Teachers Without Borders: Exploring Experiences, Transitions, and Identities of
Refugee Women Teachers from Yugoslavia

Snežana Ratković

Department of Graduate and Undergraduate
Studies in Education

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Studies

Brock University, Faculty of Education
St. Catharines, ON

© Snežana Ratković 2014
Abstract

Prior to September 11 2011, Canada was recognized as a leading advocate of international refugee protection and the third largest settlement country in the world. University educated refugees were admitted to the country in part on the basis of their education, but once in Canada their credentials were often ignored. The purpose of this study was to explore, through a transnational feminist lens, immigrant and settlement experiences of refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia who immigrated to Canada during and after the Yugoslav wars; to document the ways in which socially constructed categories such as gender, race, and refugee status have influenced their post-exile experiences and identities; and to identify the government's role in creating conditions where the women were either able or unable to continue in their profession. In this study, I employed both a transnational feminist methodology and narrative inquiry. The analysis process included an emphasis on the storying stories model, poetic transcription, and concentric storying. The women’s voices are represented in various forms throughout the document including individual and collective narratives. Each narrative contributed to a detailed picture of immigration and settlement processes as women spoke of continuing their education, knowing or learning the official language, and contributing to Canadian society and the economy. The findings challenge the image of a victimized and submissive refugee woman, and bring to the centre of discourse the image of the refugee woman as a skilled professional who often remains un- or underemployed in her new country. The dissertation makes an important contribution to an underdeveloped area in the research literature, and has the potential to inform immigration, settlement, and teacher education policies and practices in Canada and elsewhere.
Dedication

To refugee women teachers
Stay in your profession.
do what you love to do,
learn the language and profession,
it’s up to you.

Don’t fear any language,
your knowledge will do,
your heart will grow,
it’s up to you.

Don’t waste your time,
don’t wait for the state,
continue your education,
it’s never too late.

(Collective Transcript Poem, Focus Group Conversation, June 2010)
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Biser, Dana, Jagoda, Lana, Maruška, Mira, Nada, Nina Bloom, Zlata, and Sunshine. Without them, this dissertation would not be possible. To Dr. Susan A. Tilley, thank you for taking on my research project, for being a mentor to me, as well as for your time, understanding, and insightful suggestions. You made my learning experience both challenging and rewarding. Thank you to my Ph.D. committee members, Drs. Armstrong and Dlamini, who have been a source of precious advice throughout my Ph.D. journey. To both Dr. Brigham and Dr. Pomerantz, your contribution to my dissertation has been valuable, inspiring, and is greatly appreciated. Thanks are also due to Drs. Beatty, Sydor, and McGinn, my work supervisors since 2007, for their ongoing support. Special thanks go to Drs. Vanderlee, Elliott, McLauchlan, Mgombelo, Woloshyn, Martinovic, and Wiebe, who encouraged me to persevere and enjoy the journey. Thank you to Phil, Mira, Catherine, Stella, Perez, Poling, Ewelina, Georgann, Michelle, Kelly, Brendan, Frank, and others for being thoughtful colleagues and friends. Thanks to my friend Dragana Barbir for giving me comfort and inspiration. I am indebted to Faculty of Education professors and staff members for their support. Thanks are due to my patient husband, Srećko; you have stood by me, given words of encouragement, helped me through stressful times, and been there when I needed to cry and to laugh. Special thanks to my sons Bojan and Igor for their love and patience, and for taking the time to provide feedback on multiple drafts of my dissertation. Thank you to my brother Žarko, my sister-in-law Dragana, my nephew Jovan, and my nieces Jelena and Milica for being a caring family. I will be forever indebted to my parents Milka and Dušan for inspiring me to learn, teach, and explore—to aim for the stars.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... ii

Dedication......................................................................................................................................... iii

Acknowledgements............................................................................................................................. v

List of Tables ....................................................................................................................................... x

List of Figures ...................................................................................................................................... xi

Prologue ............................................................................................................................................... xii

CHAPTER ONE: SETTING THE STAGE........................................................................................... 1

  Background ....................................................................................................................................... 3

  Rationale ......................................................................................................................................... 8

  Research Questions ......................................................................................................................... 10

  Methodology .................................................................................................................................. 14

  Moving On: Towards Transnational Ways of Researching, Writing, and Knowing,... 17

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW. 18

  Post-Colonial Identity as a Point of Departure .............................................................................. 19

  Towards a Transnational Feminist Praxis ...................................................................................... 24

  Literature Review: Women, Migration, and (Teacher) Identity ....................................................... 41

  Moving On: Addressing Gaps in Refugee/Teacher Research .......................................................... 72
### CHAPTER THREE: IN THE MIDST OF TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST RESEARCH AND NARRATIVE INQUIRY

- Transnational Feminist Practices ................................................................. 76
- Narrative Inquiry .......................................................................................... 78
- Recruiting Participants .................................................................................. 82
- Interviewing ..................................................................................................... 81
- Keeping Field Notes ....................................................................................... 93
- Practicing Self/Reflexivity ............................................................................. 94
- Transcribing, Analysing, and Representing ................................................... 98
- Addressing Complexities and Concerns .......................................................... 106
- Moving On: Considering the Researcher's Ways of Knowing ............................ 118

### CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCHER'S STORY

- What Made Me a Refugee Woman ................................................................. 120
- What Brought Me to Canada ......................................................................... 120
- How I Ended Up at a Canadian University ..................................................... 124
- What Kept Me at the University ..................................................................... 125
- Why I Pursued My Ph.D. .............................................................................. 126
- Moving On: Entering a Transnational Space ................................................. 127
CHAPTER FIVE: STORIES OF WOMEN, STORIES OF EXILE, STORIES OF TEACHER IDENTITY .......................................................................................................................... 128

Introducing Refugee Women Teachers ........................................................................................................... 128

Story One: Shelter Is Not Enough ............................................................................................................. 137

Story Two: We Don't Count, They Want Our Children ............................................................................. 163

Story Three: We Are a Gift to Canada, But Our Chances (to Teach) are Slim to None ................................. 178

Story Four: Storying the Researcher ......................................................................................................... 218

Story Five: Silences and Gaps in Our Stories .............................................................................................. 221

Moving On: Towards a Collective Narrative .............................................................................................. 234

CHAPTER SIX: THEORISING EXILE, SETTLEMENT, AND TEACHER IDENTITY ............................................................. 235

Intersectionalities ...................................................................................................................................... 236

Capitalism, Neoliberalism, and Exile ........................................................................................................... 238

Transnational Spaces on Canadian Soil ..................................................................................................... 242

Gendered Geographies of Teacher Knowledge .......................................................................................... 245

Implications for Transnational Praxis ......................................................................................................... 250

Remaining (Research) Questions .............................................................................................................. 258

Epilogue .................................................................................................................................................... 261

References ................................................................................................................................................... 262
Appendices

A: Transcription Conventions..........................................................................................289

B: Individual Interview Protocol (First Interview)...........................................................291

C: Individual Interview Protocol (Second Interview).......................................................294

D: Focus Group Interview Script.....................................................................................295

E: Focus Group Participant Confidentiality Agreement Form........................................296

F: Focus Group Interview Protocol..................................................................................297

G: Participant Member Checking Form...........................................................................298
List of Tables

Table 1. Participants’ Profiles............................................................................................80

Table 2. Overview of How I Honoured the Multiple Voices of Participants.....................101

Table 3. Teacher Identity Transitions Reported by Participants........................................212
List of Figures

Figure 1. Alternative modes of data analysis and representation........................................100

Figure 2. Refugee women teacher identity negotiated and constructed through participants’ stories........................................................................................................214
Prologue

It was a hot summer afternoon in Crvenka. Late June. Streets were flooded with children recently freed from school and strict schedules. They were running and laughing with their friends, streaming into long summer days. I turned my gaze back from a wide open window and saw my friend Tanja approaching me with a silver tray and two cups of coffee. Her eyes looked somehow dim and lost in a strange and faraway place. The room breathed with the strong comforting smell of Turkish coffee, but a cold silence was invading the space. Tanja left the tray at the table and sat across from me. She looked at me with her big almond eyes and said, "It makes me sad, but I know you have to go. For weeks, I didn’t understand why you have to go to Canada and why I have to lose my best friend. Every morning for the last two weeks I prayed to God to change your mind, but now I understand...you must go. You must go to save their souls." I did not understand. I did not understand who "they" were. I did not understand why their souls must be saved. I did not understand a word. We cried. That night I dreamed of a world map. Majestic and lazy continents were resting on the endless water. They all looked alike, nestled in a deep dream. All of them were asleep except Europe and North America. These two continents were awake, vibrating and communicating with each other through bright golden rays. I was relieved, "I am not leaving Europe once and for all; I am bringing Europe and North America together." A few seconds later, my dream sank into a deep dark sea. The next morning, we left Yugoslavia.
CHAPTER ONE: SETTING THE STAGE

Prior to September 11 2011, Canada was recognized as a leading advocate of international refugee protection and the third largest settlement country in the world with 11,000 new asylum claims received each year. The concept of the superior West in the post-9/11 Canada re-whitened Canadian identity after decades of multiculturalism, excluding other civilizations as well as the histories and cultures of non-Canadian diasporas and Original peoples inhabiting Canada. In 2008, the Conference Board of Canada’s report *Renewing Immigration: Towards a Convergence and Consolidation of Canada’s Immigration Policies* (Watt, Krywulak, & Kitagawa, 2008) suggested increasing immigration levels and refugee intakes to meet the country's economic needs. The report also stated that the Canadian immigration system must be responsive to immigrants’ and refugees’ needs and expectations. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (1951) defines a refugee as:

> A person who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution. (p. 1)

Such a definition—while providing some criteria—hides the differences across individuals and groups assigned the refugee label, constructing a far too simplistic portrait of a refugee. In Canada, refugees are accepted under three distinct categories: convention refugees or persons who seek protection at a visa office abroad; persons in
Canada whose claims are heard and accepted by the Immigration and Refugee Board; and persons in Canada granted protection under a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA). Most convention refugees and protected persons who are resettled to Canada are government sponsored refugees. They immigrate to Canada as refugees with permanent resident status and receive financial and other support from the Canadian government for one year. Some refugees, however, come to Canada as privately sponsored refugees who are supported by humanitarian organisations, family members, or faith communities, and also immigrate with permanent resident status. Sponsoring groups commit to providing assistance in the form of shelter, clothing, food, and settlement assistance for one year. Refugees selected abroad must pay their own airfare. Moreover, they must demonstrate their ability to eventually re-establish in Canada and go through medical, security, and criminality screening (Canada’s Immigration Law, 2002). As much as these categories are useful in regulating immigration and settlement processes, they fail to address other differences among refugees, which are often based on their nationality, ethnicity, culture, race, class, gender, sexuality, age, physical ability, marital status, and education. In this dissertation, I use the category “refugee” not as a telling-it-all label, but rather as a starting point for a systematic exploration of the term’s complex, layered, and multifaceted nature. This categorization, although limited and problematic, may be important and helpful when it provides a sense of community and acceptance as a social, cultural, and political identity (Khayatt, 1994).

In addition to being celebrated as the third largest settlement country in the world, Canada passed the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988, becoming the first state in the world to officially recognize, guard, and promote cultural diversity. The Act contains a
number of sections relevant to the process of settlement that "promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society, and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation" (Section 3(1) (c)). Moreover, the Act directs the Minister to assist ethno-cultural minority communities in overcoming any discriminatory barriers, including those based on race or national or ethnic origin (Section 5(1) (g)). The Act acknowledges the freedom of all individuals living in Canada to preserve, develop, and share their cultural heritage, including cultural norms and practices.

**Background**

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, some speculated that the world was entering an era of peace, democracy, and human rights (Fukuyama, 1992). Despite this optimistic vision, the last two decades have produced a great number of conflicts, wars, and humanitarian catastrophes. The post-Cold War model of military invasion in the name of democracy and human rights was implemented by the United States (US) and its allies, and used for the sake of achieving military and economic supremacy in a globalising world. Under the shield of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), U.S. military forces carried out "humanitarian" missions by attacking Iraq in 1991, Yugoslavia in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001, and Libya in 2011, and expanded their military and economic domination to more than 20 countries around the world.

We live in "an era of accelerated forms of corporate and militarized rule, with the US emerging as the lead bully on the block, ably assisted of course by the UK" (Mohanty, 2006, p. 8). Mohanty, a well-known postcolonial and transnational feminist
scholar, urged U.S. feminists to question their support of the Bush administration and the wars in the name of liberating Third World women, particularly Afghan and Iraqi women:

Bringing ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’ (or more precisely the free market) to Afghanistan and Iraq most recently, then, has involved economic devastation, denationalization, destruction of cultural, historical, natural and environmental resources, and, of course, indiscriminate massacres in both countries. (p. 9)

Since September 11, 2001 a campaign has been underway to position Canada internationally as "an unconditional partner of the United States in foreign policy" (Arat-Koc, 2005, p. 32), invoking civilizational superiority of these two nations and of Western identity. It led Canadians into a narcissistic compassion focused only on North-American-Us and the white U.S. imperialism (Arat-Koc, 2005).

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of U.S. hegemony were followed by the Yugoslav civil wars (1991-1995). Germany and the US helped trigger the bloody breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991 and continued to destabilize the region in the coming years (Yugoslavia: The Avoidable War, 2002). The Yugoslav wars brought the word Balkans to the world’s attention in an unfortunate way; the wars re-introduced the old stereotypes of Balkan peoples as primitive and violent savages (Sulzberger, 1969). In the same vein, Kaplan (1994) described the Balkans as the cradle of Nazism—a place where Adolf Hitler learned "how to hate so infectiously" (p. xxiii). During and after the Yugoslav wars, however, the Western media usually represented Yugoslav conflict as "a product of ‘centuries of ethnic hatred,’ of irreconcilable ancient and ahistoric ethnic, religious and cultural differences, and of an everlasting tribal mentality, all of which were
alien and incomprehensible to the ‘rational West’” (Batinic, 1999, pp. 11-12). This
demonization of the Balkans (and Yugoslavia) culminated in the 1999 NATO bombing of
Serbia and Montenegro (then Yugoslavia).

From March 24 through June 10, 1999, NATO forces (including the U.S. and
Canadian military) engaged in a massive and continuous bombing campaign against
Serbia, destroying not only military targets, but also civilian bridges, residential
buildings, television stations, hospitals, and the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. Human
Rights Watch and Amnesty International accused NATO of deliberately breaking
international law and committing war crimes by targeting civilians and using cluster
bombs, as well as bombs laced with depleted uranium (Erlanger, 2000). NATO officials
and Western media portrayed the bombing campaign as the best course of action for
stopping the ethnic conflict between Serbs and Albanians in Serbia’s Kosovo province.
Parenti (2002) observes that NATO forces dropped twenty thousand tons of bombs and
killed three thousand women, children, and men "out of humanitarian concern for
Albanians in Kosovo – or so we were asked to believe" (p. 9). The motive behind the
intervention in Yugoslavia rests, however, in the desire:

to put Yugoslavia—along with every other country—under the sovereignty of
free-market globalization...Western leaders talk of peace and perpetrate merciless
wars. They call for democracy while supporting ex-Nazis and fostering despotic
intercessions. They hail self-determination while exercising coercive colonial rule
over other peoples...to transform the world into a global economy under the
tutelage of the transnational corporations, backed by the unanswerable imperial
might of the United States and its allies. A key component of the global strategy,
of course, entails capitalist restorations within the former communist countries.

( pp. 2-3 )

In 1999, NATO “was busy saving Yugoslavia, bombing a modern, sophisticated society back to a near-third-world level” (Blum, 2005, p. 2). In the aftermath of the Yugoslav civil wars and NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, four million people were displaced or became refugees in the former provinces of Yugoslavia. Most of the displaced people immigrated to Germany, Sweden, Austria, The Netherlands, Turkey, Italia, United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark, the United States, Australia, and Canada.

From 1995 to 2000, Canada accepted a significant number of refugees from the Balkans. These refugees accounted for 21-28% of all refugees admitted to Canada at that time. In the latter part of this period, the main source of this increase was refugees escaping the wars in the former Yugoslavia, many of whom held degrees from postsecondary institutions (Statistics Canada, 2003-2004). Between 1993 and 1995 almost 9,000 persons from Yugoslavia immigrated to Canada as government-assisted refugees (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1997). From January 1995 to September 1997, another 9,888 immigrants and refugees from the former Yugoslavia arrived and settled in cities in Ontario, primarily Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Toronto, Ottawa, and Windsor (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1997).

I am a survivor of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia; I am a science teacher who immigrated with my family to Ontario, Canada in 1998 as a privately sponsored refugee; I am a refugee woman who cleaned hotel rooms in Niagara Falls while the Canadian military forces bombed my parents, brother and relatives in Yugoslavia. I brought four suitcases to Canada, a teaching degree, seven years of
teaching experience, and a passion for teaching and learning. My teaching degree and my
teaching experience from Yugoslavia were not recognised in Ontario. I was labeled as a
foreign teacher by the Ontario Teachers' College and as an unqualified teacher by a
public district school board administrator who was in charge of hiring occasional
teachers. I worked for minimum wage for three years before I could continue my
education at a Canadian university and obtain my first student employment, which led to
a number of part-time contracts and research assistantships. In the past fifteen years, I
went through sixteen different jobs to make a living and re-establish my teaching career.
Since 2000, I have completed my Bachelor of Science degree in Biotechnology and my
Master's degree in Education; however, I have been unable to secure a teaching position
at the elementary or secondary school level.

As a result of my refugee and settlement experiences, I focused on exploring the
settlement and professional experiences of refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia who
immigrated to Canada during and after the civil war in the country. I explored the
settlement barriers the women encountered in Canada, the supports they received, and the
benefits they gained in the process of immigration and settlement. I identified the ways in
which race, gender, class, ethnicity, culture, and education—in addition to refugee status—
shaped the women’s professional identities in Canada. I compared the narratives of
refugee women teachers to the master narrative of exile, settlement, and teacher identity
in Canada. Finally, I offer their stories and recommendations to the Ministry of
Immigration and Settlement, government agencies serving refugees, teaching authorities
in the country, and to other refugee women teachers.
I decided to explore these questions through a systematic inquiry, and I began pursuing part-time Ph.D. studies in education in 2007. I recognised that my experience of exile in Serbia was far from a romantic journey, but I did feel that my Serbian experience of exile was less traumatic for me than my Canadian experience. In Serbia, we were struggling financially, but my teacher identity was alive and never questioned. In Canada, my husband and I provided our sons with excellent educational opportunities. We built a new house and new networks. At times, however, I still felt like a used-to-be, homeless teacher. This dissertation became an effort to understand immigrant and settlement experiences as well as the professional identities of refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia who immigrated to Ontario and Québec between 1993 and 1998, while also extending the conversation about forced migration, professional displacement, and teacher identity.

**Rationale**

Refugees leave their countries under extreme conditions and come to Canada to re-establish their lives. One of the challenges refugees in Canadian society face in terms of integration remains that university educated refugees are admitted on the basis of their education but, once in Canada, these peoples’ skills and credentials are ignored (Proposed Amendments to the Immigration System, 2008). Such a disconnect between the immigration policies and practices affects the lives of refugees in general and the lives of refugee female teachers, in particular, while producing and perpetuating systemic, social, and general obstacles to these women's attempts to teach in Canada (Brigham & Walsh, 2008; Medic, 2007; Phillion, 2003; Walsh & Brigham, 2007).
More recently, the gender/power dynamics of teaching and learning and the particular experiences of immigrant female teachers have been documented and theorised in the Canadian context (Bascia, 1996; Brigham & Walsh, 2008; Kirk, 2006; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh, Brigham, & Wang, 2011). However, there are limited studies investigating teaching and learning in Canada from the refugee female teacher's perspective. Literature has documented the prevalence of women in immigration flows since 1970s (Donato, 1992; Morokvasic, 1984). The initial writings perpetuated, however, male bias by "adding women as a variable, not by including gender as a central research focus" (Pessar & Mahler, 2001, p. 3). While some authors considered gender as a key theoretical concept in immigration research (Pedraza, 1991), Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) took immigration research another step forward by arguing:

Gender is not simply a variable to be measured, but a set of social relations that organize immigration patterns. The task, then, is not simply to document or highlight the presence of undocumented women who have settled in the United States, or to ask the same questions of immigrant women that are asked of immigrant men, but to begin with an examination of how gender relations facilitate or constrain both women’s and men’s immigration and settlement. (p. 3)

Presently, women and girls comprise about half of any refugee population (UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, 2013). Exploring the local–global dialectic of gender relations has gained particular relevance in contemporary contexts of forced migration and teacher identity in which border crossings, subjugated knowledges, and transnational identities emerge.
Inclusion of Yugoslav refugee female teachers’ voices in narrating immigration and settlement experiences in Canada has the potential of informing and influencing settlement policies and practices. Moreover, these voices might help us understand how immigration and settlement processes are shaped by social locations such as race, class, gender, age, language, culture, ethnicity, nationality, physical ability, education, political identity, and refugee status. Bringing to light the Canadian settlement context and the dynamics of refugee female teachers' stories might also help educators, government officials, and educational authorities in the country to understand the multi-layered social, cultural, political, and national space within which these women's stories and experiences are contextualised.

