

Truth Before Reputation: An Analysis of Canadian Political Discourses on Settler-Colonialism
and Genocide in China and Canada

Reid Gerbrandt

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree

Master of Arts

Department of Sociology and Criminology

University of Manitoba

Copyright © 2023 Reid Gerbrandt

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who helped make completing this Masters thesis possible. First and foremost, I would like to thank all of my family and friends for all the love and support I received during my coursework and thesis research. Even during my lowest moments, they provided constant encouragement to press through. This is a monumental achievement in my life and I could not have accomplished it without their support. Thank you to Mom, David, Tara, Anika and Ezra for always supporting me and being proud of the work I do. Thank you to Haden, Braden and Ryan for always encouraging me throughout my education. Lastly, thank you to Helen Wiebe, who continues to be an important source of inspiration to this day.

I would also like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Andrew Woolford, who introduced me to genocide studies early in my undergraduate career and it was amazing to work with him for both my Honours and Masters thesis'. I would also like to thank my other two committee members, Dr. Jeremy Patzer and Dr. Sean Carleton, who provided incredible guidance and suggestions during my work.

Abstract

The discovery of 215 potential unmarked graves at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in May 2021 sparked one of the last big debates on settler colonial genocide in Canada. On June 10, 2021, NDP MP Leah Gazan presented a motion to declare the Indian Residential School System (IRSS) genocide. However, it did not gain unanimous consent as politicians from several political parties voted against it. This was surprising as only a few months earlier Parliament had voted to recognize the ongoing Uyghur crisis in China genocide. What made this recognition significant was that several processes of group destruction that were part of the IRSS are evident in the Uyghur crisis, and several politicians even identified Uyghur destruction as settler-colonial in nature. The questions remain: why did Canadian politicians view settler-colonialism in China as a process of genocide, while avoiding this label for settler-colonialism in Canada? And what discursive strategies did they employ to highlight genocide in one context while minimizing it in another? Using the frameworks of conceptual constraint and “blame games,” this thesis examines how Canadian politicians portray China as a stereotypical “Villain” nation while upholding Canada as a “Hero” nation. It will also show how these views are maintained in the public sphere, and why we need to continue to monitor this latter discourse despite the Canadian House of Commons finally recognizing the IRSS as a genocide in October 2022.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Introduction.....	1
Continued Importance of the Research amid Recent Events.....	6
Chapter One: Historical Analysis on Genocide.....	8
Defining Genocide.....	9
The Uyghur Crisis.....	17
The Indian Residential School System.....	27
Differences Between Settler-Colonial Genocides?.....	37
Chapter Two: Theory.....	39
Conceptual Constraint/Blockage.....	40
Blame Games.....	45
Chapter Three: Methodology.....	48
Paradigmatic and Methodological Frameworks.....	48
Data Sources and Collection Strategies.....	51
Further Stages of Analysis.....	52
Limitations.....	55
Chapter Four: Analysis.....	56
Organizing Theme 1: Authoritarian State vs. Human Rights Defender.....	56
Section Discussion.....	64
Organizing Theme 2: Strategic Use of the Holocaust Prototype.....	66
Section Discussion.....	72
Organizing Theme 3: “Genocide” in the Chinese and Canadian Context.....	73

Section Discussion.....	83
Results: Where Political Parties Stand.....	84
Chapter Five: Discussion.....	88
Moral Mistakes, Not Genocide.....	89
Reputation over Truth.....	94
Conclusion.....	99
References.....	103

Introduction

During debates in the House of Commons on February 18, 2021, Conservative MP Nelly Shin implored Parliament to recognize the abuses against Uyghurs in China as genocide. She spoke to the importance of getting to the truth of the matter: “When we see our fellow humanity abroad suffering, as the Uyghur and Turkic Muslims are in China, it is time to stand up and acknowledge the atrocity for what it is – genocide – and take realistic, practical steps with our international allies to hold the Government of China to account” (House of Commons Hansard: February 18, 2021). She argued that we must do this because Canada is a signatory to the 1948 *United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (hereafter UNGC), which requires Canada to fulfill important obligations whenever and wherever genocide is taking place.

Conservative MP Michael Chong made further comments on Canada’s international role in genocide recognition and prevention: “Canada is a state party to the convention. Article 1 clearly establishes Canada’s obligation to prevent genocide, even if it is extraterritorial. Article 4 clearly establishes Canada’s obligation to take action to punish genocide, including punishing the perpetrators. These obligations are binding and are the norm of international law” (HoC Hansard: February 18, 2021). From these comments, it appears Conservatives take the issue of genocide recognition quite seriously and are committed to exposing it wherever it takes place.

In June 2021, a few months after the discussion above, Parliament held an emergency debate to discuss the discovery of potential unmarked graves at former residential school sites in Canada, where politicians raised the question of genocide. Speaking to the importance of discovering the truth of the residential school system, Conservative MP Gary Vidal ended his statement with, “This discovery is a sombre reminder that so much work needs to be done to

address the devastating and harmful effects that residential schools had, and still have on many Survivors today. All Canadians must stop and reflect on what the truth is of our history and as a country... Let me end by saying that the truth is not easy. It requires courage and vulnerability” (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021).

This is in line with what the party said during debates on the Uyghur crisis. However, when NDP MP Leah Gazan questioned Vidal on whether he believed the Indian Residential School System (hereafter the IRSS) amounted to genocide as defined in the UN Convention, he attempted to avoid the concept altogether: “... partisanship, language and some of the particulars that we like to talk about in the Ottawa bubble do not matter to the people on the ground... Our individual responsibility is to listen, to build relationships, and to respect our neighbours and friends who are different from us has become way more important than the partisanship and the specific language around the issue” (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021).

This is interesting because when discussions of genocide concerned the Uyghur crisis, Conservatives did not describe this as a partisan issue, stating that Canada had an obligation to recognize the genocide occurring in China. They considered it wrong and hypocritical to avoid using the concept. However, when it comes to arguments of genocide against Indigenous peoples here at home, we must be cautious of applying the term, as it distracts from other important reconciliation efforts between settler-Canadians and Indigenous peoples, as Conservative MP Mark Strahl states: “It is good to have accountability. It is good to take stock of where we come from and where we need to go, but it is necessary, right now, to take real, meaningful and immediate action to take advantage of the spirit of reconciliation that is sweeping across the country” (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021).

These examples highlight the basis of my research, which concerns differences in how Canadian politicians have addressed accusations of genocide in China and Canada. To give some context, in February 2021, members of the House of Commons voted to recognize the Uyghur crisis as genocide following a Conservative led motion to do so. The vote passed 266-0, with a majority of Liberal MPs abstaining from the vote (Jones, 2021). The Canadian Senate held a similar vote in June 2021, with Conservative Leo Housakos heading the motion. This vote failed to pass, with 29 for and 33 against (MacDonald, 2021). As of this moment, the current Liberal government still has not recognized the ongoing persecution of Uyghurs as genocide. What made this debate and vote significant were the elements of the genocide that MPs highlighted during their statements. In addition to focusing on the imprisonment of Uyghurs in detention centres and the forced sterilization of Uyghur women, many MPs spoke about the Chinese governments assault on languages, religion, cultural monuments, infrastructure and group connections. For these politicians, the suppression of these elements meet the criteria for genocide. This is significant because the Canadian government has not fully recognized genocide as including processes of cultural destruction.

These views did not carry over to similar accusations against Canada. On June 10, 2021, Leah Gazan called for a unanimous motion for Parliament to recognize the IRSS as a process of genocide (Stefanovich, 2021). The standard narrative has been that the IRSS represents a devastating chapter in Canadian history, but this system did not intend to destroy Indigenous peoples as distinct nations. At most, it is considered a “cultural genocide” with advocates for this terminology arguing that while this system had a significant negative impact on Indigenous languages, cultures and family connections, due to a lack of intent to physically exterminate them, it cannot be considered “actual” genocide. Gazan points out that there is no legal definition

of cultural genocide, and that this system meets the criteria of the UNGC's definition: "there is no category for cultural genocide. Genocide is genocide. We cannot classify genocide. It falls under the UN Genocide Convention. Forcefully removing children from one group to another group, I would say, meets all the criteria that classify a genocide" (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). With processes of cultural destruction being recognized in the Uyghur case, the pieces were set for a change in the IRSS narrative. However, the motion did not receive the unanimous consent of all MPs, with several members of the Conservative and Liberal parties striking it down (Stefanovich, 2021). This opens up questions as to why at this point in time politicians overwhelmingly supported recognizing genocide in China but were hesitant to do so when accusations were pointed at Canada.

This thesis will examine the strategies that members of the Canadian government employ to accuse one country of committing genocide while avoiding such accusations in their own country. Two strategies were most prominent in my research. First is the tactic of constraining the definition of genocide to fit a prototype through a process called conceptual constraint. This is where a group in a decision-making role places limits on a concept in order to meet a desired narrative, meaning only certain ideas, events or individuals qualify for the criteria. In the case of genocide, one side will argue that only certain forms of group destruction, such as mass killings, fit the prototype.

However, some take it a step further and argue that one event in particular sits as *the* prototypical genocide, with most arguing that the Holocaust takes this role. Because the UNGC definition was coined shortly after the conclusion of the Holocaust, the argument is made that it directly inspired the concept of genocide and is the standard by which all subsequent genocides are to be measured. For a process to be considered genocide, it must share specific similarities to

the experiences of European Jews, Roma and other victim groups of Nazi Germany. Failing to do so disqualifies a crime from being considered genocide, and “blocks” the concept from being used to describe certain destructive processes. Some argue this tactic is used in order for some countries to avoid being compared to genocidaires such as the Nazis, and that by creating this high standard it becomes easier for some governments to avoid being accused of and taking responsibility for group destruction in their own country.

This idea of conceptual constraint is tied another set of strategies known as “blame games” (see Hood, 2011). Typically used in political and business circles, these tactics are used whenever one party wants to either assign blame to another group, or to avoid being seen as blameworthy. The avoidance aspect is carried out through either denying the crime ever took place, or merely downplaying its significance. One tactic is called problem denial, whereby an accused group admits that a crime did occur, but it is not as serious as the other side claims it is. This denial is furthered by comparing the event in question to another that is more severe, and thus more worthy of blame. In this study, I believe politicians in the Canadian government use blame and denial to accomplish two objectives. First, to present China’s actions against Muslim groups as more genocidal than Canada’s policies that target Indigenous peoples. Second, to suggest that the Chinese government fits the traditional mold of genocidaire better than past Canadian governments. Assimilatory actions against Indigenous peoples were mistakes it is argued, but they cannot be compared to those of the Chinese government or other culprits such as the Nazis. Avoiding the label of genocidaire maintains Canada’s positive reputation on the international stage.

Taken together, this theory and methodology will help me answer the research question:

What discursive strategies are deployed by the Canadian government to recognize genocide

in China but avoid the concept in Canada? What my thesis will also address is why the government employed these tactics and how they inspire, or have been inspired by, similar discourses found in the public.

Continued Importance of the Research amid Recent Events

During my research on the differential response to genocide in China and Canada in 2021, an event took place that shifted the narrative on settler-colonialism and genocide in Canada in a new direction. In July 2022, Pope Francis undertook a pilgrimage across Canada where he apologized to Indigenous peoples for the role the Catholic Church played in the residential school system. While returning to the Vatican, he declared that the IRSS amounted to crimes of genocide (Deer, 2022). He did not stop at “forced assimilation,” “grave mistakes” or even “cultural genocide,” but described it as “actual” genocide. Following Pope Francis’ remarks, Leah Gazan declared she planned to seek another motion of unanimous consent from Parliament to recognize the IRSS as genocide. She presented this motion to the House of Commons on October 27, 2022, and no other member spoke against it and it successfully passed (Raycraft, 2022).

While the passing of this motion is significant and it seems the Canadian government is no longer entirely avoiding the blame for committing genocide, this research is still important. The debates surrounding the IRSS in 2021 were the last big discussions in Parliament on whether this system amounted to genocide against Indigenous peoples. As politicians have denied for so long that genocide took place, it is worth investigating what strategies they used at this time and how these still persist in public circles outside the government. I believe this will also contribute to future research. The Chinese government continues to engage in settler-colonial genocide against Uyghurs while denying that such processes are occurring. Perhaps they use similar

discourses that colonial governments such as Canada have used, particularly because they have called out Canada for its abuses against Indigenous peoples (MacDonald, 2021).

The blame discourse can also be applied to other nations that deny past genocides. Countries such as modern Turkey continue to deny that the Armenians suffered a genocide in the early 20th century. This campaign has continued for so long that it has become engrained in law and education. Further research into how the Turkish government and citizens continue to avoid being blamed for this atrocity is beneficial.

My argument will be presented throughout my thesis as follows. Chapter II will give a brief account on the UNGC definition and scholarly arguments on what constitutes genocide. This will be followed by providing historical background on the Uyghur crisis and the IRSS. Chapter III will explain how I apply the conceptual constraint and blame avoidance framework to my data analysis. In Chapter IV, I will explain my methodological framework, which is the discourse-historical approach, followed by the steps I took to complete my data collection and analysis. Chapter V will present the evidence I found in my data collection to support my argument. In Chapter VI, I compare the statements made by politicians with views I found in public discourses. This is my attempt to discern the justifications politicians make in not recognizing genocide in Canada but recognizing it in China. Chapter VII will present my Conclusion and discuss how Canadian politicians can use their new-found recognition of the IRSS as genocide to make a positive difference in other regions.

Chapter I: A Historical Analysis on Genocide

This chapter will provide readers with background information about the crime of genocide and the two main cases that are the focus of my thesis. It is divided into three main sections. The first will give a brief overview of how the UNGC definition was developed and how Raphael Lemkin attempted to include processes such as cultural destruction in the idea of genocide. I will also detail the debate that continues in genocide studies over whether the destruction of cultural connections between group members constitutes a crime of genocide. It is important to understand how this debate has impacted society's knowledge of the idea of genocide, and my research shows that politicians have been engaging with this conversation as well. This will be followed with the historical background of both the Uyghur crisis in China and the Indian Residential School System of Canada. These are two important cases to investigate because of how the Chinese and Canadian governments have used similar methods to target Indigenous peoples, and how both nations continue to be involved in what Dibyesh Anand refers to as "modern colonialism" (Anand, 2019:135).

My hope is that this thesis will add to the conversation of genocide and cultural processes of group destruction. As the following section will show, the ability for a group to remain connected through cultural and social means is essential for its survival. Not acknowledging these processes puts groups at greater risk for destruction, as some genocides will be allowed to continue because no one speaks out against them. Methods such as mass killings are important, and groups need to be protected from this type of violence as well. However, as David Neressian states, "By limiting genocide to its physical and biological manifestations, a group can be kept physically and biologically intact even as its collective identity suffers in a fundamental and irremediable manner" (Neressian, 2005).

Defining Genocide

Raphael Lemkin's work to create the concept of genocide differs in important ways from its official definition under the UNGC. Both Lemkin and the UNGC mention that genocide is the destruction of various human groups by different processes. Both provide the guidelines of what groups are offered protection and what processes constitute an act of genocide. However, there continues to be a debate among scholars about whether the UNGC definition truly captures Lemkin's concept. Under Article II of UNGC, genocide is defined as "any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: a) killing members of the group; b) causing serious bodily/mental harm to members of the group; c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; d) preventing births within the group; e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group" (UNGC, 1948).

The UNGC focuses primarily on the physical or biological destruction of groups. The only process that is deemed cultural is the forceful transfer of children from one group to another, although some argue this was included to describe a biological rather than cultural technique of destruction, since it was assumed children would never be returned to their families and communities (Akhavan, 2016:257). Yet Lemkin viewed groups as held together with more than the physical lives of members, citing several key elements of group life that need to be protected so that groups can survive.

When Lemkin conducted his initial research on the history of group destruction, he looked at instances of mass death (the Roman sacking of Carthage, the destruction of European groups during the campaigns of Genghis Khan, the attempted destruction of Armenians by Ottoman Turkey), but physical destruction was not the only threat he saw to the survival of

groups (Lemkin, 2013:1). Compare the UNGC definition to the following passage from Lemkin's book, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, which reads: "Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups" (Lemkin, 1944:79).

This definition brings to light two important elements about genocide. First, processes of genocide do not need to be "immediate" or take place over a short period of time, whether it is a single day, several weeks, months or years. Rather, they can take place over decades and inflict harm on generations of members of the targeted groups. Genocide also involves multiple processes of destruction taking place simultaneously, with strategies changing over time. So long as the condition of intent (*mens rea*) is fulfilled, only one of articles 2a-2e are needed to meet the criteria for genocide. However, this crime never involves only one process. Genocide can start, wane off, and then increase again, taking on different forms in each case. Pauline Wakeham calls this the "slow violence" of genocide, which is characteristic of colonial genocides, "when these multiple genocidal processes accumulate within a persistent structure that perpetuates grave socio-economic disparities, territorial dispossession, and the violation of Indigenous rights, their effects typically compound over time into prolonged, multi-generational assaults on Indigenous nations" (Wakeham, 2021:13).

The second element of Lemkin's phrase is that genocide does not only involve physical or biological processes of destruction, but also destruction of political, economic or religious institutions, the group's cultural symbols or its language (Abed, 2006:309). Genocide can thus be seen in a "fundamentally cultural manner" since Lemkin tied these aspects to the "essential foundations" of a group's life (Butcher, 2013:254).

Lemkin had hoped to have distinct elements of cultural destruction included in the UNGC under Article III. In the first draft of the Convention, committee members were presented the following definition of cultural genocide: "In this Convention, genocide also means any deliberate act committed with the intent to destroy the language, religion or culture of a national, racial or religious group on the grounds of national or racial origin or religious beliefs as: 1. Prohibiting the use of the language of the group in daily intercourse or in schools, or the printing and circulation of publications in the language of the group; 2. Destroying, or preventing the use of, libraries, museums, schools, historical monuments, places of worship or other cultural institutions and objects of groups" (Morsink, 1999:1023). These prohibitions were meant to outlaw efforts to forcibly change the cultural makeup of groups with the aim of eliminating the groups themselves. This is not to say that Lemkin was entirely open to all potential inclusions in the genocide concept. For instance, Lemkin believed that political groups do not possess the specific characteristics needed to be afforded protection under the UNGC (Abtahi & Webb, 2008). Likewise, Lemkin tended to view group identity as ascribed and consistent throughout its history, ignoring how groups themselves are processes of continuing identity formation (Woolford, 2019:146). The goal of this section is not to elevate Lemkin to the level of being infallible, but rather to demonstrate cultural protection is deeply rooted in the genocide concept.

Lemkin's views on the cultural dimensions of group destruction were not met with approval from the majority of United Nations delegates, who saw the inclusion of cultural destruction within the legal definition of genocide as diluting the Convention's purpose. Some argued "it would show a lack of logic and of a sense of proportion to include in the same convention both mass murders in gas chambers and the closing of libraries" (Abtahi & Webb, 2008:1508). However, the reasoning for some of these delegates came from a wish to avoid prosecution. Colonial nations such as Canada and the United States were at the time of the UNGC's drafting using tactics of cultural assimilation against Indigenous peoples and they did not want their policies to come under scrutiny so they voted against its inclusion. The delegation from Canada had orders to vote against the UNGC entirely if Article III remained a part of the Convention (Brean, 2015).

The article on cultural destruction was subsequently removed and only the techniques of destruction listed in Article II remain to legally describe this crime. Since the implementation of the UNGC, descriptions of cultural destruction have been delimited to the term "ethnocide," or in some cases "cultural genocide," as a separate category of destruction rather than simply to designate a different technique toward achieving the same ends as physical genocide. These terms work to describe this process as lesser forms of genocide, in that it is a form of destruction, but without mass murder, making it not an "actual genocide" (Butcher, 2013:254). This reasoning creates a hierarchy of destruction with lesser forms of destruction at the bottom and instances of mass murder compared to the Holocaust on the top (Woolfe, 2006:402).

To this day there continues to be a dispute surrounding what "actual" genocide entails, as legal, academic, and popular understandings of genocide differ which makes this debate both confusing and difficult (Curthoys & Docker, 2001:3). On one side there are scholars who stick

closely to the UNGC definition and the narrative that physical and biological destruction is how genocide is committed. The other side aligns closer to Raphael Lemkin's original vision that genocide includes acts of cultural, political, economic, physical and biological destruction, and that the process involves a "synchronized attack" of all or many of them at once (Butcher, 2013:265).

With regards to the former group, they continue to assert that there are "analytical" differences between physical and cultural destruction (Chalk & Jonassohn, 1990:23). These individuals believe that cultural destruction is a lesser form of cleansing, one that is not equivalent to mass murder (Mann, 2005:72, 75). Their viewpoint is that Lemkin saw genocide as synonymous with the Holocaust, and whenever a debate arises around whether a phenomenon constitutes genocide, comparisons to the Holocaust are deemed necessary (Butcher, 2013:254). This places the Holocaust at the top of the hierarchy and as the standard for measuring genocide. If any atrocities do not meet Holocaust criteria (i.e., they are not in some way similar to the Holocaust) then it is not genocide. Other scholars such as Payam Akhavan take a legalistic approach, focusing on the difference he sees in genocide and persecution, or crimes against humanity, a difference he believes needs to be kept in mind when discussing cultural genocide (Akhavan, 2016:248). Citing the International Criminal Courts definition, persecution is "the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity" (ICC, 1998). The key difference Akhavan points out is that genocide targets groups as a whole, while persecution singles out individuals or a small community within the group and inhibits certain rights they are afforded (Akhavan, 2012:43). There is intent in persecution, but not the "special intent" (*dolus specialis*) that genocide requires.

