someone of Sudan’s peripheries or an Indigenous person in Canada is beyond their capacities. These relationships do not need to have a political agenda, indeed I recommend that they do not. Perhaps inherently, friendships are process rather than outcome oriented and adopting such an approach holds promise. The friendlier, the more kin-like even, the better. As Niigaan Sinclair said, First Nations in what is now Canada signed treaties with settlers to establish familial relations with the newcomers, and to share the land with them on that basis (personal communication, July 17, 2014). It is through interpersonal relationships that non-Indigenous people can come to know, to experience vicariously, the impacts of genocide and, thus, be motivated to interrupt it out of their own relational self interest. This goes beyond empathy.

Every time I meet Lee Maracle, she launches straight into stories about what is happening with members of her family and wider community, most of whom I have never met. Irrespective of her intentions, in doing so, she provides me with a window into the day-to-day lives of those within her circle. Some of the experiences she relates are closely analogous to what my family members go through, others are very different. But through these stories I am gifted with rich, contextualized knowledge; and she strengthens our relationship on her terms (it is very clear to me that my job is to listen without interrupting, a practice she has told me I need to get better at). I do not claim that friendships exist outside of the relations of genocide I have described. Relationships are always power-laden. Niigaan told me about one of his closest friends, a friend from childhood who is racist; and, yet, he loves him like a brother. And my relationship with Maracle exists precisely because of these relationships of genocide (I came to her for advice on conducting this research).

Though I advocate for relationships that respect the self interests of both parties, the interests of one party in the relationship must accommodate the interests of the other. As I have mentioned repeatedly, reciprocity is a dimension of relationships and I am loath to recommend that those targeted by genocide should invest their energies in more and deeper interpersonal relationships with those complicit, “It’s not obvious that Indigenous people would appreciate being
bombarded with offers of friendship from hundreds of settler acquaintances motivated by colonial guilt” (Christopher Powell, personal communication, October 17, 2018). Along these lines in her research on White women and Indigenous women pursuing activist work together, Carol Lynne D'Arcangelis (2015) identifies “a White desire for proximity” (p. ii), as something that stands in the way of respectful relationships. That in their “quest for legitimacy/innocence,” White women move in too close to Indigenous women in a way that is experienced by Indigenous women as “invasive” (p. ii). She also quotes Maracle who talks of respect in relationships meaning respecting the sacred space in between people. This is particularly important in the context of genocide, where those targeted are trying to heal from trauma and need spaces where they can feel safe and work autonomously with others from their community to reclaim culture. I acknowledge the risk in recommending more interpersonal relationships among those complicit and those targeted by genocide and want to make clear that this is a qualified recommendation: these inter-figurational relationships must be respectful.
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Appendices
Appendix A: Timelines of the Colonization of Sudan and Canada

Timeline for Sudan

Middle Ages: Christian kingdoms along the Nile coexist with their Muslim neighbours and small numbers of Arab Muslims migrate southwards.

1504–1821: The Funj Sultanate, which adopts Islam.

1603–1874: The Darfur Sultanate, which is Islamic.

1821: The Turco-Egyptian conquest and eventual colonization of Sudan (the Turkiyya).

1885: Mahdist forces (of Mohammed Ahmed–‘al-Mahdi’) capture Khartoum, marking Sudan’s first independence from colonial rule. The al-Mahdi dies soon afterwards and Khalifa Abdullahi takes over (the Mahdiyya).

1899: The Egyptian army, under British control, re-conquers Sudan and declares it an Anglo/Egyptian Condominium.

1916: The Sultanate of Darfur is conquered and incorporated into Sudan.

1925: The Gezira Agricultural Scheme opens.

1955: The Anyanya Rebellion, or Sudan’s First North-South Civil War, begins.

1956: Sudan achieves independence from the British. This is sometimes referred to as Sudan’s second independence as they achieved their first independence in 1885.

1958: General Ibrahim Abboud leads a military coup against the civilian government.