More research is needed in the field of Canadian immigration, settlement, and teacher re-certification if we are to gain a deeper understanding of what it means and how it feels to be a refugee female teacher in a world increasingly troubled by military conflicts and forced migration. More specifically, "serious and methodical education research on violence, war, peace, humanitarian assistance and their impact on women’s learning and resistance is much needed" (Mojab, 2008, p. 402).

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this research was to: (a) explore immigrant and settlement experiences of ten refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia who immigrated to Ontario and Québec between 1993 and 1998; (b) investigate teaching, learning, and power relations from the refugee female teacher's perspective; and (c) inform immigration, settlement, and teacher re/certification policies and practices in Canada. The study represents a step away from the meta-narrative about the poor, insufficient, and unclear
cultural capital of refugee women in general and Yugoslavian refugee women teachers in particular. It challenges the image of a victimized and submissive refugee woman in the Canadian context, and brought to the centre of the discourse the image of the refugee woman who is a university educated professional, but often remains unemployed or underemployed in the country of her exile.

The main research question was: How have Yugoslavian refugee women teachers experienced their immigration and settlement in Ontario and Québec while attempting to continue their professional lives in these two provinces? Sub-questions included:

1. How has refugee status influenced Yugoslavian women teachers' goals to continue their professional lives in Ontario and Québec?
2. How have gender, class, race, age, language, culture, nationality, ethnicity, and political identity—in addition to their refugee status—influenced the women’s understandings of their professional identities as teachers?
3. How have government and social structures enhanced or inhibited the women’s opportunities to teach in Canada?

I focused on refugee women's experiences rather than on immigrant women's experiences to break away from the trend of homogeneity. My intention was not to overemphasize differences or to minimize the common experiences of immigration or of being a woman. While acknowledging that refugee and immigrant women share some common values, beliefs, experiences, and expectations (e.g., they are new to the country, must learn a new language, and adjust to the new environment), I searched for the uniqueness and complexity of these women's lives.
Immigrant women often take care of their personal business before leaving their home country. For many of them, leaving and returning to their home country is often a personal choice and the sense of loss and trauma is not necessarily overwhelming. Many refugee women, however, leave their home countries under extreme conditions and in such a hurry that their personal business at home remains unsettled; often lack time for transition to the new country which results in confusion and uncertainty; lose their family members due to war; are not able to return to their home countries; and often have an overwhelming sense of loss and trauma. Such profound differences have rarely been considered in research on migration and teacher identity, and deserve a more systematic approach.

Silove, Steel, McGorry, and Mohan (1998) explored experiences of Tamil immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in Sydney, Australia. The authors found that Tamil immigrants reported a smaller range of trauma exposure than Tamil refugees did. Refugees also scored higher on health, welfare, and asylum problems as well as on family concerns compared to immigrants. Psychiatric symptoms, however, were assessed in this study by questionnaire alone and "no attempt was made to determine psychiatric 'caseness'" (p. 179).

Based on interviews with seventy women refugees from Yugoslavia, Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000) portrays the horrifying experiences the refugee women had to face, including sexual, physical, and psychological violence. According to the author, refugees are exposed to “the prolonged effects of various psychosocial stressors: forced separation from spouses, parents and children, inadequate housing, poverty and existential insecurity, strained communication with the new social environment” (p. 172).
Similarly to Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000), Kirmayer et al. (2010) argue that the prevalence of specific types of mental health problems among immigrants and refugees is influenced by the nature of the migration experience before, during, and after resettlement:

Specific challenges in migrant mental health include communication difficulties because of language and cultural differences; the effect of cultural shaping of symptoms and illness behaviour on diagnosis, coping and treatment; differences in family structure and process affecting adaptation, acculturation and intergenerational conflict; and aspects of acceptance by the receiving society that affect employment, social status and integration. (p. 959)

The authors also found that immigrants to Canada often show slightly lower rates of mental disorders than the general population (this *healthy immigrant effect* reflects the fact that immigrants pass multiple tests to achieve immigrant status), but rise over time to local levels. In contrast, refugees are at higher risk than the general population due to their exposure to war, violence, and forced migration—with up to ten times the rate of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Petrovic (2003) offers a more personalised illustration of the difference in the construction of the refugee and the independent immigrant identity by recounting dialogue between a refugee woman and an independent immigrant woman who immigrated to Canada from Yugoslavia after the Yugoslav wars. The independent immigrant, who was later able to return home and transport all her material belongings (e.g., furniture, books, and memorabilia) to Canada, asked the refugee woman how she survived the winter in a city that was besieged. The refugee woman answered she burned
all the furniture and books to warm her family. When asked if she was selective in
burning her books, the refugee woman replied that the children’s books were the very last
to be burned. This dialogue reveals how differently these two women were affected by
the wars in the former Yugoslavia, and how refugees and independent immigrants, even
when coming from the same country, may bring with them extremely diverse
experiences. Migration and the term *diaspora* have, however, evolved beyond the "victim
tradition" (Cohen, 1996), and have grown to represent

any kind of migration that places a group of people away from the place where
they had originally settled for generations. To transcend the first, negative
tradition is to acknowledge the diversity of experience as people disperse from a
homeland to new places. (Dlamini, Wolfe, Anucha, & Yan, 2009, p. 407)

This study provided participants with an opportunity to reflect upon their
settlement experiences in Ontario and Québec, and understand more fully their
professional goals and identities at a particular point of time. As a refugee female teacher
from Yugoslavia, I view this study as a great honour and a privilege as I join other
Yugoslavian refugee women teachers in reflective interpretations of their settlement
experiences, while exploring more deeply the meanings attached to my settlement
experience and teacher identity.

**Methodology**

I engaged in transnational feminist research within an era of forced migration,
recognising that women’s experiences and their autobiographical writings are largely
influenced by their social locations. Social location refers to "persons’ positions within
power hierarchies created through historical, political, economic, geographic, kinship-
based and other socially stratifying factors” (Mahler & Pessar, 2001, pp. 445-446). These stratifying factors are forces that confer on people particular advantages and disadvantages, influencing the development of their individual and collective identities. My social location has influenced my choice of research topic. My research interest in the settlement experiences of Yugoslavian refugee female teachers has originated from my personal refugee struggle, my desire to gain a deeper understanding of that struggle, and my commitment to telling the stories of other refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia who survived life-threatening danger, immigrated to Canada, and began to believe they were finally rescued in this country.

Borrowing from feminist standpoint epistemology (Harding, 1991, 1993), I placed Yugoslavian refugee women teachers at the centre of the research process to build knowledge from their lived experiences, to examine society through these women’s lenses, and to translate the research findings into practice and policy. I am also aware that my socially situated knowledge and social locations can be used as a resource, a part of the research method, and a tool of a transnational feminist research practice.

borders, discuss their social location, practice reflexivity, and address accountability. Such research practices encourage the researcher to engage with participants in a respectful and systematic manner. Transnational feminist methodology urges researchers to problematize research practices to dismantle existing hierarchies of knowledge production. Transnational feminist researchers conduct research "not to reproduce exercises in narrow 'navel-gazing' but always in relation to overlapping hegemonic power structures at multiple temporal and geographic scales" (Nagar & Lock Swarr, 2010, p. 9).

In the midst of transnational feminist research, I also drew on narrative inquiry (Andrews, Squire, & Tambokou, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 1998, 1999; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Elliott & Drake, 1999; McCormack, 2000a, 2000b, 2004). I worked with the assumption that (a) human beings give meaning to their lives through story (Andrews, et al., 2008), (b) narrative inquiry "characteristically begins with the researcher's autobiographically oriented narrative associated with the research puzzle" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.40; original emphasis), and (c) narrative inquirers—similarly to transnational feminist researchers—make connections between people's personal stories and the social structures the stories mirror and shape at the same time.

Keeping in mind that a researcher's story is central to narrative inquiry (Trahar, 2009), I wrote a personal account entitled Researcher's Story to position myself as a researcher and an insider/outsider to participants' experiences. In this account, I described how my multiple social locations shaped my identity as a researcher and a refugee woman teacher. I revealed my professional and personal identity, my memories of pre-war Yugoslavia, and my connections to the participants' lives.
Moving on: Towards Transnational Ways of Researching, Writing, and Knowing

Chapter One raised a number of issues about stereotyping refugee women and their abilities/identities. It charted the issues of marginalisation and professional dislocation of refugee women in their host country; highlighted the danger of capitalism and imperialism; and introduced transnational feminist praxis and narrative inquiry as a means of exploring and honouring refugee women’s lives. In the remaining five chapters of this document, I will explore how these issues shaped the personal and professional lives of ten refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia; immigration and settlement policies and practices; as well as teaching, learning, and researching in Canada.
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Refugee women's narratives are part of a larger discourse of exile, diaspora, and transnational identity which, although unique and complex, share some similarities with (im)migration experiences. These narratives mirror the women's multiple associations and dis-associations with the host country, struggles to define local in the context of exile, relationships to collective histories of displacement (Clifford, 1997), and diasporic identity.

The concept of diaspora is often defined as a dispersion of people across countries away from their original homelands. While some people understand the concept of diaspora as a virtual community of people scattered across the world as a result of a historical trauma (e.g., slavery), others define diaspora as any kind of migration that places a group of people away from their homeland. “Whatever definition emerges, diaspora suggests a common bond of locality, culture, and common ancestry, which extends beyond the narrow boundaries of a group’s country of origin (Dlamini, Wolfe, Anucha & Yan, 2009, p. 407). Migrants' relationship to homeland often remains an important source of identification. In their study exploring youth social identities in Windsor, Ontario, Dlamini et al. (2009) found that for some African youth immigrants to Canada, "the dialectic relationship between place and self provides a strong sense of who they are" (p. 415). To create a sense of belonging in Windsor, youth evoked the homeland as a key resource. The homeland was "a source used to maintain homeland culture, enhance integration between old and new culture, deal with the history of dominance and resistance, and share with and teach others" (Dlamini et al., 2009, p. 423). Not only
identities, but also identity resources such as a home and land were described in this study as fluid and transitory, continuously negotiated across space and time. The authors also noted that difference as an important signifier of a diasporic life "can be as inclusively illuminating as it can be exclusively alienating" (p. 426).

Post-Colonial Identity as a Point of Departure

Hall (1995) defines diaspora as a dynamic and evolving community stating that diasporic identities “are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference" (pp. 119-120). He also argues that identity, similarly to the concept of diaspora, is a multidimensional term characterized by complexity and fluidity. Identity is fragmented, discursive, and contextual. Questions of identity are always questions about representation and invention. They are always about silencing and remembering, about narrative, and the stories which peoples and cultures “tell themselves about who they are and where they came from” (Hall, 1995, p. 5).

Hall (2007) further defines cultural identity as a process of becoming:

It belongs to the future as much as to the past…Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation…The past continues to speak to us. But it does not longer addresses us as a simple, factual "past," since our relation to it, like the child's relation to the mother, is always-already "after the break." It is always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture, not an essence but a positioning." (pp. 131-132)
Additionally, Bhabha's (1994) theory of cultural difference provides us with the conceptual vocabulary of *hybridity* and the *third space*. He develops these two concepts to address identity construction of migrants and colonised peoples in the contemporary globalising world. For Bhabha (1994), being a migrant and/or colonised means being in at least two places at once, being in-between two cultures, dwelling in a third space—a space of “a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation…that takes you ‘beyond’ yourself in order to return, in a spirit of revision and reconstruction, to the political conditions of the present” (pp. 3-4). He argues that to be in-between and unhomed is not to be homeless. At the same time, it means to dwell in a "state of incredulous terror" (p.13). Bhabha (1994) also defines the concept of *othering* as a form of pathological disorder at a governmental level and argues that “[t]he objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish system of administration and instruction” (p. 101).

The place of immigrants and refugees in their host country can be additionally theorized by using the concept of *othering* as described by Daniel Francis (1992) in his book *The Imaginary Indian*. Francis discusses the image of the "Vanishing Indian" in Canada (p. 57). Since 1850, this image remained an appealing one for Canadians:

Appealing as it did so strongly to sentimentalists who wanted to indulge a guilty conscience while feeling there is nothing they could do about it. It appealed as well to social critics eager to berate governments for their shameful policies of neglect. It appealed to expansionists because it disposed of a major obstacle to the extension of White civilization across the continent...the image appealed to racists
who found in it a welcome reassurance that their own way of life was superior...When Canadians said "Indian," they meant doomed. (p. 57)

According to the text above, Indians were perceived as dying-out-savages. George Grant—an Anglican minister from Nova Scotia—traveled across the Northwest in 1872 and wrote that Indians are a dying race, a problem to be solved. Grant believed, however, that Indian children could be saved, "Little can be done with the old, and it may be two, three or more generations before the old habits of a people are changed; but, by always taking hold of the young, the work can be done" (Grant, 1967, p. 178). This sentiment of rendering people as problems to be solved and their children as creatures to be saved continued from the 18th into the 21st century. While humanitarian immigration is a building block in the construction of the Canadian nation as "compassionate and caring" (Dauvergne, 2005, p. 75), refugee selection policies and practices continue to construct refugees as an inferior "Other."

The concept of othering is further illuminated by Edward Said (2000) when he argues that Orientals/Other-than-West are often constructed as a less human other, "a subject race, dominated by a race that knows them and what is good for them better than they could know themselves” (p. 35). This less human other appears as “in need of corrective study by the West” (Said, 2000, p. 41) creating a reality that is both “antihuman and persistent” (p.44). The Orient is considered by the West as an object of study, labelled with an otherness/difference. This object of study is inferior, passive, non-participating, and non-autonomous. These inferior identities are not only constructed, but also invented. The West invented the Orient, the Oriental, and the Other-than-West to justify its domination over minority groups:
Although the Western consumer belongs to a numerical minority, he [sic] is entitled either to own or to expend (or both) the majority of the world’s resources. Why? Because, he, unlike the Oriental, is a true human being. No better instance exists today of what Anwar Abdel Malek calls "the hegemonism of possessing minorities" and anthropocentrism allied with Europocentrism: a white middle-class Westerner believes it is his [sic] human prerogative not only to manage the nonwhite world but also to own it, just because by definition “it” is not quite human as “we” are. There is no purer example than this of dehumanized thought.

(p. 108)

Thus, Said critiques the legacy of generalization, categorization, and colonization for inventing, constructing, and maintaining the minority groups’ troubling identities. However, he equates the Occident with Europe and European imperialism and fails to acknowledge the power imbalance among existing European states (e.g., Western European countries vs. Eastern European countries).

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (1989) describe how post-colonial theory offers a useful framework for exploring the female immigrant experience:

Post-colonial theory, with this stress on the dynamics of displacement and, ultimately, the resistance it inspires, is also a potentially fruitful illuminator of female experience and of the double jeopardy potentially inherent in female immigrant experience...Post-colonial theorists point out that "women in many societies have been relegated to the position of 'Other'...They share with colonized races and peoples an intimate experience of the politics of oppression and
Feminist and post-colonial discourses both seek to reinstate the 
marginalised in the face of the dominant. (pp. 174-175)

Postcolonial theoretical perspectives are helpful in understanding the everyday 
lives of women in the post-migration context. Moreover, they allow us to understand how 
the views of immigrant and refugee women are shaped by their experiences in their own 
countries, their lives during displacement, and their experiences within exiled 
communities. In particular, postcolonial theoretical perspectives offer an analytic tool "to 
examine how the ‘non-Western Other’ has been constructed through contrasting images 
with the West” (Anderson, 2002, p. 12). According to Bhabha (1983), the colonial 
subject is constructed within an apparatus of power that contains a fixed form of 
difference, the stereotype. Furthermore, Fanon (1970) describes the effects of stereotypes 
on a colonised culture as "a continued agony rather than a total disappearance of the pre-
existing culture. The culture once living and open to the future, becomes closed, fixed in 
the colonial status, caught in the yoke of oppression" (p. 78).

Although most of the migrant literature continues to explore the themes of 
dislocation, assimilation, and marginalisation, emerging female identities are increasingly 
becoming theorised as transnational female identities. According to Paudyal (2010), 
"individuals cannot confine themselves within the narrow concept of national and cultural 
boundaries in this globalized world...identities are becoming more transnational and 
global due to the development of technologies, transportation, and global connections 
between people” (p. iv).
Towards a Transnational Feminist Praxis

Postcolonial and transnational studies have always focused on the inequalities rooted in capitalist patriarchies in various times of globalization. Grewal and Kaplan (2000) recognise that postcolonial studies have enabled feminist scholars to study transnationality:

For example, notions of "orientalism," "subalternity," "hybridity," "diaspora," "traveling theory," and "border theory" provide feminists with conceptual tools to examine a vast array of representational politics. Emphasis on the history of modern imperialism has helped feminists look at race, sexuality, and class not only as bounded categories but as concepts that "travel"—that is, circulate and work in different and linked ways in different places and times. (p. 1)

Transnationalism is a process by which migrants develop social relations that link their societies of origin and settlement together. This process is strongly linked to migrants and hybridity, which are fundamental concepts in postcolonial studies. Transnationalism is about networking and connecting different peoples and ideas that expand the narrow notions of national, racial, and ethnic identity.

Transnational feminism has developed a stronger presence with the growth of globalization, exploring intersectionalities of women’s lives from a global and interdisciplinary perspective and advocating for international women's networks. According to Nagar and Lock Swarr (2010), transnational feminism is:

a conceptual framework that strives to liberate itself from the political and intellectual constraints of international feminisms and global feminisms. Whereas international feminisms are seen as rigidly adhering to nation-state borders and
paying inadequate attention to forces of globalization, global feminisms have been subjected to critical scrutiny for prioritizing northern feminist agendas and perspectives and for homogenizing women's struggles for socio-political justice, especially in colonial and neocolonial context. (p. 4)

This framework interrogates border-crossing; considers context and history; and challenges western feminism on issues of racism, colonialism, and global capitalism/imperialism. This perspective problematises feminist scholarship within North America and contributes to the contemporary feminist knowledge production and activism through anti-racist, anti-capitalist, and anti-colonialist agendas of the North American white diaspora. In this view, women's struggles must be understood in relation to historical, cultural, political, and economic contexts, making it impossible to speak of an average woman. In the last two decades, re/conceptualizations of feminism have shifted the focus from a homogenized notion of "woman" to race, class, sexuality, physical ability, ethnicity, nationality, and globalization, stressing the intersectionalities, as well as differences of these experiences. Theorizing women’s experiences from these multiple and intersecting locations generates new questions, concerns, and interpretations (Mohanty, 2003; Narayan, 1998), complicating analysis of the historical, political, economic, and cultural forces that shape women’s lives in an increasingly globalising world. Transnational feminisms—building on (feminist) postcolonial theories—offer a new framework for theorising women's lives in such a world.

Transnational feminism seeks to uncover oppression by juxtaposing intersections of race, class, gender, and culture, among a host of others, while working through difference (e.g., through race, class, gender, culture, and ethnicity)—rather than through
binary oppositions—in the construction of knowledge. Within this context, Mohanty (2003) describes our world as:

a world that can be understood only in terms of its destructive divisions of gender, color, class, sexuality and nation, a world that must be transformed through a necessary process of 'pivoting the center' (to use Bettina Aptheker's words), for the assumed center (Europe and the United States) will no longer hold. (pp. 43-44)

To theorise the questions of difference and power means to understand race, class, gender, nation, sexuality, and colonialism "not just in terms of static, embodied categories but in terms of histories and experiences that tie us together" (Mohanty, 2003, p. 1). Mohanty (2003) also argues that access to socially valued resources may be hindered through destructive divisions of gender, race, class, and nation/ethnicity. Although a separation between the five categories is only possible in theory, it is important to discuss the conceptual meaning of each concept.

Gender or rather gendering is a socially constructed hierarchy (Purkayastha, 2012). Mohanty (1984) argues that descriptive gender differences (sociologically and not necessarily biologically defined) "are transformed into the division between men and women" (p. 340). As a result, sexual difference becomes a synonym for female subordination and reinforces binary divisions between men and women. It is important to note, however, that within such a dominant discourse of male domination and female subordination, particular cultural, material, ideological, and institutional forces outline divergent experiences of what it means to be man or woman (Sideris, 2003).

Mohanty (2003) describes racialization as a continuous and negotiated process:
Growing up in India, I was Indian; teaching high school in Nigeria, I was a foreigner (still Indian), albeit a familiar one. As a graduate student in Illinois, I was first a "Third World" foreign student, and then a person of colour. Doing research in London, I was black. As a professor at an American university, I am an Asian woman—although South Asian racial profiles fit uneasily into the "Asian" category—and because I choose to identify myself as such, an anti-racist feminist of colour. In North America I was also a "resident alien" with an Indian passport—I am now a U.S. citizen whose racialization has shifted dramatically (and negatively) since the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001. (p. 190)

In terms of class, social stratification could be described in the following manner:

“Class classification starts off from the allocation of individuals, sorting their competencies on the basis of criteria of marketability of skills, economic function, property and knowledges” (Anthias, 2001, p. 378). Bourdieu (1986) argues that class location depends not only on basic economics, but also on social and cultural capital. Social capital is a robust network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance, influence, and support, while cultural capital refers to long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body (e.g., attitudes, behaviour, gender, and ethnicity); objectified in cultural goods (e.g., dress, pictures, books); and institutionalized as academic credentials and diplomas. Social and cultural capital can be converted into economic capital and thus become constitutive of class positioning. Bannerji, Mojab, and Whitehead (2001) further define class by arguing that important relations of production—
in terms of gender—also include relations of inheritance, marriage, divorce, as well as control of reproductive rights.