Akhavan then turns to Article 2(e) of the UNGC, a subsection that is argued to be the only inclusion of cultural destruction within the genocide definition. For him, 2(e) is met when children of one group are forcibly transferred to another with the intention that they will never be returned to their home communities, as this impedes a group's physical reproductive capacities (Akhavan, 2016:263). This is what allows the "special intent to destroy" box to be checked. He uses the IRSS as an example of how 2(e) is not met, despite acknowledging Indigenous youth suffered cultural harms. In situations where children are taken away from their parents and are subjugated to cultural indoctrination into the perpetrator group, so long as the children are returned to their families at some point in time, there is no intention to destroy the group. There are several gaps in Akhavan's knowledge of the IRSS. First, many children were not the same when they returned home due to their loss of language and they no longer wished to identify with their nation. In fact, the cultural violence they suffered often made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to return to their communities. Second, cultural indoctrination and destruction processes were not meant to be limited to the residential schools. The Canadian government and churches hoped that upon returning to their home communities, Indigenous youth would attempt to indoctrinate their family and community members into settler society (see Woolford, 2015).

Some scholars believe the inclusion of cultural destruction will weaken the genocide concept. In his reaction to the Canadian House of Commons passing Gazan's motion to recognize the IRSS as genocide, historian Christopher Dummitt says what is happening to the genocide definition is a form of concept creep. A social psychological term, concept creep happens when a negative concept is expanded horizontally to include new activities and vertically to include actions that were previously seen as less harmful or not harmful at all (Haslam, 2016:11, 14). Dummitt sees the inclusion of cultural destruction as an example of

vertical expansion. He states, “Concept creep weakens the original term... by stretching the meaning of genocide to fit an every-broader array of actions, the term loses severity. It just doesn’t mean the same thing anymore” (Dummitt, 2022b). However, the group I will discuss below takes the opposite view of Dummitt. They do not view the inclusion of cultural elements of destruction as lessening the severity of the idea of genocide, but instead see it as a refinement of the concept to better capture the ways groups are destroyed.

Elisa Novic understands why society equates genocide more often with physical and biological destruction and leaves cultural forms out of the conversation. She notes how “the general public would find it difficult to understand how, under the concept of genocide, massacres of human groups and denial of the right to teach a particular language in schools could be put on the same plane” (Novic, 2016:29). However, her views align with the second group who understand genocide as a more complex process, in the similar vein to Lemkin’s original vision, and who argue that a distinction between genocide and cultural genocide is false. For this group, cultural destruction is not a lesser form of genocide. They also do not see cultural destruction as only a method of genocide, but rather *as* genocide, in that it is an essential part of the crime (Short, 2010:844), as it “leaves marks not only on the human body, but also on the mind and spirit” (Galtung, 1990:294) and the cultural, biological and social disintegration of a targeted group (Hobson, 2019:19). It is also worth noting that in genocides where physical destruction is seen as the dominant process, cultural destruction always plays an important role. For instance, Claudia Card notes the mass destruction of Jewish libraries and synagogues during the Holocaust, which were important cultural, religious and historical institutions (Card, 2003:74). Mohammed Abed points to another Holocaust example. As Jewish families and

communities were torn apart and separated all across Europe, there came a loss of cultural production and transmission (Abed, 2006:326).

This group also recognizes that the particular evil of genocide does not lie in the mass killing of people or in any industrial means of doing so, but rather through the loss of the group's social vitality. Social vitality refers to the relationships and social institutions that make it possible for group members to make meaningful connections with one another and allow their culture – which informs religion, education, politics, family life and important ceremonial traditions – to thrive and be passed along to their children. However, Card adds that, in genocide, “For those who survive physically, mere knowledge and memory are insufficient to create social vitality, even if they are necessary. Those who cannot participate in the social forms they remember do not actually have social vitality but only the memory of it” (Card, 2003:76). A group that is unable to come together as a community and practice their cultural heritage or is unable to pass on important cultural elements to the next generation is not practising social vitality and these essential connections are potentially lost forever. Even if a vast majority of the group survives attempted physical destruction, they are alienated from one another and risk no longer identifying with their culture, risking the group becoming “socially dead” (Paterson, 1982:5-9). A group has the potential to disappear if it becomes socially dead. It is this particular evil that critics such as Akhavan and Dummitt fail to acknowledge. Their legalistic and historical reasonings miss important elements of group life that are essential to its survival.

One avoids privileging some acts of group destruction over others and reinforcing a genocide prototype through recognizing a wide range of destructive processes. However, the concept of “actual genocide” continues to be applied inconsistently, with some processes of cultural destruction being branded as “cultural genocide” at best, but other similar phenomena

being labelled as genocide. The question is: is this because they are trying to follow the legal concept of genocide, or deploy genocide in a self-serving manner? I will next offer a brief historical analysis of the two cases that make up the focus of my study: the ongoing Uyghur crisis in China and the Indian Residential School System of Canada.

The Uyghur Crisis

The ongoing assault on Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic Muslims of the Xinjiang region is the result of ethnic tensions and Han-Chinese policies that have been escalating for many decades. To understand this situation, we must go back to as early as the 18th and 19th centuries. While Xinjiang makes up one sixth of the modern Chinese state, for centuries it remained a frontier colony and not officially part of the country, with these Muslim groups being the Indigenous populations of the region (Fallon, 2019:76). In the 1700s, Chinese forces entered the territory to set up military outposts. This became the extent of Chinese presence for some time, as no permanent settlements were established (Smith Finley, 2021:349). In 1881 the Qing Empire adopted the land as apart of China's territory, and then in 1884 they officially named it Xinjiang, or "New Frontier" (Roberts, 2020:30). There were already early campaigns to eliminate Indigenous cultures and the Chinese tried to set up free education centres to assimilate Muslim groups into Chinese society. However, this did not work, as hardly any individuals signed up for these schools (Roberts, 2020:31).

Even though Xinjiang was now a province of China, there continued to be a low settler presence in the region. Indigenous groups were able to mostly live out their lives free of outside influence. In the 1920s, nationalist feelings began to arise within Indigenous populations, and this is when many groups came together to define themselves as "Uyghur," and recognized their region as "East Turkistan" while establishing the East Turkistan Republic. With this came further

establishments of their own currency, school system, a national anthem and a flag (Roberts, 2020:40). Uyghurs sought twice to break away from China and assert their independence, in 1933 and 1949; however, both attempts were unsuccessful (Fallon, 2019:77). Even when the Soviet Union began to gain influence in the East and provided aid to Uyghurs, East Turkestan did not become a puppet state of the USSR. The freedoms that Uyghurs had enjoyed only slowly began to disappear once the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took control of the country.

When the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) formed in 1949, a new phase of colonization took place in Xinjiang. At this time, there were still few non-Indigenous settlements and only five percent of the region's populations were Han-Chinese citizens (Smith Finely, 2021:349). After the new regime took over, a mass movement of settlers into the region began. The government stated that Uyghurs were in need of a "democratic liberation" and these new settlers were there to assist in economic development (Anand, 2019:137). In 1954, CCP official Liu Shaoqui said in a statement to the First National People's Congress that "[the minority nationalities] were unable to progress without the help of their Han brothers. Thus, the state had a duty to send Han cadres to work in the minority areas, where they would serve and assist the minority nationalities to consolidate their internal unity and political maturity until the time when they could assume leadership in the area" (Howland, 2011:186). The CCP's projected goal consisted of going in to help modernize the region, as they proclaimed Uyghurs were not able to do it themselves. In reality, mass migration into Xinjiang was about increasing the overall Han population in the region so they would be the dominant group and effectively take control. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution under Mao Zedong further endangered Uyghur life. As the Red Guards began attacking and suppressing the old ideas and customs of pre-Communist China,

so too were Uyghur lifestyles and cultures targeted to a point where they were outlawed from being practiced (Roberts, 2020:47).

Restrictions on Uyghur cultures worsened in the 1990s, and coupled with an increase in Han population, this brought ethnic tension to the region and resistance began to build. These restrictions were put in place to stop what the CCP claimed to be separatist movements of Uyghurs seeking to break away from China. After the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, China joined the Global War on Terror, but not necessarily in the global sense. They adopted the “language of the War on Terror to describe their fight against internal insurgencies and dissidents” (Jackson, 2005:13). They justified actions as trying to root out possible terrorist cells located in Xinjiang, and drew further connections between Uyghurs and known terrorist organizations such as Al-Quada. However, while there were outside Uyghur communities located in places such as Afghanistan, these Uyghurs were not organized military-styled groups, did not receive funding from any terrorist organization, nor were they attracted to the ideology of global jihad (Roberts, 2020:115). In fact, Al-Quada and the Taliban looked down on these Uyghur groups, and even had dealings with the Chinese government to suppress them and prevent them from trying to start conflicts in China. While these outside Uyghur groups posed no threat to China, the CCP continued to spread information of a terrorist threat within the country and so further dispossessed Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

Colonization efforts continued to increase with continued attacks against Uyghur culture, language and religion, along with further developments in infrastructure and an acceleration in Han migration to the region. The justification of controlling the population and seizing Indigenous lands replaced improving their lives. Even in established Uyghur communities, the makeup began to change, as Han style buildings replaced Uyghur infrastructure, risking the

destruction of Uyghur cultural character of these centres (Roberts, 2020:137). Prior to the 9/11 attacks, the first modern assimilation centres were established and the number of these institutions increased in the post-9/11 era. These were special boarding schools for Uyghur children that gave the impression they were preparing students for employability in the new economic ventures of Xinjiang. In reality, they were stripping the students of their language and beliefs, and indoctrinating them into Han-Chinese culture. They were the first generation of Uyghur children to be subjugated to assimilation in such a way. They were also the first to be impacted by losing connection to their cultures while not being accepted by the Han settlers who were taking over their homelands (Roberts, 2020:140).

Naturally, Uyghurs, Kazakhs and Turkic Muslims actively resisted through staging peaceful demonstrations against the colonial PRC nation. Sadly, two events took place that drastically changed the tactics the Chinese government took against Xinjiang's Indigenous peoples. In 2009, in the city of Urumqi, violence erupted between Uyghurs and Han citizens that resulted in deaths on both sides (Smith Finely, 2021:350). Then, in March 2014, eight people killed 31 Han citizens and injured 141 others. This second attack would prove significant as it took place in Chinese territory outside of Xinjiang (Roberts, 2020:171). There was no evidence that these attacks were connected to any Uyghur group within or outside of China. Sadly, this did not matter to the Chinese government, who portrayed this attack as a serious threat to the safety of Han citizens. At this moment, Uyghurs were no longer merely seen as lazy individuals who needed outside help to thrive economically, but rather a dangerous group that needed to be controlled and suppressed. This resulted in President Xi in 2014 declaring a "Peoples War on Terror" to fight back against the rising threat in their Western region (Smith Finely, 2021:351).

After these events, the modern modalities of China's assault against the Muslim groups of Xinjiang began. In 2016, Chen Quanguo, who had been the Communist Secretary of Tibet, arrived in Xinjiang to establish a security state. His task was to coercively accelerate the political and cultural transformation of Muslim locals (Fallon, 2019:79). An example is "Project Beauty" through which CCP cadres encourage "modern" ways of living in order to improve the lives of citizens (Grose, 2019). This campaign was first implemented in Uyghur homes. The home is an important element of Uyghur culture, as everything from their furniture and how their interior is arranged, to how the house and yard is designed is a symbol of who they are (Grose, 2021:2056). Unfortunately, the state viewed Uyghur traditional homes as unhygienic, inconvenient and unhealthy to physical and mental wellness so they had to be remodeled to fit a more "modern" lifestyle (Grose, 2021:2062). This type of colonial housing campaign appears less violent, as through it the government claimed to be making improvements to the quality of Uyghur housing, when in reality it is a means to destroy the cultural fabric of a targeted group (Mitchell, 1991:44).

Social and religious behaviours are also heavily monitored. The CCP claims they are fighting terrorism in the region, and they have put out announcements that say religious extremism and violent terrorist ideology have infected the Uyghur population, who need to be cured from their "disease" (Smith Finely, 2019; Grose, 2019). CCP cadres that were sent into the communities have lists of behaviours and signs of religious extremism to monitor. These include women wearing a veil or jilbab, men growing beards, anyone abstaining from alcohol or smoking, not teaching their children Mandarin or believing that Xinjiang has not always been part of China (Leibold, 2020:55). To ensure that no citizen falls into the trap of extremist indoctrination, Uyghur schools, mosques and shrines have been rooted out and either boarded up or destroyed (Raza, 2019:489). The CCP proclaims that the people of Xinjiang rejoiced in the

changes that came to the region, with jubilant statements such as “Women have thrown off their headscarves, children have been rescued from the ‘gloom’ of religious indoctrination in underground Quranic schools” (Smith Finley, 2019).

To ensure that mass domestic and cultural changes are taking place, CCP cadres maintain a strong presence within Uyghur homes. These officials present themselves as “relatives” to the household and move in with them for a set period of time, ranging anywhere from one week to one month. They tell their hosts that their lifestyle is “outdated” and that they must transform how they conduct themselves as a proper family (Grose, 2021:2052). These cadres encourage Uyghurs in the home to embrace Han-Chinese culture, to make sure they are eating meat and drinking alcohol, teach them Mandarin and help redecorate the home in the Han style (Raza, 2019:489). Pictures of these incidents show families as happy individuals who enjoy all amenities that Chinese culture has to offer and enjoy spending time with their Han “relatives.” If the families refuse to accept Han lifestyle, or are not adopting it fast enough, cadres will report them to state officials and they will be punished.

This punishment includes being sent to what the CCP calls “re-education centres,” which are mass detention facilities that first opened in 2017 (Smith Finely, 2021:351). These facilities were set up for particularly “untrustworthy” individuals but expanded for others when re-education in the home and community was viewed to be unlikely. These institutions have been promoted as providing Uyghurs who have been “radicalized” into terrorist ideologies with vocational training so that they return as productive members of society (Szadziewski, 2020:211). However, these have proven to be another colonial tool used to suppress these Indigenous cultures further.

Those who are transferred to the centres have been forced to undergo horrific cultural indoctrination classes. They must confess to “crimes” they have committed against the state, which is synonymous with being Uyghur and practising a religion and culture of which the CCP does not approve. Uyghurs are sent to specific courses where they have to learn Mandarin while simultaneously dropping their own language. They must also take up the customs and traditions of Han-Chinese lifestyles, and are even taught to believe they have always been Chinese, erasing any potentially nationalistic notion that they are an outside group Indigenous to Xinjiang (Tobin, 2021:110). Those who refuse to conform are tortured until they comply, while Uyghurs who follow instructions come out “changed” individuals who know how to recognize “illegal religions” and show a willingness to withdraw from their old lifestyles and take up a secular one (Zenz, 2019:114, 116). A study done at one of these institutions noted that while 68% of respondents did not know why they were sent there, at the end of their sentence 99% of them confessed to their “crimes” and went along with the CCP’s teachings.

Along with these methods of forced cultural indoctrination, processes of biological destruction have been used against Uyghur women in the re-education centres and in the communities. The CCP have proclaimed that a major reason for the rising “unrest and terrorism” in Xinjiang is due to a high Uyghur population (Zenz, 2021:295). This has resulted in drastic birth suppression measures, including forced abortions and sterilizations or the insertion of IUD’s in Uyghur women (Zenz, 2020). Hundreds of thousands of women have now undergone these birth prevention procedures, who are also only allowed to have a small number of children (Smith Finely, 2021:353). These birth policies are in stark contrast to the policies of the broader Chinese population, as the CCP had lifted its one-child policy and were encouraging Han families to have more children.

Failure to keep the population quota results in Uyghur women being sent for re-education, where sexual torture and rape are being used as weapons to destroy the wombs and reproductive organs, along with their dignity (Turdish & Fiskesjö, 2021:33, 34). Birth rates are also suppressed through efforts of biological absorption, as there have been cases of forced marriages between Han men and Uyghur women. Han society is patriarchal, with cultural identity inherited from the father, so any children born of these marriages are considered Han Chinese, not Uyghur (Turdish & Fiskesjö, 2021:25). In cases where a Uyghur male has been sent away for re-education but related women remain in the home, a male Han cadre moves in with the remaining family members, and the wife becomes the colonial property of the Han man (Turdish & Fiskesjö, 2021:36). This subsequent drop in Uyghur births has been described as the worst since the genocides in Rwanda and Cambodia (Ruser and Leibold, 2021).

Adults have not been the only victims of China's anti-Uyghur policies, as children have been the subjects of other techniques of cultural violence. When both parents are sent away for re-education, it is because they are infected with "extremist thoughts" and are thus no longer capable of being parents, so their children are made wards of the state (Zenz, 2019). These children need new parents who will be a positive influence on them, and they are placed in special orphanages or boarding schools where the supervisors are now their new "family." Similar to the re-education institutions adults are sent to, children are taught Mandarin, about Han culture and traditions and that their parents failed to teach them "good life habits" while also communicating negative depictions of Han culture. Children are encouraged to instead see supervisors as their new parents and many children have indeed referred their teachers/supervisors as "mummy" (Raza, 2019:495). The children are further encouraged to forget their own culture and to start seeing themselves as Han instead of Uyghur children

(Roberts, 2020:233). Scholars and activists note that if these child institutions remain successful, re-education centres for adults may no longer be needed, since the CCP will be able to cut off the transmission of Uyghur culture from parents to the next generation.

China's campaigns in Xinjiang have resulted in a continuing demographic reimagining of the region, as Uyghurs themselves have been forced to change to fit with the Han citizens replacing them in other aspects of society. Many Uyghurs have been removed from urban centres in the region, with their homes and business taken from them when they are forced into the countryside. This makes it easier for them to be identified as religious extremists and targeted for re-education, as rural areas are known to be more religious (Tynen, 2020:316-317). When Uyghurs are removed from their communities to re-education centres, Han citizens are given incentives to move to Xinjiang. Between 2015 and 2018, approximately two million new Han residents moved to the region and received lands, apartments and well-paying government jobs for doing so (Zenz, 2020:3, 6).

The demographics of Xinjiang schools are also changing, as officials have made it more difficult for Uyghur children to enter academic schools and are instead shuffled off to vocational schools. Han children now make up the majority in these academic institutions, not only limiting the education afforded to Uyghurs, but also employment opportunities (Roberts, 2020:231). With the combined processes of having Uyghurs drop their culture and ability to claim sovereignty of Xinjiang, along with the increase of Han citizens, this will aid the CCP in gaining complete control of the vast wealth of natural resources found in this province, which is home to one-third of China's oil reserves and a considerable amount of its uranium reserves (Smith Finely, 2021:352; Raza, 2019:490). Taking over Xinjiang also allows China to complete its "Belt and

Road Initiative,” a series of land trade routes that link up with the rest of Eurasia, which they cannot accomplish unless the Han population becomes the dominant group of the region.

The CCP proclaim that these campaigns are about the fight against terrorism or the need to improve the lives of citizens of Xinjiang, but what they really aim to do is suppress and ultimately destroy the cultures and systems of meaning of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim groups indigenous to the region. This is why scholars and any witnesses/survivors able to speak out have declared this crisis a genocide (Fallon, 2019; Ibrahim, 2019; Roberts, 2020; Smith Finely, 2021; Tobin, 2021). The Chinese government view these groups as a threat to the establishment of a secular nation along with their ability to control a region of a country that they continue to view as rightfully theirs, as opposed to belonging to peoples Indigenous to the region. Their campaigns in the region represent the vision of genocide as moving beyond physical mass killings and embraces a multi-pronged approach that aims at the destruction of what Raphael Lemkin (1944:79) would refer to as “the essential foundations of the group.”

The social vitality of Uyghurs is thus under threat, as sending adults and children to various re-education centres has disrupted the practice of religious and other cultural traditions, the practice of their language, and the separation of parents and children cuts off intergenerational cultural transmission (Tobin, 2021:109). Those not sent to these institutions will further self-censor themselves, as Uyghurs are afraid to practice their customs in fear of being sent away. If they witness other Uyghurs breaking the CCP’s cultural laws, they must report to local cadres. This has created a sense of distrust in Xinjiang communities and diminishes the possibility of Uyghurs maintaining any meaningful connections with their groups (Roberts, 2020:227). If these atrocities continue, those who identify with their cultural Uyghur roots will continue to diminish, effectively destroying them in whole or in part. The fact that our

House of Commons has recognized this as genocide must be commended, as only a few other nations have taken that initiative.

The Indian Residential School System

Much like the re-education centres the CCP is using against Uyghur peoples, the Indian Residential School System is not the only process used in the attempted destruction of Indigenous peoples in Canada. A wide range of policies and processes have been deployed to disenfranchise the hundreds of Indigenous nations of Turtle Island that long pre-existed the establishment of settler-colonial governments in North America. This is described as a slow, intergenerational violence taking place through different genocidal acts and at different junctures. The consequences of these policies are multiple disparities among Indigenous peoples such as socio-economic gaps, over-representation in federal prisons and child welfare systems, the dispossession of traditional territories, and violation of Indigenous rights (Wakeham, 2021:13). Successive Canadian governments have historically brushed aside deadly harms against Indigenous peoples, saying diseases must be blamed for Indigenous population loss. However, while the introduction of new diseases did drastically impact Indigenous populations, it was, and continues to be, “human agency” that is most responsible for Indigenous suffering (Whitt & Clark, 2019:12, 16-17). Even when the decisions of settlers are acknowledged, they have been defended as a tragedy resulting from the “unstoppable” nature of Westward expansion, when Indigenous peoples just refused to get out of the way (Lewy, 2004).