1964: The ‘October Revolution’ overthrows Abboud and a national government is elected.

1969: Gaafar Mohamed El-Nimeiri leads a military coup, the "May Revolution," and becomes President.

1971: Nimeiri executes the leader of the Communist party after a failed coup attempt.

1972: A peace agreement is signed in Addis Ababa and the South achieves partial self-governance leading to 10 years of peace.

1978: Oil reserves are discovered in Bentiu in South Sudan.

1983: Nimeiri introduces Sharia law national wide.
1983: Tensions in the South lead to the formation of the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) under the leadership of Dr. John Garang and Sudan’s Second North-South Civil War begins.

1985: Nuba people join the SPLA in its fight. After widespread popular protests Nimeiri is deposed from the Presidency by a group of officers and a Transitional Military Council takes power. Arabized tribes are mobilized to form the murahaliin militia which carry out raids and massacres across the South.

1986: Sadig el-Mahdi’s party wins elections. He become Prime Minister and establishes a civilian government.

1989: The National Salvation Revolution (NSR) takes over in a military coup.


1993: After another military coup the Revolution Command Council is dissolved and Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir is appointed president.

1998: The US launches an attack on a pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum, alleging it was making materials for chemical weapons and has links to Al-Qaeda. The government dismisses the claims as false.

1998: Famine is caused by war and drought, with Bahr el Ghazal the worst affected area.

1999: Following a power struggle with the Parliamentary Speaker, Hassan al-Turabi, President al-Bashir dissolves the National Assembly and declares a state of emergency. The same year Sudan begins to export oil.

2000: Release of The Black Book: Imbalance of Power and Wealth in the Sudan. Omar al-Bashir is re-elected President after all other political parties boycott elections.

2001: al-Bashir’s party, the National Congress Party (NCP), signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the SPLA in preparation for peace negotiations. Citing its record on terrorism and human rights violations, the US extends unilateral sanctions against Sudan for another year.

2003: Two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), launch a rebellion in Darfur and the government responds with bombings and by arming and organizing militia from “Arab” communities.

2004: In Darfur, as the army moves against the insurgency, tens, possibly hundreds of thousands of civilians are killed and hundreds of thousands are displaced within Sudan and across the border into Chad. The United Nations (UN) accuses pro-government Arab militias known as "Janjaweed" of carrying out systematic killings of civilians in Darfur, and the government of failing to disarm them, but does not used the term genocide. The US issues a similar
condemnation describing the atrocities as genocide. The Sudanese government agrees to the African Union (AU) sending in a protection force.

2005: The Government and the SPLA sign a Comprehensive Peace Agreement and an autonomous government is formed in the South. The leader or the SPLA, Dr. John Garang, is appointed President of Southern Sudan and Vice-President of Sudan, but dies tragically a few weeks later in a helicopter crash. The UN Security Council calls upon the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate atrocities in Darfur and the government responds by setting up its own “Special Criminal Court on the Events in Darfur.”

2006: The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) is reached but not signed by all Darfur rebel groups. The UN Security Council vote to send a 26,000 strong peacekeeping force to Darfur, but Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir - citing a violation of sovereignty - refuses to allow the deployment of the UN force. Jan Pronk, the top UN official in Sudan is expelled from the country.

2007: The ICC issues arrest warrants for a Sudanese Minister and janjaweed militia leader, that is rejected by the government. The government accepts the deployment of an AU-UN force to Darfur (UNAMID), which is deployed the following year.

2008: Northern and Southern forces have military confrontations over the disputed oil-rich town of Abyei. JEM launches an attack from Darfur on Omdurman and Khartoum that is repelled.

2009: The ICC issues an arrest warrant for President Bashir for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur, which the government rejects. An international ruling is made granting control of Abyei to the North. The Meroe High dam is inaugurated.

2010: Al-Bashir is re-elected President of Sudan, and Salva Kiir as President of South Sudan.