Ethnic identity is created and perpetuated through the use of gender as a symbol (Jones, 2002; Baines, 2003). With the institutionalization of ethnicity and ethnic identity, the colonial-ascribed characteristics became generalized for each ethnic group (Gallimore, 2008). Riaño and Baghdadi (2007) define ethnicity as national, cultural, religious, linguistic, or other traits that are assigned to distinct groups. In the European context, the term ethnicity is used rather than race, and it is understood in territorial terms. Riaño and Baghdadi (2007) further explain:

Ethnicity can be studied from the perspective of self-identification (i.e., groups and individuals seeing themselves as having a collective identity because of common ethnic categories such as race, origin, language, religion, and history) or from the perspective of dominant groups categorizing minority groups (i.e., the demarcation of boundaries between us and those who are different). (p. 168)

One of the major assumptions behind transnational feminism is the importance of connection between peoples across continents. Shohat (1998) emphasises the hybrid nature of contemporary communities characterised by the permanent movements of people, goods, and images. According to Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt (1999), transnationalism is “a state where people live dual lives; speak two languages and have two homes in two countries" (p. 217). As migrants live simultaneously in (at least) two different worlds, their identities are not framed by the location, but rather seen as "fluid and flexible" (Yeoh, Lai, Charney, & Kiong, 2003, p. 3).
Another main assumption behind transnational feminism is the multiple and negotiated nature of identity. Transnational feminism challenges Eurocentrism:

Endemic in present-day thought and education, Eucentrism is naturalized as "common sense." Philosophy and literature are assumed to be European philosophy and literature...History is assumed to be European history...The residual traces of centuries of axiomatic European domination inform the general culture, the everyday language, and the media, engendering a fictitious sense of the innate superiority of European-derived cultures and peoples. (Shohat, 1998, p. 1)

Shohat (1998) acknowledges the presence of multiple feminist voices within each social location (Shohat, 1998). Grewal (1994), for example, emphasises the heterogeneous, negotiated, and fluid subjectivity of women. She takes into consideration different representations of women based on social class and caste, as well as those representations based on the social roles of wife and mother.

Transnational feminisms also acknowledge and explore diasporic subjectivities. Grewal and Kaplan (1994) refer to transnational feminism as a form of alliance, subversion, and complicity operating in a privileged in-between space where asymmetries and inequalities between women can be acknowledged and critically deconstructed. Mendoza (2002), however, argues that transnational feminism is an attempt to construct a virtual, utopian community. The global, especially cyberspace and global media, becomes the privileged space to impose political meanings and strategies. The struggles and agendas of those women who do not have access to the Internet and transnational networks easily become neglected or get overshadowed by the mostly English-speaking,
better educated, and socio-economically more privileged women who have access to the Internet, can travel, can attend conferences, and can communicate with each other (Mendoza, 2002). Despite these concerns, a transnational feminist framework carries a possibility of informing and advancing North American feminist thought.

**Moving Away From the East-West Binary**

Western feminists operate on the assumption that their societies are "perfectible" (Lazreg, 1988, p. 326). Such an assumption imposes a western normative model over the rest of the (feminist) world. Lazreg (1988) states that even Eastern feminists' writings for western audiences are based on the assumption that western feminist knowledge can be expanded or adjusted but seldom questioned. Toth (1993) notes that with the rising of the Iron Curtain in the late 1980s, Western perceptions of Eastern European women ranged from envy to pity. After the end of communism and socialism in Central and Eastern Europe, Western feminists witnessed the challenges faced by Eastern European women in reconciling the new conditions of their post-socialist/pre-capitalist reality. Reflecting on these views, Toth writes: "I do not want readers either to envy or pity us, but to understand us" (pp. 214-221).

Havelkova (1996) asserts that direct application of Western feminist theories to Eastern European realities leads to "the false assumption that East/European women are second-class citizens and that they are conservative” (p. 243). Instead of explaining Eastern European feminism in terms of its difference from the West, feminists should engage with these concepts in terms of “copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often with radically asymmetrical relations of power” (Pratt, 1992, pp. 6-7).
Watson (2000) invites Western feminist scholars to consider multiple dimensions of difference through which gender has been constructed and lived. The author affirms that despite patriarchal structures many women in Eastern/European socialist states did not feel excluded or inferior to men because they were provided with education, employment, and extensive networks of child care. Maternity leave and funds were introduced and kept women's jobs open for them until their return. By the end of the 1980s, employment rates among women were generally similar to those of men (Watson, 2000). Understanding the history of women’s activism in post-socialist states, says Watson, brings us closer to understanding why many Eastern Europeans do not consider gender as a category in and of itself, separate from broader socio-economic relations. They believe that fighting for equity and social justice becomes possible first and foremost by addressing the social category of class.

Kašić (2004) expresses skepticism about the usefulness of emphasizing the difference in West-East feminist relations; doing so showcases the difference of Eastern European feminisms in the name of voice, while preserving the hegemony of Western feminisms. This concept of Eastern European feminist "Other" leaves Western feminisms as unmarked, universal, and normal. It also maintains a power imbalance, since the "Other" remains a guest in the house of the dominant group. According to Cerwonka (2006), these concepts are not necessarily explicitly defined in the literature on the East-West divide in feminism. Western feminism, however, often refers to feminist theory and scholarship generated in North America and Western Europe. In this context, Western Europe refers to the countries allied with the US and NATO against the Soviet Union and its allies during the Cold War (1945-1991), while Eastern Europe refers to the
former communist states of Central and Eastern Europe (i.e., Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Soviet Union) as well as to the former provinces of the non-aligned Yugoslavia (i.e., Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Serbia). At the same time, the writings of women of color, third-world feminists within the American academy, and black American feminists do not seem to inhabit the category Western feminist. Cerwonka (2006) questions the logic and usefulness of the categories Western European feminism and Eastern European feminism, but employs them in congruence with existing feminist literature.

Mudure (2007) describes the position of Eastern/Central European feminisms as azeugmatic position, a position that relies on bridging and yoking:

The problem of Eastern/Central European feminisms is their ambivalence; they are in a bridging, yoking position between hegemonic feminisms and the feminisms of the poor women of the world. Eastern/Central European feminisms belong and long to belong to Europe, which is a space with a hegemonic history and presence. On the other hand, the social, political, and particularly economic realities of these countries are more or less close to the realities of Third World countries—with adequate variations for each country of the region. (p. 142)

Bazylevych (2011) challenges Western hegemonic scholarship, arguing that the majority of published feminist work dismisses the presence of socialist activism in the area of women's rights. Bazylevych writes:

When socialist contributions to women’s rights are acknowledged (high percentage of employment, achievements of women in science and professional
lives, developed childcare network and accessible education), they are usually prefaced with “although,” “while,” or immediately postfixed with “however,” pointing to the only partial success of these policies (Einhorn 1993). Few if any scholars attempt to focus on the glass half full, as opposed to the glass half empty, informed by the celebratory post Cold War discourses. (p. 14)

This underlines how the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of the U.S. imperialism aggravated many Eastern/Central European women’s life conditions and “pushed socialist ideas about a safety net (guaranteed employment, providing social benefits) out of the picture, leaving women to tackle rampant deregulation, privatization, and dismantling of institutions that have once helped women in maintaining their independence” (p. 16). She notes that the Eastern European feminist peace agenda that focuses on resolving political issues around the world—in contrast to the Western equity agenda that takes up women’s issues only in order to avoid politicization—was mostly dismissed by Western scholars. This Eastern European peace agenda was, however, correct in its criticism of capitalism, classism, racism, and sexism.

In her article Missing in Action: On Eastern European Women and Transnational Feminism, Roman (2006) also argues that the realities of Eastern European women remain absent from transnational feminism:

Clearly, the topics studied are narratives belonging to the women/gender/sexualities of those nations that have come out of colonialism in the twentieth century and can be located exclusively on the continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Virtually absent are the problems of Eastern Europe, as are those of a modern Europe as the European Union...Is it the right time for
feminists to regain transnational feminism by making it more inclusive and thereby addressing not only the problems of the postcolonial world but also those of Eastern Europe, of Europe as the European Union, and of multicultural Europe? (pp. 5-6)

The author explains that the issues of Eastern European women are not about the veil and female genital mutilation—often discussed in postcolonial and transnational feminisms—but rather those of marketization and unprecedented consumerism. In contrast to the transnational/postcolonial discourse, the Eastern European feminists do not advocate for anti-European politics and activism. They engage with ethnic, religious, and European identities, rather than with issues of race or color—burning concerns of postcolonial and transnational feminisms in North America. Roman (2006) describes Eastern European women as the European "Other" and emphasises the importance of engaging with Eastern European realities:

Since Eastern Europeans are the traditional “European Others” of Western Europe, then Eastern European women’s function becomes crucial for a democratic redefinition of Europe: By assuming and valorizing their historically dislocated Europeanness into an empowered “minor” European identity devoid of racism, fascism, and sexism. It is on these premises that a dialogue between Eastern European women and the European Union is possible, as well as between Eastern European women and transnational feminism. (p. 7)

In the excerpt above, Eastern European women's experiences are excluded from western feminist discourses because these women are perceived as descendants of the colonial Western Europe (to which they do not belong). A dialogue between the Eastern European
women and the rest of Europe is critical if we are to redefine and sustain European democracy.

**Proposing an Anti-racist/Anti-capitalist/Anti-colonialist Feminist Agenda**

Mohanty (1984) shifts away from woman as lack and victim and takes race—or rather location—as her focus. In a number of Western feminist writings, Mohanty detects the "colonialist move" (p. 349) that constructs the Third World Woman as a singular and monolithic subject. According to Mohanty, this construction of a colonial *Other* is rooted in three Western feminist assumptions: men as oppressors versus women as victims, first world women versus third world women, and a false sense of common experiences and goals (i.e., sisterhood). First, Mohanty argues that the classical notion of men as oppressors and women as oppressed—often taken up by white feminist scholars—is problematic, as it implies a universal notion of patriarchy and only highlights the men/women binary. She writes:

Not only is it problematical to speak of a vision of women shared by Arab and Muslim societies without addressing the particular historical, material and ideological power structures that construct such images, but to speak of *the* patriarchal family or *the* tribal kinship structure as the *origin* of the socio-economic status of women is to again assume that women are sexual-political subjects prior to their entry into the family. So while on the one hand women attain value or status *within* the family, the assumption of a singular patriarchal kinship system (common to all Arab and Muslim societies) is what apparently structures women as an oppressed group in these societies! (p. 342)
Mohanty (1984) critiques the white Western feminist assumption that all Arab and Muslim women are a homogeneous oppressed group, and reminds feminists that there are diverse practices within the family which constitute women as mothers, wives, and/or sisters. She also challenges the definition of Arab and Muslim patriarchal family as a fixed family that is “carried over from the times of the prophet Mohammed...as it were, ‘outside history’” (p. 342). Mohanty acknowledges there is sufficient evidence that patriarchal structures have oppressed women at different points in history, but warns that all patriarchal structures are not necessarily identical. She argues that a singular approach to understanding patriarchal families is rooted in Orientalist tendencies and Western biases towards other cultures. As a result, patriarchy becomes a homogenizing, oppressive term applied to all women. Mohanty points out that such a view of a universal patriarchal system constructs a problematic image of a woman who is oppressed even before she is born.

Second, white Western feminists assume that third world women are a coherent group with identical experiences and goals. They define so called Third World Women as being subjects outside social relations and structures. These women's lives and identities are judged by Western feminist standards, and an average Third World Woman is defined as:

religious (read "not progressive"), family-oriented (read "traditional"), legal minors (read "they-are-still-not-conscious-of-their- rights"), illiterate (read "ignorant"), domestic (read "backward") and sometimes revolutionary (read "their-country-is-in-a-state-of-war-they-must-fight!"). This is how the "third world difference" is produced. (p. 352)
Such a view of third world women is paternalistic and implies they are not feminist enough. Consequently, the Western feminist's task is to show the third world women how to get feministic (i.e., become sexually liberated, free-minded, in control of their lives, and secular). Mohanty warns that terms such as First World Woman and Third World Woman are problematic in suggesting oversimplified similarities within these groups of women. She deconstructs the First World Woman/Third World Woman binary and argues that First World and Third World categorisations are less helpful than the categorizations North/South or One-Third/Two-Thirds Worlds (Mohanty, 2002).

North/South is used to distinguish between economically and politically privileged and marginalised nations while One-Third/Two-Thirds Worlds represent social minorities and social majorities, categories based on the quality of life led by nations and communities. Such a categorisation points out the continuity as well as the discontinuity between the haves and have-nots around the world. Mohanty (2002) elaborates:

This [One-Third/Two-Thirds Worlds] designation also highlights the fluidity and power of global forces that situate communities of people as social majorities/minorities in disparate form. One-Third/Two-Thirds is a nonessentialist categorization, but it incorporates an analysis of power and agency that is crucial. Yet what it misses is a history of colonization that the terms Western/Third World draw attention to. (p. 506)

Mohanty suggests that terminological discussions around categorizations First World Women/Third World Woman, North/South, and One-Third/Two-Thirds Worlds reveal the limitations of our analytical language. Labels and definitions must be questioned and discussed in terms of both their values and their limitations. Moreover, she argues that it
is in the production of this *Third World Difference* that Western feminisms correct and colonize the complexities and conflicts encountered by women of different classes, religions, cultures, races, and castes in "Third World Countries." Western scholarship (and Western imperialism), must be explored in the context of the West's hegemonic position today, and a struggle for control over the process of world development. Abdel-Malek (1981) cautions that politics is deeply rooted in the discourses of culture:

Contemporary imperialism is, in a real sense, a hegemonic imperialism, exercising to a maximum degree a rationalized violence taken to a higher level than ever before-through fire and sword, but also through the attempt to control hearts and minds. For its content is defined by the combined action of the military-industrial complex and the hegemonic cultural centers of the West. (p. 145-146)

Third, Mohanty (2002) criticizes Western methodological practices which are patronizing and committed to finding evidence of powerless and victimized third world women. The white feminist concept of *sisterhood*, says Mohanty, implies a false sense of common experiences and goals; as if *all* women are oppressed by a universal system of patriarchal dominance. This idea only paralyses women. In the same vein, Marler (2006) invites feminist scholars to challenge the myth of universal patriarchy. She explains, “It is the myth of universal patriarchy that will not give women a future” (p. 183). The male/female binary is not the only axis around which power and privilege revolve; race, class, ethnicity, nationality, social agency, and other identities also influence the power imbalance, often in conjunction with gender (Mahler & Pessar, 2001). Massey (1994) argues that people's social identities affect their access to resources and opportunities, but
their social agency has the potential to transform these identities. This concept of intersectionality acknowledges that gender is critical, but not necessarily the most salient script in women's lives. Nevertheless, gender is “an entry point into complex systems of meaning and power” (Visweswaran, 1997, p. 616).

Mohanty (1984, 2002) points out that every women’s rights movement must focus on the global political economy rather than ground itself in the micropolitics of everyday life. She problematises feminist experience as *hegemonic white U.S. middle-class* women's experience, and argues for Reagon's (1983) approach to experience. Instead of thinking that women's experience can inform a feminist politics, we should think of politics as informing experience and social location. Mohanty (1992) also draws attention to intersectionality: “it is the current intersection of anti-racist, anti-imperialist and gay and lesbian struggles which we need to understand to map the ground for feminist political strategy and critical analysis” (p. 87). She calls this way of thinking a politics of location and defines it as "historical, geographical, cultural, psychic, imaginative boundaries which provide the ground for political definition and self-definition for contemporary US feminists" (p. 74). Mohanty reconceptualises the politics of identity through a politics of location, a temporality of common struggle, and a coalition-building based on survival.

Rather than promoting feminist sisterhood, Mohanty (2002, 2003, 2006) offers the idea of noncolonizing feminist solidarity across borders. She believes in a larger feminist project than the colonizing one she observed emerging in mainstream feminist scholarship. Mohanty (2002) develops the concept of *feminist solidarity* to decolonize knowledge and critique capitalism. The main assumption of the *feminist solidarity* model
is that the local and the global compose each other and that worldwide communities have correlated histories. This model focuses on the micropolitics of context, subjectivity, and struggle, as well as global economic and political frameworks. It highlights common interests across borders, explores the historical and experiential differences, describes the interconnectedness of women's lives across the world, and defines links and divisions between forms of women’s activism across geographical, historical, and social locations (Mohanty, 2006). Feminist solidarity assumes that Western and Third World feminists are not geographically defined categories, but rather “political and analytic sites and methodologies used” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 502). Mohanty argues that a woman originating from a Third World country can be a Western feminist in orientation, while a European woman can employ a Third World woman analytical perspective, creating and multiplying radical sites of feminist knowledge and solidarity. Transnational feminist solidarity cannot be premised on a, us/them binary (or any other binary inclusive of power/resistance, modernity/tradition, East/West, North/South, Western/non-Western, national/international, and feminism/patriarchy); but rather on connectivity and inter/subjectivity. This solidarity argues for relationships that intentionally and systematically link migrants' societies of origin and settlement. It is all about crossing borders, networking, and connecting different peoples and ideas beyond national, racial, and ethnic identities.

Mohanty (2003) utilizes the feminist solidarity model to examine race, empire, and citizenship in U.S. feminist projects. She observes that corporate cultures of power, domination, and surveillance overlap with a politics of complicity in the U.S. academy, and urges progressive scholars to analyze the languages of imperialism and empire.
Mohanty (2006) argues that “theorizing the place of immigrant, poor women of color in the citizenship narrative of Women’s Studies, and challenging the rescue narrative of privileged US feminists wherever it appears is a crucial aspect of feminist solidarity praxis at this time” (p.17). She further explains that feminist scholarship has been helpful in addressing the intersectionality of gender, race, class, and sexuality, but the category of the nation has been under-theorized in feminist work in the US. In times of war, however, these stories of the nation become mobilized and visible.

**Literature Review: Women, Migration, and (Teacher) Identity**

Immigrant women experience tensions and conflicts "as they navigate workplace norms in their new country" (Dlamini, Anucha & Wolfe, 2012, p. 1). Although skilled immigrant women (e.g., physicians, engineers, and teachers) are viewed as desirable immigrants and citizens, international education and work experiences do not facilitate access to higher paying employment (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005). The main barriers to obtaining employment in Canada include a lack of language proficiency (Phillion, 2003; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh et al., 2011), attitudinal barriers among employers (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005), non-recognition of international credentials (Dlamini, Anucha, & George, 2006; Medic, 2007; Mojab, 1999), non-recognition of international work experience (Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005), as well as "the costs of examinations or certification and limited internship positions through which to gain employment experience" (Dlamini et al., 2012, p. 3).

The professional lives of immigrant women teachers have been documented and theorised around the world. Literature on immigrant women teachers reveals factors that might be less evident when women teachers' immigrant status, race, ethnicity, school
experience, and pedagogy are taken for granted, as they can be when the teachers are "uniformly white, native English speakers, and of European background (Bascia, 1996). Moreover, this body of literature reminds us that teacher identities cannot be taken for granted, and that many immigrant women teachers articulate a sense of difference based on race, culture, and language, a difference experienced in terms of transition from one country to another and the reactions and responses of others: "These stories are poignant, but they are also striking in the sense in which the teachers articulate their own race and ethnicity...as a sense of 'difference,' of 'otherness,' the consequences of looking different, speaking or acting differently" (Bascia, 1996, p. 7).

**Post-Migration Realities of Immigrant Women Teachers**

Many immigrant women have limited access to employment in their host countries (Anucha et al., 2006; Dyck & McLaren, 2004; Man, 2004). As a result, they are forced to accept inadequate jobs in order to survive. Dlamini, et al. (2012) explored the work experiences of 37 immigrant women in Windsor, Ontario, and found that approximately half the women reported discrimination in the workplace. Despite the unfair treatment and discrimination, many women did not fight back:

First, the struggle to obtain a job in the first place meant that the women were very much aware of the delicate nature of retaining a job in a precarious economic climate...The economic slowdown increased the levels of xenophobia, ethnic marginalization, and gender discrimination despite a much-acclaimed Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. To find a low-skill job became a great achievement, and unskilled workers were easily replaceable. (Dlamini, et al., 2012, p, 12)
Some participants in this study even quit their jobs instead of resisting discrimination. These women became part of the global market, and experienced technological advances that deskill labor and create challenges and complexities in immigrant women's lives. The percentage of university educated immigrant women who were able to work in their professions in Canada decreased from 40% in the 1980s to 25% in 2000 (Couton, 2002), making these women vulnerable to deskilling and discrimination.