Unlike the United States, which frequently deployed violent tactics of elimination against Indigenous peoples, settler-Canadians more often utilized assimilatory policies in the hopes that Indigenous identities and societies would simply disappear. The objective was to gain control of Indigenous lands and natural resources (Woolford & Gacek, 2016:403). Settler expansion in the

past is imagined differently today, however. Instead of these lands being the traditional territory of Indigenous nations, the Canadian landscape is described as a vast “untouched” wilderness ripe for the taking, with the overall development of Canada portrayed as peaceful (Logan, 2015:433). In this historical imaginary, settlers expanded westward across the territories, creating treaties through negotiation with Indigenous nations that was supposed to establish partnerships between the two parties. Unfortunately, settlers used the treaties to gain complete control over the land and created policies to keep Indigenous peoples off of it and remain on the small reserves upon which they were already sequestered (Woolford, 2009:84).

When colonial expansion stretched from coast to coast and Indigenous peoples were pushed to the fringes, the policies used against them moved from outward to inward, as settler-Canadians took up the goals of colonial governments in the United States to eliminate “every aspect of Native American life – religion, speech, political freedoms, cultural diversity...” that continued to exist (Wolfe, 2006:400). Even though they were on reserves away from settler communities, the fact that First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples still existed as their own nations and held on to their lands was perceived as a problem. Not only were these nations going against what settler societies saw as civilized, but they still held on to lands that colonial governments wanted. They were not able to act due to the treaties they signed. They had to expand policies that diminished identity and sovereignty entirely, eliminating any holds Indigenous nations had on the land. This proved difficult at the start. Even with legislation such as the Gradual Civilization Act of 1857 or the Enfranchisement Act of 1869, policies that were supposed to help bring “progress” to Indigenous communities by having them willingly give up their identity in exchange for limited Canadian citizenship. However, Indigenous peoples remained firm that they were not interested in giving up their traditions and worldviews (Woolford & Gacek, 2016:403).

These setbacks greatly frustrated the Canadian government. Eventually, they turned to a process that already existed but sought to institutionalize it nationwide: residential schools. As Indigenous adults were proving unwilling to accept settler offers of “enfranchisement” and “civilization,” the government believed the next best method as eliminating Indigenous groups through the education of Indigenous children to cut off cultural transmission and assimilate the younger generations (Woolford, 2009:84).

Canadian churches had already been operating a small number of institutions for Indigenous children before Canada officially became a country in 1867. As early as the 1830s, industrial and boarding schools had been set up for Indigenous children to instruct them in farming and other vocational skills to prepare them for the labour market. A majority of these institutions were also day schools, and children were able to return to their families at the end of each day. The government viewed this as an issue because of the risk that the children would unlearn everything they were taught at school. At home, they were surrounded by the worldviews the government found undesirable. Prime Minister John A. Macdonald believed that to properly eliminate Indigenous identities within children, they must be educated away from their home communities and have no regular contact with their families. He proclaimed, “When the school is on the reserve, the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write his habits, and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write... Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of white men” (TRC History, 2015:164).

This helped spur the government to align itself further with the churches and officially establish the Indian Residential School System which began in 1883 (TRC Final Report, 2015:3). Children were separated from their families and communities all school year, and often even during the summer, with the hope of children dropping their Indigenous identities and instead adopting settler worldviews and cultures. Much like the re-education centres for Uyghur “extremists” in China and the boarding schools for their children, these institutions in Canada were portrayed as something positive. The system claimed the education and skills training provided to Indigenous youth helped them attain a good job and a successful life as an adult. In reality, these institutions were places where Indigenous identities were constantly attacked with the aim of eliminating them as distinct nations in order to gain control over more land for political and economic purposes. They were also spaces of physical, sexual, and emotional violence, as well as death.

The moment Indigenous young people arrived at residential school, their names were stripped from them and replaced with either an English or French name, or simply a number (Monchalin, 2016:127). Supervisors stripped any clothing the children brought from their home communities and disposed of it, replacing their outfits with school uniforms. If they had long and braided hair, supervisors cut it to fit specific settler male or female styles. These were simple yet effective methods of identity destruction. It was conveyed to Indigenous youth that their culture was profane and that to succeed, they needed to discard everything of their past life, including their names and how they styled their hair.

They received a menial education at best. Residential schools were organized through a “half-day system” with the typical day split into classroom learning and vocational work in and around the school (TRC Final Report, 2015:77). This included growing and preparing food,

manual labour on the school building and grounds and making and repairing school clothing. Vocational training included various forms of construction work, farming, and other menial projects. Because students were only in the classroom for half of their day, the education they were able to attain was often only to the level of grade three and thus they were hardly prepared for life outside of school. The education they did receive, along with other experiences outside the classroom, mainly involved a belittling of their cultures. Their lessons were only taught in English or French, and students were punished for speaking their own language. Any education around their own culture depicted Indigenous peoples as savages and that their traditions and worldviews were the way of the devil. To succeed, they had to adopt the Christian religion and settler ways of living in order for them to be perceived as “white.” Coupled with the fact that much of their vocational training focused on menial types of work, they were seen as the “low-rung of society” and were taught to only be second-class members of settler society (MacDonald & Hudson, 2012:432).

The “education” young people received manipulated them to think they were better than their parents and communities so they would eventually break ties with them altogether (TRC Final Report, 2015:2). These feelings of superiority manifested whenever children went home on school break. When Jennie Blackbird returned home after being at school for the year, she recalls, “When I returned home, I heard my grandparents and my family around me, only speaking our language. I was a very angry person when I heard them speak Anishinaabe, our language. I remember telling my grandparents, don’t you dare talk to me in that language and feeling superior to them, as they did not know how to make the English sounds” (Survivors Speak, 2015:106).

Connections were also lost because Survivors recalled feeling resentment towards their families for leaving them in such places, believing that they did not care about them and simply abandoned them. Theodore Fontaine recalled how his trust in his family was broken, as his older cousins held him down when he tried to get to his parents who were walking away from the school. Father R., the school's principal, comforted him a moment later: "I thought he might protect me and make sure I was okay in this strange environment. Perhaps he'd help me get home somehow. After my forceful separation from Mom and Dad, his behaviour served as a first step to replace that abandonment by transferring my trust to him" (Fontaine, 2010:32, 134). The churches and government felt that if Indigenous youth gained a sense of superiority or anger towards their families, they would no longer see themselves as Indigenous and renounce their identity.

Along with these processes of cultural destruction came instances of abuse directed at the children. Medical experiments were one method used at these institutions, as groups of young people were withheld food, vitamins or even dental care. Young girls and women were also forced to undergo sterilizations, with the Sexual Sterilization Act in Alberta of 1928 permitting school principals to forcefully send girls to receive the operation (Akhtar, 2010:116). Children often found themselves as the victims of sexual abuse at the hands of the priests and nuns, resulting in young girls becoming pregnant and being forced to undergo abortions. Officials also abused Indigenous youth emotionally. As the government and churches claimed that Indigenous adults were unfit parents, the priests and nuns who ran the institutions were proclaimed to be superior caregivers who would give the students all the love and affection they needed.

In reality, most supervisors treated Indigenous youth with neglect, and Survivors remember constantly being met with cold, hard gazes. If they ever felt sad, scared or homesick,

instead of comforting the children, many priests and nuns shamed or punished them for it. Murray Crowe remembers, “When I couldn’t stop crying they came and got me;... they took me out, out to the dark room we called it. And they pulled my trousers down and they spanked me” (Survivors Speak, 2015:113). Coupled with these instances of abuse came the terrible living conditions imposed on the students. Along with the intentional starvation experiments and lack of food at these institutions, diseases such as tuberculosis ran rampant in these buildings. At the peak of the system, children had a 50% chance of surviving due to these living conditions (Paquette, 2020:147).

Upon leaving the schools, Survivors continued to experience the negative consequences of the assaults on their identity. Many young people were no longer able to speak their language and lost the ability to effectively communicate with their families, whether from not being allowed to speak it and forgetting how, or from a desire to rather speak English or French as they began to see their own language as inferior. Many former students also showed no desire to relearn their languages, as they experienced trauma from the punishments they received at school for doing so. Others denied their cultural heritage and tried to not look Indigenous anymore, convinced the priests and nuns were correct that their cultures were “savage” and that they were now “civilized” because they went to residential school. Vitaline Elsie Jenner remembers, “I didn’t want to be an Aboriginal person. No way did I want to be an Aboriginal person. I did everything. Dyed my hair and whatever else, you know, just so I wouldn’t look like an Aboriginal person, denied my heritage, my culture, I denied it” (Survivors Speak, 2015:106).

This represents the ultimate aim of the IRSS and colonization as a whole; the government did not care how much Indigenous children identified with European settler society so long as they cut ties with their old life, thus hoping to permanently eliminate Indigenous peoples as

distinct nations (TRC Final Report, 2015:133). However, even though these young people attended residential school, settlers continued to regard Indigenous people as savages and inferior. Survivors were thus detached from their old way of life and shunned from the society they were taught to embrace. Coupled with their mediocre education and menial vocational skills they participated in, Survivors and succeeding generations of Indigenous peoples were set up for failure, making their erasure more likely.

When the IRSS officially disbanded, and the last school closed its doors in the late 1990s, an estimated 150,000 children had passed through their doors, representing seven generations of Indigenous peoples forced to attend one of these institutions (Monchalin, 2016:126). Due to the poor living conditions, high transmission of diseases, medical experiments, and in some cases the abuse at the hands of the officials, death was not uncommon at these institutions. Initial research put the deathrate at 3,200 children known to have died as a result of the IRSS, although many Indigenous peoples and scholars have argued that the number is likely much higher (MacDonald, 2015:414).

Even though the system no longer exists, colonial policies continue to negatively impact Indigenous peoples and communities, with the legacy of the system continuing through other processes. Pacquette notes how the IRSS lives on in ongoing issues, such as the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child welfare system, the disproportionate number of Indigenous women murdered and missing each year and the suicide epidemics within Indigenous communities (Pacquette, 2021:148). Intergenerational effects are also found among the families of Survivors, as parents often passed down the abusive parenting skills they endured at the schools to their children, resulting in subsequent generations growing up in abusive and neglectful households.

The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2008, following an official apology from then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper on behalf of the Canadian government, attempted to determine the truth of what happened at IRSS institutions and what this system truly represented. In 2015, after six years of research and hearing testimony from thousands of survivors, the TRC released its Final Report, concluding that the IRSS had committed “cultural genocide” against First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples (TRC Final Report, 2015:1). Outside of the Commission, other prominent public officials, including former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Beverley McLachlin, also used the term “cultural genocide” (Tasker, 2015). The TRC did not use the term “genocide” because they had no legal mandate that allowed them to prosecute the Canadian government and churches for establishing a system to diminish Indigenous cultures. While the term cultural genocide has gained support from both Survivors and settler allies, with seventy percent agreeing that the IRSS amounted to cultural genocide, others believe this term diminishes what the system represented, and that what took place in these institutions represented “genocide” (MacDonald, 2015:425, 426). Other critics argue the term cultural genocide diminishes the effects of other physical and biological harms, ignoring that these also contributed to genocide. Pacquette says this ignores the low rates of survival through starvation, physical and sexual torture, spread of infectious diseases and forced relocation to the schools (Pacquette, 2020:147). Simply using cultural genocide ignores that the IRSS included physical and biological processes of destruction.

Further, the then-Conservative government did not even use the term cultural genocide. It is true that then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper addressed the “devastation caused by a policy of Indian residential schools” and stated, “This was a policy of forced assimilation that not only destroyed the lives of individuals but of entire families and societies, and it has had long-lasting

implications on entire communities in our country” (HoC Hansard: June 2, 2015). However, this was the furthest he and other Conservative MPs went in describing the legacy of the IRSS, and when members of opposition parties asked the federal government if they recognized the system as cultural genocide, they continually dodged the concept. This included Mark Strahl, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development at the time. When Liberal MP Ralph Goodale asked him, “Would the government explicitly acknowledge the cultural genocide that has taken place...” Strahl responded with, “the government recognized that the Indian residential schools caused great harms to individuals, to communities and to an entire society, and that the attitudes that gave way to that policy had no place in Canada” (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2015). He made several similar responses, all without acknowledging the IRSS as a process of genocide. He did not even use the term “cultural genocide.” He believed the system resulted from racist attitudes instead of an intent to destroy Indigenous nations.

An important point I want to establish is that the IRSS is not the only settler-colonial policy and structure Indigenous peoples argue to be part of the process of genocide in Canada. Representing the IRSS as such risks supporting the view that the development of the Canadian nation was a peaceful process and that the system was an unfortunate “dark” chapter in our history. Ross gives examples of the IRSS being an extension of several anti-Indigenous colonial policies. This includes how forcing children to attend these schools is compared to the forced removal policies of colonial governments, or how cultural suppression within the schools was an extension of how Indigenous ceremonies and traditions were outlawed in Canadian society as a whole (Ross, 2016:6, 9). Campaigns of starvation and forced removal had already been in place

before the original industrial and boarding schools were established, and processes that began during and after the residential school system have also been described in this manner.

This has included the Sixties-Scoop, where Indigenous children were taken and placed in foster homes far away from their home communities and cultural influences, with a vast majority going to non-Indigenous families. Destruction of Indigenous identity through environmental means, such as the impacts of clear-cut logging in the traditional territory of the Lubicon Lake Cree, have also been described as genocide (see Woolford, 2019). This is because Indigenous nations often see non-human life as a part of their communities and key components of group life, so an attack on them is an assault on the group as a whole (Woolford, 2009:89).

In 2019, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also recognized the findings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the police and government neglect to properly address this issue, as a genocide (Tunney, 2019). With Gazan's motion passing in 2022, another genocide has been added to the list that Canada recognizes. The hope is that this will encourage Canadian lawmakers to examine other settler-colonial processes that have committed genocide against Indigenous peoples. The other hope is for our government to view these phenomena as an interconnected, synchronized attack against Indigenous nations instead of individual "dark chapters" in Canadian history.

Differences Between Settler-Colonial Genocides?

I am not arguing that both cases I have discussed are mirror images of one another. However, the processes of destruction used by both the Canadian government and the CCP do share some common elements. Both are settler-colonial processes aimed to change the demographics of the targeted region through eliminating the presence of Indigenous populations,

as settlers see the territories as inherently theirs. This has included coercing the populations to give up their cultural identities. When these tactics do not work, segments of the population are forcibly removed to institutions that are framed as providing them positive education and skills training, when in reality those incarcerated are forced to look at their own cultures with disdain and take up the language and worldviews of the settler nation, or else face severe consequences. Further, both involve what Lemkin originally defined as genocide: “a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups,” including instances of birth suppressions, language, spiritual and cultural suppression, infrastructure change (Lemkin, 1944:79). The questions remain: what happens when only one of these subjects is recognized as genocide and the other is not? And what strategies are used to accomplish this argument?

The above distinction will be the main focus of this thesis. Using the IRSS and the Uyghur crisis to frame a comparative study, my goal is to find the political and social discourses members of the House of Commons and Senate used to argue that the case in China amounted to genocide, while the case in Canada did not (at least, until October 2022).

Chapter II: Theory

Denialist discourse plays a significant role in the process of genocide. In his model of the ten stages of genocide, Gregory Stanton describes denial as the tenth stage, where perpetrators attempt to bury their actions and pretend they never happened in order to avoid punishment and scrutiny (Stanton, 2016). A successful denial strategy helps promote the narrative genocidaires wish to push on the domestic and global public. However, genocide denial extends beyond strategies that proclaim the events in question never happened. Perpetrators can deny responsibility, saying that the violent circumstances were beyond the state's control and death was caused by some other force, such as famine or disease (Smith, 2014:105). Governments can also recognize that violence did occur against the targeted groups, but argue that the law sanctioned these actions and justified them as self-defence against dangerous resistance groups (Pruitt, 2017:275). This is why Adam Jones argues that genocide denial reshapes the grim moments of history through either erasing it or portraying it as necessary in order to create a preferred image of one's self and country (Jones, 2006:352).

The nation and people are spared of not only international legal prosecution, but also the shame of being compared to notorious genocidaires across history and having this crime forever mar their identity. While Holocaust denial immediately comes to mind, the denial of the events of the Armenian genocide continues to have a major influence on public memory in modern day Turkey. Armenians are still represented as traitors to the nation who cannot be trusted, and while people were killed, arguments persist that this did not represent a "Final Solution of the Armenian question" but rather a military operation working against enemies of the state (Smith, 2014:105). This makes it easy for the Turkish government to denounce claims of genocide as

uncredible and silence the survivor community. Denial continues to be an important part of Turkey's nation building (Orlani, 2021:121, 123).

Pégorier views genocide denial as a “double killing” as it destroys not only the public memory of the crime, but also the dignity of survivors who constantly have their horrific experiences questioned (Pégorier, 2018:103). Indeed, some scholars suggest the entire genocide process is an example of denial, as victim groups are denied the right to live, the right to exist as their own people, and in the case of mass killing, to a death with dignity (Fournet, 2007:83). This is why I believe a theory centering around genocide recognition and denial needs to be used when looking at how Canadian politicians view settler-colonial genocide in Canada and China. While the passing of Gazan's motion brought an end to government sanctioned denial in Canada, it is still important to analyze the types of strategies successive governments used. This chapter will explain two denial strategies used most frequently by Canadian politicians: conceptual blockages and blame games.

Conceptual Constraint/Blockage

Concepts shape our observations of the world around us. Moshman defines two types of concepts that are used in the genocide conversation as formal-based or prototype-based. Formal-based concepts are defined by necessary and/or sufficient conditions while prototype-based concepts are defined by a specific example and a predetermined set of criteria (Moshman uses robins and ostriches as an example for prototype-based concepts, where both are technically “birds” but many individuals see the robin as a better example, or prototype, of the concept “bird”) (Moshman, 2001:432). Prototype-based concepts will be useful to help understand how Canadian politicians recognize or fail to recognize acts of genocide, particularly when it comes to looking at different processes of group destruction.

The issue with prototype-based concepts is that they “constrain” what genocide is. Constraints are not necessarily an issue because there are crimes that do not fit the definition of genocide and so must be kept out of the conversation. The issue with the constraints I discuss in this thesis is that they are used to deliberately keep certain processes that match the idea of Lemkin’s original vision of genocide, and more generally help us understand how groups persist across time, out of the discussion. This is done so that violent government policies enacted against targeted groups cannot be considered genocide and so participants in these actions can avoid being labelled genocidaires. To accomplish this, they align the concept of genocide with only the most physically violent or widely known processes of group destruction. Because the UNGC definition of genocide was drafted shortly after the conclusion of the Holocaust, people assume that the concept was based on the Holocaust, and set this event as the ultimate standard for determining group destruction. If no similarities to the Holocaust are found when discussing a case, pushback against the use of the concept is expected. This is not to say that the Holocaust is the only genocide that can be cast as the prototype. Other genocides can be switched out to highlight features that constitute the crime (Moshman, 2001:436). However, the Holocaust tends to be the most cited example.

Prototype-based understandings of genocide are prominent when contrasting the Holocaust and settler-colonialism. The “totalitarian cleansing programmes” of the 20th century continue to overshadow the attempted extermination of Indigenous peoples by colonial governments (Moses, 2002:8). Settler narratives agree that methods of colonialism were damaging to the original populations; however, it is held that the “development” of settler societies destroyed Indigenous peoples. This is represented as an “inevitable part of progress,” whereas the attempted mass killing of an entire European people (the Jews) is considered more

shocking and intentional (Moses, 2002:21; Mazower, 1994:5-8). Because colonial campaigns do not include crucial elements that were present in the Holocaust, such as a similar scale of mass killings, settler-colonialism is then held as not “actual” genocide. Ward Churchill notes how because there were no “concentration camps” in colonial nations such as the Americas or Australia, some presume there was no deliberate intent to eliminate Indigenous peoples, even though mass killings and cultural suppression campaigns did take place. This makes it easy for settlers to deny the genocidal legacy of North America’s past and present (Churchill, 1997).

In order for conceptual constraints to be maintained, conceptual or theoretical blockages are applied to ensure non-prototype processes are not used to describe a concept. These strategies are not always negative, as a conceptual blockage can have a positive influence on academic debates. Preston Driggers explains that if there is a hostile relationship between different modes of thought, a “blockage” is inserted into the conversation. He describes these blockages as providing a positive irritation, as they “act as ‘gadflies’ to stimulate a diversity of creative solutions and provide opportunities to sharpen our logical intuitions” (Driggers, 1977:148). Such conceptual blockages further serve as methods to call out an unfavourable status quo and open up dialogue for a greater diversity of social norms. These blockages are annoying to some groups as it stops one theory from dominating all others, but Driggers sees this as a good outcome. Combining different theories has the potential to strengthen knowledge.

While Driggers believes this type of obstruction is positive for critical thinking, he also notes that conceptual blockages are also used as an adversary tactic and hinder the development of new theories. Dirk Moses takes this angle and suggests that conceptual blockages are used to keep one theory dominant and stop others from being considered. He uses this approach to examine the relationship between genocide and settler-colonialism. Moses makes the argument

that there are two camps that attempt to define the concept of genocide: liberals, who see genocide as strictly meaning the attempted extermination of peoples such as those carried out in 20th century Europe, and post-liberals who expand the notion to include the violent policies carried out in European colonies against Indigenous peoples. Both use several blockage techniques to counter the other side in order to create their specific boundaries on the genocide definition. It is these camps that I use to describe both sides of the Canadian political discussion on genocide, as they fit in to the results of my analysis.