2011: South Sudanese vote 99 percent in favour of independence, and become independent from Sudan, though border areas are disputed. Conflict begins again in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile state and the Sudan Revolutionary Front, a coalition of opposition military and political actors in the North, forms. Sudan’s parliament passes a law cancelling the Sudanese nationality of Southerners. Sudan blocks shipment of oil from South Sudan (the pipeline runs from the North) after Juba reportedly refused to pay customs fees. South Sudan accuses the Sudan of sabotaging its economy. The government kills Darfur rebel leader Khalil Ibrahim.

2012: Peace talks between Sudan and South Sudan resume. Protests in Khartoum are sparked by government fuel and subsidy cuts in response to the drop in oil revenue after the independence of South Sudan.

2013: Sudan and South Sudan agree to resume pumping oil and withdraw troops from their borders to create a demilitarised zone. The government violently suppresses more demonstrations in Sudan over more cuts to subsidies. Dissent within the ruling NCP leads to a major reorganization.
2014: The National Dialogue process launched by President al-Bashir is met with scepticism. The chief prosecutor of the ICC halts investigations into war crimes in Darfur due to lack of support from the UN Security Council.

2015: President al-Bashir is re-elected for another five-year term. He wins nearly 95 percent of the vote in a poll marked by low turnout and boycotted by most opposition parties.

2016: Street and stay-at-home protests at IMF-prompted hikes in the price of basic goods are met by further government oppression.

2017: The US announces a partial lifting of sanctions on Sudan.

2018: Protests against the rise of bread price break out after the government removes subsidies.
Timeline for Canada

1497: Venetian navigator John Cabot reaches Newfoundland (or perhaps Cape Breton).

1608: Samuel de Champlain establishes a French colony at Québec City. Indigenous nations generally welcome and trade with newcomers.

1670: King Charles the II of England grants the Hudson’s Bay Company, a fur trading company, control of the lands and Indigenous peoples of the Hudson’s Bay watershed, most of what is now Canada.

1701: France, the Iroquois Confederacy and other Indigenous allies sign the Albany Treaty at Montréal, also known as the Great Peace.

1725 – 1779: The British and the Mi’kmaq and Maliseet sign a series of Peace and Friendship treaties.

1749 – 1750: Edward Cornwallis, Governor of the colony (now province) of Nova Scotia, issues proclamations awarding a bounty for the capture or killing of Mi’kmaq people.

1763: New France is ceded to Britain. A Royal Proclamation notes Indigenous claims to lands and says treaties with Indigenous peoples will be negotiated as nation-to-nation.

1829: Shanawdithit, the last Beothuk of what is now Newfoundland, dies.

1836: Lieutenant-Governor Sir Francis Bond Head proposes relocating Anishinaabeg and Wyandot engaged in farming and business in what is now called southern Ontario to remote and non-agrarian Manitoulin Island. His plan is overturned due to the lobbying efforts of the Aborigines' Protection Society in Britain.

1850-1854: Though James Douglas signs treaties with various Coast Salish communities on Vancouver Island, after this point British colonial administrators refuse to recognize Indigenous land title and begin seizing land without treaties.

1867: British colonies in the northern part of North America enter into confederation, marking their independence from Britain. The British North America Act gives the federal government of Canada responsibility for Indigenous peoples and their lands.

1871-75: The government negotiates the first five numbered treaties with Indigenous nations in northwestern Ontario, and parts of what are currently called Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

1876: The Indian Act passes, defining who is an Indian, extinguishing Indigenous forms of self-government, and disenfranchising Indigenous people. Subsequent amendments of the Indian Act promote enfranchisement with loss of Indigenous rights, but very few Indigenous people opt for
it is made mandatory for Indians who are educated, serve in the military and women who marry a non-Indian man.

1870s: The first official Indian Residential Schools open.

1873: The North West Mounted Police, what are to become the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), are established.

1885: The Northwest Rebellion is launched, a brief and unsuccessful uprising by the Métis and some Cree.