Oppression of immigrant women in general and immigrant women teachers in particular is complex, strengthened by the interlocking alliance of racism, classism, ageism, nationalism, sexism, capitalism, and imperialism. It is neither a hierarchical nor vertical structure, rather it is a three-dimensional matrix of domination. Within this matrix, immigrant women remain trapped on the bottom, often constructed by their supervisors and colleagues as different, inferior, and inadequate.

**Facing the Deficit Model of Difference**

Miller (2008), who explored the experiences of Caribbean male and female teachers teaching in the United Kingdom (UK) noted that the non-recognition of these teachers' credentials and work experiences is rooted in the deficit model of difference and the supremacy of dominant knowledge. He argues that non-recognition of international teaching qualifications constitutes a political act: “While credentials from within the European Economic Area receive automatic recognition and are legitimised as valid, certain forms of credentials, knowledge and work experiences gained outside this area are generally treated as suspicious or inferior, or both” (p. 26).

Although Caribbean teachers are allowed into the UK, professional standards deny them access to teaching. Devaluation of immigrant knowledge and experience has
been "used as a new strategy to maintain the subordination of certain groups of migrants and to reinforce the existing power relations in the UK" (Miller, 2008, p. 33).

In her article *Survival of the Fittest: Russian Immigrant Teachers Speak About Their Professional Adjustment in Israel*, Remennick (2002) noted that teaching is contextual, and that Soviet immigrant teachers, who were mostly women, faced a great challenge adjusting to the culture, climate, political and military problems, and school system in Israel. She suggests that researchers and policy makers should explore and understand the ways in which these women bridge this cultural gap if they are to inform decision-making and improve immigration, settlement, and educational policies and practices.

Research also indicates that internationally educated women teachers often internalise the deficit approach to assessing their knowledge and skills in Canada; they believe (or they have been convinced to believe) that they must modify their teaching style and practices to be more Canadian and less foreign (Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2006).

**Countering Discrimination**

In her article on professional integration of Russian immigrant teachers in Israel, Remennick (2002) states that most Soviet teachers who participated in her study were wives and mothers, and that only 12-13% of her participants found a teaching position in the Israeli school system. She describes professional integration of Russian immigrant teachers in Israel as "Survival of the Fittest" (p. 99). Teachers who managed to re-establish their teaching careers in Israel were young (in their thirties or early forties), but had significant teaching experience in the former Soviet Union (FSU). Those teachers who were proficient in Hebrew and had teaching degrees from the major cities of the
FSU were preferred in the school market over their less educated colleagues from smaller towns. Remennick (2002) also noted that local school principals discouraged older teachers, especially women, from re-establishing their teaching careers:

Teachers in their thirties with 5-15 years of Soviet experience had the best chances of regaining their job. In this age-experience category, there seemed to be no gender difference in the chances for occupational success. For older candidates, male preference was often expressed by potential employers, based on the argument that only male teachers could hold the class in check. The combination of heavy Russian accent, older age and female gender was seen by most school principals as highly problematic. (p. 108)

To re-establish a teaching career, Russian immigrant teachers—especially women in their forties—had to resist their potential employers’ negative stereotyping of them as professionals.

In a study on mentoring immigrant teachers in Australia, Peeler and Jane (2005) also pointed out to an immigrant female teacher from India who managed to obtain a contract teaching position at a school, but lacked the support of her peers. Even after being hired, this teacher had a difficult time coping in a racist, hostile environment. The study draws attention to the complexities of immigrant women teachers’ experiences within educational systems of their host countries.

Immigrant women teachers in Canada also find that their teaching credentials and experiences are undervalued in comparison with credentials and experiences of comparable Canadian-born teachers (Mojab, 1999). These women's professional identities become destabilized, which might put at risk their mental and physical health.
Mojab (1999) interviewed 86 immigrant women in Toronto, coming from 30 countries. Ten out of 86 participants were immigrant women teachers. Of the ten women who were teachers in their home country, three were housewives, three were unemployed, and four were in traditionally female jobs (e.g., janitoring, hairdressing, or cooking) in Canada. The author argues that some immigrant women teachers "could not readily continue their profession even if they had adequate knowledge of English and if their credentials were accredited" (p. 127) because their teaching experience is perceived as inferior to Canadian teaching experience. This perception is partially due to the differences in the educational systems between Canada and other countries, but "it has, at the same time, racial, ethnic, and class dimensions" (p. 127), and results in a rather lengthy and costly re/certification. Mojab (1999) concludes that women teachers participating in her study expected to find teaching jobs in Canada, but instead encountered "the negative impacts of globalization, a 'flexible' workforce, and a 'jobless' society" (p. 127).

Phillion (2003) investigated the experiences of five internationally educated women teachers from India, Jamaica, and Somalia as they went through the process of becoming certified teachers in Ontario, Canada, and concluded that these women encountered three main types of obstacles to teaching: (a) systemic obstacles such as lack of information related to the re-certification process, the cost of the process, lack of Canadian teaching experience, and need for additional education; (b) general obstacles such as lack of language proficiency and an accent, and (c) social obstacles including racism and discrimination.

Walsh et al. (2011) reported that most internationally educated female teachers struggle to re-establish their teaching careers in Canada because they are often
streamlined into minimum wage jobs. The long hours associated with minimum wage jobs ensure that the energy and time required to study, to re-certify, and/or to attend language classes are severely limited. As a result, these women are forced to give up their teaching careers. The authors argue that where internationally educated (female) teachers (IETs) live in Canada also affects the ways they are constructed in the labour market and teacher education programs: "Female IETs are thus located in a difficult space where their differences in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and language are heightened even as they are subject to discourses about self-responsibility and necessity of meeting seemingly neutral standards of competence" (p. 663).

Ng and Shan (2010) reported that training programs for internationally educated professionals—including immigrant women teachers—in Canada reproduce and maintain the gendered and racialised segregation of the Canadian labour market. More specifically, they found that only two of the 21 Chinese immigrant women—who participated in their study and bridge-to-work programs—stayed "close to their previous careers" (p. 175). Most women were streamlined into low-paid occupations such as settlement services and childcare that rely on a feminised and racialised workforce:

One worked in higher education and the other as a customs broker. All the other women had to change their career paths, many from traditionally male-dominated fields (such as engineering) to jobs that are female-dominated, such as community and settlement services and early childhood education, which are increasingly occupied by women of colour and immigrant women...regardless of the sector into which they have inserted themselves, many found that they were in lower echelon positions; some failed to find full-time employment and worked on a
part-time or contract basis. Many found that they were over-qualified for the positions they occupied. (p. 175)

The authors concluded that Canadian training programs perpetuate gender and racial discrimination both in the job market and society. These processes of discrimination are rooted in a colonial legacy "that downgrades education, training and credentials from non-Western societies, thereby re-inscribing and exacerbating existing inequalities based on age, gender and race" (p. 181).

**Assimilating, Acculturating, and/or Integrating**

Michael (2006) explored professional integration of immigrant teachers (mostly women) from the FSU in comparison to Israeli teachers working in the same schools and found immigrant teachers participated less in school decision-making, professional development courses, and professional organizations than Israeli teachers. Michael argues schools have adopted an assimilationist rather than a pluralistic approach to professional integration of immigrant teachers. Such an approach "hinders the absorption of immigrant teachers and fails to utilize the potential contribution of immigrant teachers, despite the general opinion that immigrant absorption is a national priority" (p. 164).

Additionally, Rhone (2007) identified four main obstacles to Caribbean teachers' integration in the U.S. educational system. The Caribbean teachers participating in her study, who were mostly females, encountered marginalization because they are: (a) immigrants, (b) racial minorities, (c) required to pursue additional education for a profession they have been practicing for a number of years in their home countries, and (d) experiencing assimilation and acculturation. Caribbean educators were not a racial minority in their homeland, and once in the US they became puzzled by their new
minority status. This marginalised location in the U.S. educational system and society forced many of these Caribbean immigrant teachers to continue their education in the US and to study these issues of marginalization in greater depth.

Educational authorities in host countries adopt a "set of value-free criteria, which discounts the social, political, historical, and cultural context within which such knowledge has been constructed" (Miller, 2008, p. 33). Authorities who claim neutral assessment and universality of teacher knowledge do not question whose interests these "standards" represent. He draws on Young (2005) who argues that universality of knowledge promotes assimilation while a politics of difference creates spaces for multiple perspectives:

In using the one-size-fits-all assessment to measure immigrants' credentials and experience, positivism and liberal universalism have failed to acknowledge:

Whose interests are served by these standards? How to assess knowledge that is valid but different? What forms of knowledge become recognised?” (Miller, 2008, p. 33)

The process of integration into a new community, however, is always dependent on individuals forming valuable relationships through friendship and mentoring (Remennick, 2002) and their ability to share common experiences (Peeler & Jane, 2005). Institutional sources of support, such as a domestic teacher mentoring for an immigrant teacher during the initial challenges in the classroom, are also critical. Shared teaching experiences build valuable learning communities, while new friendships promote better understandings between individuals, groups, and communities, break down culturally and socially constructed barriers (Bond, 1999), and build a common goal and solidarity (Hall, 1997).
Western Images of a Refugee Woman

Western (i.e., North American, Australian, and Western European) constructions of refugee women identities vary based on their country of origin. Some refugee women might be more marginalised than others. Empirical studies about refugee women often feed into the refugee narrative. In one study, 95% of Cambodian refugee women reported that they were sexually abused or raped (Mollica, 1986). Chung (2001) compares health challenges of Cambodian refugee women immigrating to the US with health challenges of other Southeast Asian refugee women entering the country. Drawing on Mollica et al.’s (1985) findings, Chung wrote that Cambodian refugee women experienced almost nine times more trauma than other Southeast Asian refugee groups. The following three groups of Cambodian women were identified as the most vulnerable women, those who: experienced rape, became widows, or lost their children. Some older Cambodian refugee women suffered from psychosomatic blindness (Van Boemel & Rozee, 1992). The severity of their blindness was related to the level of traumatic events they experienced during and after the collapse of Cambodia.

Chung and Bemak (2006) state refugee women’s experiences of violence, rape, and physical abuse impact their mental health and often results in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. The authors also argue that, unlike immigrant women who migrate voluntarily, refugee women escaping from their war-torn countries and oppressive governments become more susceptible to mental health problems.

In a study focusing on intervention programmes created for assisting refugee women in their settlement, Carr-Hill et al. (1996) argue that “a high proportion of the groups operate at low levels of English language competence, with very few skilled
enough for English-medium study and training” (p. 1). Clayton (2005) observes, however, that “the work situation of migrant and refugee women declines notably on arriving in their host country, irrespective of their existing qualifications and even after they have accepted qualifications… education and training are usually necessary in the new country” (p. 227).

In Australia, Markovic, Manderson, and Kelaher (2002) explored the health risks and health care needs of refugee women from the former Yugoslavia. The authors asserted that “refugee health may deteriorate as a result of a combined impact of preimmigration experience and settlement problems” (p. 12). Public health professionals, therefore, must recognize the effects of the settlement experience on refugee women’s mental and physical health rather than adopt a “blame the victim” strategy. The authors conclude, “issues of resettlement, including finding employment and gaining a sense of security, are paramount for humanitarian settlers. Expectations that people are responsible for their own health and well-being fail to acknowledge social and governmental responsibility in health promotion and prevention” (p. 13).

In their study exploring the role of education in the resettlement process of Sudanese refugees in Australia, Hatoss and Huijser (2010) found that Sudanese refugee women face cultural and linguistic barriers in accessing educational opportunities in the country. The authors argue that immigration and resettlement policies often portray refugee women as vulnerable, which reinforces a binary opposition between refugee women as poor and powerless and Western women as educated and liberated. Such an approach denies refugee women agency and reinforces existing re-settlement barriers. In addition, socially constructed gender roles both in the new and home country pose
challenges to women’s educational achievements. Hatoss and Huijser (2010) conclude that "education is seen as one of the most important goals in refugees’ lives" (p. 158).

In Canada, racist practices and ethnocentric assumptions reduce the space for resistance and well-being on the part of immigrant and refugee women (Guruge & Khanlou, 2004). Additionally, nursing research on domestic violence against women in post-migration and settlement contexts remains limited:

Nursing research has paid little attention to women’s voices regarding post-migration loss of financial and social stability, the experience of racism and discrimination, the stress of negotiating and navigating through various institutional and structural systems that are designed to serve the dominant groups, and the impact of these experiences on the health and well-being of immigrant and refugee women. (p. 42)

Such a marginalization of immigrant and refugee women's voices leads to the perpetuation of these women's vulnerability within the Canadian health-care system. To address these issues of marginalization, the settlement of refugee women in Canada should be discussed from the perspectives of refugee women. In order to contextualize these experiences, however, it is important to outline the broader policy context of refugee settlement in this country.

The Location of Refugee Women Teachers in the Canadian Context

The Citizenship Act (1977) stipulates that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, are entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties and liabilities (Section 6). Canadian Citizens have the right to vote, to seek elected office, and to serve in the government. Canada is one of the few states in the
world that grants citizenship once certain conditions are met. Those conditions are typically met by three years of residence in Canada as a permanent resident.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) has had a major impact on the promotion and protection of human rights in Canada. According to Section 27, the *Charter* should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the protection and development of the multicultural heritage of Canadians (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982). In addition, the *Charter* recognizes equality as one of Canada’s fundamental values:

> Every individual is equal before and under the law, and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability. (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, Equality Rights section, para.1)

Section 15 (1) of the Charter protects every individual in Canada from discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, and mental or physical disability. The main purpose of s. 15 (1) is to prevent disadvantage, stereotyping, or political or social prejudice from violating the essential human rights of persons in Canadian society. It applies to all laws; regulations and policies of legislatures; federal, provincial and territorial governments and government agencies; policies of rules of governmental employers; and organizations such as occupational regulatory bodies and hospitals.
In addition to the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982), the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (1985), Section 2, states that all individuals lawfully living in Canada should:

have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as members of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted.

Under this Act, discriminatory practices include denial of goods, services, and facilities; commercial premises or residential accommodation; and matters related to employment including membership, opportunities for advancement, and equal wages. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (1990), a set of provincial human rights legislation, also prohibits discrimination in regard to employment, services, and membership in an occupational association or self-governing profession (Janzen, Tokaci, Case, Vinograd, & Bertao, 2004; Medic, 2007; Wayland, 2006a).

**Canadian Immigration Laws**

In January, 1997, the *Not Just Numbers: A Canadian Framework for Future Immigration* report came out. It was followed by *Building on a Strong Foundation for the Twenty-First Century: New Directions for Immigration and Refugee Policy and Legislation* in January 1998. The requirements for entry into Canada presented in these two documents include high levels of formal education, the ability to resettle in 12
months in the case of refugees, the ability to speak at least one official language or to learn it quickly, relatively young age, excellent health, and the ability to adjust quickly to the Canadian culture thus preventing some immigrants—particularly illiterate women, women of colour, and women living in poverty—from immigration to Canada. The report promotes newcomers’ integration but this integration is envisioned as the responsibility of the immigrants and refugees, rather than of Canadian society and the state.

In its *Not Just Numbers: A Canadian Framework for Future Immigration* report, the *Legislative Review Advisory Group* (2007) states that the active integration of newcomers into Canada is "central to the success of the immigration program" (p. 2). The suggested framework assumes new requirements for citizenship, based not only on physical presence in Canada, but also on active participation in the community. The Advisory Group urges the Federal-Provincial Council on Immigration and Protection and federal immigration authorities to work together to improve access to trades and professions. It also highlights the importance of family; self-financing immigrants with proficiency in an official language, education, age, and work experience; a broader definition of protection including a proactive approach overseas to find those most in need; an inland procedure to discourage non-genuine claimants; and incentives for voluntary compliance with the *Immigration and Citizenship Act* (1978). The document contains 172 recommendations for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Some of the recommendations suggest recognizing and promoting the continuum from landing to citizenship, including explicit recognition of active participation in Canadian society as a requisite for citizenship, applying the *Immigration and Citizenship Act* (1978) to the selection and integration of immigrants, and the admission of visitors, students and
temporary workers, while also applying the *Immigration and Protection Act* (IRPA) (2002) only to those seeking protection.

The *IRPA* dictates that economic immigrants are chosen on a basis of the criteria that require higher education and work experience that will benefit Canadian society and the economy. A refugee, however, is primarily selected as a person who under the IRPA is “a Convention refugee” or “a person in similar circumstances, taking into account Canada’s humanitarian tradition with respect to the displaced and the persecuted” (IRPA, 2002, 3.2.c.).

The *National Action Committee on the Status of Women* (NAC) warns that the report introduces challenging criteria for the achievement of citizenship and maintenance of landed immigrant status since it implies a suspicious attitude toward immigrants. The Committee argues that the Canadian *Immigration Act* (1978) must be changed to include not only immigrants’ responsibilities (e.g., to be self-supporting, to integrate) but also their rights. According to Arat-Koc (2000), the Act fails to address "problems of racism and discrimination that have prevailed and grown stronger in Canada in the recent period, but rather legitimates and reinforces racist, anti-immigrant, anti-refugee sentiments" (p. 19).

**Settlement Policy**

Settlement is conceptualised as "a long-term, multi-step process that may not even be achieved in the first generation after migration" (Wayland, 2006b, p. 38). Settlement policy is defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and managed through public and non-profit service providers (i.e., settlement sector). Settlement policy consists
of a “variety of programs and services designed to help newcomers become participating members of Canadian society as quickly as possible” (CIC, 2002a).

In her report *Unsettled: Legal and Policy Barriers for Newcomers to Canada*, Wayland (2006a) listed a number of legal and policy barriers newcomers encounter in their settlement in Canada:

- eligibility requirements to access services; inflexible requirements for acquiring licensure in one’s profession; the presence of hiring procedures that are reasonable in the Canadian context but discriminate against newcomers, such as not hiring “overqualified” candidates; processing fees for services that may be beyond the reach of many families; the absence of programs to meet specified needs, such as the absence of occupation-specific language training; and, in the case of English as a Second Language (ESL) funding for schools, the absence of accountability mechanisms to ensure that funded programs are even delivered. (p. 4)

The participants reported that Canadian public policy fails to recognize the multiple stages of the settlement. Their settlement experiences are often characterized by isolation, vulnerability, and a lack of civic engagement; and employment is the primary settlement need, not least because it reduces other barriers to settlement. Settlement services are often delayed by limited funding and government-imposed constraints on the design and delivery of programs by non-government organizations, as well as by communication barriers. In addition, extended family separation results in a costly process that further burdens new Canadians. Legal and policy barriers to settlement interconnect and intensify, producing systemic discrimination against newcomers.
Wayland (2006a) argues that, once in Canada, immigrants and refugees are assisted only in the first, immediate phase of their settlement (i.e., they are often provided shelter, food, clothing, orientation, and basic language instruction). Employment-specific language instruction, training and education with the goal of securing employment, access to health services, housing, and the legal assistance system (required in the intermediate phase of settlement), as well as civic participation and issues related to citizenship (required in the long-term phase of settlement) remain, however, insufficiently addressed by government agencies, services, and policies for newcomers.

The author compared the findings of her study with literature on legal and policy barriers for newcomers in Canada, and made recommendations to reduce barriers to collaboration between government departments and jurisdictions, while building partnerships between the public and private sector. She also suggested decreasing processing times for immigration and family sponsorship. The government should give multi-year funding to immigrant serving agencies; allow for more flexibility in programming; fund interpretation services for health care providers, legal services, schools, social services, and other areas of need; and ensure that admission to the regulated professions is contingent on equity rather than on labour market conditions. It is also critical to build the capacity of educators to meet the needs of immigrant children and youth.

Wayland (2006a) concluded that policy makers must engage directly with immigrants and refugees, even if it means "focusing on one person at a time" (p. vii). She states that immigration authorities must be permitted to revoke permanent resident status in cases of security or genuine identity concerns.
In their collaborative work with the Philippine Women Centre of BC, Pratt et al. (2010) documents and scrutinises the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), "a temporary work visa program that brings from 3,000-6,000 (mostly) Filipino women to Canada annually to work as live-in servants" (p. 75) for middle-class Canadians. Much of the authors' attention in this study focused on the inadequate state regulations of the program and the Canadian state praxis that legitimates those regulations. The Canadian state sees the LCP as a solution to a problem, such as reasonable child care for Canadians. Such an approach to the assessment of the LCP makes it difficult to develop (or even consider) an effective critique of this program. Another way of "seeing like a state" (Scott, 1998) in relation to this program is to view it as a humanitarian and compassionate response to the "horrors of life in the Philippines" (Pratt et al., 2010, p. 75). The possibility of obtaining Canadian citizenship after two years in the program is often seen as an adequate reward for two years of servitude. In the words of Razack (1998), ”when people of the Third World come knocking at our doors, we are able to view them as supplicants asking to be relieved of the disorder of their world and to be admitted to the rational calm of ours” (p. 91), under any conditions.