Post-liberals equate genocide with colonialism. For them, the impacts of settler-colonialism on Indigenous peoples are not the result of the unintentional consequences of the “natural” spread of diseases, starvation and low birth rates among their communities. Instead, they were intentional processes meant to wipe out Indigenous peoples to make way for settler communities. Post-liberals also align themselves with Lemkin’s original vision, where cultural destruction is understood as a technique of “actual” genocide, not a separate category of “cultural genocide,” and must be included in the UNGC definition (Moses, 2002:23). While post-liberals do recognize that 20th century genocides such as the Holocaust were significant events, they do not constrain the concept to any one genocidal event. In fact, they equate Nazi Germany’s occupation policies in Eastern Europe to those of colonial governments in North America. Germany intended to achieve superiority over and dispossess the peoples deemed Indigenous to the region, which included Jewish and Slavic peoples.

The liberal camp has a more constrained view on genocide. These scholars take the notion that genocide is the deliberate physical destruction of a group based on ideological notions and that settler-colonialism does not fit this concept. According to this camp, destruction of Indigenous peoples falls under “developmental” or “utilitarian” motives, and cannot be

compared to the ideological based genocides of 20th century Europe (Moses, 2002:20). While these scholars admit that settler societies did inflict mass violence and death upon Indigenous peoples, these actions are dismissed as unintentional consequences of development. They suggest that these violent policies were not the result of any pre-planning on the part of colonial governments or out of a sadistic desire to violently do away with Indigenous peoples. It is instead summed up as a product of overreaching “greed” (Moses, 2002:22). What these scholars fail to recognize is that the development of one society can cause the destruction of others and thus be a form of genocide.

Liberals also believe that only certain types of governments, namely totalitarian regimes, are capable of committing atrocities such as genocide. Such regimes are seen as the ultimate genocidaires in their efforts to create racially pure, utopian worlds through the cleansing of unwanted peoples. This is why they use states such as Nazi Germany as their standard bearers. Moses further notes how these scholars differentiate between “typical” genocidaires and the governments of North America: “The real enemy is the totalitarian drive to perfection, a deviant form of modernity resisted historically by the West, itself largely innocent of the intended physical destruction of a people” (Moses, 2022:22). This limits the types of states that are seen as capable of committing crimes such as genocide, with Western governments absolved of wrongdoing because genocide cannot be committed in liberal-democratic states. North American states cannot be seen as genocidaires as they have long stood up to the totalitarian governments who commit “actual” genocide.

My focus will not be limited to one camp over the other. The fact that Canadian politicians did not initially recognize the IRSS as a process of genocide suggests some of them belong in the liberal camp. However, there is potential for them to fall in with the post-liberal

camp as well. Depending on what aspects of the Uyghur crisis they recognize as genocide, conceptual blockages may be dropped when discussing the actions of the CCP. Along with conceptual blockages and constraints, politicians have used another strategy to portray the Chinese government as more capable of committing genocide than the Canadian government. This strategy is known as the blame game, and I will next explain the different tactics used by Canadian politicians.

Blame Games

Several scholars have theorized different forms of the blame game, and while I draw upon this broader work, my use of the terminology is most strongly influenced by Christopher Hood. According to Hood, “blame games” are the strategies used to either apply blame to a certain individual or group, or to avoid being blamed themselves (Hood, 2011:17). He commonly uses groups in the business or political worlds as examples. Three specific blame strategies he focuses on are agency, policy and presentational strategies.

Agency concerns the individual responsibility component of blame avoidance. This involves deflecting blame to lower-level people within an organization, with leadership gaining credit for solving the issue. It also relies on constant turnover in an organization so current structures in an organization cannot be blamed for the decisions of past leadership (Hood, 2011:69). Policy strategies minimize and deflect blame through the creation of regulations or laws. These are effective because they push blame back onto victims who voice any concern. Examples include authoritarian regimes, who label complainers as politically motivated troublemakers (ibid.:101). Finally, presentational strategies use persuasion tactics to convince an audience why an event is or is not worthy of blame (ibid.:47). Instead of using laws to get their

point across or deflecting blame to lower level individuals in an organization, blame is passed on and avoided through presenting one group as more blameworthy than the other.

Presentational strategies are most frequently found in the genocide discourses used in the Canadian government, as politicians did not try to deflect blame towards lower level individuals or organizations, or use past laws to label Indigenous peoples as politically motivated trouble makers. I focus on presentational strategies because it captures how China is presented as more blameworthy than Canada in committing “actual” genocide. Through my research, I identified three interconnected strategies that will apply to how Canadian politicians avoid/deflect blame in cases of genocide.

According to the liberal camp, only certain types of governments are capable of committing genocide. Since Canadian politicians declared that China is committing these actions but did not point the same finger at themselves, they see the CCP as a better example of a typical genocidaire. This is the basis of the first strategy, which is “social actor representation.” Van Leeuwen (1996, 2008) describes this tactic as focusing on the background characteristics of those involved in the blame game. Individuals or groups are perceived as blameworthy if they possess stereotypically negative attributes and are thus ostracized as the “Other,” so constant negative presentation is required. To avoid such blame, one must ensure constant positive self-presentation. The analysis will show how politicians portray inherent characteristics of both the Chinese and Canadian governments in order to assign blame.

According to the liberal position, typical genocidaires are the totalitarian ethnic cleansing regimes that were common in the 20th century. Since the Holocaust is the genocide standard, the typical culprit is similar to the Nazis. Connected to social actor representation, the second strategy is the “rescue narrative” (Lakoff, 2008:24). This is where a “Hero” struggles against an

evil “Villain” who is attacking a helpless “Victim.” Much like the previous strategy, to be seen as the “Hero,” one must avoid any characteristics that portray them as a “Villain.”

The third strategy is a specific variant of what Hood refers to as “problem denial,” a blame discourse that admits a problem exists, but in a way that minimizes the amount of blame given, and deflects some of it away (Hood, 2011:50). Unlike “total problem denial” where the entire issue is swept away, this discourse is used to admit some guilt while denying responsibility for other aspects of the issue. This helps portray a certain party in a positive light and maintain some of their good reputation. I chose this strategy because of its connection to another strategy aligned with the IRSS, which is residential school denialism. Like problem denial, it admits to a problem while downplaying several aspects of the issue. This denialism does not deny that residential schools existed, or that children experienced profound physical, sexual and cultural harms. However, it does deny basic facts about the system that minimizes its harmful legacy on Indigenous peoples and hinders truth and reconciliation (Carleton, 2021:2). It includes strategies such as arguing the system had good intentions when the schools were first opened, that we must have a balanced look at the positive and negative aspects of the schools, or that the system represented a product of its time and cannot be judged using today’s standards (Justice & Carleton, 2021). Problem denial will only be used in the Canadian case, as it is strictly a blame avoidance strategy.

Conceptual blockages and blame game strategies were important when analyzing discourse used by Canadian politicians, as I found multiple examples where they assigned blame to the CCP but were able to block the genocide concept from being used to describe Canada’s actions. My methodological framework allowed me to identify instances when these strategies were deployed and I will explain this in the next chapter.

Chapter III: Methodology

In this chapter, I will explain the methodologies I used to apply my theoretical framework to my data. I will begin by outlining the paradigmatic and methodological processes that framed my research. As my thesis criticizes Canadian politicians for how they have approached the issue of genocide in China and Canada, an approach that allows a critical viewpoint was necessary for this project. After I introduce my methodology, I will explain my research process, such as how I extracted my data and what sources I used, how I analyzed my data and how I decided to organize my findings for presentation in this thesis. The thematic networks that I organized my data into will be shown in the following chapter on Analysis.

I end this chapter by explaining one important limitation I encountered in my research, which is that my data sources do not provide concrete justifications politicians make for their positions on genocide. While it is not detrimental to the results of my thesis, I believe there is a way one can gain another perspective on the issue of genocide recognition and denial in the Canadian government by incorporating this limitation. It is something to consider if I, or other researchers, wish to conduct another project in the area of genocide denial and blame avoidance.

Paradigmatic and Methodological Frameworks

The paradigmatic lens I have applied to this study is a critical approach, with a focus on how prominent figures such as government officials use their power to influence society and maintain the status quo, which can be inspired by an ideology. For Jørgensen and Phillips, this ideology is used to create a favourable reality while simultaneously masking the “actual” reality from the public (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:179). The longer those with influence keep the public in this false reality, the more the public will come to accept it as the truth and act as

another enforcer of that reality. This makes it easier for governments to keep unwanted groups, ideas or narratives out of the mainstream as it is difficult to unravel a narrative that a majority of the general population accepts and promotes.

This does not mean there are no methods that can push back against harmful ideologies and that is why my thesis works as a retrospective critique. According to Reisigl and Wodak, this method works to criticize how present societies reframe the past in order to preserve a status quo that is favourable to the government, then aims to revive this historical narrative to create more responsible methods of dealing with the past (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001:35). This is connected with the ideology critique above, as the favourable status quo represents the false reality societies attempt to create. It includes heroic narratives such as how a nation was founded or developed, or celebrates the impacts that certain individuals or groups have had on the society. In many cases, these realities are created in order to cover up negative characteristics of a nation, particularly if it committed atrocities such as genocide against groups of people. A retrospective critique attempts to convince society that this narrative is false, and give a different perspective on history. This includes giving a voice to people who have been marginalized within dominant historical narratives.

This fits in with the framework developed in the literature review and theory chapters. Emphasis on physical and biological destruction continue to dominate the “status quo” definition of genocide. This has allowed destructive processes such as the IRSS to avoid being described as genocide. However, in recent years there has been a push back against this notion, creating more “responsible” narratives not just of the crime of genocide, but the history of Canada also. Conceptual blockages and blame avoidance strategies are used to maintain the favourable “reality” of the crime of genocide for Canada. These strategies serve to ensure that Canada’s

policies against Indigenous peoples through the IRSS are not held culpable for genocide. The reality is upheld through demonstrating how nations such as China are the “real” perpetrators of “real” genocide.

To implement my critical lens, my chosen methodological framework is a discourse analysis. A focus on discourse when looking at political speeches is important because it allows one to designate “the conjunction of power and knowledge” within processes of statecraft “and highlights the political nature of policy making” (Kenway, 1992:128; Taylor, 1997:125). There are multiple approaches to discourse analysis, and I will use discourse-historical analysis, which according to Reisigl and Wodak, “attempts to transcend the pure linguistic dimension and to include the historical, political, sociological and/or psychological dimension in the analysis and interpretation of a specific discursive occasion” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001:35). This approach has been used in studies that have similarities to my thesis. Reisigl and Wodak employed it to uncover how Austrian political parties used propaganda to cover up their National Socialist past and claim they were the “first victim of Nazi politics of dictatorship and territorial expansion” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001:42). This was despite evidence that National Socialism existed in the nation before the Nazis took control and continued to exist decades later.

I also employ elements of comparative discourse analysis when examining my data. According to Jørgensen and Phillips, “comparison to radically different positions can help the researcher to recognize the contingent, culturally-relative nature of aspects of the texts under study” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:149). While this study deals with only one group of people, Canadian politicians, the focus is on lawmakers who take differing positions on the crime of genocide. A comparative discourse analysis allows me to investigate how politicians have recognized the Uyghur crisis as genocide while avoiding using the concept to describe the IRSS

and their justifications for doing so. In the case of the IRSS, while the group of politicians that recognize it as a process of genocide will be addressed, they are not the focus of my comparison.

What is gained from using this approach is the exposure of power relations that exist within a nation's politics and how they serve to manufacture a national self-image (Hansson, 2015:298). This approach not only showcases the discursive strategies governments use to avoid blame and shift it towards someone else but also uncovers the broader social, political, cultural and historical processes that make it possible (Hansson, 2018:551). This aids in understanding the work undertaken by political actors to maintain the status quo, including creating narratives that help them avoid being blamed for committing genocide.

Data Sources and Collection Strategies

Concerning the concept of genocide and how the use of its definition is recognized or blocked by government actors, I have analyzed the written recordings of debates in both the Canadian House of Commons and the Canadian Senate, which are called Hansard transcripts and are publicly accessible and located on the institutions' websites. Since both places of government had different outcomes in votes on the Uyghur genocide, I wanted to analyze how discourses were used in each chamber. To narrow the focus of my data collection and avoid blindly looking through the debate calendar on these websites, I began with a media study through looking up articles from sources such as CBC, CTV, Global news, the Globe and Mail or the National Post. Articles that commented on political discussion and reaction to the IRSS and the Uyghur crisis were used to guide my search of debates that were held on or around those dates. This was followed up by a review of these debates to find detailed discussion for analysis.

Upon the completion of my media search, I settled on five different dates to guide my data collection. As political debates around certain issues can span multiple sessions of Parliament, I created a range of days around the specific dates in order to analyze discussions leading up to the event and reactions to any decisions made in either chamber after the event. I settled on a range of three days before and after the date. The dates I focused on were October 21, 2020 (when the House of Commons Subcommittee released its report on the Uyghur crisis), February 22 and June 29, 2021 (when the House of Commons and Senate voted on whether to recognize the Uyghur crisis as genocide), May 27, 2021 (when potential unmarked graves were located at the former Kamloops Residential School), and June 10, 2021 (when MP Leah Gazan presented her first motion to recognize the IRSS as genocide).

I chose this timeline because of the close proximity of the decisions to recognize genocide in China but not in Canada. The discovery of potential unmarked graves occurred only a few months after debates on the Uyghur crisis had concluded, and discussions of the latter debate were still fresh in political and social conversations. The fact that their viewpoints on genocide change in the span of a few months is worth looking into further.

Further Stages of Analysis

After gathering the necessary online transcripts and completing an initial read through, the next stage involved the coding of select phrases. Coding is essential for this kind of qualitative study as it divides data into categories and themes that can help determine what the researcher needs to focus on in the stages that follow (Dey, 1993; Vaughn & Turner, 2016:50). These codes are anything from words and short phrases to entire paragraphs and are key to my research as it generated a large amount of data that needed to be organized in order to effectively review it. Researchers agree that simplifying or reducing data in this way is beneficial, because

data is stripped to its bare bones and then expanded, which helps generate further knowledge and theories (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996:28, 30).

With regards to coding data, I used an approach that aligns with what Coffey and Atkinson refer to as “indigenous terms and categories of the culture of the individual informants” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996:32). This is important as politicians have their own terms and explanations that they use to describe atrocities in Canada and China, and these terms are helpful in organizing my data. These will be repeated in different sections and will be helpful in organizing my data. However, I do have a small list of codes that I will use regardless of whether the politicians use them or not. The strategy that I have decided is best for my thesis is abductive coding, a blended approach that combines terms and phrases that research participants use, along with pre-defined codes created before the study commenced (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019:264).

For example, codes that I took directly from the Hansard texts include terms such as “Authoritarian.” This is how politicians in the House of Commons and Senate described the Chinese system of government and this terminology guides the justifications used to recognize or deny the existence of genocide. In contrast, I created predetermined codes such as “Prototype” or “Denial” before the analysis and based on my literature review and theoretical framework. As my theory centres on how the concept of genocide is constrained to fit a standard prototype, I wanted to have “Prototype” on my list in case a word or passage in the text fit this code. I used “Denial” because part of my thesis concerns genocide denial. I put this on my predetermined list in case no politician used the word “Denial” in any statements, but their words or actions nonetheless reflected strategies of denial. I used this code whenever someone either disagreed that the IRSS met the criteria for genocide or if they dodged the question entirely.

While diving deeper into the codes after I assign them will yield interesting results, a further analysis strategy is needed to gain a clear understanding of how Canadian politicians recognize and deny settler-colonial genocide. The second part of my analysis involved the creation of several thematic networks, which involve the breaking up of text in order to find explicit rationalizations and their implicit significations (Attride-Sterling, 2001:388). Creating such links is greatly beneficial to my thesis because I feel this type of study needs to be told in a story-like manner, creating a web that neatly explains how politicians recognize and deny genocide, depending on the nation in which it is committed. Pairing this with general coding strategies is beneficial as coding is the first step in constructing a thematic network (Attride-Sterling, 2001:390).

Attride-Sterling divides these networks into three sections: Basic themes, Organizing themes, and Global themes, with each representing a different level of meaning within the text. Basic themes help the reader make sense of the individual codes the author has assigned to portions of the text under study. However, on their own they do not help the reader understand the text as a whole. If several Basic themes are grouped together, they create Organizing themes. This latter group represents the main evidence on which a claim is based. Taken together, several Organizing themes help answer the main argument, which is the Global theme. What is important to note is that the data under analysis potentially produces more than one Global theme, and so it becomes necessary to split the data into two or more networks for better organization.

After organizing my codes and constructing my Basic and Organizing themes, this created a Global network that was too large and did not have a coherent narrative. I decided that two Global themes were needed, with China occupying one network and Canada occupying the

other. The first Global theme presents the CCP as a “Villain” regime and the second presents the Canadian government as a “Hero” regime. This is linked to the rescue narrative that will play a role in framing part of my analysis. In the next chapter, I will explain how each Organizing Theme has contributed to the genocide narratives that Canadian politicians created.

Limitations

My entire data collection consists of transcripts I retrieved from online sources. This means that I never spoke to any politicians nor asked them directly what they believe the concept of genocide represents, and whether it applies to the Uyghur crisis and the IRSS. I did not have the opportunity to ask any follow-up questions as to why they came to the conclusions they did. I see this as a limitation because I cannot verify their justifications for recognizing genocide in the Uyghur crisis but not in the IRSS. I have attempted to make up for this limitation through comparing the discourses of politicians with those found in prominent media contributors. This will give further insight into the Canadian status quo concerning genocide and how this has inspired politicians mindsets. This is one reason I believe future research in this topic must be conducted, especially because Parliament has now recognized the IRSS as genocide. With the discourse-historical approach in mind, we see what has changed in the Canadian status quo with regards to settler-colonialism and genocide and how these politicians arrived at these new conclusions.

Chapter IV: Analysis

This chapter is divided into three sections, with each section containing one Organizing theme from each network, and China to Canada will be discussed alongside one another. The first section examines the strategies MPs and Senators use to frame Canada as a peaceful, democratic nation and China as a totalitarian, communist regime that has no respect for human rights. This is important as these strategies enable representation of one nation as more capable of genocide than the other. The second section shows how politicians link the Holocaust with the official coining of the UNGC. This is followed with examples of how they compare the Uyghur genocide with the Holocaust. No politicians attempted to make a direct comparison between the Holocaust and the IRSS, or insinuated that such a comparison is wrong, so there is no organizing theme for Canada. Finally, I will touch on the arguments politicians make to declare the Uyghur crisis a genocide while avoiding the term when discussing the IRSS. The following Discussion chapter will further dissect these blockages and games and what it means for Canada's view of the genocide concept. I will also compare the blockages and games with discourse that I found in prominent media sources.

Organizing Theme 1: Authoritarian State vs. Human Rights Defender

If a government or nation is painted in a negative light, it makes it easier for the general population to believe they are capable of committing heinous crimes such as genocide. During debates surrounding the Uyghur crisis, Canadian lawmakers made it known that they view the Chinese Communist Party as a regime that has no respect for human rights and uses totalitarian tactics to govern its citizens. Conservative Senator Leo Housakos spoke to China's willingness to detain people on a whim, including the recent issue with the two Michaels who were released from Chinese custody only last year: "China is not only a superpower, it is also a lawless state.

That is to say, it is a state without the rule of law. This means that the regime has been entirely willing to simply grab people off the streets, whether Chinese or foreigners, and hold them hostage until their demands are met. This has been clearly demonstrated in China's arbitrary detention of Canadians Michael Korvig and Michael Spavor" (Senate Hansard: Nov. 3, 2020). Conservative MP Nelly Shin also mentioned the other human rights abuses the Chinese government is currently committing: "This is the same government that continues to disregard human rights and international law with regard to Hong Kong, Tibetans, Falun Gong practitioners, Christians and other minority groups" (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021).

Some have also been quick to point out that it is not a surprise that China is a nation where human rights do not exist, as the world has witnessed their atrocities for some time. Conservative MP John Williamson described parts of this history: "Today's China is the same China that cracked down on students in Tiananmen Square 22 years ago. It is the same China that, after being admitted to the World Trade Organization, failed to adhere to its commitments to liberalize and open up. It is the same China that imprisons its citizens and denies them freedom of speech and press. More recently, it is the China that has illegally expanded its territory throughout the South China Sea and claims much of that sea as its territory" (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). What the above statements show is that Canadian politicians are quick to point out the past failings of China and portray the CCP as a regime that has been involved in human rights abuses for a long time.

Having established that China is already a nation engulfed with human rights abuses, they further link some of the above abuses that have been committed against others to what Uyghurs face in their own communities in Xinjiang, as Conservative MP Michael Chong describes: "Outside the camps, Xinjiang has turned into an open prison for Uyghurs. China has combined

the power of an authoritarian state with leading edge technology to create a surveillance system that is beyond Orwellian. Every single Muslim is tracked. Muslims who do not meet the algorithmic standards are flagged for arrest and detention in camps. Any Uyghur who does not follow the direction of authorities is flagged for arrest and detention. There is no procedural fairness, just the brute force of an authoritarian regime” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). This illustrates the mass surveillance system that the CCP has employed across Xinjiang to monitor Uyghur daily behaviours and interactions to ensure they are following the campaigns the government has implemented to eliminate the Uyghur cultural and physical presence in the region.

Finally, there were hints that some politicians recognize China’s actions against the Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims as acts of settler-colonialism. Indeed, Senator Leo Housakos recognizes the sovereign status of the Uyghur homeland and that Han-Chinese invaders are occupying Xinjiang. He states that, “I think we must all try to appreciate the full scope of what is happening in the region that China calls Xinjiang, but which in actual terms is really Chinese-occupied East Turkestan” (Senate Hansard: Nov. 3, 2020). He further notes how the settlement of new Han Chinese citizens in Xinjiang will affect the regions demographics: “This sterilization campaign has been accompanied by settlement policies that have sought to swamp the local Uyghur population with large numbers of Han Chinese, who have been encouraged to settle in the region in order to become the majority” (ibid.). MP Garnett Genuis also referred to Xinjiang as “East Turkistan” on several occasions, recognizing Uyghur sovereignty of the region.