1890: The Plains Bison of Canada are now extirpated. This has led to loss of livelihoods and associated culture, as well as starvation and disease among Indigenous peoples of the prairies. Humanitarian assistance has been withheld to pressure nations to sign treaties surrendering their lands.

1885: The Indian Act is amended to ban the Potlatch ceremony of the coastal nations of what is currently called British Columbia, a ban that was only lifted in 1951.

1895: The Indian Act is amended to ban the Sun Dance of First Nations on the prairies, a ban that was only lifted in 1951.

1927: The Indian Act is amended to forbid any First Nation from retaining a lawyer for the purpose of making a claim against the government or to raise money to retain a lawyer, on punishment of imprisonment.

1942 – 1952: Government scientists perform nutrition experiments without consent on Indigenous children at six Indian residential schools. Some malnourished children are assigned to control groups that are denied adequate nutrition.

1951: Major changes to the Indian Act remove a number of discriminatory rules.

1949: Newfoundland enters Confederation as a Canadian province.

1950s and 60s: Many Indigenous peoples in the north are relocated and the RCMP slaughters Inuit dog teams throughout Canada’s North, devastating livelihoods and associated culture.

1960: Indigenous people acquire the right to vote in federal elections.

1960s – 1980s: Indigenous children are apprehended in large numbers from their parents and adopted out to white families, in an unofficial policy that has been termed the “Sixties Scoop.” However, the point has been made that more Indigenous children have been removed from their families and sometimes communities today.
1969: The Liberal government releases its “White Paper on Indian Policy” that proposes to assimilate Indigenous people and extinguish Indigenous rights (including Aboriginal title and treaty rights), this time on the grounds of promoting equal rights.

1973: In the Calder case, the Supreme Court upholds Indigenous rights to land, citing the 1763 Royal Proclamation.

1975: Quebec signs the James Bay Agreement with Cree and Inuit communities, opening the way for new hydro projects.

1984: The Inuvialuit Claims Settlement Act provides the Inuit of the western Arctic control over resources.

1985: Changes to the Indian Act extend formal Indian status to First Nations people who were involuntarily enfranchised and their descendants. This includes First Nations women who were stripped of Indian status for marrying non-Indian men.

1990: The Meech Lake Accord, which contained proposed amendments to Canada’s constitution, is defeated by a single vote by Elijah Harper (Oji-Cree), member of the Manitoba Provincial Legislature who dissents because First Nations have not been consulted on the amendments.

1990 – present: Under the Comprehensive Land Claims Process the government continues to insist that the extinguishment of Indigenous title and rights is a prerequisite to negotiating new land claims settlements and self-determination.

1990: The crisis at Oka/Kanehsatà:ke: a blockade by Mohawk to protect their traditional burial grounds from being developed into a golf course expansion and condominium project resulting in an armed standoff with the Canadian military.

1991-1996: The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples investigates the history of relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and proposes solutions, which for the most part are not implemented.

1995: The Ipperwash Crisis: a dispute over land of the Stoney Point Ojibway band expropriated by the government during World War II leads to a violent confrontation with the Ontario Provincial Police who kill unarmed protester Dudley George.

1996: The last Indian residential school closes.

1999: The territory of Nunavut is created in the eastern Arctic, with lands set aside where Inuit can live, hunt and control sub-surface resources.

2000: The Nisga’a Treaty is signed. The Nisga’a receive about $196 million over 15 years, communal self-government and control of natural resources in parts of northwestern British Columbia.
2005: The Kelowna Accord agreed to by First Nations, federal and provincial governments calls for spending $5 billion over five years to improve Indigenous education, health care and living conditions. Paul Martin’s minority Liberal government falls before the accord can be implemented.

2007: Canada’s largest class action settlement is signed by the government, churches and survivors of the Indian Residential School system. It grants individual and collective compensation and establishes a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

2008: Prime Minister Stephen Harper offers a formal apology on behalf of Canada for Indian residential schools.