**Teacher Re-Certification Requirements in Ontario and Québec**

The *Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act* (2006) is designed to “ensure that regulated professions and individuals applying for registration by regulated professions are governed by registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial, and fair” (para. 1). Teachers who were educated outside Ontario and Québec may obtain a teaching certificate by submitting an application to the Ontario College of Teachers and the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (Minister of Education, Recreation and
Sports; MELS) or completing a teacher education program in the province. In addition to these two opportunities, the province of Ontario funded a number of bridge-to-work programs for internationally educated teachers from 2002 to 2009. Many immigrant and refugee women had limited access to these bridge-to-work programs since they were often designed either for the immigrant and refugee teachers in high demand subject areas—French, secondary math, and sciences—or accessible only in three metropolitan areas in Ontario—Toronto, Ottawa, and Kingston (Brigham & Walsh, 2008; Deters, 2008; Walsh & Brigham, 2007). As a result, many refugee teachers holding credentials in less demanding subject areas or living outside these three metropolitan areas were excluded from these programs and, consequently, from the teaching profession in the province.

To become a General Education Teacher in Ontario, internationally educated teachers must apply to the Ontario College of Teachers (hereafter, the College). The College is a self-regulatory body with a statutory mandate to licence, govern, and regulate the practice of teaching in Ontario. It was established and is governed by the Ontario College of Teachers Act, S.O. 2009, c. 12. Required documentation includes a copy of proof of identity, an original Canadian criminal record check report, a copy of teaching certificate from the home country, a transcript of the teacher education program from the home country, a letter to verify the transcript of the program, a transcript of postsecondary studies from the home country, a letter to verify the transcript of the studies, a proof of proficiency in English or French, a statement of professional standing, and a letter to verify teacher experience for practicum. All the documents must be submitted in or translated to English or French by translators acceptable to the Ontario
College of Teachers. It is also important to note that "Transcripts and verification letters must come from the institution to the College" (Ontario College of Teachers, 2013, p. 8). The College cannot accept these documents from internationally educated teachers "even in an unopened, sealed envelope" (p. 8).

The re-certification process in Québec is regulated through the MELS. To obtain a teaching permit in the general education sector in Québec, candidates must have a university degree as prescribed by regulation or a degree recognized as equivalent by the MELS. Candidates who have graduated outside Québec must also hold a teaching certificate issued by the competent authority of the province, territory or country in which they received teacher education as well as a university degree equivalent to a Québec bachelor’s or master’s degree including at least 450 hours of training in educational psychology (MELS, 2013). According to the Practicing the Profession of General Education Teacher Fact Sheet (MELS, 2013), the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports may also authorize a school board or a private institution, under exceptional circumstances, to hire elementary or secondary teachers who do not hold a teaching certificate. School boards may take advantage of this provision if they "can demonstrate that no one legally authorized to teach is available to fill the position in the relevant subject area" (p. 6). This exception is valid for only one school, is not renewable, and does not lead to a teaching permit or a teaching diploma.

**Bridge-to-Work Programs and Resources**

To facilitate the integration of immigrant and refugee teachers in the Canadian educational system, the Government of Canada and Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) have developed 12 language training and bridge-to-work programs
that were delivered at multiple universities, colleges and agencies in Toronto from 2002 to 2009. Seven teacher education programs in Canadian English-speaking universities also have developed specific formalized practices for internationally educated teachers (Myles et al., 2006). In addition, the Canadian government established in 2007 the Office of the Fairness Commissioner in Toronto, Ontario to assess the registration practices of regulated professions and trades, including teaching.

In April 2002, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) invested $3.6 million in nine bridging training programs in the province to prevent a heavy loss of teaching potential in Ontario. From 2002 to 2005, the MTCU launched the Alternative Teacher Accreditation Program for Teachers with International Experience (ATAPTIE), as one of these nine programs. The program was a collaborative effort of the Faculty of Education at Queen's University, the Ottawa-Carlton District School Board and a nongovernmental organization, Local Agencies Serving Immigrants (LASI) World Skills Ottawa. The ATAPTIE degree involved completion of eight academic courses and a 70-day teaching practicum in Ontario elementary schools. According to Myles et al. (2006), the first 2002/2003 ATAPTIE cohort of internationally educated teachers proved that immigrant teachers bring a wealth of expertise (e.g., an awareness of racial and ethnic diversity, diverse cultural and linguistic knowledge, and a first-hand understanding of immigrant experience) to the Canadian classroom. The ATAPTIE practicum experience, however, remained a great challenge for these teachers:

They had to (a) adapt to a different school system and teaching philosophy; (b) acquire resources for working with children in elementary school, which for some was a totally new experience; (c) communicate and model appropriate English,
which was their second, third or fourth language; and (d) establish a positive relationship with their associate teachers, as this relationship is vital to their success in the practicum. (p. 243)

To address the above mentioned issues in the development of future bridging programs, the authors recommended more preparation time before the practicum, English language training, orientation to the school culture, guided observations of classrooms, and journal writing. Intercultural training for internationally educated teachers, associate teachers, faculty members, and other actors involved was also suggested. The main goal of the ATAPTIE program was to "best support the teacher candidates so that they can enter into the community of practice and ultimately find viable employment in Ontario elementary schools" (Myles et al., 2006, p. 244). Whether or not this goal has been accomplished to date remains a mystery; no follow up studies exploring ATAPTIE graduates’ employment rates and subsequent professional pathways have been reported in the literature.

From 2004 to 2009, internationally educated teachers wishing to re-establish their teaching careers in the province were offered another bridge-to-work program entitled Teach in Ontario. This program was funded by the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada through Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The purpose of the program was to help internationally educated teachers navigate the certification process and prepare for employment as teachers in Ontario. The project was a partnership among LASI World Skills, the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ontario Teachers’ Federation, and Windsor Women Working with Immigrant Women. The services included information and counselling about the certification process and preparation for employment in
Ontario; assistance with document retrieval; teaching-specific language upgrading courses; a six-week employment preparation course; a two-week placement in a classroom; a six-month mentoring relationship with an experienced educator; and an occasional teaching workshop that prepared internationally educated teachers for the six-month mentoring relationship that was a unique employment opportunity. Participants’ feedback about the services was positive, and many of them obtained teaching employment contracts (Teach in Ontario, 2009). As of July 1, 2009, Teach in Ontario is no longer offering services to support immigrant and refugee teachers. The program was terminated in 2009 because "many of the barriers to certification and employment for IETs have been alleviated as a result of the work of Teach in Ontario and its partners" (Teach in Ontario, 2009).

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner was established in 2007 to assess the registration practices of regulated professions and trades and to ensure these practices "are transparent, objective, impartial and fair for anyone applying to practise his or her profession in Ontario" (Office of the Fairness Commissioner, para. 1, 2013). The Office requires regulatory bodies to review their own registration processes, submit process reports, and implement the commissioner’s recommendations for improvement. Additional office activities include monitoring labour mobility in Canada, monitoring the activities of certain agencies that assess qualifications, and doing research. The Office does not help internationally trained and educated individuals to assess their credentials or obtain licences.
Refugee Women Teachers (Un)Settling in Canada

According to the master narrative of Canadian humanitarism, refugee women come to Canada to find shelter, immigrate to Canada by manipulating the system, have large families, and bring to the country their problems and conflicts (Morris & Sinnott, 2003). Refugee women are often signified as uneducated, as women of colour who do not speak English or French, and as women who are "more feminine, docile, sexually available, obedient" (Macklin, 1999, p. 24).

Israelite et al. (1999) argue that Somali refugee women in Toronto are triply marginalised “by their race, gender and newcomer status” (p. 21). As a result, refugee women teachers are often portrayed as different from the white, Canadian-born, and English-speaking female teachers and are most susceptible to marginalisation (Mojab, 1999). This marginal status of refugee women teachers is often intensified by competition, a salient feature of neoliberalism that separates the fit from the unfit. As a free market neoliberal country, Canada views its citizens as solely responsible for their success in the society. Consequently, social responsibility for systemic inequities vanishes in the light of the individual’s responsibility for his/her place in the social and economic order. This view perpetuates the production of a “permanent underclass, and even a permanent criminal class, along with a class of aliens, or noncitizens” (Brown, 2006, p. 695). Neoliberalism has transformed life conditions in the twenty-first century:

Neoliberalism in the early twenty-first century is marked by market-based governance practices on the one hand (the privatization, commodification, and proliferation of difference) and authoritarian, national security-driven penal state practices on the other. Thus, while neoliberal states facilitate mobility and
cosmopolitanism (travel across borders) for some economically privileged communities, it is at the expense of the criminalization and incarceration (the holding in place) of impoverished communities. (Mohanty, 2013, p. 970)

Due to neoliberalism and market rationalities, only the personal and the individual are recognizable and the political is no longer a contested field. Neoliberal narratives reject the importance of collective experience or redefine this experience as a product to be consumed. This ideology makes "feminist critique and radical theory appear irrelevant—unless they confront these discursive shifts" (Mohanty, 2013, p. 971). In such a context, refugee and immigrant women teachers often remain un- or underemployed in their new country (Brigham, 2002; Man, 2002).

Refugee women teachers are often unable to return to their home countries or connect with their home universities due to a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, ethnicity and/or political orientation. As a result, these women are often unable to provide the documentation required by the Ontario College of Teachers. In her unpublished Master’s thesis, Dragana Medic (2007) describes the story of Ms. Fatima Siadat, a refugee woman teacher from Iran who came to Canada in 1989 as a Convention Refugee and wanted to pursue her teaching career in Ontario. Before her arrival to Ontario, Ms. Siadat taught her secondary school students that writers have a right to freedom of expression. Such an opinion and teaching philosophy led to Ms. Siadat’s loss of employment and threats to her life. Upon her arrival in Ontario, Ms. Siadat obtained a Community College Certificate in early childhood learning and worked in day-care centres. She, however, wanted to pursue her teaching career in Ontario and had to apply for a teaching certificate. In 1993, Ms. Siadat applied to the Ontario Ministry
of Education for a teaching certificate but was unable to provide all the documents required by the Ministry because:

She claimed that the Iranian Ministry of Education, as her persecutor in Iran, was unlikely to respond to her requests of providing her or the College with the original documents, and she was even worried that if she requested these documents from them, they would harm some members of her family who were still in Iran. (p. 51, emphasis in original)

In 2005, Ms. Siadat pursued a lawsuit to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. The Ontario Superior Court of Justice decided on January 13, 2007 in favour of Fatima Siadat declaring that the Ontario College of Teachers had violated the Human Rights Code of Ontario by requiring Ms. Siadat to establish her teaching qualifications by providing the original documents (Keung, 2007). The College did not appeal the decision but started working with Ms. Siadat to develop creative ways to assess her teaching credentials (Professionally Speaking News, 2007). Fatima Siadat, who fled Iran in 1990, won a 13-year legal battle to have the Ontario College of Teachers reconsider her application for a hearing to evaluate her qualifications to teach in Ontario. Whether Ms. Siadat was awarded a teacher certificate (or not) was never made public.

Immigrants who are members of visible minority groups might experience greater professional displacement than their non-visible minority colleagues and teachers born in Canada (Esses, Dietz, Bennett-Abuayyash, & Joshi, 2007). Although this claim is based on empirical studies exploring experiences of skilled immigrants rather than immigrant women teachers, it might be argued that refugee visible minority women teachers undergo a similar treatment in the Canadian education system and society. According to
Esses et al. (2007), prejudice plays a role in the process of re-certification in Canada, but this role cannot be definitively determined:

An important question to ask is whether the skills of these racial minority immigrants are being discounted because of "the lower quality of education in countries in which these skills were obtained, because of these immigrants' lower proficiency in English or French, because of a lack of knowledge of Canadian norms and employment practices, because of racial prejudice, or perhaps because of other unknown factors. An understanding of what is driving these effects should aid in alleviating what is considered to be a significant issue of growing concern in Canada and provide a point of entry for policy intervention. (p. 639)

Walsh and Brigham (2007) argue that the professional (dis)location of immigrant women teachers in Canada should be discussed in the context of immigration policies and the needs of the labour market:

In a broader sense, obstacles faced by teachers who come to Canada must be considered in the context of immigration policies that aim to attract well-educated and skilled professionals (see, e.g., Hyndman, 1999; Man, 2004; Mojab, 1999; Preston & Man, 1999)—and also in the context of a country where birth rates are low, the labor force is aging, and immigration is a crucial component of current and future growth in terms of population and economy. (p. 2)

Moreover, over the past two decades, the Canadian classroom has become more culturally and linguistically diversified (Egbo, 2009). The teacher population, however, does not mirror such classroom diversity (Dei, James, Karumanchery, James-Wilson, & Zine, 2000). The research indicates that Canadian teachers who are mostly white, middle
class females are often poorly prepared for teaching students of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds: “The reforms have failed to deliver their espoused targets of excellence, equality, and high achievement for urban students, particularly as they relate to social class, race, ethnicity, language, and gender” (McMahon & Armstrong, 2006, p. 301). There is a need to diversify the Canadian teaching force and employ racial and cultural minority people, including immigrant and refugee teachers. This need is not only rooted in a desire for social justice, but also in "beliefs that racial minority and immigrant teachers' own experiences and socio-cultural locations will improve the quality of educational experiences for racial minority and immigrant students" (Bascia, 1996, p. 2).

New Pedagogies and Possibilities

Dlamini and Martinovic (2007) urge educators to challenge the deficit approach to assessing international teaching credentials and experiences as well as recognize the value and the potential of a diverse student/teacher population in Canada:

- diverse classes—classes that work in and in between two or more languages and cultures to create students and teachers as engaged brokers, investigators, participants and producers of culture, language and identity—would provide a more complex, rich and politically sensitive learning experience. (pp. 155-156)

Dlamini (2002) invites schools and faculties of education to “re-imagine the mainstream as intercultural and multilingual in make-up” (p. 52). She references Giroux’s (1992) work and argues for the implementation of a border pedagogy as a tool for progressive classroom teaching; a pedagogy that employs difference as an analytical tool and encourages students to cross over “into cultural borders that offer narratives, languages and experiences that provide a resource for rethinking the relationship between the centre
and the margins of power as well as between themselves and others” (Giroux, 1992, p. 209).

According to Giroux (2005), border pedagogy is linked to critical democracy. Educators must understand the frameworks in which “difference is constructed through various representations and practices that name, legitimate, marginalize, and exclude the voices of subordinate groups” (p. 24). Border pedagogy does not simply recognize difference as a social and historical construct, but makes the axis of power visible within and across educational settings. Such pedagogy should be seen as a site for critical analysis, creativity, and possibility:

These pedagogical borderlands where blacks, whites, latinos [sic], and others meet demonstrate the importance of a multicentric perspective that allows students to recognise and analyse how the differences within and between various groups can expand the potential of human life and democratic possibilities. (p. 26)

Phillion (2003) also argues that immigrant teachers bring cross-cultural teaching experiences as well as cultural and linguistic knowledge about a diverse student population to Canada and expand the dialogue on the meaning of education for both immigrant students and their Canadian-born peers.

Walsh and Brigham (2007) encourage researchers to work together with immigrant and refugee female teachers to publicly raise teacher re-certification issues. The authors explored the experiences of 11 immigrant female teachers in Nova Scotia and represented their research findings as a readers' theatre script. All of the participants had non-Canadian university degrees and teaching experience. Only one woman obtained teaching credentials in Canada, while other women were unemployed or underemployed
in relation to their education and work experience. The authors noted that even those women teachers who lacked confidence in their language skills were able to express some of their ideas through art:

Obstacles, for example, were (re)presented as a river that one cannot reach across, a “languages block” made of Lego/Duplo, and also a green clay fence that keeps the “immigrant teachers” out, a fence they “have to jump to get to teaching”... we have worked together to raise important issues publicly in a form that is accessible to a greater number of people. (p. 20)

This artistic form of research dissemination proved to be a powerful tool for raising public consciousness about immigrant women teachers' struggles in Nova Scotia. During each performance, the audience expressed "surprise and dismay, sometimes shock, and occasionally scepticism" (p. 21). When the researchers and study participants performed the readers' theatre for 140 teacher candidates and conducted subsequent workshops, many issues related to racism, stereotyping, and Eurocentrism in Canadian schools emerged. The researchers argue that all individuals participating in the readers' theatre performance—including researchers, immigrant and refugee female teachers, and audience members—were encouraged to develop a more critical understanding of complex social systems of teacher re-certification in the province. They have begun a “process that Freire (1981) has referred to as conscientização, or coming to critical understandings about social structures—understandings that can inform social action” (p. 21).
Walsh et al. (2011), going a step further from understanding teacher re-certification issues, invite researchers and teacher educators to respond to the changing context of teaching and learning in Canada:

In current times the work of teacher education must involve troubling the complex discourse of neoliberalism, which through its dominance is rendered almost invisible. This work must address such questions as: What are some points of commonality and difference in the ways that each of us involved with teacher education (and teaching) is shaped? (p. 663)

The authors suggest development of specific long-term practices that acknowledge internationally educated teachers’ unique needs in terms of language programs; recognize their previous teaching experiences; and provide opportunities for becoming familiar with the Canadian classroom. They also recommend further research on internationally educated teachers’ resilience in various Canadian provinces and in other countries. Walsh et al. (2011) urge researchers to explore the ways in which existing teacher education programs are responding to the changing context of immigration and teaching in neoliberal times.

**Moving On: Addressing Gaps in Refugee/Teacher Research**

Postcolonial theories and transnational feminist practices invite us to theorize borders and boundaries through multiple lenses and methodologies. Transnational feminist practices further highlight the importance of understanding the relationships between issues that are often separated analytically and politically such as gender, class, race, capitalism, and imperialism. Kim (2006) writes: “Instead of simplifying or obfuscating these linkages, transnational feminist methodologies attend to the diverse
ways in which women and men in particular places and spaces produce and transmit knowledge (and local forms of feminist thought)” (p. 119).

The literature discussed in this chapter shows that empirical studies about refugee women teachers are limited in number. One reason for this limitation might lie in the master narrative of refugee-hood that describes refugee women as different, uneducated, and aprofessional. In such a context, the term *refugee woman teacher* escapes scholarly considerations. Another reason for finding such a limited number of empirical studies exploring refugee women teachers' lives might surface from the highly contested nature of the *refugee woman* label. This label often carries negative connotations for many groups and individuals and some refugee women participating in empirical studies might choose to declare themselves as immigrant rather than refugee women. What also emerged from the literature reviewed are the complexities of immigrant and refugee women teachers’ identities and the challenges they face in their new country. Transnational feminist theory reflects these complexities and provides a framework to explore and critique these identity constructions.

Remembering that "professional knowledge landscape" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 273) expands our view of teacher knowledge from a narrow view of instructional competencies to encompass teachers’ life stories as persons and professionals (whose knowledge is found in their past experiences, present minds and bodies, and their future aspirations), I situated my study within a transnational feminist research praxis and narrative inquiry. The following chapter moves beyond the credential matter, as the key factor in teacher knowledge, to the context of teachers’ work and life matters. It discusses
interpretations of refugee women teachers' stories as a theoretical approach to the study of teacher knowledge (Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997).
CHAPTER THREE: IN THE MIDST OF TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST RESEARCH AND NARRATIVE INQUIRY

This chapter provides an overview of the research process, including transnational feminist research practices and narrative inquiry. I explore the ways in which the social locations of refugee female teachers shape their identities in the Canadian context.

Conducting transnational feminist research through narrative inquiry methods led me into a contested research landscape concerned with gender, power, and identity. In my research, gender is critical for understanding the taken-for-granted ways in which difference, oppression, and privilege operate. I recognise that gender overlaps with other social identities such as race, class, and nationality, and that all of these identities influence my research participants’ experiences and my location as researcher (Butler 1990; Narayan 1993). Butler (1990) argues the term women does not represent a universal identity. The meaning of gender varies in historical contexts and “intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out 'gender' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained” (p. 3). Uma Narayan (1993) challenges the process of sorting people into homogenous and fixed categories by complicating the sense of what it means to "inhabit a culture," especially the culture of a Third-World woman and feminist. She explains:

Finally, though calling myself a Third-World feminist is subject to qualification and mediation, it is no more so than many labels one might attach to oneself—no more so than calling myself an Indian, a feminist, or a woman, for that matter, since all these identities are not simple givens but open to complex ways of being
inhabited, and do not guarantee many specific experiences or concerns, even as they shape one's life in powerful ways. (p. 4)

In the same vein, my researcher's identity developed into a subjective, fragmented, and dynamic journey. I recognised that a researcher’s identity shapes the research process and products, challenging notions of researcher objectivity and neutrality (Henry, 2003). I contributed to feminist debates by exposing some of the complications that arise when the researcher must make critical decisions about representing herself to her research participants (Narayan, 1993; Reinharz, 1992). I explored these issues raised in feminist research methodologies within the context of a refugee women researcher’s experience. I brought gender and women's voices to the foreground to understand the perspectives of refugee women teachers, to challenge the dominant patriarchal hegemony that exists in Western societies, and to recognise the strong influence of both Canadian and Yugoslav culture on the research process.