What is perhaps more telling is how Conservative MP Brad Vis describes China’s version of settler-colonialism, which he links to the occupation policies that the Nazis deployed across Europe. He cites the work of Azeezah Kanji and Mehmet Tohti, academics and Uyghur

rights activists, who have reported on, “the current stage of the Chinese governments (sic) ‘project of settler-colonialism and demographic change in the resource-rich territory China refers to as ‘Xinjiang’.’ Tellingly, this name literally means ‘new frontier.’ The terrifying parallels to the Lebensraum and Anschluss terminology used by the Third Reich during the 1930s and 1940s are clear” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Here, Vis is declaring that the Nazi Germany’s annexation of Austria and their desire to create “living space” (Lebensraum) in Eastern Europe for Germans is directly related to the actions the CCP is taking in Xinjiang, the rightful home of the Uyghurs.

Beyond recognizing the settler-colonial nature of the CCP’s actions, Vis continued with another statement from Kanji and Tohti, making another connection that included the Uyghur crisis, settler-colonialism and genocide: “Kanji and Tohti cite: ‘renowned scholar of settler-colonialism Patrick Wolfe [who] famously wrote that ‘the question of genocide is never far from discussions of settler-colonialism.’ In the case of China’s policies against the Uyghurs, this question of genocide is not just abstract or metaphorical, but imminent and literal” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). This is significant, because citing a quotation such as this means Vis recognizes that processes of settler-colonialism potentially amount to genocide. Further, it opens for the possibility for Conservatives to be entering the camp Moses identifies as post-liberals, who see settler-colonialism as a genocidal process. While the comments from Housakos and Vis are among few that mention settler-colonialism, it is interesting that they recognize it is happening in China and connect it to the crime of genocide.

These early statements are important when examining the strategies Canadian politicians use to claim China is committing “actual” genocide. They portray the CCP as a regime that has already committed human rights abuses and continues to do so through its treatment of Uyghurs,

which makes it easier to convince others that China is capable of committing genocide. This is in stark contrast to how politicians choose to describe Canada, instead depicting it as a champion of human rights. Canadian politicians indeed claim that this is a crucial element of Canadian identity that has always been apart of our history. Before the vote to recognize genocide in China, Conservative MP Dan Albas noted, “Today, we have an opportunity as members to stand up and send a powerful message. In doing so, we continue Canada’s long-standing and proud history of standing up for human rights and defending the most vulnerable” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021).

Conservative MP Marty Morantz provided additional examples of our “proud history”: “In 1957, former Prime Minister Lester Pearson received the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in resolving the Suez crisis through the United Nations... In 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney stood virtually alone in the world against the tyranny of apartheid in South Africa and is revered to this day in South Africa” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Canada is also touted as a leader in the recognition of genocides that have taken place around the world, as Conservative MP Brad Vis reminded the House of Commons: “Ideally, Canada is a nation unafraid to stand on the side of freedom and human rights. We in the House have done so before, having recognized and condemned seven genocides that occurred around the world during our nation’s history” (ibid.). This statement is indeed true, as the federal government has officially recognized the Armenian genocide, the Holodomor, the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, the Srebrenica massacres, the mass killing of the Yazidi people by ISIS, and the mass killings of the Rohingya in Myanmar (MacDonald, 2021).

Conservatives were not the only politicians standing up for Canada’s “proud history.” NDP MP Jack Harris noted: “It is a matter of fundamental human rights and the obligations of

countries like Canada to call out the actions of states whose actions and practices of widespread and systemic abuses of human rights are of such enormity that they require international opprobrium and action” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Liberal MP Mark Gerretsen made a similar declaration: “Canada stands up for human rights everywhere and at all times. Canada stands up for the people of Venezuela, for the people fleeing their homes in Myanmar, for the people of Yemen suffering in the midst of war, for the people of Belarus calling for free and fair elections and for the Uyghurs facing repression, persecution and arbitrary mass detention” (ibid.).

One question that many politicians have asked is how they want Canada to be remembered in this pivotal moment. If Canada does not live up to its reputation by standing up to China and calling out its human rights abuses against Uyghurs, we risk being on the wrong side of history. Conservative Marty Morantz made this very point in the House: “This is one of those moments in history when we have not only an opportunity but an obligation to speak out and take action. People are dying and being persecuted, for not other reason than their faith, by an authoritarian regime that cares not. To not speak up leaves us in a moral vacuum, and history will not judge us well if we fail to act” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Instead, it is argued that Canada must place itself on the right side of history as it has done many times in the past. Conservative Senator Thanh Hai Ngo made such a call: “Canada has always been a front-runner in fighting for democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law – the very values on which this great nation was founded... Let us not be remembered for being subservient to cowardice, self-interest and the almighty dollar. Let us stand on the right side of history and truly honour the pledge, ‘never again’” (Senate Hansard: June 3, 2021). In this instance, the Senator is calling on Canada to live up to this idealized (and ideological) vision of its statehood.

Canada, however, has not always been perfect and has committed errors in the past. The tone Conservatives take when addressing our nation's wrongdoing, though, is different to how they addressed China. Conservative MP Pierre Paul-Hus recalled of our refusing to let the MS *St. Louis*, which carried Jewish refugees from Europe in 1939, come ashore: "Let us not forget that in 1939, Canada refused to accept certain refugees because of their race... Canada also refused entry to this ship with Jewish refugees on board. The ocean liner returned to Europe and the passengers were imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps..." (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Atrocities against Indigenous peoples were also noted, particularly in regard to the IRSS. When discussing its legacy, MPs such as Conservative Garnett Genuis stated, "In the history of many nations, there are horrific atrocities that have been undertaken, and it can be hard to think about how we related to our country in the midst of these events... There have been horrific mistakes, and part of our identity has become to try and confront them, to apologize for them and to move forward" (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021).

Then-leader of the Conservative party Erin O'Toole communicated similar sentiments when addressing the system and the remains found at the former Kamloops institution, and addressed how we have fallen short of the ideals that make Canada a great nation: "Responsible citizenship in this great country of Canada requires us to commit to the ideals of our country: peace, order and good government, equality and opportunity for all. At many points in our history, we have fallen short of these ideals and these values we cherish. This is particularly the case in our collective failures with respect to Indigenous Canadians... To me, reconciliation means recognizing areas where we have made mistakes or failed to do better" (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). The words Genuis and O'Toole use are nice and do carry weight; however, they are different from the words used to describe atrocities in China. Whereas the actions of the CCP

are seen as typical of an authoritarian regime and addressed in a harsh manner, ours are minimized as momentary blips in our otherwise exemplary behaviour, that is, as mistakes or failures.

Coupled with these statements is Genuis' take on the IRSS and settler-colonialism. He portrays settler-colonialism as negative, but its harms are downplayed: "At the heart of what happened with the residential schools was the principle of colonialism: An external power tried to control Indigenous communities and deny families, communities and individuals the autonomy that they should have had" (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021). There is truth in what Genuis says; however, it does not portray a clear picture of the destructive nature of the IRSS and settler-colonialism. A comment that Conservative MP Dan Albas made sums up the relationship between settlers and Indigenous peoples: "I would simply say that all governments dating back to the birth of this great country have failed in many cases to protect individual rights and to respect our commitments to first nations, dating back to the royal proclamation" (ibid.). This last statement sums up how Conservative politicians view China and Canada, with the former having a long history of human rights abuses, and the latter being a great country that has made a few mistakes in its past, as most countries have done in their histories.

This is in contrast to how far politicians from other political parties went in describing Canada's historical policies of settler-colonialism, including the IRSS. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acknowledged as much when he stated, "The residential school system was only one piece of a larger colonial policy designed to erase language and culture and to assimilate Indigenous communities so they no longer existed as distinct peoples" (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). Bloc Québécois member Gabriel Ste-Marie also criticized Canada's history: "Its history is one of imperialism and colonialism, a legacy of the British Empire... Compelled by a desire for

the never-ending accumulation of profit and capital, the British Empire and Canada crushed the first peoples and rode roughshod over their rights so they could get their hands on the first people's lands and resources. That was the world view behind the creation of residential schools and the ensuing horror" (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021).

Green MP Elizabeth May took it one step further, linking our colonial structure, and the IRSS, to acts of genocide: "... it is a hard thing to acknowledge as settler culture Canadians that our entire society has been built on dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their lands. The residential school system was part of the institutionalized racism and genocide to break down the culture, the societies and civilizations that were here before European Canadians" (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). This is to show that members of other political parties have gone further than the vague terms Conservatives have used to describe Canadian history and its relation to the IRSS.

Section Discussion

Elements of the social actor representation and rescue narrative strategies were prominent in the above organizing themes. Without mentioning the Uyghur crisis, Canadian politicians point out negative characteristics of the Chinese government, arguing the CCP has routinely committed human rights abuses in multiple sectors of Chinese society, both in the present and the past. Because of the CCP's history, Canadian politicians are not surprised that they are committing such atrocities against Uyghurs and other Muslim groups. China is now seen as a stereotypical, inherently evil 'Villain' through the negative 'Other'-presentation.

This 'Villain' narrative is furthered with the first comparison that Canadian politicians make between the CCP and the Nazi Party. Canadian MP's and Senators state that China's anti-

Uyghur policies are examples of settler-colonialism, a process that is damaging Uyghur population numbers, their communities and their cultures. However, declaring that these processes are similar to Nazi colonial-like occupation policies across Europe puts the CCP in a category that is worse than most other governments. In this manner, Chinese settler-colonialism is identified with a more notorious example of Villainy: the Holocaust. This Villain narrative will be further explored in the next section.

When discussing Canada's history, Canadian politicians focus on Canada's positive human rights reputation. This paints Canada as inherently good and a 'Hero,' the opposite side of the rescue narrative. Politicians believe we must use our legacy as a defender of human rights to fight against the CCP, an established 'Villain.' They admit that there are times in Canadian history where we have failed to live up to our moral values, putting us in line with the Villain category. Politicians include our past and current treatment of Indigenous peoples in those remarks. However, they also emphasize that part of our identity is that we apologize for wrongdoings, showing we at least feel a sense of remorse, which nudges us back toward the Hero category. In contrast, it is claimed the CCP has never shown remorse for its past human rights abuses which maintains their Villain status.

When the issue of anti-Indigenous policies such as the IRSS do come up, we find examples of politicians committing strategies of problem denial. As I explained in my Theory chapter, this strategy does not deny the entire existence of an issue, but rather acknowledges that a problem exists while minimizing its overall impact. This is found in the rhetoric used to describe settler-colonialism in China and Canada. Politicians admitted that the Uyghur crisis and the IRSS are processes of settler-colonialism that have negatively affected targeted populations. They took it a step further in the discussions on the Uyghur crisis when they declared that settler-

colonialism amounts to genocide. However, they did not equate settler-colonialism and genocide during debates around the IRSS. This is surprising as these latter debates occurred only a few months after those on the Uyghur crisis, so why does one process of colonialism amount to genocide while another does not?

Canadian politicians, particularly Conservatives, are also protecting the status quo through this strategy. Politicians have established that Canada has always been on the right side of human rights issues and that we are an international leader in this regard. Our failures, including those against Indigenous peoples, are framed in such a way that this notion cannot be challenged. This is the first part of the discourse-historical approach, setting up part of the reality politicians try to defend. What the above reality is trying to cover up is that Canada, a liberal-democratic nation, has used authoritarian policies against Indigenous peoples, including the pass system, restricted voting rights, the Indian act, and residential schools. Accusations of genocide, as we will see later in the analysis, puts the status quo in further jeopardy.

Aside from discussing how a nation's past and current environment is a precursor for being a genocidaire, politicians in the House of Commons and Senate pointed to an event that the Uyghur crisis shares similarities with: the Holocaust.

Organizing Theme 2: Strategic Use of the Holocaust Prototype

When discussing the atrocities of the Uyghur crisis, the Holocaust repeatedly arose as a point of comparison. Various politicians began statements by telling stories about survivors or personal encounters of when they visited concentration camps. They also reminded their colleagues that the UNGC definition of genocide was coined in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Conservative MP Michael Chong stated, "The genocide convention codifies the crime of

genocide. It was the very first human rights treaty adopted by the United Nations in December of 1948. It signified the international community's commitment after the Holocaust to never allow it to happen again" (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). The fact that this definition came out in the aftermath of the Holocaust leads many to assume that the Holocaust is integral to the genocide concept, though Lemkin's concept was also influenced by other genocides such as the genocide of Armenians by Ottoman Turks.

When discussing the severity of applying genocide to the Uyghur crisis, Senator Leo Housakos stressed, "The 1948 convention is focused on acts designed to physically destroy a particular group. Since the convention was formulated in the aftermath of the Holocaust in Europe, there's no doubt as to the context in which the convention was drafted" (Senate Hansard: June 3, 2021). MP Brad Vis provided a similar idea after listing some of the ongoing indignities against Uyghurs: "These instances and sadly many other documented cases fulfill the United Nations definition of genocide under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, created following the revelations of the Nazi Holocaust" (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). It is the latter two quotations that I find most significant, as both Housakos and Vis suggest that the idea of genocide is reducible to the Holocaust.

With the important connection between the genocide definition and the Holocaust established, members of our government have argued that the CCP's anti-Uyghur policies represent a process similar to the Nazi genocides. Conservative Senator Thanh Hai Ngo declared at the beginning of his speech, "The plight of the Uyghur and other Turkic Muslims has aptly been described by experts as the largest mass detention of an ethno-religious minority since the Holocaust" (Senate Hansard: June 3, 2021). MPs such as Michael Chong believe that the sheer number of Uyghurs that have been interned in the Chinese re-education camps is enough to make

a viable comparison to the Nazi genocides: “Some estimate that more than two million Chinese Muslims have been detained in these camps. Some experts have called this the greatest mass incarceration of an ethnic group since the Holocaust” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Backing up such declarations with numbers is important when making this connection, as people will see images of the Nazi concentration camps in their minds. Conjuring up those images and then picturing Uyghurs in a similar situation creates a public furor over the actions of the CCP, and a demand to stand up to them as Canada is imagined to have done to Nazi Germany in the Second World War.

Further, instead of referring to these institutions as re-education centres, numerous politicians describe these places as “concentration camps.” Senator Ngo notes how Uyghurs have been “rounded up and forcibly detained in what the Chinese government doublespeak refers to as ‘re-education centres.’ Survivors, however, are unequivocal in their assertion that these are, in fact, ‘concentration camps,’” (Senate Hansard: June 3, 2021). Other politicians note the irony in how the Chinese government calls these places re-education centres when in fact they are places of detention, forced labour, physical and sexual torture and forced sterilization. Senator Housakos notes, “Prisoners are subjected to psychological indoctrination, physical torture, including waterboarding, sexual abuse, forced abortions and mass sterilization... It is believed that as many as 3 million people, or 30% of the Uyghur population, are detained in these concentration camps” (ibid.).

Bloc Québécois MP Stéphane Bergeron also notes this irony and then connects these institutions to the Nazi concentration camps: “Witnesses have spoken about concentration camps euphemistically referred to as re-education camps. This reminds me of the inscription over the entrance to Nazi concentration camps, ‘Work sets you free.’ In other words, if people worked

hard, they were eventually freed. This is the kind of euphemism used to describe concentration camps” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Consistently referring to these places as concentration camps and comparing them to the Nazi camps makes it easier to portray the Uyghur crisis as another Holocaust.

It is not just in the opinions of MPs that a comparison exists between the Uyghur crisis and the Holocaust. Politicians have cited how legal and scholarly experts have pointed to how another Holocaust is taking place in China. Conservative MP Brad Vis stated, “We recognize the seriousness and severity of direct comparisons to the Holocaust. Tragically, the evidence is present and plain to see. Dr. Adrian Zenz, senior fellow in China Studies at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, testified before the subcommittee that this was in fact a Holocaust 2.0, but much more sophisticated” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). This is significant as he is using expert evidence to suggest that the Uyghur crisis can be “directly compared” to the Nazi genocides, and it is far worse than what happened the last time. Most individuals are familiar with the horrors of the Holocaust, but for there to be a current atrocity that is worse than the Nazi crimes this invokes a tremendous amount of fear and anger and increases calls to recognize this as genocide.

Along with scholarly experts, politicians gave examples of members of the Jewish community pointing out that what the Uyghurs are facing compares to what they and their family members went through. Conservative MP Nelly Shin gives the example, “Indeed, Jonathan Sacks, the U.K.’s former chief rabbi, tweeted on July 22: ‘As a Jew, knowing our history, the sight of people being shaven headed, lined up, boarded onto trains and sent to concentration camps is particularly harrowing.’ Jewish leaders acknowledge the eerie familiarities of what is happening to Uyghurs with what the Nazis did during World War II” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18,

2021). She gives the further example of, “The president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews wrote in a letter of ‘People being forcibly loaded onto trains, beards of religious men being trimmed, women being sterilised, and the grim spectre of concentration camps’” (ibid.). Not only is the Uyghur crisis declared as a Holocaust 2.0, but now there are Holocaust Survivors and other members of the Jewish community saying there are similarities between what their people went through and what the Uyghurs are currently going through.

To back up why they believe the Uyghur crisis meets the criteria for the UNGC definition, they constantly make comparisons to an event that they believe is the archetypal genocide, which is the Holocaust. If another event has similarities to the Holocaust, then it must mean it meets the UNGC definition. They back this up by stating Uyghurs are held in concentration camps and face untold horrors, how Jewish individuals are reminded of their experiences when they see what is going on in China, and that we must be concerned because this has been described as worse than the Nazi genocides. These politicians also focus on the physical elements of the Holocaust, and mainly base their comparison on the fact that Uyghurs are being detained in what are described as concentration camps, and are facing horrors similar to those the Nazis victims faced. This appeared to be the main basis of comparison between the two, as Conservative and Bloc Québécois politicians did not compare the Uyghur crisis to other elements of the Holocaust.

The Holocaust never came up during debates on the IRSS, so it is difficult to determine how politicians viewed the experiences of Survivors in the context of this particular genocide. No politicians tried to link the Holocaust to the IRSS, or when anyone declared the system to be a process of genocide, no one stood up and criticized “false” equivalencies to an event such as the Holocaust. However, at the start of Marty Morantz’ speech, he declared, “We have our own

issues of social justice in Canada, to be sure, but the realities of the Holocaust and the shock of the Holocaust, outside the lived experience, is for some just too much to bear” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). I do not dispute this sentiment, as those of us who did not experience the full terror of the Holocaust will never comprehend what the Nazi’s victim groups endured during this genocide. NDP MP Heather McPherson asked Morantz what he thought about applying the genocide label to processes against Indigenous peoples here in Canada. He responded with, “On social justice issues around Indigenous Canadians, I am very sympathetic to arguments on that” (ibid.). If arguments were ever to come up, one worries if he will equate the IRSS to “social justice issues,” which are serious, but not equal to processes such as the Holocaust, and thus not be considered genocide.

The closest comparison to the Holocaust came with a different settler-colonial attack on Indigenous peoples, which was Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). After making his own statement on the Holocaust, Garnett Genuis criticized Prime Minister Trudeau for recognizing MMIWG as genocide but not the Uyghur crisis: “The Prime Minister’s reluctance to call out these crimes is all the more striking given the fact that he has previously accused Canada of committing a 21st century genocide. He said in 2019 that his government accepts that murders of Indigenous women and girls in recent decades amount to genocide. Experts at the time, including Irwin Cotler, criticized this use of the term ‘genocide’ saying, ‘I think we have to guard against using that term in too many ways because then it will cease to have the singular importance and horror that it warrants.’ Is it not then ironic that the Prime Minister of Canada is prepared to accuse his own country of genocide, even when some experts say otherwise, but unprepared to accuse the Government of China of genocide, even when the experts say otherwise?” (HoC Hansard: February 18, 2021). He stated this was not meant to

brush the issue aside and he was open to having debates on MMIWG and the IRSS and whether they amounted to genocide.

Section Discussion

The rhetoric surrounding China in this section is a continuation of the rescue narrative. In the previous section, politicians successfully painted China as an inherently evil Villain with examples of their past and present human rights abuses and how they connect to the current treatment of Uyghurs. This section takes the Villain narrative a step further, as China's crimes against Uyghurs bear similarities to the Holocaust. If a nation is compared to Nazi Germany, a nation that committed mass atrocities in what many describe as the "darkest chapter in human history," it places them in a special category of Villainous regimes. This also emboldens Canada's status as the Hero. Standing up to the CCP means we are standing up to an enemy that is committing a "Holocaust 2.0," linking us to the generation that stood up to Nazism during the Second World War.

There are also examples of politicians using conceptual constraint when it comes to the Holocaust. Along with pointing out the similarities between this genocide and the Uyghur crisis, MPs and Senators believe this connection is serious because the Holocaust directly inspired the idea of the genocide concept. The way they have portrayed it as not just as an example of the crime of genocide, but rather as the *ultimate* example of genocide, framing it as the prototypical crime that sets the criteria. With the Uyghur crisis meeting these standards, politicians are able to move into a further analysis of the legal definition of genocide and determine whether China is guilty of these offences. While there is no arguing the similarities between the Uyghur crisis and the Holocaust, what about processes of group destruction that are just as damaging but do not meet the criteria of an established genocide prototype?

This is where conceptual constraint hurts the analysis of destructive settler-colonial policies as processes of genocide, even when the Holocaust did not come up during debates on the IRSS. Using one particular genocide as the standard for the definition ensures that some processes of destruction remain out of the conversation. Because the IRSS did not contain certain elements that existed in the Holocaust, such as concentration camps, politicians did not feel the need to bring it up during debates on the IRSS. What politicians do not realize is that different genocides will have distinctive processes that are specific to the situation. Both the IRSS and the Holocaust have differences between them, but they both meet the idea of genocide that Lemkin originally envisioned. While this section does not provide proof of how politicians compare the IRSS and the Holocaust, I explain in the Discussion chapter how this is played out in non-political spheres and how it inspires the idea that the IRSS is merely a “social justice issue” instead of genocide.