2010: Canada signs the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, one of the last four nations to do so.

2011: A winter housing crisis in remote Attawapiskat First Nation garners sustained media and political interest.

2012-2013: Idle No More, a grassroots protest movement with direct action and social media components, is at its height. It arose in response to proposed legislative threats to Indigenous rights and the environment, as well as continuing inequality in services and rights for Indigenous peoples.

2014: The Conservative government of Stephen Harper is defeated; its policies were viewed as being particularly antagonistic to Indigenous peoples.

2015: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission releases its final report and recommendations, which are welcomed by the incoming Liberal government.

2016: The Canadian Human Rights Commission rules that the federal government discriminates against First Nation children on reserves by failing to provide the same level of child welfare services that exist elsewhere.

2016: The federal government approves the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion from the Alberta oil sands to the west coast over the objections of First Nations and local municipalities.
Appendix B: Questions for Collaboration

1. You have had a chance to read about theories of colonial genocide and bystanding in my research proposal. What are your reactions to these theories? In which ways are they helpful for explaining some of what Sudan/Canada has experienced? In which ways are they not helpful? How could they be improved?

2. Please suggest some names of influential non-Indigenous people, people who maybe could have mobilized others, who have stood by to genocidal processes whom I should approach to have a conversation with about this topic.

3. Why these people? How would you put them in order of priority?

4. Any advice about how I can contact or how I should approach these people? Would you be willing to help me in approaching these people?

5. What questions do you have for them? What would you like to know from them?

6. Any advice about how I should conduct these conversations? Anything I should be aware of or be careful about?

7. What action or change would you like to see coming out of this research?

8. How would you like to be involved with this work moving forward? I’d welcome a range of types of involvement including (but not limited to): reviewing transcriptions/notes of interviews, providing input into the analysis, reviewing and commenting on my analysis, reviewing and commenting on my writing about the research, helping design or implement initiatives for change coming out of this research.

9. Would you like to be acknowledged by name as a collaborator in this research?
Appendix C: Conversation Guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to have this conversation with me. In this research I want to learn how non-indigenous Canadians view and relate to events and processes affecting indigenous peoples in Canada. I have brought with me a number of questions I would like to ask you today. Some of the questions may seem very broad, or maybe even outside of your expertise. However the purpose of this research is to try and understand your perspective. For this reason I encourage you to be honest and to say what you think and feel.

Questions

1) To begin with, please tell me a bit about yourself.
   Probes: Background, family, work, important commitments outside of work, organizations you are involved with.

2) Please tell me a bit about what Canada and being Canadian means to you.

3) How do you know about Indigenous peoples in Canada?

4) Please describe for me what you think has happened in Canada between indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous people.
   Probes: In the past? Now?
   Who was/is involved?
   How did these things happen? How do they continue to happen?

5) How do you think what you’ve described has affected Indigenous people, as individuals? As groups or nations?
How do you think it has affected non-Indigenous Canadians? What do you think it means to non-Indigenous Canadians? What do you think it mean to people in your profession/sector?

6) What do you think non-Indigenous Canadians are doing, or not doing, about what you have described?

A) What is the Canadian government doing, or not doing?

B) What are other groups in society doing, or not doing?

C) What are those from your profession/sector doing, or not doing?

7) For those who are not doing anything – how do you think they think and feel about that?

8) What would you like to see people in your profession/sector doing?

9) What needs to change for them to be able to play a more active role in events and processes affecting Indigenous peoples?

10) Recently some have started to use the word genocide to describe the way Indigenous peoples have been treated in Canada and how this is threatening their survival as groups or nations. What are your thoughts and feelings about this?

Probe: Does the label genocide change how you think and feel about what we have discussed so far today?

11) How do you think your grandchildren will come to see what has happened to Indigenous people in Canada and the role non-Indigenous Canadians have played?

12) Is there anything I didn’t ask you about that you think I should include in my research?

Are there any other thoughts or feelings related to the research that you would like to talk about?