**Transnational Feminist Practices**

As a transnational feminist researcher, I study the social conditions of women in a "sexist, 'malestream' and patriarchal society" (Stanley & Wise, 1983, p. 12) in Canada and Yugoslavia. I challenge taken-for-granted sexist practices of governments and societies that displace, ignore, and silence women. I approach this project as "research on women, by women and for women" (Sarantakos, 2004, p. 54). I believe that people are situated within power hierarchies (patriarchal and otherwise) due to their individual or group's social locations. I hold, however, that people's social agency is not affected only by their social locations such as gender, but also by their individual characteristics (e.g., social agency). To gain a deeper understanding of refugee women's complex, interlocking
and often oppressing identities, I further sought participants’ perspectives on race, class, gender, age, culture, language, ethnicity, nationality, education, and refugee status.

I am aware that knowledge is constructed and produced by human actors, which means that knowledge is constructed from multiple and even contradictory perspectives, interpretations, and purposes (Cope, 2002). I approached this study with an understanding that many epistemologies are possible in the research process. I chose transnational feminist epistemology to guide my research decisions. I acknowledge the problematic nature of constructing a feminist way of doing objective research, but I am hesitant to "completely throw the idea to the wind leaving room for only absolute relativism" (Bhurak, 2008, p. 209). For me, objectivity and subjectivity are not conflicting paradigms; "feminist objectivity means quite simply situated knowledges” (Haraway, 1991, p.188). I consider these situated and embodied knowledges as space within knowledge creation that allows for difference, complexity, contradiction, and social change. Furthermore, I assume that knowledge production is a politically and socially constructed process; it is neither universal nor separated from its process of production. This approach to knowledge and objectivity is critical for my data analysis and decisions about representation; it does not only allow for multiplicity of knowledge, but considers the role of gender, race, class, and other social constructions in the production of knowledge.

Throughout the research process, I kept in mind that the direction of conversation shifts between participants and researchers; assumed a long relationship with participants; engaged in self-reflexivity; made power tensions explicit as much as possible; scrutinised research methods and process; and worked towards reciprocity, accountability and social
change. As a transnational feminist researcher, I also recognised that the taken-for-granted categories such as immigrant woman and refugee woman are socially constructed and simplistic categories. I revisited and renegotiated the immigrant and the refugee woman category through individual and focus group interviews remembering that research stories are critical for developing a deeper understanding of such categories and identities.

While conducting interview conversations, transcribing digital recordings and analysing data, I kept in mind Alexander and Mohanty's (2010) questions: "Who resides in which spaces? Who belongs and whom are rendered outsiders? Who is constituted as the knowledgeable and the unknowledgeable? Which knowledges and ways of knowing are legitimized and which are discounted" (p. 29)? I considered analytical and political linkages seriously and focused on issues of subjectivity and identity within the context of institutional, global, and cultural practices of refugee-hood, immigration, and settlement. I positioned myself as a refugee woman teacher/researcher, an insider/outsider to participants' experiences, “someone familiar, while recognizing the continuous weaving back and forth and in between, as participants and micro-contexts changed” (Tilley, 1998, p. 317).

**Narrative Inquiry**

Narrative inquiry is based on the assumption that, as human beings, we come to understand and give meanings to our lives through stories (Andrews, Squire, & Tambokou, 2008). Narrative inquiry is, however, "more than uncritical gathering of stories" (Trahar, 2009, p. 1); it is a way of understanding and inquiring into experience through “collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series
of places, and in social interaction with milieus” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20). I considered three commonplaces of narrative inquiry: temporality, sociality, and place. Drawing on Carr’s (1986) statement that “we are composing and constantly revising our autobiographies as we go along” (p. 76), I attended to the temporality of my own and the participants’ lives, as well as to the temporality of places, things and events. I focused on both personal conditions and, simultaneously, on social conditions. By personal conditions, I mean my own and the participants’ “feelings, hopes, desires, aesthetic reactions and moral dispositions” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 480). By social conditions, however, I denote the setting, the social, cultural, and political conditions under which our experiences and events are unfolding. Within the commonplace of sociality, I also considered the inquiry relationship between my life and the participants’ lives. As a narrative inquirer, I could not subtract myself from this relationship. I also recognise that “all events take place some place” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 481). Our identities are intimately linked with our experiences in a particular place or in multiple places and with the multiple stories we tell of these experiences.

Borrowing from the narrative inquiry into teaching and teacher knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 1999), I engaged in narrative analysis through the storying stories model (McCormack, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2004), poetic transcription (Furman, Lietz & Langer, 2006; Glesne, 1997; Richardson, 1992, 1994), and concentric storying (Elliott & Drake, 1999). These three models complemented each other in the process of data analysis and representation.

The storying stories model involves looking at interview transcripts through multiple lenses (i.e., active listening, narrative processes, language, context, and moments
of epiphany), and using the views highlighted by these lenses to write interpretive stories. These multiple lenses are "the dimensions people use to construct and reconstruct their identity and to give meaning to their lives. They highlight both the individuality and the complexity of a life" (McCormack, 2000a, p. 282). A series of interviews is conducted and each interview recording and transcript is analysed and re-written into an interpretative story. These interpretative stories are then compiled into a personal experience narrative for each participant. Through the construction of interpretive stories, researchers "frame meaning possibilities rather than close them’ (Lather, 1991, p. 113), offering the reader multiple readings of a story and an opportunity to re-story his or her life.

Poetic transcription is an alternative way of data representation that blurs "accepted boundaries between art and science, exploring the shapes of inter-subjectivity, and examining issues of power and authority, including that of researcher/author" (Glesne, 1997, p. 204). These poems include moments of epiphany, emotionally charged metaphors, as well as analytic descriptions. Their goal is to achieve metaphorical generalisability and "inspire an empathic, emotional reaction, so the consumer of research can develop a deep, personal understanding of the ‘subject’ of the data” (Furman et al, 2006, p. 25).

Concentric storying is the process of deconstructing personal stories, identifying the core values and beliefs behind the stories told, and re-constructing a new story (Elliott & Drake, 1999). Collaboration and reflection are key elements of this process. Concentric storying might be also used as an alternative model for professional development. To complete this process, participants-researchers need to revise their old stories while
including new behaviour and learning: "It is only in the action that a new story is created" (Elliott & Drake, 1999, p. 6).

I borrowed the storying stories model, poetic transcription, and concentric storying from narrative inquiry for a number of reasons. First, narratives create a sense of community. Through narrative studies, “educational researchers establish a close bond with the participants. This may help reduce a commonly held perception by practitioners in the field that research is distinct from practice and has little direct application (Creswell, 2008, p. 511). Second, narratives are holistic and well suited for expressing complexities and contradictions of human lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Third, narratives can speak a universal language and engage readers to see themselves through another’s life story, "re-visioning their own, arriving where they started and knowing ‘the place for the first time’” (Richardson, 1997, p. 6). Finally, re-storying teachers’ experiences is essential to teachers’ personal and professional growth (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, 1995, 2000). Systematic inquiry of teachers by teachers can generate both individual and public knowledge about teaching (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1992). Having refugee women teachers articulating their knowledge and practice is one way to document and publicly validate their local and transnational forms of knowledge in Canada and worldwide. I used multiple modes of data representation to avoid speaking for the participants in this study; to promote a multilayered dialogue between participants, myself, and the reader; and to allow for multiple voices and subjectivities. I trust that from refugee women teachers’ personal narratives we may “glean the diversity behind over-generalized notions of ‘the refugee experience’” (Eastmond, 2007, p. 249).
Recruiting Participants

As a refugee feminist researcher concerned with gender equity, education, and social justice, I chose to explore the experiences of refugee female teachers located within the Yugoslav diaspora in Ontario and Québec. Recruitment of participants for this study was primarily based on my personal connections made in Ontario over the last 14 years. After I was awarded research ethics clearance by the Brock University Research Ethics Board (File #09-215), I started recruiting participants. To recruit 10-12 refugee female teachers for this study, I originally considered the following criteria, participants:

(a) emigrated from Yugoslavia between 1991 and 2001, during and after the civil war in the country (1991-1995); (b) immigrated to Ontario; (c) obtained either teaching or non-teaching employment in the province; (d) fluently speak, read, and write English; and (e) are available and willing to attend to the scheduled timeline for the research study.

During the process of recruitment, I revised my recruitment criteria and submitted a modification to my research ethics application to Brock University Research Ethics Board. In the submitted modification, I proposed expanding my participant population from refugee women teachers residing in Ontario to refugee women teachers residing in Ontario and Québec. This modification originated from one participant’s offer to assist me in recruiting more participants for the study. I accepted her offer and a few days later she sent me an e-mail containing a list of six names together with their respective e-mail addresses and telephone numbers. She noted in her message that four of the women whose names were listed in the e-mail expressed their desire to participate in the study, but lived in Québec. Therefore, although my original focus was on the Ontario context, I felt responsible to honour these women's voices. My modification was accepted by the
research ethics board, and I extended my research location into the neighbouring province of Québec. Using a snowball recruitment approach over the course of three months, I recruited five women teachers from Ontario and four women teachers from Québec.

The refugee women teachers participating in this study immigrated to Canada from four former provinces of Yugoslavia: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia. They represent a heterogeneous group in terms of age, ethnicity, and nationality. The group also varied as to whether women are single or married and whether they have children. Participants taught in Yugoslavia in a variety of educational settings and across disciplines. Their teaching experience in Yugoslavia ranged from 2 to 16 years of teaching. Eight women were successful in obtaining Canadian credentials either at the college, postgraduate, and/or graduate level. Two women gave up Canadian education due to domestic duties and financial difficulties. All participants made attempts to re-establish their teaching careers in Canada, but no woman returned to her pre-exile professional location. In other words, no woman in this study obtained permanent, full-time employment in her subject area and her school division within the Canadian context (See Table 1).
Table 1

Participants' Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Arrival date</th>
<th>Arrival age</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Teachable</th>
<th>Teaching years</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biser</td>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>YU</td>
<td>CROAT</td>
<td>95/QB</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>Math (IS)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>L’Éducatrice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>93/QB</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>Psych (IS)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>PT Instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagoda</td>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>EXYU</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>95/QB</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>French/Latin (IS)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>L'Éducatrice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lana</td>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>95/QB</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>French (College)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>IS Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maruška</td>
<td>MNE</td>
<td>MNE</td>
<td>MNE</td>
<td>95/ON</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>Serbo-Croatian (JI)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>OC Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mira</td>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>94/ON</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>three</td>
<td>Math (JI)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nada</td>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>EXYU</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>95/QB</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>Serbo-Croatian (JI)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nina B.</td>
<td>CROAT</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>95/ON</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>Serbo-Croat/English</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snežana</td>
<td>CROAT</td>
<td>SRB/CAN</td>
<td>SERB</td>
<td>98/ON</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>Science (IS)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zlata</td>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>EXYU</td>
<td>94/ON</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Serbo-Croatian (IS)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine</td>
<td>QB</td>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>QB</td>
<td>Born</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>French (JI)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sunshine

QB   CAN   QB   Born   N/A   Married   one   French (JI)    N/A   Yes   Principal
Interviewing

I used narrative interviewing to explore the participants' storied lives (Clandinin & Connely, 2000; DeVault, 1999; Kohler Riessman, 2008; Mishler, 1986). Narrative interviewing is a form of interviewing that involves the generation of detailed stories of experience (Kohler Riessman, 2008). Narrative interviews are relational modes of conversations, which respect the participants' ways of organizing meaning in their lives (DeVault, 1999). Researcher and participant, collaboratively, produce and make meaning of events and experiences that the participant reports (Mishler, 1986). In this study, I approached interviewing with an understanding that all field texts, including interviews, are interpretive texts:

What may appear as an objective tape recording of a structured interview is already an interpretive and contextualised text: it is interpretive because it is shaped by the interpretive processes of researcher and participant and their relationship, and it is contextualized because of the particular circumstances of the interview's origins and setting. Central to the creation of field texts is the relationship of researcher to participant. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 94)

Interviewing the Interviewer

I designed this study knowing that as a narrative inquirer, I must be wakeful and thoughtful about all of my methodological decisions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I chose the language of wakefulness rather than critique to "proceed forward with a constant, alert awareness of risks, of narcissism, of solipsism, and of simplistic plots, scenarios, and unidimensional characters" (p. 182). To engage in narrative inquiry in the midst of a critical but supportive community, I assumed the role of a study participant.
and recruited a Ph.D. colleague to interview me before and after I interviewed the participants. I was aware of the importance of maintaining wakefulness as I developed interview protocols and conducted interviews. I knew that the way I act, question, and respond in an interview "shapes the relationship and therefore the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110).

To address risks and dangers throughout my inquiry, I committed myself to the task of criticism. Being interviewed helped me develop the "I, the critic" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 181) identity. I was interviewed before I started interviewing other women to construct my personal narrative, one which would not be influenced by other women's stories. I was also interviewed a second time in the fall of 2010, after all the individual interviews and focus group interviews were completed, to explore the ways in which the participants’ stories have shaped my refugee narrative. Both interviews were digitally recorded. Once the first interview was completed, I reviewed and analysed the interview process. I noted in my reflexive journal what worked and what did not work during my first interview. When reviewing the first interview, I was mostly a researcher reflecting on the interview process and interview protocol. In light of this review, I revisited and revised my original interview protocol. I also explored my perspectives and biases related to exile, immigration, settlement, and professional dislocation in Canada.

For example, my experience of immigration to Canada was an experience of exile and I assumed that immigration experiences of participants were similar to my own. One of the questions in my interview protocol was, “Tell me your story of exile.” This question and the biases inherent in this question were not obvious to me until my colleague noted that immigration to Canada is not necessarily an experience of exile, or a negative experience.
According to my colleague, it was critical to change this question to minimise my influence on the participants' responses. I appreciated my colleague's insight and considered her advice to a certain degree. Since I was interested in exploring the taken-for-granted categories of exile, home, and refugee woman identity in my study, I did not want to avoid the language of exile; I modified my first interview question in the following manner: "Tell me your story of coming to Canada. Was your story a story of exile? Why? Why not? How would you define exile?"

During my second interview, I assumed the dual researcher/participant role. When reviewing the second interview transcript, I identified the ways in which refugee female teachers' stories have influenced my responses to interview questions, my understanding of the research topic, and my shifts within the research landscape. I noted moments of repetition, surprise, frustration, and satisfaction in my refugee teacher narrative.

Following each interview, my colleague would e-mail her reflective notes to me. I would consider both my colleague's reflections and my review notes in revising my original interview questions and in articulating my researcher/refugee woman teacher positioning. The process of listening to the digital recordings of my interviews helped me identify a number of unclear or hidden thoughts, feelings, and impressions which could have led to bias in the study if unchecked. Furthermore, this process allowed me to identify personal feelings arising from my interviewee experience, to learn the value of patience and probing questions in the interviewing process, and to gain an appreciation of feelings being heard or unheard. My familiarity with the interviewing process, achieved through my first interview, helped me develop empathy for the participants and identify some ethical concerns in asking particular questions (Cheanil, 2011), especially those
questions related to participants’ family affairs (e.g., marriage issues and/or troubling episodes with children). Analysis of my second interview, on the other hand, revealed my shifting location within the teaching profession and Canadian society. My interview narrative made me realise that my experiences of immigration, settlement, and doctoral studies have advanced my knowledge and skills, but jeopardised my sense of self as a science teacher:

And maybe all these experiences are just overwhelming and I don’t feel so much excited about teaching anymore. And maybe that’s a good thing because right now I have to focus on my work, my studies and my family, and that’s already a lot. So yeah, I said it! You see, I’m not excited about teaching anymore, and that's sad, very sad. (Conversation 2, September, 2010)

I was frightened and disheartened to hear these words; I finally surrendered to the forces of professional dislocation in Canada and lost my passion for teaching. It took me twelve years of resistance and education before I found myself admitting I had been defeated by the Canadian policies and practices that perpetuate de-skilling of internationally educated female teachers across Canada.

In addition to lessons learned through the first interview, my second interview helped me also understand my newly developed perspectives of becoming/being Canadian. In 1998, at the time of my arrival to Canada, my definition of a Canadian included only people who were born in Canada. During the review of my second interview recording, I was again taken by surprise when I heard myself challenging the above mentioned definition of a Canadian:
It’s not only having your Canadian passport, it’s more than that. You know, it’s, it’s a lifestyle, it’s being rooted, connected, supported, proficient in English…but, since then, I really think that being Canadian… actually (laughs softly) means being somebody similar to me, somebody with an immigrant, multicultural identity. (Conversation 2, September 13, 2010)

Through this listening exercise, I discovered that my perspectives on exile, immigration, and teacher identity became influenced by and intertwined with other refugee female teachers’ perspectives; our individual stories grew into *our story*, a story which emerged during the research process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I grew to understand that research/knowledge making is identity making.

**Interviewing Refugee Female Teachers**

Individual interviews with refugee women teachers took place in the spring and summer 2010. During our interview conversations, the participants and I crossed borders and intertwined our multiple narratives. Once in the field, I started negotiating relationships, purposes, transitions, a way to be useful and my position of belonging to the research landscape and Yugoslav diaspora. I perceived myself as being a legitimate member of the Yugoslav diaspora by default; I was born and raised in Yugoslavia and I lived in this country for 35 years. To join the research landscape, however, I needed to develop relationships with the participants. To develop rapport with refugee female teachers, I met with each of the women three times over a three-month period. I focused on becoming a committed listener and a sensitive reader of these women's stories. I was in the research landscape to develop trust and "grasp the huge number of events and
stories, the many twisting and turning narrative threads that pulse through every moment" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 77).

I conducted two individual in-depth, open-ended interviews with each refugee female teacher to develop a rapport with these women; to modify existing or create new questions for the second interview; and to gain a deeper understanding of these women's perspectives and lived experiences. I found it difficult to strictly follow the interview protocol; I established "intimate participatory relationships" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110) with refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia, and my interviews often turned into conversations.

I transcribed all the individual interviews verbatim, because such a transcription process is often valuable:

Analysis takes place and understandings are derived through the process of constructing a transcript by listening and re-listening, viewing and re-viewing…Transcription facilitates the close attention and the interpretive thinking that is needed to make sense of the data. (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999, p. 82)

I transcribed every utterance in as much detail as possible, including idiosyncratic elements of speech such as stutters, pauses, nonverbal and involuntary vocalizations, as well as the tools used to coordinate conversation such as turn-taking, repairs, and overlapping talk (Edwards & Lampert, 1993; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). I structured each transcript as a dramatic script (Ochs, 1979) and used textual symbols to indicate, among other things, time gaps (e.g., I wrote in "pause" each time when silence/pause lasted for more than five seconds), loud speech (e.g., I wrote text in capital letters each time when participants raised their voices), and emphasis (e.g., I used capital letters and
italics each time when participants emphasised a word or two). I am aware, however, that the transcription convention used in this study (See Appendix A) mirrors my personal preferences and biases about the representation of speech (Ochs, 1979). Moreover, I recognise that representation of the original interview is always partial. It is impossible to create a perfect representation of the original conversations, because of two distinctive reasons: (a) our hearing ability is selective and (b) transcription is guided by researchers’ interpretative lens, sifting “details of speech (and gaze and gesture and action) or writing that are arguably deemed relevant in the situation and that are relevant to the arguments the analyst is attempting to make” (Gee, 1999, p. 88).

I conducted interviews at a number of locations participants chose. Some interviews took place in participants' homes and others in my home. A number of interviews conducted in Québec took place in Lana's home. Lana, the refugee female teacher who facilitated participant recruitment in Québec, invited me and other study participants to her home. While three women welcomed me to their homes, two chose Lana's place for our interview conversations. Lana's home became our research centre and my research refuge. I visited Québec three times during data collection, and every time I was able to engage in the research process with passion and excitement, far away from my every-day life often fragmented and burdened with numerous challenges and interruptions.

First interview conversation. I started each individual interview by introducing myself and the study. Then, I explained the logistics of the research process, asked the participant to read the consent form and sign the form if she agreed to participate in the study. Next, I asked the participant to fill out a one-page questionare including
demographic information such as age at the time of arrival to Canada and years of teaching experience in Yugoslavia (See Appendix B). Finally, I turned on the digital recorder and asked my first question. By the time the recorder was on, the room would surrender to the strong comforting smell of Turkish coffee (a habit brought from our homes in Yugoslavia), my interview protocol would magically fade away, and our interview would quickly turn into an open, relaxed and, at times, passionate conversation. Our conversations included a range of different cognitive and emotional responses and dialogues; from a formal conversation strictly focused on the interview questions to a daring adventure into our memories and dreams, from comedy and laughter to tragedy and sorrow.

After conducting the first individual interview with each woman, I listened to the digital recordings two times asking myself the following questions: Who are the characters? What, when, where was it taking place? As a researcher, how am I positioned during this conversation? As a researcher, how am I positioned in relation to the participant? As a refugee woman teacher from the former Yugoslavia, how am I positioned in relation to the participant? How am I responding emotionally and intellectually to this participant? What was said? How was it said? What remained unsaid, but signalled in the conversation? What additional questions should I ask during the second individual interview? I then added all the questions that emerged during the first interview to the second interview protocol.