With the Uyghur crisis connected to the Holocaust, and coupled with the evidence of China being a typical human rights abuser, this opens up connections that are made to a crime our politicians see as rising from this event: genocide. We shall further see how the actions of the “human rights champion” Canada falls into this category.

Organizing Theme 3: “Genocide” in the Chinese and Canadian Context

During the debates leading up to the vote on whether to recognize the Uyghur crisis as genocide, politicians on all sides crafted arguments linking the actions of the CCP to the elements found in the UNGC definition. For Conservatives who were leading the motion, their statements often centered on the physical and biological criteria of the definition. After citing the UNGC and its five criteria, MP Garnett Genuis stated what elements he believed the Chinese government are guilty of: “...only one of the criteria needs to be established to necessitate a

determination of genocide. The Government of China's treatment of Uyghurs likely involves all five [criteria] of the above, but in particular, the evidence that the government's actions respond to criteria c and d, 'Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part' and 'Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group,' is now completely irrefutable" (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021).

Particularly with Article 2d, Genuis cites the Uyghur crisis as, "a genocide that involves putting people in concentration camps, that involves forced sterilizations, forced abortion, forced insertion of IUDs" (HoC Hansard: June 2, 2021).

Other Conservatives supported this contention with specific examples. Nelly Shin noted how birth suppression and rape were used to destroy Uyghur people in detention centres: "Former detainees have testified to having experienced or witnessed a system of organized mass rape, sexual abuse and torture. Women were also forcibly sterilized or fitted with IUDs... One woman who fled Xinjiang says, of a victim who is now an addict, she was 'like someone who simply existed, otherwise she was dead, completely finished by the rapes... Their goal is to destroy everyone,' she said," (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Eric Duncan echoes Articles 2a-2e in the opening of his statement declaring the crisis a genocide: "...there is a genocide happening in the world... There are one million people in detention camps in China. Women are being sterilized. There is forced abortion and slave labour. People are being ripped away from their families, tortured and murdered simply because of their religion" (ibid.).

Members of other political parties were quick to connect China's actions with sections of Article II of the UNGC and discuss multiple methods of group destruction. Liberal MP Arif Virani made the connection to 2d with birth suppressions: "What is more, Uyghur Muslims are being subjected to horrific abuses, including forced sterilization and abortions. The UN Genocide

Convention is clear: imposing measures to prevent births within a group is committing an act of genocide” (HoC Hansard: Oct. 22, 2020). Bloc Québécois MP Christine Normandin found examples for 2c that involve living conditions bringing about the destruction of Uyghurs: “The third criterion is that of deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part. We know that many Uyghurs have been taken from their homes by force, sent to concentration camps and then moved to factories, mainly located in Xinjiang, in order to help reduce the Muslim population in that part of China. We know that the working conditions in those factories are inhumane and unbearable” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021).

While they did not specifically cite the UNGC, the following two MP’s listed multiple processes of genocide that the CCP is committing against Uyghurs. NDP MP Jack Harris stated: “We need to recognize that the mass detention, forced labour, surveillance and population control measures, which have been described by other speakers today, being directed against the Uyghurs and Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang fits the definition of genocide” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Liberal MP John McKay followed suit: “... credible allegations of extensive abuses of human rights of Uyghurs and Turkic Muslims, including but not limited to torture, enslavement, restrictions of freedom of movement, denial of freedom of religion and belief, denial of the right to a fair trial and so on... Unfortunately, these are all the requisite elements of a genocide taking place against the Uyghurs and Turkic Muslims” (ibid.).

Beyond these processes, MPs acknowledged that Uyghur children being forcibly separated from their parents and placed in state run orphanages and schools meet the criteria of Article 2e) of the UNGC, which is the forcible removal of children from one group to another group. Christine Normandin, after listing examples of how the Uyghur crisis meets the criteria

for articles 2a)-2d), stated, “The final criterion for a finding of genocide is forcibly transferring children of one group to another group. Once again, witnesses have testified that children have been separated from their families. Children have been taken from their families and placed in state-run orphanages, schools or camps to re-educate them, indoctrinate them and turn them into perfect little Chinese citizens, erasing their culture” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe, also of the Bloc Québécois, linked the operation of genocide to Uyghurs, “telling stories of children being taken away from the families and placed in state-run orphanages or schools. It is even harder when we know that they will be robbed of their language and culture so they can be indoctrinated and ultimately assimilated” (ibid.).

While not specifically referencing Article 2e, Conservatives also talked about forced separation of families and how destroying cultural elements leads to genocide. Conservative MP Marty Morantz discussed the International Criminal Courts three elements of genocide and concluded that the PRC’s attempted destruction of Uyghur culture amounted to genocide: “The Chinese Government has implemented measures against Uyghurs, such as forcibly transferring children away from their families, restricting the use of their national language, banning cultural activities, destroying schools and religious institutions and many other things we have heard here today. Since 2016, thousands of mosques, graveyards and other religious sites have been desecrated and destroyed. The Uyghur language has been banned in Xinjiang schools” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021).

Morantz followed this up with recognizing that these cultural aspects of destruction amount to genocide, and meets the third element of genocide, which is the intent to destroy a group in whole or in part: “With respect to the third element of genocide, the intent in this case by the Chinese Communist regime could not be more clear: It wants to destroy the culture, faith

and existence of the [Uyghur] culture” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). This is significant as Morantz declares that the Chinese government plans to destroy Uyghurs as a group through intentionally destroying important cultural sites and the banning of language and religious practice. Aspects of group destruction such as these are not included in the current UNGC but make up elements that Lemkin wanted to include in his Article III (see page 10 above). This signals a possible desire to move to see genocide beyond the UNGC definition.

Michael Chong joined Morantz in linking cultural aspects of destruction with genocide: “China is in the process of eliminating an entire religion and culture. Satellite images show that about twenty Islamic religious sites, including mosques, have been destroyed. Uyghur children are not allowed to learn their language or culture. The state is perpetuating a genocide and committing crimes against humanity through its systemic population controls, sexual violence and mass detention centres” (HoC Hansard: Feb. 18, 2021). Brad Vis is another Conservative who linked cultural destruction to the UNGC definition. Among the instances that “fulfill the United Nations definition of genocide under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” Vis added: “From first-hand witness testimony, it detailed mass instances of forced detention, where prisoners were refused the right to practice their religion and speak their own language” (ibid.) He listed this among other instances of forced labour, sexual violence and birth suppressions. Because physical and biological elements surrounded cultural processes of destruction in both of their statements, an argument can be made that Vis and Chong focus more on the latter two as processes of genocide. However, the fact that they include cultural elements is a promising sign that they see genocide as encompassing more than physical and biological destruction.

The statements from Conservative politicians such as Morantz, Chong and Vis, along with Bloc members Normandin and Brunelle-Duceppe, are significant. Not only do they recognize that transferring children from their families and forcing them to forget their language and religion is genocide, but also that the CCP's general policy of cultural destruction against the Uyghurs is genocidal. Canadian government officials in this instance position themselves as post-liberals who are no longer beholden to a narrow definition of genocide. Particularly when looking at the statements from several Conservative members, they recognize "actual" genocide as including physical, biological *and* cultural processes of destruction. The cultural aspects they argue about even go beyond what is included in the UNGC, and in this way they expand the legal concept of genocide. These views that were not presented by all members of the Conservative party, and only Morantz and Chong specified cultural processes as constituting genocide, with most of the remaining members focusing on physical and biological processes.

When Leah Gazan made her first motion on June 10, 2021 to recognize that the IRSS meets the UNGC definition of genocide, some voted against her motion and did not give it unanimous consent. Some politicians came forward in the days leading up to the motion and declared that the IRSS represented a genocide. However, many members of the Conservative, Bloc Québécois, Liberals and New Democratic Parties either denied that the IRSS amounted to genocide, declared it cultural genocide or a "dark chapter" in Canadian history, or merely dodged questions on this issue. As an example of the latter, Liberal MP Pam Damoff, who was Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services at the time, was asked three times whether she viewed the IRSS as a crime of genocide. She found ways to dodge the concept in each case, particularly when Green MP Elizabeth May, who as noted above had earlier declared Canada to have been founded on genocide, asked, "Can we admit that we are the beneficiaries of

a genocide?” (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). Damoff responded with: “... when we think about how our country was founded, we see it was founded on racism, and it was founded on colonialism. As a result, Indigenous peoples not only had to deal with this 150 years ago but also continue to deal with it today” (ibid.). Here, she admits to Canada being founded through violence and power but stops short of declaring it genocide. Other Liberal members joined Damoff in dodging such questions, as MPs Dan Vandal and Perter Schiefke did the same when Gazan and NDP MP Jenny Kwan questioned if they believed the IRSS amounted to genocide.

Other members went a little further than Damoff in describing the destructive legacy of the IRSS while still downplaying “actual” genocide. Bloc Québécois member Gabriel Ste-Marie made these comments on the youth that were sent to these institutions: “They were forced to attend these institutions and to forget their language, their culture and their identity. They were made to feel ashamed of what they were. In anthropology, this is referred to as ethnocide, or cultural genocide, which means to eradicate a people. The ultimate aim of the residential schools was to kill the Indian in the child” (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021). Bloc Québécois Marilène Gill also used the term cultural genocide to describe the plight of Indigenous peoples: “It pains me to think of all of those men, women and children, dead or alive, who had to suffer to allow for Canada’s plans to expand its dominion from coast to coast, engaging in a cultural genocide to kill the Indian in the child, which resulted in killing the child in the Indian” (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021).

This is surprising, as someone else in their party, Christine Normandin, stated that taking Uyghur children from their families and putting them in state run institutions in order to erase their culture is an example of Article 2e) of the UNGC. Why is this not the case for Indigenous youth? For members of the Bloc Québécois, it is a cultural genocide and not genocide. Yves-

François Blanchet, leader of the Bloc Québécois was hesitant to use the label genocide because Indigenous peoples may not want to use it to describe the IRSS: “As for the notion of genocide, I am wary of getting into a semantic debate over words. I am not afraid of the word ‘genocide’ and have no problem saying ‘cultural genocide’ if there is a desire for acculturation. However, I will leave it to First Nations to choose the term we should use” (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021).

Even amongst the NDP, not all are united in believing that “actual” genocide includes cultural destruction. Members such as Alexandre Boulerice said about the IRSS: “It was cultural genocide... The goal was to kill the Indian in the child, to separate children from their roots, their culture, their language and their spirituality. The authorities tried to turn these children into carbon copies of the white settlers and Christians who ran the institutions” (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021). It is fair to note that Boulerice was the only NDP member I found that did not recognize the IRSS as a process of genocide. All other members of the party that I studied were found to take the opposite approach.

One might expect that Conservatives, who spearheaded the motion to recognize genocide in China, would also recognize it here. After calling out the methods of cultural destruction and linking settler-colonialism to genocide, this would be plausible. Eric Melillo noted family separation and the breaking of community ties: “Survivors of residential schools remember the horrors of being taken from their parents and being removed from their communities and their cultures” (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). Jamie Schmale hinted at cultural destruction in his statement: “A new page is being written on the dark and shameful narrative that is the Canadian residential school legacy, a legacy that has had a profoundly lasting and damaging impact on Indigenous families, culture, heritage and language” (ibid.). Conservative MP Mark Strahl came to a similar conclusion following the discovery of potential unmarked graves, giving a statement

eerily familiar to that of Schmale's: "The legacy of residential schools is a national shame that has had a profound, lasting and damaging impact on indigenous people, culture, heritage and language" (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021). While these statements address the harms the IRSS inflicted on Indigenous cultures and community connections, they do not go into detail about how Indigenous groups were damaged.

Politicians also discussed physical and biological methods of destruction. Conservative Senator Donald Plett spoke of the effects of children that were forcibly taken to these institutions: "thousands of Indigenous children's lives were lost through malnutrition, disease and abuse in Canada's residential schools" (Senate Hansard: June 1, 2021). This was the furthest any Conservative went in describing the physical and biological violence that took place within these institutions, as others merely referred to these as "abuses" or "mistreatments." While not wrong, this does contrast with the detail members of this party used to describe the physical and biological assaults that are occurring in Uyghur re-education camps.

When giving residential schools an official label, Conservatives labelled the system as a "dark part" or "dark chapter" in Canadian history. When addressing the potential unmarked graves at the former Kamloops institutions, MP and at the time Conservative leader Erin O'Toole stated, "the residential school system is a dark and painful part of the Canadian story. Tragically, new chapters are still being added to this sad history" (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). After his comments on the damaging legacy of the IRSS, Jamie Schmale declared, "I do not think anyone believes this was anything but a very dark time in Canadian history and not something any of us could be proud of" (ibid.). When discussing the path forward to reconciliation in terms of the IRSS, Eric Duncan expressed that, "We need to address this specific, dark part of our history" (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021). The labelling of the IRSS as

“dark” is correct; however this does not specify the intentions of what the Canadian government and churches were trying to accomplish with these institutions. Instead, it singles this process out as the worst, and possibly only, harmful colonial policy enacted on Indigenous peoples, leaving out phenomena such as the 60’s Scoop or MMIWG.

Only two Conservatives went further than the dark chapter label and labelled the IRSS a “cultural genocide.” Eric Melillo stated that, “I certainly agree with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s finding that this most certainly did constitute a cultural genocide. I know there has been much discussion about this today in the chamber, and I certainly agree with the member on that” (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021). On June 11, one day after Parliament denied Leah Gazan’s motion to recognize the IRSS as genocide, she asked MP Jamie Schmale to provide his views on the genocide question: “Will he honour this truth about our Canadian history, that what happened in residential schools was violent and in fact a genocide...?” (HoC Hansard: June 11, 2021). Schmale responded in a way that both answered the question and denied the full truth that Gazan sought: “In terms of her question, I do support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action. It is a cultural genocide, there is no doubt about that. We continue to learn and try to fix the mistakes of the past, but also learn so things like this never, ever happen again” (ibid.). What is important to note with Schmale’s answer is that Gazan’s question centered around her motion of recognizing the IRSS as an act of genocide, and Schmale instead referred to the findings of the TRC, recognizing it as “cultural genocide.”

Section Discussion

When politicians recognized cultural processes of destruction of Uyghurs as genocide, it appeared they were moving in the right direction of recognizing what genocide entails. However, they ignored these same processes when present in the IRSS. They recognized these methods as

harmful and noted that nothing good resulted from these institutions, but they used language that downplayed their legacy. With this, they deploy the problem denial strategy. They acknowledge that these institutions were “dark” but do not acknowledge that they were genocide.

Not labelling the IRSS genocide helps maintain a reality politicians favour, as Canada is able to preserve its status as a liberal-democratic human rights defender. It protects the status quo by presenting past anti-Indigenous policies as the result of a lack in judgement as opposed to intentional processes to destroy Indigenous groups in whole or in part. If Canada has committed genocide, then it has no right to call out other nations such as China for doing so.

Politicians presented statements that fall in line with both the post-liberal and liberal groups in regards to conceptual blockages. With China, by recognizing that processes of settler-colonialism and cultural destruction are in line with the idea of genocide, they align themselves with post-liberal views. They recognize that the particular evil of genocide is not limited to mass killings and that severing important cultural connections can equally destroy the group. Limiting their language, destroying their cultural sites and forcing children into state-run boarding schools are recognized as threats to the survival of the Uyghur group. However, when these processes occur in Canada, these same politicians switch sides to the liberal side of the argument and ignore the particular evil of genocide. Assaults on Indigenous cultures and languages, along with forcing children to attend *these* state-run schools, are not acknowledged as the attempted destruction of groups.

Results: Where Political Parties Stand

All political parties were involved in discourses used to create the two Global Themes of this thesis: China as a “Villain” state and Canada as a “Hero” state. They employed this strategy

through a combination of conceptual constraints and blame attributing/avoidance strategies. It is important to note that not every Member of Parliament or Senator spoke on these matters so I cannot definitively state how many politicians believe genocide is occurring in China but not in Canada. It is also the case that not every party member shares similar opinions on these issues. While they do often vote as a block, a variety of viewpoints on genocide persist within parties. The viewpoints on genocide in China and Canada for one political party is not the most important aspect of this thesis. What is important is how these strategies of deflection and denial impact truth and reconciliation in in Canada, and how these patterns are further circulated within the general public.

As the Conservative party led the motion on China, they were found most often to recognize the Uyghur crisis as genocide. The Bloc Québécois followed with similar sentiments. Both used tactics of negative presentation to portray China as a stereotypical “Villain” nation because of the authoritarian nature of the CCP and their past and current human rights abuses, including those committed against Uyghurs. Both also used examples of the Holocaust to frame their contributions. This not only drew comparisons between the two, but also justified their position because the Holocaust is often assumed a prototype for the concept of genocide. Because they found numerous examples of connections between the Uyghur crisis and the Holocaust, they were able to effectively make their argument that the CCP was committing genocide against the Indigenous groups of Xinjiang.

Only a few NDP and Liberal members spoke on this side of the issue. Those that did make statements were less likely to use tactics of conceptual constraint; however they did draw on examples from the UNGC definition to declare the Uyghur crisis a genocide. The reason that

few Liberals spoke is that most refused to declare that this issue amounts to genocide and resulted in most members abstaining from the eventual vote.

During discussions around whether the IRSS represented a process of genocide, nearly all political parties used problem denial strategies, with members of the Conservatives, Liberals and Bloc Québécois being the most likely to deploy such language. All politicians involved kept in line with the spirit of the problem denial discourse strategy. They admitted that residential schools caused immense harm to Indigenous children and communities while downplaying the system's overall legacy by minimizing or omitting other facts from the dialogue. These facts include anything that might incriminate the IRSS as a process of genocide. However, each political party took a different approach in their problem denial efforts.

The Liberals openly engaged with Canada's colonial identity and how settler policies have harmed, and continue to harm, Indigenous peoples and included the IRSS among those policies. However, when asked if they believe the system was intended to destroy Indigenous peoples in whole or in part, they were split. Some referred to these institutions as an example of cultural genocide while others dodged the issue entirely. This does not mean that no Liberals engaged with the genocide label, as a handful did recognize the IRSS as such. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith stated, "...if the intent to destroy an ethnic or racial group through forcibly transferring children of the group to another group constitutes genocide, then yes, I think in my view, this was genocide" (HoC Hansard: June 1, 2021).

The Bloc Québécois were similar to the Liberals in engaging with Canada's colonial history, but they did take their discourse a small step further as they were more likely to use the term cultural genocide to describe the legacy of the IRSS. This is the term that is more widely adopted in the Canadian political and legal systems and it is encouraging to see this party draw

attention to some of the genocidal aspects of this system. However, they too avoided calling this “actual” genocide. Their level of problem denial does not come from ignoring the basic facts about the IRSS, as they do engage with the harms Indigenous youth suffered and the true intention behind the system. The problem is they ignore how Indigenous peoples have described the system. This is summed up with Blanchet’s closing remarks when he said politicians must wait and see how Indigenous peoples will label the IRSS, forgetting that many Indigenous leaders and communities have been calling the residential schools a process of genocide.

The Conservatives were a surprise due to how they addressed genocide with the Uyghur crisis. Their engagement with problem denial consisted of taking the opposite approach when discussing the IRSS and the possibility of genocide. Prominent politicians from the Uyghur debates were silent on the issue. Michael Chong, a leading figure in the Uyghur motion, did not rise to speak. Garnett Genuis, another leading figure on the Uyghur issue, made no attempts to connect the IRSS to genocide as he had done so passionately with the case in China. Marty Morantz did not stand up to make a connection between the destruction of Indigenous cultures and languages and genocidal intent. No one on this side stood up and declared that Indigenous children being taken from their homes and placed in government and church run institutions met the criteria for Article 2e) of the UNGC. Hardly anyone on this side commented on the non-cultural effects the IRSS institutions had on Survivors either. They talked about children being “abused” or “mistreated” but never discussed issues such as the physical or sexual abuse, forced labour or medical and nutritional experiments in detail. Instead, many simply referred to this as a dark part of our history, which is abnormal to the Canadian identity. Only two Conservatives even referred to the system as cultural genocide.

While I was able to gather a rich amount of data for this thesis and it provided helpful understanding of how Canadian politicians recognize genocide in China but not in Canada, there was one limitation to my findings. As I stated in my Methodology chapter, my data provided no insight into politicians' justifications for their actions. The following Discussion chapter is my attempt to explain why Canadian politicians denied the genocide label for the IRSS for so long.

Chapter V: Discussion

On the surface, the genocide recognition and denial views of Canadian politicians have changed due to Leah Gazan's motion passing in October 2022, with Parliament recognizing the IRSS as genocide. However, it is still worth looking at government justifications for the use of discourses in genocide recognition and denial in the two cases presented in this thesis. This helps us understand why genocide denial persisted in the Canadian government for as long as it did, and continues to persist in some circles among the general public.

It is difficult to determine the exact justifications behind the statements the politicians presented. The data came from recorded transcripts and I did not conduct interviews to ask MPs or Senators questions and follow up questions. However, there is a connection between the blame discourses of politicians and the rhetoric used in the public sphere, including academia and the media. In both of the latter, one can find instances of academics and journalists utilizing similar strategies as those discussed above. Critics have called out this public discourse and argue it distorts what genocide actually represents.

Scholars have recognized that in recent years there has been a backlash to reckoning with Canadian education and history, particularly when it comes to settler-colonialism and relations with Indigenous peoples (Wahpasiw, Perry & Carleton, 2021). This not only includes members of the general public, but prominent figures in media, academia and politics. For these individuals, reckoning with the past in a way that calls into question the moral characteristics that have defined our nation are examples of "tearing down Canada." When there were calls to cancel Canada Day celebrations after potential unmarked graves were located at the former Kamloops school, then-Conservative leader Erin O'Toole defended Canada's moral character despite the nation's faults: "We are not a perfect country. No country is. There is no place on this planet

whose history can withstand close scrutiny. But there is a difference between acknowledging where we've fallen short and always tearing the country down" (Tasker, 2021). To fight against this, tactics such as defending past leaders as being flawed but still exceptional individuals, or using language that does not compare our nation to typical genocidares, such as Nazi Germany or Communist China, is employed. It is these ideas I will focus on in this chapter because there are similarities between these statements and statements politicians made in the Hansard transcripts. These connections give us clues as to why lawmakers are hesitant to use the genocide label to describe atrocities in Canada but will use it with China.

Moral Mistakes, Not Genocide

David Webster believes one method of denying Canada's genocidal history is to argue for the "essential goodness of Canada" (Webster, 2019). These individuals admit that Canada is not a perfect country and that it has made mistakes in the past. However, those mistakes cannot overshadow all of the good our government and country has provided its citizens and the world. It is argued that Canadians must take a balanced approach when looking at their nation's history, but at the same time give more weight to the good parts of our history. Brian Crowley states, "Looking solely at our past errors – and we have made our share – is not the right standard by which to measure Canada and its great achievements" (Crowley, 2020). In reality, we are no different than other countries with an imperfect history, and in some cases we are better. According to Ted Morton, "Canada's history is not perfect. But neither is any other country's. Look around the world and you will see much, much worse examples of racism, religious persecution, sexism and homophobia" (Morton, 2022).

This is found in those that defended the moral character of John A. Macdonald, whom they consider "the most admired figure in the history of Canadians" (Black, 2021). Even when

considering his role in the creation of the IRSS, this is presented as a mere error in judgement. As signatories of a letter from the Macdonald-Laurier institute that defended MacDonald's character argued, he "launched policies that failed, as happens to all national leaders. This is certainly the case with the establishment of a national policy on Indian Residential Schools" (MLI, 2021). The letter further notes that he "made many other mistakes respecting Indigenous peoples and policies Canadians today strongly disapprove" (ibid.).

When city officials removed Macdonald's statue from public locations in Victoria, B.C., Brian Crowley stated that its removal horrified many Canadians and that, "the decision to remove Sir John's statue shows that this gesture fails the tests of reconciliation because non-Indigenous Canadians do not accept the reducing of their illustrious founder to a one-dimensional caricature, based on a policy that was widely accepted and supported at the time" (Crowley, 2018). He believes that we must also look at Macdonald's positive contributions, such as advocating for women's rights or how he gave Indigenous people the right to vote (ibid.). This balanced approach is also applied to the individuals that worked at the schools. Brian Giesbrecht describes the IRSS as a misguided policy to properly educate Indigenous children but notes it had "positive" outcomes: "Canada's residential schools experiment was a clumsy attempt at education. Many people were hurt... But many others received educations that helped them live rich lives" (Giesbrecht, 2022).

There are similarities between these statements and those I found within the Canadian government. The issue of problem denial exists outside the realm of politicians, as these other public figures admit that Canada has not always treated Indigenous peoples right, but these aspects cannot overshadow the good that the nation has done, particularly for Indigenous peoples. There are also elements of the positive self-presentation and rescue narrative not found

in the Hansard transcripts, as some attempt to defend the actions of residential schools as good intentions and that Indigenous children received a beneficial education. Politicians did not go as far as some of these non-political figures and say that the IRSS or other policies had any positive elements to it. However, the brushing off of Canada's atrocities as mistakes is a tactic that MPs and Senators have taken from the public. These public individuals also make the same error as politicians when describing the impacts of negative policies. Instead of recognizing anti-Indigenous policies as similar to measures used by authoritarian governments, they are depicted as *mistakes*. This is connected to the views below on how residential schools amounted to genocide.

Historians Christopher Dummitt and J.R. Miller are good examples. Miller agrees that the IRSS and other policies caused immense harm to Indigenous nations; however, none meet the threshold for genocide because the government never displayed an intent to destroy: "Both intent and action must be present for destructive state actions to be considered genocide. The problem in the Canadian case is that, while government policies were often terribly damaging to Indigenous people, those actions were never undertaken with the intent to destroy an Indigenous group" (Smith & Miller, 2019).

Instead of destroying Indigenous nations, the government aimed to control and transform them into settler-Canadians: "The goal of such damaging policies as residential schools, limiting Prairie First Nations' food supply of the 1880s, reshaping their economies and systems of governance, and suppressing their languages and spiritual practices was to control their actions, not eradicate them... If Canada had wanted to destroy First Nations, it would not have devoted so much effort in trying to turn them into Euro-Canadians" (Miller, 2021). Here, Miller is drawing on the liberal approach to genocide studies. A part of the "development" of the

Canadian state, he argues, was controlling Indigenous nations through the above policies, producing unintentional consequences. He does not recognize that these processes were used to *eradicate* Indigenous peoples. In reality, the processes listed above were highly destructive to connections between Indigenous peoples, thus contributing to their destruction in whole or in part.

This is because the IRSS does not meet the standard of what a genocide is supposed to look like, and any attempt to make this fit is more of a strategy of “moral politics” as opposed to proper academic analysis (Dummitt, 2021). Dummitt believes that the crime of genocide is only applied to the more violent, physical processes of group destruction: “Until recently, the word genocide mostly brought to mind acts of violent brutality – the gassing of millions of European Jews in the Holocaust, the massacres of hundreds of thousands of Armenians by the Turks, or the ferocious machete-murders of the Tutsi minority in Rwanda. By these standards, it is hard to imagine how Canada’s residential schools – as terrible as they were – can be considered in the same category” (Dummitt, 2022b). He is using conceptual constraint to limit what the crime of genocide entails. While he does not specifically focus on the Holocaust as *the* standard of genocide, he does highlight the type of process that is the prototype for the crime, which is physical mass killings.

However, Dummitt does give the Holocaust the prototype label when he criticizes comparisons between it and residential schools: “It’s bogus, though, because it draws an entirely false equivalence between the two events. We all know that genocide and the Holocaust are bad, and we all know that residential schools were bad. So, the crude logic here asserts, why not imply that they are essentially the same thing?” (Dummitt, 2022a). He makes the assertion that whenever someone declares that an event amounts to genocide, they are automatically making

comparisons to the Holocaust. It becomes the standard of genocide, and because in Dummitt's mind the IRSS does not meet its criteria, it cannot be considered genocide. If this comparison occurs, critics believe this is not out of a desire to fully reckon with the past or address this part of our history in a way to better engage with reconciliation.

The issue of problem denial appears here again, using similar language as politicians to describe the harms committed against Indigenous children. Both claim the institutions of the IRSS were damaging to Indigenous cultures and community connections, but these did not intend to eradicate them so this cannot be an example of genocide. Similar to how Garnett Genuis described the process of settler-colonialism, governments aimed to control Indigenous peoples, not destroy them.

Instead, settler-colonialism and Confederation are elements of Canadian identity that are worth celebrating. Crowley states, "Confederation itself was no exercise in crude majoritarian triumphalism, but an exquisitely wrought compromise between contending cultures, languages and religions that made us one of the longest-enduring political orders on the planet" (Crowley, 2017). I look at this quotation because politicians took the opposite approach with settler-colonialism in China. For them, this is an "exercise in crude majoritarian triumphalism" because what the CCP is doing to Uyghurs is viewed the same as how Nazi Germany occupied its European territories. When it happens in Canada, it represents mistakes, or as Dan Albas put it, not respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples.

This is another instance where the discourse-historical approach is useful, as politicians are creating a false sense of reality of how settler-colonialism shapes Canadian identity. Our history is not perfect but it resulted in a grand liberal-democratic nation. Any negative affects against Indigenous peoples, including the IRSS, are thus assumed unintentional and part of a

series of mistakes where Indigenous rights were not always respected. This is not the case for China. The CCP represents an authoritarian regime so their version of settler-colonialism cannot be good. In fact, politicians connect it to the crime of genocide.

Unlike China's treatment of Uyghurs, all of our actions against Indigenous peoples are examples of moral mistakes. Some scholars have been critical of describing our settler-colonial policies as mistakes as it brushes aside the true nature of colonial governments. As Heidi Matthews states, "All political communities hold within them dark histories of violent oppression against marginalized groups. These stories are not about moral mistakes. Instead, they remind us – uncomfortably – that the authority to govern is often built, literally, on the demonization and destruction of group-based identity" (Matthews, 2019). It appears our government no longer sees these processes as mistakes due to Parliament accepting the motion to recognize the IRSS as genocide. However, most have been relatively silent about the issue since the motion passed. My sense is that this silence has to do with Canada's international reputation, something that has also been touched upon by the media.

Reputation over Truth

The Irwin Cotler quotation that Garnett Genuis used regarding the legacy of recognizing MMIWG as an ongoing genocide had one further element. Cotler, who is head of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights and a former attorney-general of Canada, worried about the effect on Canada's image if this was recognized as genocide: "That [genocide] should be used very sparingly... I would hope it would not have an effect on Canada's reputation" (Dyer, 2019). The greatest issue prominent Canadians have with the recognition of any genocide on our home soil, whether it is the IRSS or MMIWG, is that it will weaken our good reputation with the rest of the world. Christopher Dummitt even believes this will have an effect on how Canadians

view themselves: “The campaign to label Canada a genocide state isn’t an isolated phenomenon, but is playing out as part of a larger effort to destroy any publicly displayed symbol of national pride” (Dummitt, 2021). This group believes that is the wrong message for Canadians, as they have tired of institutions saying that this is an awful country: “Canadians are tired, very tired, of being told how unjust and terrible Canada is... Canada’s left-wing media bombard us daily with their narratives of what a racist, sexist, homophobic, colonialist mess we are...” (Morton, 2022).

This has to do with how other people view Canada and make the decision to immigrate here. Ted Morton states that “In today’s world, by almost any standard, Canada ranks as high or higher than any other country as the best place to live, work and raise a family. That’s why immigrants from around the world have been pouring into Canada for the past four decades” (Morton, 2022). This logic states that people will not immigrate to another country if it has a bad reputation. This was the tone politicians took during the debates. Politicians had to remind the House of Commons about Canada’s international accomplishments and that we are not a bad country.

This was not the case for China and the CCP, who have a less favourable international reputation and politicians built on that image. These views are not new, as prominent figures have stated that the CCP have been at the forefront of aggressive practices for some time. Erin O’Toole stated in 2020 that Canada must no longer tolerate activities that have included human rights abuses, intellectual property theft and manipulative trade practices (Tasker, 2020). At no point during my data analysis did I find statements on this side of the argument that called for a balanced approach to China’s history.

Those who argue against recognizing anti-Indigenous policies as genocide believe Canada’s reputation will be ruined if we recognize violence against Indigenous peoples as

genocide. David Webster uses an example from a 2019 *Toronto Star* article that criticized the government for recognizing MMIWG as genocide: “The *Star* was not terribly interested in what had been revealed about murdered and missing Indigenous women. Instead, it worried about what the word ‘genocide’ would do to Canada’s reputation overseas: ‘Only three countries (Germany, Rwanda and Cambodia) now acknowledge responsibility of genocide within their borders. Is that a club we want to join?’” (Webster, 2019). This raises further questions about the remarks Garnett Genuis made about MMIWG. Does he think genocide is only concerned with violent, physical destruction, or does he not want to see Canada’s reputation tarnished?

Critics take issue with this approach, not because they think Canada is a terrible place to live, but because this attitude does a disservice to truth and reconciliation. Katie Teeling notes that, “There’s this narrative floating around that Canada can’t be a bad place because of the international good we’ve done. So many immigrants and refugees have come to Canada in search of a better life. Would they do that if we were so bad?” (Teeling, 2022). They are encouraged to come here while overlooking the one “dark chapter” in Canada’s history that is the IRSS. While this narrative circulates, not everyone in Canada agrees with it, particularly Indigenous peoples. Lee Maracle says this side of Canadian kindness is unfamiliar to Indigenous peoples, and believes this view is one-sided: “Canada views itself as the nicest colonizer in the world. It does not ask the colonized if they agree with this, Canadians just keep repeating it to each other like bobbleheads that can’t stop bobbling” (Maracle, 2017:133-134). What these critics are arguing against is an essential element of the discourse-historical approach and ideological reality building. Both the federal government and everyday Canadians enforce the status quo, ensuring it remains entrenched in our society.

Webster pushes back against the position taken by the *Toronto Star* article and explains how genocide recognition is actually beneficial to a nation's reputation, and answers the question posed in the *Toronto Star*: "As a matter of fact, yes. Though no country is perfect, Rwanda and Cambodia have benefitted from reflection on their violent paths. Germany is a model of honest confrontation of its genocidal history... German acceptance of a genocidal past and of national collective responsibility has made a better, stronger and more compassionate country. None of this has hurt Germany, which has the best international reputation of all major countries in the world" (Webster, 2019). His language is similar to what political and non-political figures used with blame avoidance strategies, through stating that no country is perfect. However, Webster takes it a step further, declaring that national imperfections include atrocities such as genocide. Despite its past atrocities with the Holocaust, and the fact that they have failed to properly reconcile with the Herero and Nama people for Germany's role in the genocide in Namibia (see Boehme, 2020:243; BBC, 2021; Ahmed, 2023), Germany continues to have good standing with most of the world. They do not try and downplay its legacy or use any blame avoidance strategies to maintain a good image. Canada cannot be afraid to do the same.

Politicians did take a step in the right direction when they unanimously passed Leah Gazan's motion to recognize the IRSS as a process of genocide and showed they were willing to put truth before reputation. New conversations were made possible, including the genocidal impact settler-colonialism has had on Indigenous peoples, or how the government is possibly interested in expanding the concept of "actual" genocide to include processes of cultural destruction. This includes a recent settlement in the class action lawsuit known as the Gottfriedson case, where the Canadian government agreed to pay \$2.8 billion to compensate for the loss of language and culture that resulted from residential schools (CBC, 2023). Totalitarian

regimes are not the only forces that commit genocide and can occur in liberal-democratic societies such as Canada. This also has the potential to open up more political dialogue about the similarities between Chinese and Canadian settler-colonialism and how it has been used to carry out genocide in each nation.

Unfortunately, since the motion passed, there has been little dialogue coming from most politicians. Gazan and other members of the NDP continue to be vocal about the declaration, but Liberals, Conservatives and Bloc Québécois have been silent. Most have not continued to label the IRSS as a process of genocide. Instead, they continue to label it a dark part of our history. This feels like a step backwards in terms of having conversations at the political level and advancing truth and reconciliation. Many politicians talk a great deal about reconciliation, but skip over truth, which Katie Teeling believes Canadians are becoming quite good at (Teeling, 2022).

This chapter examines why Canadian politicians were unwilling to engage in genocide dialogue when it came to the IRSS, despite showing a clear will to call out and punish genocidaires several months previously with the Uyghur crisis in China. This is because there are those in the government that want to maintain Canada's positive image and will use any language necessary to avoid the genocide label being applied to anti-Indigenous policies. With the evidence presented, it is clear this problem is found outside the Canadian Parliament, as politicians and prominent individuals in the public inspire each other with problem denial strategies that portray actions in China as genocide while similar actions in Canada are applied a downgraded label. This is serious because if this "reality" continues to be widely embedded within discourses found in the Canadian mainstream, it will make it more difficult to counter such narratives.

Conclusion

In this last push for denial, Canadian politicians used classic blame discourses to avoid the genocide label being attached to the Indian Residential School System. The discoveries of more potential unmarked graves at former residential school sites, along with the declaration from Pope Francis that the IRSS amounted to genocide against Indigenous peoples, appears to have put an end to these strategies, at least at the federal level. The false reality that has been embedded in Canadian society for decades has been shattered, and MPs and Senators are no longer able to rely on strategies of problem denial to defend it. Perhaps they heeded the words of NDP MP Alistair MacGregor, who was critical of politicians recognizing atrocities everywhere but in their own backyard: “Today’s debate has made me think of all of the times Canada has stood on the world stage over the last number of decades and lectured other countries on their human rights record while remaining wilfully ignorant of the rampant abuses in our own backyard. If this is not the most damning example of hypocrisy, I do not know what is” (HoC Hansard: June 3, 2021). He did not mention Parliament’s recognition of the Uyghur crisis, but it feels implied.

The disintegration of the Canadian status quo on genocide opens up possibilities of politicians finally fully engaging with our history and using it to create a better Canada. They have shown this through recognizing methods such as cultural processes of group destruction in the Uyghur crisis. However, their continued silence on the motion means that they are willing to continue persevering some form of the status quo discussed in this thesis. As Teeling mentions, they continue to actively engage in reconciliation, but hardly mention the truth. If this continues it will have serious implications on educating Canadians about the legacy of the IRSS. We are already seeing denialists providing conflicting views on children buried at former residential

school sites (see Glavin, 2022). This opens up the possibility for other false narratives that distort basic facts about residential schools. Politicians can choose to speak out against these narratives and counter them with more education on the truth of the IRSS. Failure to do so allows these discourses to remain in the mainstream.

Silence from political leaders is one reason there must be future research on this topic. Further studies can incorporate other blame games I did not use in my analysis. Indeed, the aforementioned silence is connected with another presentational strategy. Christopher Hood states that keeping a low profile, or “lying doggo,” is a common tactic where officials will simply avoid talking about the issue, sitting it out until it passes over and everyone’s attention is diverted elsewhere (Hood, 2011:59). This may quite well be what Canadian politicians are doing. Ignoring that Parliament has recognized the IRSS as genocide, the Canadian general public and the rest of the world will forget this declaration and move on to other issues. This maintains their positive international image. This is an issue worth further investigation. We need to see how they will engage with genocide recognition in the future, particularly as more potential graves are located at former residential school sites. Silence on the issue is also worth exploring, depending on how politicians continue to engage with settler-colonialism and genocide in China.

Politicians choosing to not engage with the legacy of the IRSS can also have implications in China. The CCP strategy of sending Uyghur children to state run boarding schools and orphanages where they are forced to lose their culture and take up Han-Chinese worldviews has extended to other populations. In February 2023, experts from the United Nations issued a report that stated over one million Tibetan children are currently completing “compulsory education” at “residential schools” located away from their families (United Nations, 2023). This is because the CCP has closed many rural schools in the Tibetan region. The children’s schooling is

conducted solely in Mandarin Chinese and with no reference to Tibetan history or their religion, and children have struggled to speak to their parents when they return home for one to two weeks each year (Campbell, 2023). In short, UN experts have stated, “We are very disturbed that in recent years the residential school system for Tibetan children appears to act as a mandatory large-scale programme intended to assimilate Tibetans into majority Han culture” (United Nations, 2023). While this system of residential schools has not yet been declared a genocide by the UN or others in the international community, it is only a matter time before someone recognizes these institutions as attempting to destroy Tibetan culture in whole or in part. Because Canadian politicians were willing to recognize these processes as genocide for the Uyghur crisis, I hope they address this issue as well.

The fact that Canada has been able to escape major international repercussions may give the CCP confidence to utilize processes such as residential schools to destroy undesirable groups. China recognizes what processes it can use to commit genocide and get away with, at least for a significant period of time.

If politicians were to engage with Canadian history, there is an opportunity to fulfill their vision of Canada being a liberal-democratic human rights champion. They can use the truth of the IRSS to tackle the residential school crisis that Tibetan children are facing. Politicians can point to how these institutions are not providing an education but are using processes to cut off cultural transmission between Tibetan parents and children, destroying Tibetan culture. Politicians can show how similar methods impacted generations of Indigenous peoples in Canada and how they continue to be affected despite revitalizations in languages and cultures. A warning can be sent out that if nothing is done to combat the destructive campaigns of the CCP, Uyghurs, other Muslim groups and Tibetans will suffer similar fates and face a long road for group

recovery and revitalization. Much like how Germany uses engagement with its history to foster compassion around the world, Canada can do the same. As Webster stated, this is a group of nations Canada should want to join. This could provide positive change and improve the situations that Uyghurs and Tibetans continue to face. Yes, not every nation will be as receptive and our reputation in some parts of the world may suffer. However, Canadians should always put truth before reputation because not doing so will result in further consequences for Indigenous peoples in Canada and around the world. This is more important than how countries view us because of our past.

Instead, politicians appear to be terrified about what this type of engagement will do to its international image. Silence from political leaders after the passing of Gazan's motion have emboldened other prominent figures to continue spreading false narratives that are hurting truth and reconciliation efforts. It has got to the point that Gazan has proposed that residential school denialism should be considered a form of hate speech (Stefanovich, 2023). She hopes that this will silence those who continue to downplay the genocidal effects of the IRSS. While experts are divided on whether this is the right approach, the fact that this proposal is being considered shows how much we need the voices of politicians in this issue. They need to continue to engage with the genocide label on the IRSS and take a role in spreading other discourses that counter these denialist narratives. Until they get over this fear and recognize what this continued silence is doing to truth and reconciliation efforts, the status quo that Canada is not, and has never been, a genocidaire will continue to find life in other societal discourses in this nation.