**Second interview conversation.** Interviewing participants for a second time, I was concerned not only with understanding the stories told, but also with relating those stories to exile, settlement, and teacher identity (See Appendix C). I was also seeking to
view these stories in relation to the wider social, political and historical context. With this in mind, I asked participants to create a timeline of the key events (Brown et al., 1998; Carey, 1997) informing and shaping their refugee journey. The creation of the timeline was our collaborative effort, "a collaborative effort shaped by the interviewer and the interviewee" (Adriansen, 2012, p. 43). The participants used a piece of white paper and a pen to map their journey as they found it relevant to this study. They decided how to visualise their timelines. Seven women wrote down a timeline themselves, while two of them asked me to listen to their stories and record key events on a piece of paper. An important consideration in creating a timeline was deciding when the timeline should begin and end. I left this decision to participants. They chose to start their timelines at different points of time in their lives; some women started their timelines with the beginning of the war, while others marked the date of their graduation or their first teaching job in Yugoslavia as the beginning of their story.

On occasion, participants would discover that their listed events took place in chronological order different from the order they originally recalled. At times, I would also ask participants to elaborate on some of the events listed and to clarify the chronology presented. These conversations opened new angles of vision for both the participant and me. The timeline creation process provided us with an opportunity to deconstruct and reconstuct our stories. Created timelines served as "a ‘collective memory’ where the story can be seen both by the interviewer and the interviewee" (Adriansen, 2012, p. 44). Timeline creation made our interview conversation a shared process and provided the participants with a sense of ownership over this process.
**Focus group conversation.** I conducted a focus group conversation following an initial analysis and interpretation of the individual interviews. The focus group procedures included: (a) opening discussion of the purpose of the focus group interview, (b) description of ethical considerations related to confidentiality of data, (c) explanation of focus group process and expectations; and (d) debriefing session (See Appendix D). I started each focus group conversation by introducing ground rules: we want everyone to participate, there are no right or wrong answers, what is said in this room should stay confidential (See Appendix E), and we will be tape recording our conversation. The focus group interviews started in a more formal manner with participants speaking up in clockwise order to respond individually to each focus group question and then the interview slowly transitioned into a more spontaneous conversation. There was also "in-depth probing" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 109) in our conversations, but it was done with trust, listening, and respect for the experience of others. I also employed a debriefing session at the end of the focus group interviews, summarising the information shared, and asking participants if the summary of our conversation was correct or if it needed to be revised (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

Our conversations were marked by equality and flexibility. In creating the focus group interview protocol, I followed the questioning route Krueger and Casey (2000) suggest, and developed the following four sections: introductory questions, transition questions, key study questions, and ending questions (See Focus Group Interview Protocol, Appendix F). My protocol included many of the typical questions suggested by Krueger and Casey (2000), such as a picture drawing question, a think-back question, an imagine question, a listing question, and a 1-minute question. I also asked two closing
questions: Why did you choose to participate in this research? Is there anything else you would like to share with me? I borrowed the last two questions from my Ph.D. supervisor (S. A. Tilley, February 11, 2009, personal conversation).

One of the focus group questions involved participants creating a Teacher Identity Map. Balan (2004), who created a picture drawing question to explore the perceived learning processes of displaced women professionals during their workplace transitions, inspired me to create a Teacher Identity Map and use this activity during the focus group interviews. The purpose of this map was to describe the participants' sense of being a teacher over time (i.e., before exile and after exile) and across space (i.e., in Yugoslavia and in Canada). The Teacher Identity Map activity included the following directions: *Think of yourself and your teacher identity before exile and presently. Draw a stick figure of yourself, or a representation of yourself, or a symbol, or a word that describes (a) your teacher identity before exile and (b) your teacher identity presently. Please explain how these two identities are similar and how they are different. Share whatever you think and feel is appropriate with the group.*

The focus group conversation held in Ontario was originally planned to involve four women, including me. One woman, however, called the day of the focus group and expressed her regrets; she was asked for a favour by a friend of hers and was not able to join us. I offered rescheduling our focus group conversation for next week or next month, but she firmly replied that she will be busy the entire summer. I thanked her for her participation in individual interviews, and promised to contact her again for member checking purposes. I hung up the telephone and stayed still for a few minutes combing frantically through my thoughts and feelings:
Did I do anything wrong? Should have I insisted on rescheduling the focus group conversation? Is there anything I could still do to bring her back? How am I going to create her narrative without the focus group interview? I have failed her...No, I have not failed her. I have to admit I am sad, disappointed, and somehow hollow at this moment but I am not surprised by her withdrawal, no, not at all. (Field notes, June 19, 2010)

The woman who withdrew from the focus group interview was Nina Bloom. After I put down the telephone and sorted my first impressions of losing a participant, Nina Bloom’s words, echoing our first conversation, came into my mind: “They made it hard and I have retreated completely.” Nina Bloom has retreated completely. She retreated from Canadian society. She retreated from our focus group conversation in the same way. In the end, the Ontario focus group conversation involved two women and me. One of the women noted that she would have appreciated our focus group conversation even more if it had involved more participants.

I transcribed the focus groups’ digital recordings using "partial transcription" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110). I transcribed only the segments of the focus group interviews relevant to the main stories verified during the debriefing sessions. I also kept field notes and a reflexive journal to document the research process.

**Interviewing a Canadian-born Woman Principal**

I conducted an interview with Sunshine, a Canadian female principal who mentored two refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia in their employment in Québec. Sunshine's participation was suggested by these two women. Lana made a call and asked Sunshine for permission to share her e-mail address with me. Permission was granted,
and I invited Sunshine to participate in the study. We met at Lana's place one Sunday afternoon in July, 2010. The three of us had lunch, and then Lana left the apartment. My interview conversation with Sunshine was 3-hours long, followed by an informal chat after Lana's return. Although informal, our chat continued to echo our interview focus on immigration, settlement, and teacher identity in Canada. My researcher passion emerged again and I asked Sunshine and Lana if it was okay with them for me to record our conversation. They both agreed and I recorded an additional hour of a friendly discussion. The interview conversation with Sunshine was conducted in the English language. My conversation with Sunshine and Lana, however, was trans-lingual and included dialogues in English, French, and Serbo-Croatian. I transcribed this conversation focusing on English and Serbo-Croatian dialogues, while omitting French exchanges between Sunshine and Lana.

**Keeping Field Notes**

I kept daily field notes, loaded with details and moments from the field. I am aware that field notes are an important form of field texts that allows us "both to fall in love with our field and to slip into cool observation, as well as to provide the detail that fills in our memory outline" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 104). I combined and compared my field notes with a reflective journal written of my field experience. I kept field notes in preparation for interviews, during the interviews, immediately after the interviews, and during my travels from Québec to Ontario. I noted accounts of events, participants’ behaviour, participants’ reactions, physical gestures, and emerging questions about participants’ responses that needed further consideration or follow-up. I also kept a record of our interactions during the interview. In addition to documenting the interview
context, I made a note of the participants' physical appearance and of their home environments outside the interview conversations.

I considered my field notes as an additional source of data and an initial phase of data analysis. I would start writing field notes at the beginning of my field trip and stop writing them at the end of the trip (Emerson et al., 1995), recreating events in a chronological order. The comprehensive process of note-taking during my field trips shaped my research in a number of ways. I gained a deeper understanding of the note-taking process, became aware of my tacit convictions and assumptions, and froze a number of specific events within the narrative inquiry space.

**Practicing Self/Reflexivity**

To question my assumptions and biases, I employed ongoing self-reflection and stayed wakeful to questions and critiques throughout the research process. My inquiry relied on respectful, ethical research and transparency of my methods and methodology. For me, a good narrative is described as "having an explanatory, invitational quality, as having authenticity, as having adequacy and plausibility" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 185). The main methodological question for me was not so much what makes a good narrative, but rather what makes a good narrative inquiry. This question has urged me to conduct a critical, systematic, and respectful narrative inquiry in the company of nine refugee female teachers, a Canadian female principal, and my Ph.D. supervisor.

I kept a reflexive journal because I knew that the researcher is not always able to control her/his experience and relationships in the field (Mason, 2001; Reinharz, 1992). Practicing reflexivity means "both to lead a life and to reflect on it, thereby combining living with self-criticism and growth" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 82). A reflexive
journal provides the same kind of data about the human instrument—the researcher—that is often provided about the paper-and-pencil or brass instruments used in quantitative studies. Following Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) guidelines, I recorded my research procedures; my insights, ideas, and beliefs; as well as the reflections on the research process as the study progressed. I divided my reflexive journal into three main parts: the daily schedule and logistics of the study; a personal diary that provided opportunities for self-reflection and new insights; and a methodological log in which methodological decisions and subsequent justifications were documented.

From the beginning of this study, I was aware that I must make transparent relations of power prevalent not only in the research process, but also in the process of exile, immigration, and settlement. I took into account my past and present life experiences and interrogated the effects of these experiences on the research process. I negotiated researcher-participant relationships on a day-to-day basis, documenting my thinking and remembering that, once in the field, I will “experience shift and changes, constantly negotiating, and maintaining flexibility and openness to an ever-changing landscape” (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000, p. 71).

I used self/reflexivity throughout the research process in an effort to minimize exploitative research practices within my study and to explore how my "active, deliberate, situated and contextual" (Bahkru, 2008, p. 203) participation in this research shaped the research process and knowledge production. Reviewing my journal entries, I grew to understand that "My role within this refugee research runs the risk of being problematic given the traditionally colonizing nature of research itself, as well as the colonizing nature of refugee-hood" (Reflexive journal entry, April 30, 2010). Throughout
the research process, I kept asking myself a number of questions posed by Bahkru (2008):

In what material ways am I benefiting from this research in relation to others involved in this process? How is the power I have at various levels within this process fluctuating over time? Am I remaining committed to an agenda of social transformation? Is this research part of a social movement working against oppression and exploitation? (pp. 201-202)

Each person can be viewed as a member of a particular social group (e.g., race, class, and gender) and may be said to have shifting degrees of power in any situation. Moreover, as researchers we have our personal agendas and purposes for doing research and the power to influence participants' narratives; "we are shaping the parade of events as we study the parade" (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000, p. 87). I am responsive to the spatiality of power and knowledge production (Alexander & Mohanty, 2010) and to the ways in which they operate in and through the research process. I was given the power to produce knowledge from the moment my ethics application was approved. I decided who, what, when, where, and how to research. I had the power to choose my research questions, to reduce three years of my doctoral research into this single text, and to change the names of people and places—in the transcripts and in the dissertation—for confidentiality purposes and participant protection (Fine, 1993). On a number of occasions, however, I felt that the power for producing knowledge circulated away from me, especially on those occasions when I was sending transcripts, transcript poems, interpretative stories, and personal experience narratives to participants for member
checking. Opening participants' e-mail responses made me anxious that the participant would not agree with my interpretations or would find those interpretations offensive.

Although I had my researcher agenda, I was aware that participants had the power to support or to resist our collaborative production of knowledge, the power to tell or withhold their stories, the opportunities to member check and inform my data interpretations, and the right to withdraw their data and their participation at any point in time without consequences. Moreover, participants had the power to tell their selective stories (i.e., the power to retell 20 years of their lives in a seven-hour frame), their safe stories (i.e., the power to protect themselves and their family members in the process of storytelling), and their off-record stories (i.e., the power to withdraw some sensitive information shared with me during our conversations by asking me to turn off the digital recorder). At times, I felt that some stories relevant to my research questions remained untold. In such cases, I used some specific follow up questions to encourage participants' storytelling. For example, after listening to digital recordings of the first interview conversations, I would notice gaps in participants' stories, write down what was missing and come to our second conversations equipped with some specific, follow-up questions. My follow-up questions were often answered in the second interview. At times, however, participants would dismiss my researcher's curiosity, and keep their stories safeguarded.

While conducting individual interviews during the spring of 2010, I continued to question the research process and the knowledge production taking place:

Am I influencing participants' responses through my research questions and my personal story/identity? How much has the presence of a digital recorder in the room re/shaped these women's narratives? Is my interpretation of data doing
justice to these women's (hi)stories? Is my re/presentation of their memories and perceptions ringing true to them? (Reflexive Journal Entry, May 21, 2010)

The power to produce knowledge through this study was "never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). It was a co/creation of knowledge through the voices of ten refugee women teachers and a Canadian female principal at a particular point of time, in the midst of their settling and unsettling in Canada. As a researcher, however, I had the authority to write the final version of this research text.

**Transcribing, Analysing, and Representing**

Transnational feminist research does not speak for others, but rather promotes dialogue through the construction of multiple and alternative data re-presentations, allowing for multiple voices and subjectivities (Lock Swarr, & Nagar, 2010; Nagar, 2010). Guided by this framework, I collected, transcribed, and analysed multiple sources of data such as individual interviews, focus group interviews, and field notes. I stayed close to the data and embraced transcription as a critical step in the process of data analysis. I simultaneously transcribed interview recordings, analysed the interview transcripts, and created multiple representations of data. The importance and complexities of transcription work have been discussed in the literature (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999; Tilley, 2003; Tilley & Powick, 2002). Lapadat and Lindsay (1999) argue that "[a]nalysis takes place and understandings are derived through the process of constructing a transcript" (p. 82). More specifically, the authors define transcription as a "theory-laden component of qualitative analysis" (p. 82). Tilley (2003) also suggests that the transcriber's "interpretative/analytical/theoretical lens" (p. 755) influences interpretation
of research data. Transcription involves "making analytic judgements about what to represent and how to represent it" (Gibson, 2009, p.31). With this in mind, I transcribed all my interview recordings, simultaneously engaging in interpretation and representation of data. The process of data transcription, analysis, and representation lasted from July, 2010 through December, 2011. As I was transcribing digital recordings, I was also creating transcript poems, identifying interview sub/titles, recording metaphors, developing interpretative stories, compiling personal and collective experience narratives, charting the ways in which participants storied my life (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), and keeping a reflexive journal (Figure 1). Through this process of data collection, analysis, and representation, the Honouring Multiple Voices Model emerged (Table 2). This model will be instrumental to migrant feminist researchers, especially to those who research participants within their own dispora or culture.
Figure 1. Alternative modes of data analysis and representation.
Table 2

Overview of How I Honoured the Multiple Voices of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View Transcript through multiple lenses</th>
<th>Developing interpretative stories</th>
<th>Identifying a dominant story</th>
<th>Conducting a member check</th>
<th>Composing personal &amp; collective narratives</th>
<th>Composing a collective narrative of exile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active listening:</td>
<td>Composing the Story</td>
<td>Looking for similarities:</td>
<td>Returning transcripts,</td>
<td>Ordering stories &amp; poems into a single</td>
<td>Ordering all narratives into a single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>Middle First draft:</td>
<td>Is the conflict similar each</td>
<td>stories &amp; poems and</td>
<td>document.</td>
<td>document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What?</td>
<td>Listing story titles</td>
<td>time? Has the participant</td>
<td>stories to participants:</td>
<td>Creating a collective narrative of exile.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When?</td>
<td>Ordering story titles</td>
<td>resolved the conflict the</td>
<td>How does this account</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>Adding text</td>
<td>same way?</td>
<td>compare with your</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>Redrafting:</td>
<td></td>
<td>experience?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is said?</td>
<td>Using multiple lenses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is missing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transcription & data analysis:

- Adding a beginning & an ending: Adding a coda
- Composing an orientation & choosing the title
- Adding a coda
- Using visual forms
- Adding an epilogue

- Is the mood consistent? What kind of mood is it?
- Does the theme pervade the interviews?
- What is the theme?
- Do you wish to remove any aspects of your experience?

- Have any aspects of your experience been omitted? Please include these.
- Reflecting on the document in light of research questions.
- Adding an epilogue.

Viewing transcripts through multiple lenses:

- Language
- Context
- Significant moments

- Does this theme facilitate understanding of the participant's narrative?
- Please feel free to make comments.
- Revising.
- Using personal narratives as another data set.
- Adding an epilogue.
Creating Transcript Poems

I created transcript poems using the participants’ words. I first identified the main stories in the transcript, and condensed those stories into poems by keeping in key words and phrases while taking out prepositions, adjectives, and adverbs. I kept enough of the participants’ words together to represent their ‘way of saying things’ (Glesne, 1997, p. 205). Finally, I reread each poem several times to trim the poem down to its core, trimming down for rhythm, rhyme, and memorable stories. My goal was to achieve metaphorical generalisability and "inspire an empathic, emotional reaction, so the consumer of research can develop a deep, personal understanding of the ‘subject’ of the data" (Furman et al., 2006, p. 25).

Developing Interpretative Stories

In addition to transcript poems, I used the *storying stories* method (McCormack, 2000a, 2000b, 2004) to move from digital recordings and transcripts to meaningful stories. I searched for plots while listening to recordings and typing up transcripts. I watched for what was said, how it was said, and what remained unsaid but signalled between the lines. I looked at interview transcripts through multiple lenses: active listening, narrative processes, language, context, and significant moments (McCormack 2000a, 2000b). I created story subtitles and the main title for each conversation, including the first interview, the second interview, and the focus group interview. After identifying a number of subtitles and one main title for each interview, I developed an interpretative story for each interview. I also noted a number of metaphors participants used in their storytelling, and recorded the ways in which the participants storied me as a researcher and a refugee woman teacher from the same diaspora. Through the construction of
interpretive stories, I framed meaning possibilities rather than closed them (Lather, 1991), offering the reader multiple readings of a story and an opportunity to re/story his/her own life.

**Identifying the Dominant Story**

While frequently revisiting the transcripts to write up the interpretive stories, I noticed that each participant would mention over and over again a particular story, a dominant story that embodied the core values and beliefs of the participant and offered an opportunity for creating a *new story* by answering the following questions in the process of data analysis: Are there similarities across interviews? Does the same theme underline the stories? Is the participant passive or active? Is the conflict similar each time? Has the participant resolved the conflict the same way? Is the mood consistent? What kind of mood is it (Elliott & Drake, 1999)? After identifying a dominant story for each participant, the lens of each storyteller emerged (Drake, Elliott, & Castle, 1993).

Unlike Elliott and Drake (1999), who used the concentric storying method to conduct a self-study and enhance self-reflexivity and professional development, I identified a dominant story for each participant to gain a deeper understanding of their individual interpretative stories and of the importance of those stories in the development of a personal experience narrative. To accomplish this task, I identified complexities and contradictions that emerged not only within the stories told during each interview but also across them.

**Composing a Personal Experience Narrative**

After creating three interpretative stories and a dominant story for each woman, I compiled these stories together with transcript poems and metaphors to compose a
personal experience narrative for each woman. At this point, I moved away from McCormack's (2000a, 2000b) storying stories model that culminates in the development of a personal experience narrative. I used the 11 personal experience narratives—including a personal experience narrative of a Canadian female principal and my own—and five collective narratives developed through this model as the basis for developing a collective narrative of exile, settlement, and teacher identity in Canada.

**Conducting a Member Check**

I am concerned with the issues of representation for those I am researching. In this study, I attempted to address issues of representation by taking the position of a committed listener during individual and focus group interviews while recognizing that in-depth interviewing is a collaborative process—co/creation of meaning by interviewer and the interviewee. I stayed wakeful and listened "intently to what the interviewee has to say, for the researcher must be prepared to drop his or her agenda and follow the pace of the interview" (Hesse-Biber, 2007, pp. 132-133).

I believe that research and knowledge production are complex and challenging processes experienced simultaneously by research participants and researchers. Knowledge produced through this research study is not universal or separated from its process of production. This approach to knowledge and objectivity is critical for my research methodology. It does not only allow for multiplicity of knowledge, and calls for a regular member check of data interpretation and representation. With this in mind, I sent each transcript and synopsis, including transcript poems, interpretative story subtitles, interpretative story titles, metaphors, and *storying-the-researcher-notes* to participants for a member check (See Appendix G). Based on the participants' feedback,
minimal changes were made (e.g., editing). After receiving participants’ approval for each transcript and my interpretations of their words, I created an interpretative story for each interview.

**Composing Collective Experience Narratives**

I used the personal experience narratives of the participants to develop five collective experience narratives. I approached and organised collective experience narratives around my research questions:

1. How has refugee status influenced Yugoslavian women teachers' goals to continue their professional lives in Ontario and Québec?
2. How have government and social structures enhanced or inhibited these women’s opportunities to teach in Canada?
3. How have gender, class, race, age, language, culture, nationality and ethnicity—in addition to their refugee status—influenced these women’s understandings of their professional identities as teachers?

In the spirit or transnational feminist research, I also considered the following questions:

1. What was silenced in these women's stories?
2. How have participants storied the researcher?

I used collective experience narratives as a way of understanding the social world of refugee female teachers in Canada and as a way of analysing how their experiences decode broader colonial structures and processes in a globalising world. From this perspective, I addressed several areas of theoretical interest, such as the colonizing nature of forced migration and settlement, the social world of diasporic communities and
professional displacement, and the systemic structures operating to produce and perpetuate marginalised identities.