References

- Abed, Mohammed. 2006. "Clarifying The Concept of Genocide." *Metaphilosophy* 37(3): 308-330.
- Abtahi, Hirad, and Phillippa Webb. 2008. *The Genocide Convention: The Travaux Preparatoires*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishing.
- Ahmed, Kaamil. 2023. "Descendants of Namibia's genocide victims call on Germany to 'stop hiding.'" *The Guardian*. February 3. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/feb/03/namibia-genocide-victims-herero-nama-germany-reparations>
- Akhavan, Payam. 2012. *Reducing Genocide to Law: Definition, Meaning, and the Ultimate Crime*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Akhavan, Payam. 2016. "Cultural Genocide: Legal Label or Mourning Metaphor?" *McGill Law Journal* 62(1): 243-270.
- Akhtar, Zia. 2010. "Canadian Genocide and Official Culpability." *International Criminal Law Review* 10: 111-135.
- Anand, Dibyesh. 2019. "Colonization with Chinese characteristics: politics of (in)security in Xinjiang and Tibet." *Central Asian Survey* 38(1): 129-147.
- Attride-Sterling, Jennifer. 2001. "Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research." *Qualitative Research* 1(3): 385-405.
- BBC. 2021. "Germany officially recognises colonial-era Namibia genocide." *BBC News*. May 28. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-57279008>

- Black, Conrad. 2021. "Centuries of failed policy does not equal evil intent." *National Post*.
<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/conrad-black-centuries-of-failed-policy-does-not-equal-evil-intent>.
- Boehme, Franziska. 2020. "Reactive remembrance: The political struggle over apologies and reparations between Germany and Namibia for the Herero genocide." *Journal of Human Rights* 19(2): 238-255.
- Brean, Joseph. 2015. "Canada Opposed Concept of 'Cultural Genocide' in 1948 Accord." *The Star Phoenix*, June 18.
- Butcher, Thomas M. 2013. "A 'synchronized attack': On Raphael Lemkin's holistic conception of genocide." *Journal of Genocide Research* 15(3): 253-271.
- Campbell, Charlie. 2023. "China's Residential Schools Separate a Million Tibetan Children From Their Families, U.N. Says" *Time*. February 7. <https://time.com/6253481/china-tibet-million-children-separated-residential-schools/>.
- Canadian House of Commons. "41st Parliament, 2nd Session." *Hansard* Vol. 147, no. 222. June 2, 2015.
- Canadian House of Commons. "41st Parliament, 2nd Session." *Hansard* Vol. 147, no. 223. June 3, 2015.
- Canadian House of Commons. "43rd Parliament, 2nd Session." *Hansard* Vol. 150, no. 017. October 22, 2020.
- Canadian House of Commons. "43rd Parliament, 2nd Session." *Hansard* Vol. 150, no. 061. February 18, 2021.

Canadian House of Commons. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 150, no. 108. June 1, 2021.

Canadian House of Commons. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 150, no. 109. June 2, 2021.

Canadian House of Commons. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 150, no. 110. June 3, 2021.

Canadian House of Commons. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 150, no. 115. June 10, 2021.

Canadian House of Commons. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 150, no. 116. June 11, 2021.

Canadian Senate. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 152, no. 8. November 3, 2020.

Canadian Senate. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 152, no. 43. June 1, 2021.

Canadian Senate. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 152, no. 45. June 3, 2021.

Canadian Senate. “43rd Parliament, 2nd Session.” *Hansard* Vol. 152, no.55. June 28, 2021.

Card, Claudia. 2003. “Genocide and Social Death.” *Hypatia* 18(1): 63-79.

Carleton, Sean. 2021. “‘I don’t need any more education’: Senator Lynn Beyak, residential school denialism, and attacks on truth and reconciliation in Canada.” *Settler Colonial Studies*: 1-21.

CBC. 2023. “\$2.8-billion settlement reached in class action lawsuit over residential schools.”

CBC News. January 21. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/residential-school-band-class-action-settlement-1.6722014>.

Chalk, Frank and Kurt Jonassohn. 1990. *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analysis and Case Studies*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Chase, Steven and Robert Fife. 2020. “Parliamentary committee calls China’s mistreatment of Uyghurs ‘genocide,’ urges Ottawa to sanction Beijing officials.” *The Globe & Mail*.

October 21. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-parliamentary-committee-calls-chinas-mistreatment-of-uyghurs/>.

Churchill, Ward. 1997. *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas, 1492 to the Present*. San Francisco: City Light Books.

Coffey, Amanda. and Paul Atkinson. 1996. “Concepts and Coding.” Pp. 26-53 in *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complimentary research strategies*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crowley, Brian Lee. 2017. “We owe Sir John A. Macdonald measured gratitude, not vilification.” *Ottawa Citizen*. September 12.

<https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/crowley-we-owe-sir-john-a-macdonald-measured-gratitude-not-vilification>.

Crowley, Brian Lee. 2018. “Removing Macdonald statue fails test of reconciliation.” *Vancouver Sun*. August 19.

<https://vancouversun.com/opinion/op-ed/brian-lee-crowley-removing-macdonald-statue-fails-test-of-reconciliation>.

Crowley, Brian Lee. 2020. "Here's what makes Canada great." *National Post*. September 23.

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/book-excerpt-brian-lee-crowley-heres-what-makes-canada-great>.

Curthoys, Ann and John Docker. 2001. "Genocide: definitions, questions, settler-colonies."

Aboriginal History 25: 1-15.

Driggers, Preston F. 1977. "Theoretical Blockage: A Strategy for the Development of

Organizational Theory." *The Sociological Quarterly* 18(1): 143-159.

Deer, Ka'nhehsí:io. 2022. "Pope says genocide took place at Canada's residential schools." *CBC*

News. Jul. 30. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/pope-francis-residential-schools-genocide-1.6537203>.

Dey, Ian. 1993. *Qualitative Data Analysis: a User-Friendly Guide for Social Scientists*. London:

Routledge.

Dummitt, Christopher. 2021. "The Canadian Historical Association's fake 'consensus' on

Canadian genocide." *National Post*. August 13.

<https://nationalpost.com/opinion/christopher-dummitt-the-canadian-historical-associations-fake-consensus-on-canadian-genocide>.

Dummitt, Christopher. 2022a. "Terry Glavin's critics are shredding their own credibility."

National Post. June 15. <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/christopher-dummitt-terry-glavins-critics-are-shredding-their-own-credibility>.

Dummitt, Christopher. 2022b. Genocide ‘concept creep’ more likely to harm reconciliation.”

National Post. Oct. 29. <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/christopher-dummitt-expanding-meaning-of-genocide-wont-elucidate-residential-school-harms>.

Dyer, Evan. 2019. “What does it mean to call Canada’s treatment of Indigenous women a

‘genocide’?” *CBC News*, June 20. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/indigenous-missing-murdered-women-genocide-trudeau-1.5162541>.

Fallon, Joseph E. 2019. “China’s Crime Against Uyghurs is a Form of Genocide.” *Fourth World Journal* 18(1): 76-88.

Fontaine, Theodore. 2010. *Broken Circle: The Dark Legacy of Indian Residential Schools*.

Victoria, Canada: Heritage House.

Fournet, Caroline. 2007. *The Crime of Destruction and the Law of Genocide: Their Impact on Collective Memory*. London: Routledge.

Galtung, Johan. 1990. “Cultural Violence.” *Journal of Peace Research* 27(3): 291-305.

Giesbrecht, Brian. 2022. “Note to Americans: Education is not genocide.” *Troy Media*. February 11, 2022. <https://troymedia.com/politiclaw/note-to-americans-education-is-not-genocide/>.

Glavin, Terry. “The year of the graves. How the world’s media got it wrong on residential school graves.” *National Post*. May 27, 2022. <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/the-year-of-the-graves-how-the-worlds-media-got-it-wrong-on-residential-school-graves>.

Grose, Timothy A. “Once Their Mental State Is Healthy, They Will Be Able to Live Happily in Society: How China’s Government Conflates Uighur Identity with Mental Illness.”

ChinaFile, 2 August 2019 <https://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/viewpoint/once-their-mental-state-healthy-they-will-be-able-live-happily-society>.

Grose, Timothy A. 2021. "If you don't know how, just learn: Chinese housing and transformation of Uyghur domestic space." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44(11): 2052-2073.

Haslam, Nick. 2016. "Concept Creep: Psychology's Expanding Concepts of Harm and Pathology." *Psychological Inquiry* 27(1): 1-17.

Hansson, Sten. 2015. "Discursive strategies of blame avoidance in government: A framework for analysis." *Discourse and Society* 26(3): 297-322.

Hansson, Sten. 2018. "The discursive micro-politics of blame avoidance: unpacking the language of government blame games." *Policy Sciences* 51: 545-564.

Hobson, Jonathon. 2019. "Prosecuting Lemkin's Concept of Genocide: Successes and Controversies." *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 13(1): 19-32.

Hood, Christopher. 2011. *The Blame Game: Spin, Bureaucracy and Self-preservation in Government*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Howland, Douglas. 2011. "The Dialectics of Chauvinism: Minority Nationalities and Territorial Sovereignty in Mao Zedong's New Democracy." *Modern China* 37(2): 170-201.

International Criminal Court. *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*. July 17, 1998.

Ibrahim, Azeem. 2019. "China Must Answer for Cultural Genocide in Court: International Law is Vital Part of Fighting for the Uighur People." *Foreign Policy* 3:
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/12/03/uighurs-xinjiang-china-cultural-genocide-international-criminal-court/>.

- Jackson, Richard. 2005. *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counterterrorism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Jones, Adam. 2006. "Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge." Pp. 283-305 in *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction* New York: Routledge.
- Jones, Ryan Patrick. 2021. "MPs vote to label China's persecution of Uighurs a genocide." *CBC News*. February 22. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/uighur-genocide-motion-vote-1.5922711>.
- Jørgensen, Marianne and Louise Phillips. 2002. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Justice, Daniel Heath and Sean Carleton. 2021. "Truth before reconciliation: 8 ways to identify and confront Residential School denialism." *The Conversation*. August 5. <https://theconversation.com/truth-before-reconciliation-8-ways-to-identify-and-confront-residential-school-denialism-164692>.
- Kenway, J. 1992. "Feminist theories of the state: to be or not to be." in M. Muetzenfeldt (eds.) *Society State and Politics in Australia*. Sydney: Pluto Press.
- Kohut, Tania. 2017. "Tory senator defends residential school system, says good work 'unacknowledged'." *Global News*. March 9. <https://globalnews.ca/news/3298332/senator-lynn-beyak-residential-schools/>.
- Lakoff, George. 2008. *The Political Mind: Why You Can't Understand 21st-Century American Politics with an 18th-Century Brain*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

Leibold, James. 2020. "Surveillance in China's Xinjiang Region: Ethnic Sorting, Coercion, and Inducement." *Journal of Contemporary China* 29(121): 46-60.

Lemkin, Raphael. 1944. *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Lemkin, Raphael. 2013. *Totally Unofficial: The Autobiography of Raphael Lemkin*. Donna-Lee Frieze (eds.). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lewy, Guenter. 2004. "Were American Indians the Victims of Genocide?" *Commentary*. September. <https://www.commentary.org/articles/guenter-lewy/were-american-indians-the-victims-of-genocide/>.

Linneberg, Mai Skjott and Steffen Korsgaard. 2019. "Coding qualitative data: a synthesis guiding the novice." *Qualitative Research Journal* 19(3): 259-270.

Logan, Tricia. 2015. "Settler colonialism in Canada and the Métis." *Journal of Genocide Research* 17(4): 433-452.

Mann, Michael. 2005. *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

MacDonald, Brennan. 2021. "Senators decline to label China's treatment of Uyghurs a genocide." *CBC News*. June 29. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/senate-canada-vote-china-genocide-1.6084640>.

MacDonald, David B. 2015. "Canada's history wars: indigenous genocide and public memory in the United States, Australia and Canada." *Journal of Genocide Research* 17(4): 411-431.

- MacDonald, David B. 2021. "Canada's hypocrisy: Recognizing genocide except its own against Indigenous peoples." *The Conversation*. June 4. <https://theconversation.com/canadas-hypocrisy-recognizing-genocide-except-its-own-against-indigenous-peoples-162128>.
- MacDonald, David B. and Graham Hudson. 2012. "The Genocide Question and Indian Residential Schools in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 45(2): 427-449.
- Maracle, Lee. 2017. *My Conversations with Canadians*. Toronto: BookThug.
- Mazower, Mark. 1994. "After Lemkin: genocide, the Holocaust and history." *Jewish Quarterly* 5: 5-8.
- Miller, J.R. 2021. "Genocide, Macdonald and Canadian history." *National Post*. January 8. <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/j-r-miller-genocide-macdonald-and-canadian-history>.
- Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. *Colonizing Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- MLI. 2021. "In Defense of Sir John A. Macdonald and his Legacy." *Macdonald-Laurier Institute*. January 21. <https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/defence-sir-john-macdonald-legacy/>.
- Monchalin, Lisa. 2016. "The Impact of Assimilation: Residential Schools and Intergenerational Trauma." Pp. 123-142 in *The Colonial Problem: An Indigenous Perspective on Crime and Injustice in Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Morsink, Johannes. 1999. "Cultural Genocide, the Universal Declaration, and Minority Rights." *Human Rights Quarterly* 21(4): 1009-1060.
- Morton, Ted. "Pierre Poilievre is the great uniter in Canadian politics." *National Post*. October 27, 2022. <https://nationalpost.com/opinion/ted-morton-pierre-poilievre-is-the-great-uniter-in-canadian-politics>.

- Moses, Dirk A. 2002. "Conceptual blockages and definitional dilemmas in the 'racial century': genocides of indigenous peoples and the Holocaust." *Patterns of Prejudice* 36(4): 7-36.
- Moshman, David. 2001. "Conceptual constraints on thinking about genocide." *Journal of Genocide Research* 3(3): 431-450.
- Nersessian, David. 2005. "Rethinking Cultural Genocide under International Law." *Human Rights Dialogue*.
- Novic, Elisa. 2016. "The Concept of Cultural Genocide: A Historical-Legal Perspective." Pp. 17-49 in *The Concept of Cultural Genocide*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Orlani, Imge. 2021. "Epistemic Injustice *from Afar*: Rethinking the Denial of Armenian Genocide." *Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy* 35(2): 120-132.
- Paquette, Elizabeth. 2020. "Reconciliation and Cultural Genocide: A Critique of the Liberal Multicultural Strategies of Innocence." *Hypatia* 35(1): 143-160.
- Patterson, Orlando. 1982. *Slavery and social death*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Pégorier, Clotilde. 2018. "Speech and Harm: Genocide Denial, Hate Speech and Freedom of Expression." *International Criminal Law Review* 18: 97-126.
- Pruitt, William R. 2017. "Understanding Genocide Denial Legislation: A Comparative Analysis." *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences* 12(2): 270-284.
- Raycraft, Richard. 2022. "MPs back motion calling on government to recognize residential schools program as genocide." *CBC News*. Oct. 27.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/house-motion-recognize-genocide-1.6632450>.

- Raza, Zainab. 2019. "China's 'Political Re-education' Camps of Xinjiang's Uyghur Muslims." *Asian Affairs* 50(4): 488-501.
- Reisigl, Martin and Ruth Wodak. 2001. *Discourse and Discrimination*. London: Routledge.
- Roberts, Sean R. 2020. *The War on the Uyghurs*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Ross, Luana. 2016. "Settler colonialism and legislating of criminality." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 40(1): 1-18).
- Ruser, Nathan and James Leibold. 2021. *Family De-Planning: The Coercive Campaign to Drive Down Indigenous Birth-Rates in Xinjiang*. Australian Strategic Policy Institute, May 12, 2021.
- Short, Damien. 2010. "Cultural genocide and indigenous peoples: a sociological approach." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 14(6): 833-848.
- Smith, Donald R. and J.R. Millier. "No Genocide." *Literary Review of Canada*. October 2019. <https://reviewcanada.ca/magazine/2019/10/no-genocide/>.
- Smith, Roger W. 2014. "Genocide Denial and Prevention." *Genocide Studies International* 8(1): 102-109.
- Smith Finley, Joanne. "'Now We Don't Talk Anymore.'" *ChinaFile*, 28 December 2019 <https://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/viewpoint/now-we-dont-talk-anymore>.
- Smith Finley, Joanne. 2021. "Why Scholars and Activists Increasingly Fear a Uyghur Genocide in Xinjiang." *Journal of Genocide Research* 23(3): 348-370.
- Stanton, Gregory. 2016. "The Ten Stages of Genocide." *Genocide Watch*. <http://genocidewatch.net/genocide-2/8-stages-of-genocide/>.

- Stefanovich, Olivia. 2021. "NDP push to declare residential schools a genocide defeated in House." *CBC News*. June 10. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/ndp-residential-school-genocide-motion-vote-rejected-1.6061006>
- Stefanovich, Olivia. 2023. "NDP MP calls for hate speech law to combat residential school 'denialism.'" *CBC News*. February 18. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/should-residential-school-denialism-declared-hate-speech-1.6744100>.
- Szadziewski, Henryk. 2020. "The push for a Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act in the United States: recent developments in Uyghur activism." *Asian Ethnicity* 21(2): 211-222.
- Tasker, John Paul. 2015. "Residential schools findings point to 'cultural genocide,' commission chair says." *CBC News*. May 29. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/residential-schools-findings-point-to-cultural-genocide-commission-chair-says-1.3093580>.
- Tasker, John Paul. 2020. "As Conservatives call for crackdown, O'Toole calls Chinese influence a grave 'threat' to Canada." *CBC News*. November 17. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/otoole-china-greatest-threat-1.5804972>.
- Tasker, John Paul. 2021. "O'Toole accuses activists of 'tearing down' Canada after towns cancel Canada Day events." *CBC News*. June 23. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/otoole-activists-canada-day-1.6076752>.
- Taylor, Sandra. 1997. "Critical Policy Analysis: exploring contexts, texts and consequences." *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 18(1): 23-35.

Teeling, Katie. 2022. "Canadians need truth, not just reconciliation." *The gateway*. July 21.

<https://thegatewayonline.ca/2022/07/canadians-need-truth-not-just-reconciliation-the-gateway/>.

Tobin, David. 2021. "Genocidal processes: social death in Xinjiang." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 45(16): 93-121.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. *Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part I Origins to 1939*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. *The Survivors Speak: A Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Tunney, Catharine. 2019. "Trudeau says deaths and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls amount to 'genocide'." *CBC News*. June 4.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-mmiwg-genocide-1.5161681>.

Turdush, Rukiye and Magnus Fiskesjö. 2021. "Dossier: Uyghur Women in China's Genocide." *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 15(1): 22-43.

Tynen, Sarah. 2020. "Dispossession and displacement of migrant workers: the impact of state terror and economic development on Uyghurs in urban Xinjiang." *Central Asian Survey* 39(3): 303-323.

United Nations. *General Assembly resolution 260*, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. December 9, 1948. UN Doc. A/RES/260(III).

United Nations. 2023. "UN experts alarmed by separation of 1 million Tibetan children from families and forced assimilation at residential schools." *United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/02/china-un-experts-alarmed-separation-1-million-tibetan-children-families-and>.

Van Leeuwen, Theo. 1996. *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Routledge.

Van Leeuwen, Theo. 2008. *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Vaughn, Porcia and Cherie Turner. 2016. "Decoding via Coding: Analyzing Qualitative Text Data Through Thematic Coding and Survey Methodologies." *Journal of Library Administration* 56(1): 41-51.

Wahpasiw, Omeasoo and Adele Perry and Sean Carleton. 2021. "Nostalgia and the Politics of Selective Remembering." *Active History*. May 5. <https://activehistory.ca/2021/05/nostalgia-and-the-politics-of-selective-remembering/>.

- Wakeham, Pauline. 2021. "The Slow Violence of Settler Colonialism: Genocide, Attrition, and the Long Emergency of Invasion." *Journal of Genocide Research*: 1-20.
- Webster, David. 2019. "Canada's non-conversation about genocide." *Active History*. June 14. <https://activehistory.ca/2019/06/canadas-non-conversation-about-genocide/>.
- Wherry, Aaron. 2021. "Why the genocide question about China is hard for the Trudeau government to answer." *CBC News*. Feb. 22. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/china-genocide-ughur-conservative-motion-1.5921207>.
- Whitt, Laurelyn and Alan Clarke. 2019. *North American Genocides: Indigenous Nations, Settler Colonialism, and International Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wolfe, Patrick. 2006. "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4): 387-409.
- Woolford, Andrew. 2009. "Ontological Destruction: Genocide and Canadian Aboriginal Peoples." *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 4(1): 81-97.
- Woolford, Andrew. 2015. *This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States*. Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press.
- Woolford, Andrew. 2019. "Decriminalizing Settler Colonialism in Canada: Entryways to Genocide Accusation and Erasure." Pp. 139-164 in *Entryways to Criminal Justice: Accusation and Criminalization in Canada*. Edited by George Pavlich and Matthew Unger. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press.

- Woolford, Andrew and James Gacek. 2016. "Genocide carcerality and Indian residential schools in Canada." *Punishment & Society* 18(4): 400-419.
- Zenz, Adrian. 2019a. "Break Their Roots: Evidence for China's Parent-Child Separation Campaign in Xinjiang." *Journal of Political Risk* 7(7): <https://www.jpolrisk.com/break-their-roots-evidence-for-chinas-parent-child-separation-campaign-in-xinjiang/>.
- Zenz, Adrian. 2019b. "'Thoroughly reforming them towards a health heart attitude': China's political re-education campaign in Xinjiang." *Central Asian Survey* 38(1): 102-128.
- Zenz, Adrian. 2020. "Sterilizations, IUDs and Mandatory Birth Control: The CCP's Campaign to Suppress Uyghur Birthrates in Xinjiang." Washington, DC: The Jamestown Foundation.
- Zenz, Adrian. 2021. "'End the dominance of the Uyghur ethnic group': an analysis of Beijing's population optimization strategy in southern Xinjiang." *Central Asian Survey* 40(3): 291-312.