**Addressing Complexities and Concerns**

I have encountered multiple methodological complexities during the research process. These complexities were related to confidentiality and anonymity, the bi/lingual nature of data, taken-for-granted categories, insider/outsider status, representation of other people's voices, responsiveness and flexibility, and critical, but respectful interpretations of the participants' stories. To address (or at least articulate) the density of the field and data, I described the main strategies used during this study in the section below.

**Protecting Confidentiality and Anonymity**

Anonymity and confidentiality are pervasive concerns in narrative inquiry. Face-to-face interviews, focus group conversations, and the importance of considering participants' backgrounds and rich narratives, make anonymity and even confidentiality difficult to achieve. To protect participants' confidentiality, I invited participants to choose pseudonyms. Most participants chose names of their family members, such as names of their sisters, aunts or nephews (e.g., Mira chose her sister's name and Zlata chose the female version of her nephews' name). Biser selected her favourite user name from cyberspace, while Dana chose a name rooted in both English and Serbo-Croatian languages, but preferred the English pronunciation of the name. Finally, one of the women chose the pseudonym Nina Bloom, the name of the main character in Patterson's and Ledwidge's (2009) novel *Now You See Her*. Nina Bloom's choice of pseudonym signalled to me that choosing one's pseudonym might go far beyond the matter of
To explore possible meanings of Nina Bloom's pseudonym choice, I read Patterson's and Ledwidge's (2009) novel prior to analysing Nina Bloom's transcripts and prior to creating her personal experience narrative. While decoding similarities and differences between Nina Bloom, the fictional character, and Nina Bloom, the participant, in this study, I realised that this pseudonym mirrored a number of gender issues present in the participant's narrative, including female body image (the looks to die for), domestic sphere identity (being predominantly a wife and a mother), and vulnerability (being heavily dependent on and protected by her man, as well as controlled by him). The Canadian female principal participating in the study also chose a pseudonym. She chose the pseudonym Sunshine, because her life goal has always been to be "Sunshine to people" (Sunshine, Conversation, June 27, 2010). I did not ask the participants to explain their choices. Sunshine was the only participant who shared with me her reason for choosing her pseudonym.

At the beginning of the research process, I wondered how to position my narrative, and whether or not I should be using a pseudonym in telling my story of immigration and settlement. As the study progressed, I shared my dilemma with my colleagues and participants. Our conversations helped me decide to keep my name and frame my narrative as the researcher positioning piece.

**Considering Complexities of the Language and My Identity**

Most participants were bilingual, while some spoke multiple languages. I speak Serbo-Croatian and English, but I do not speak French. Consequently, I anticipated bilingual interview conversations—conversations in the English language with refugee female teachers living in Ontario and conversations in the Serbo-Croatian language with
those women living in Québec—and bilingual recruitment materials (i.e., cover letter, information letter, informed consent form, focus group confidentiality agreement, individual interview protocols, focus group protocol, and feedback/thank you letter). I first created all the recruitment material in the English language and then translated all the documents into the Serbo-Croatian language. During individual interviews, English or Serbo-Croatian was spoken. Both focus group interview conversations—one in Ontario and one in Québec—were conducted and recorded in the Serbo-Croatian language to create more spontaneous and richer conversations.

As I inhabit a transnational space and as I cross cultural and linguistic bridges on a daily basis (e.g., boundaries between my Canadian work environment and my Serbian home environment), I was determined and excited to embark upon a research study that honours multiple cultures and languages. Moreover, I felt that interviewing refugee women teachers in Canada in their mother tongue was not only an appropriate cross-cultural strategy, but also an important undertaking rooted in respectful research (Tilley, 1998) and social justice. At the beginning of each individual interview, I would indulge in the sweetness of the Serbo-Croatian language and in my cultural memories while introducing myself, the study, and the informed consent. I would swim through these introductions kao riba u vodi (like a fish in water). I would then turn on the digital recorder and switch to my Canadian researcher's identity and my English vocabulary. At times, our conversations would become so relaxed and spontaneous that I would suddenly find myself shifting back to my Serbo-Croatian script. After these occasional shifts reached my consciousness—every time taking me by surprise—I would run back to
my English repertoire. These crossingovers became natural processes in our conversations in the same way they were common routines in our daily lives.

Transcription of the first conversation conducted in the Serbo-Croatian language took me by surprise one more time; I was speaking slowly, making frequent pauses and kept rephrasing my questions. I noted my reaction to this unsettling discovery in my reflexive journal:

What am I doing? Am I explaining or justifying my questions? Am I translating from English to Serbo-Croatian? Am I getting lost in translation? Lost in my Serbo-Croatian script? Have I abandoned my mother tongue for so long that it is now escaping away from me? It is not responding. Not obeying. Am I returning home speechless? (Reflexive Journal, August 21, 2010)

I grew to understand that fourteen years of my immigrant life (and my intensive studies pursued in the English language for the last twelve years) have suppressed my mother tongue and threatened my bilingual identity. Transcribing my first interview conducted in the Serbo-Croatian language made me aware of my linguistic dislocation. That very same evening, I took a Serbo-Croatian novel from one of my book shelves—Igra Anđela (Angels’ Game) by Ljiljana Habjanović Đurović—and promised myself (and my ancestors) that I will never again turn my back to the magical landscapes of my mother tongue.

During our focus group conversations, we discussed the language we spoke. We came from three former provinces of Yugoslavia—BiH, Croatia and Montenegro—which became independent countries after the Yugoslav civil wars. We declared four different ethnic identities: Croatian, Montenegrin, Serbian, and Ex-Yugoslavian. With this in
mind, I was interested in identifying the language we spoke during the focus group conversations. After a brief discussion, we all agreed that during the focus group conversations we spoke two dialects—ekavicu or ijekavicu—of the Serbo-Croatian language, a language that was tattered into four different languages after the bloody breakup of Yugoslavia: Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian. Three of the women participating in the study, who were Serbo-Croatian language and literature teachers, strongly supported this statement, citing a number of experts in the field.

I interviewed all refugee female teachers from Québec in the Serbo-Croatian language as well as one woman from Ontario who preferred to be interviewed in Serbo-Croatian rather than English. In addition to speaking Serbo-Croatian, some of the participants from Québec would occasionally use a few French words such as educatrice and le bien-être in our conversations. In an instant, multiple languages were spoken and the language barrier broke down. These language crossings took place during my conversation with Sunshine and Lana. We passionately engaged in our research-related-chat in three languages: English, French, and Serbo-Croatian. The power of multilingualism I experienced at that time was tangible and fascinating.

During the focus group in Québec, I informed participants that our conversations would be transcribed and member-checked in the Serbo-Croatian language, translated to English, and eventually published in English. I offered to hire a professional interpreter to translate my dissertation to Serbo-Croatian so that participants would receive an additional opportunity for member checking of the final document. All participants rejected this offer, while some of them noted that their children are trilingual and able to translate my dissertation for them if needed. The women trusted me and my translation
abilities. Jagoda, for example, noted that she was invited by Lana to participate in this research, and that she trusts me because she trusts Lana. It is also possible that my insider/outsider status within the Yugoslav diaspora made the participants comfortable and trusting.

After transcribing all of the 23 interviews (21 individual interviews and two focus group conversations) in the very language spoken during the interview, I continued with primary data analysis using the same language until the data was member checked and approved by participants. I then translated from Serbo-Croatian into English only those texts, quotations, transcript poems, interpretative stories, and personal experience narratives that were included in this dissertation. For those women who were interviewed in the Serbo-Croatian language, I wrote bilingual quotations and transcript poems side by side in this written document to keep the accuracy of the Serbo-Croatian word; to demonstrate the challenges of meanings lost in translation; and to invite the reader to enter the messiness and the beauty of our trans/lingual worlds.

**Challenging the Taken-for-Granted Categories**

During our conversations, particularly focus group interviews, we revisited the meaning(s) of the taken-for-granted categories such as refugee woman and immigrant woman. Although all of the women participating in the study applied to come to Canada as refugees, most of them used the word immigrant, rather than immigrant woman or refugee woman when describing their experiences and their locations in Canada. Two discussions on this topic took place. The first discussion explored similarities and differences between an immigrant woman identity and a refugee woman identity. The second discussion, on the other hand, explored the process of becoming a Canadian
woman. We also revisited and redefined the word *exile*, as well as the word *home* to challenge these taken-for-granted categories as well as our cultural and personal assumptions. Our main goal was to develop a common language (and understanding) rather than assuming it already existed before our conversations took place. We concluded that language is not neutral and that language constructs subjects, in our case immigrant and refugee women, in particular ways (Cixous, 1993; Irigaray, 2002; Weedon, 1997).

**Negotiating the Insider/Outsider Status**

As a transnational feminist researcher, I remain aware of the power and authority issues embedded in my relationship with those whom I research. I understand the importance of reflexive practice and the need to question and articulate my personal and research standpoints throughout the research process. For example, I am aware that in my research with Yugoslavian refugee women teachers, I am both an *insider* and an *outsider* to their experience. I am a refugee woman teacher from Yugoslavia, and, as such, I share some social locations (e.g., race, gender, and refugee status) with the participants in my study. As an insider, I was able to gain easy access to the Yugoslavian refugee female teacher population in Ontario and Québec and develop a rapport with these women over a three month period. Sharing some characteristics with Yugoslavian refugee women teachers in my study, however, does not enable me to fully understand their lived experiences (Riessman, 1987; Beoku-Betts, 1994), especially when considering my social locations of the researcher and the Ph.D. student in the research landscape. In addition to these two locations, my outsider status to the experiences of the participants has also
emerged from my different social location in terms of ethnicity, religion, age, marital status, and my current professional status in Ontario.

I grew to understand that insider/outsider binary has the potential to mask “power differentials and experiential differentials between the researcher and researched” (Naples, 2003, p. 49). In many instances, I felt simultaneously as an insider and an outsider to the participants’ worlds, continuously negotiating and crossing borders of not/understanding and not/belonging. I became aware that my relationship to the participants was renegotiated on a regular basis. This constant negotiation has assisted me in revisiting and relocating the relations of "gender, race, and class, all the relations at the immediate level" (Naples, 2003, p. 49). My own sense of insider/ness or outsider/ness has changed significantly over time moving from belonging to not-quite-belonging to belonging enough. This process enabled me to come “closest of all researchers to approximating the emotional stance” (Adler & Adler, 1987, p. 67) of the women I studied.

As a refugee woman researcher researching refugee women within the same diaspora, I experienced the insider/outsider status as a complex and multi-faceted location. I kept reminding myself that ethnic researchers can develop strong bonds with refugee participants, but at the same time their closeness with the participants can influence the researcher’s objectivity and the social dynamic of the interview. The boundaries between me and the research participants remained both “entrenched and yet constantly shifting than initially imagined” (Sherif, 2001, p. 445). Borrowing from Sherif (2001), I originally defined my ambiguous insider/outsider status as the status of a partial insider or of a partially native ethnographer.
I gained access to the diasporic community of refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia, but I kept wondering if my insider/outsider status had significantly distorted my interview questions, as well as data interpretation. For example, I found many of the participants' statements and metaphors to be familiar and straight-forward. Due to this assumed familiarity with the Yugoslav culture and refugee experience, I was aware that I might be inclined to take some participants' statements, symbols, and metaphors for granted, without asking probing or clarifying questions.

Throughout the research process, I also wondered how participants have storied my life and my insider/outsider location in the research landscape:

How much are they open to share their deeply personal stories with a partially native ethnographer? How do they negotiate the tensions arising from cultural trust and cultural sanction? Would they feel more comfortable telling their deeply personal stories to a cultural outsider who does not share the same cultural norms and expectations? Would these women feel safer with a researcher who is a cultural outsider? Does this sense of trust and safety change over time? Who is in charge of these shifts? (Research Journal, May 15, 2010)

To address the issues of insider/ness and taken-for-granted assumptions that might arise from my perceived familiarity with participants, I maintained wakefulness as I wrote this research text, received comments from participants and my supervisor, and used my own critical lens.

Towards the end of the research process, I was becoming more and more aware that my insider/outsider status did not always guarantee that the research conducted was any less hazardous to the participants than the research conducted "by someone stepping
in from the outside for a brief encounter. Different risks evolve as researchers and contexts change” (Tilley, 1998, p. 321). I remained committed to reciprocity and long-lasting relationships.

**Publishing Other People's Voices**

In my study, I experienced the tensions between allowing participants' voices to be heard and publishing those same voices as my own. I was committed to balancing participant-researcher power dynamics and conducting "respectful research, research sensitive to individual participants and research contexts, with both researcher and participants benefitting—research that included but pushed beyond concerns for ethical behaviour by the researcher" (Tilley, 1998, p. 317). I balanced the power dynamics between participants and myself by allowing for multiple voices, member check, reciprocity, and alternative modes of data representations.

The question of ownership in this research emerged at the research design stage, resurfaced during the writing of the field text and, again, in creating research texts. For me, it raised questions about whether or not I should make field texts public in this dissertation, about which field notes were appropriate and which ones were inappropriate to share with participants or make public in this document, especially those field notes capturing the atmosphere in participants' homes before or after the interviews. Ownership concerns persisted throughout the research process, blurring into "concerns of ethics and negotiated relationship in the field" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 176). I was aware of the possibility that my relationships with participants in the field may be terminated at any time by the participants. With this in mind, I reframed concerns of ownership into concerns of relational responsibility. As I composed my field and research
texts, questions of ownership became less important than questions of my responsibility and my honesty towards participants. I am aware that respectful research demands that "we do not write research participants out of their lives" (McCormack, 2001, p. 312); it demands that I do not become a “colonizer of the subjects through re-telling" (Garrick, 1999, p. 152) participants' stories. To minimise colonization of participants' voices, I used a member check, and made my own voice visible in the text. As a researcher, however, I was the one who wrote the final version of this research text, trusted by participants, and, hopefully, readers.

**Considering Responsiveness and Flexibility**

Throughout the study, I demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness by: (a) expanding my research from Ontario into the bordering province of Québec; (b) developing forms and interview protocols in both English and Serbian; (c) conducting all interviews held in Québec in the Serbian language; (d) moving from a postcolonial feminist perspective to a transnational feminist framework after preliminary data analysis was accomplished; (e) inviting a Canadian female principal to participate in the study; and (f) modifying the process of data analysis and representation for the Canadian female principal. All these modifications were my response to the two events that emerged from the field. Firstly, one of the refugee women teachers who agreed to participate in my study suggested participation of four women residing in Québec. To include these women's voices I expanded my research to this neighbouring province.

Secondly, two refugee women teachers participating in the study suggested an interview with a Canadian female principal who mentored them into teaching profession in Québec. These women believed that their Canadian mentor could share with me some
valuable settlement strategies and resources. I conducted only one interview with the Canadian principal and was not able to strictly follow the storying stories method that includes the analysis of three consecutive interviews (McCormack, 2000a, 2000b). To develop a personal experience narrative from one interview, I storied the principal's interpretative stories within one interview and around my main research questions: How has refugee status influenced Yugoslavian female teachers' professional journeys in Canada? How have social structures—in addition to refugee status—influenced these women’s understandings of their professional identities as teachers? How have government and social structures enhanced or inhibited these women’s possibilities for re-establishing their professional lives in the country? I also used concentric storying method and poetic transcription to analyse and re/present this woman's perspectives of immigration, settlement, and the teaching profession in Canada.

Making Sense of Storied Lives

As I moved from field (e.g., from interviewing and observing) to field text (e.g., interview transcript, field notes, and reflexive journal) and research text (e.g., dissertation document), I was concerned with theoretical considerations, field text-oriented considerations, and interpretative considerations. In terms of the theoretical considerations, I began with experiences as told and lived through refugee female teachers' stories, experiences as narrated and transformed by these women and myself. In terms of field text-oriented considerations, my shift from field text to research text remained critical for constructing meanings and final interpretations. During the research process, I was overwhelmed with the amount of the constructed field text such as interview transcripts and field notes. I found myself often engaged in writing diverse
"interim texts, texts situated in the spaces between field texts and final, published research text" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 133). Sharing these interim texts (e.g., transcripts, transcript poems, and interpretative stories) with participants was often filled with hesitation, uncertainty, and panic. For me, the main concern was the participants’ reaction to interim texts. I feared that my interim texts, my interpretations, would upset participants and damage our relationships. This concern reminded me one more time of how important it is to respect, negotiate, and nurture my relationships with participants. I moved frequently back and forth between field, field texts, and research texts while negotiating researcher-participant co/participation in the research process. During this co/participation, I was also cognisant of the stories told about me by my participants. These stories stayed with me as I moved from the field to this dissertation document.

**Moving On: Considering the Researcher's Ways of Knowing**

In this chapter, I documented the research process and explained my methodological decisions. As a transnational feminist researcher and a narrative inquirer, I challenged the taken-for-granted assumptions about the ways in which researchers produce research texts (Sherif, 2001). I replaced the traditional methodological assumptions that the researcher must remain distant from the research participants to maintain objectivity with the recognition that the researcher's ways of being and knowing affect every aspect of the research process. In the following chapter, I describe my experiences, views, and attitudes and the ways in which they informed my research methodology.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCHER’S STORY

As researchers, we come to inquiry with histories, "views, attitudes, and ways of thinking about inquiry" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 46). To clarify my history, views, attitudes, and ways of thinking about research, I introduce my story of coming to Canada...

About Canada

I came to Canada …

I wanted to …

I applied to come …

grateful for being accepted.

But then, there is some kind of misleading...

at the very beginning

… when I talked to a lady

at the Canadian embassy

… she gave me … points

because I’m highly educated

I have my teaching degree.

I came to Canada and

I received a broom.
I am a science teacher who immigrated to Ontario in 1998 with my husband and two sons. I was born and raised in Osijek, Croatia, Yugoslavia where I received my Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Education degrees, started working as an environmental chemist, got married, and gave birth to my eldest son.

**What Made Me a Refugee Woman**

I vividly remember 1991. Civil war broke out in Yugoslavia. Following the outbreak of the war, which resulted in a major media campaign directed against Serbs in Croatia and military conflicts between Croatian authorities and the Serbian population in the region, my husband and I decided to leave our jobs, apartment, and material belongings and move to Serbia. Our first stop in Serbia was Bački Gračac where we moved in with my uncle. My uncle’s house became a shelter for a number of our relatives who fled Croatia for their lives. The only income we had was a monthly refugee assistance, which included limited portions of flour, sugar, oil, and hygiene products provided by the International Red Cross. Serbia was experiencing a big economic crisis caused by the breakout of war and massive waves of refugees pouring in from other Yugoslav provinces such as Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). In the meantime, my youngest son was born. My brother helped me find employment as a high school science teacher. We relocated to Crvenka, a small town in Serbia.

**What Brought Me to Canada**

Our refugee years in Crvenka were years of economic hardship for the entire country. Many of us held refugee status. My husband was taking whatever work was available to him. Half my monthly salary went towards the rent alone. We had my husband’s sister living with us at the time. After two years of living in Crvenka, I agreed
with my husband’s suggestion to immigrate to Canada because the five of us lived in the
Canadian equivalent of a one-bedroom apartment, there was no job security for my
husband and his sister, and wages for my teaching position were miserable. Life was
difficult, but I still enjoyed teaching. My teaching practice helped me fulfil some sense of
self in spite of my refugee status. This is only a simplified version of my complex
situation at that time.

When we first applied to come to Canada, we were not accepted as refugees. We
were accepted on the basis of having five Canadian families supporting our application.
For this reason, we did not receive any government support. We were greeted by the
friends who secured those five signatures. They helped us move to the apartment they
rented on our behalf, and connected us with the Employment Help Centre, English
language school, and an elementary school for our eldest son. Within days, my husband
and I started working. We did not speak any English at that time. My friend’s former
employer was able to offer me a job as a chambermaid at minimum wage. My husband
was hired as a labourer for a cable installation company in residential areas at minimum
wage. As the busy season came to an end in the hotel industry, I shifted my employment
to the fast food industry. We continued to chase seasonal jobs.

My landed immigrant status in Canada was my first encounter with colonialism as
a lived experience. Before my immigration to Canada, I perceived colonialism as a
condition affecting others. Ten years after my arrival in Canada, I found myself in a
colonial present, and realised that the troubling experience of being a refugee woman is a
postcolonial phenomenon. I suddenly woke up in a world of binaries: here and there,
before and after, us and them. They assigned me a number of unfamiliar signifiers:
"You used to be a teacher."
"You are lucky, because your skin is white."
"You are not white; your skin is olive."
"We don’t hire unqualified teachers."
"You have a sexy accent."
"How can we trust you to teach our children?"
"How can we hire immigrant teachers? There are so many of our graduates looking for jobs!"

I was suddenly a mature woman trapped in the skin of an inferior, childlike other (Said, 2000). I also caught myself (re)defining “Them” and neutralising the blades of “Their” oppression:
"They are ignorant."
"They are arrogant."
"I am a science teacher in spite of “THEM.”

Postcolonialism does not affect only particular countries and territories, but also groups of peoples across the world (Loomba, 2005). Postcolonialism includes people living in colonised countries as well as those people “geographically displaced by colonialism” (p. 16). I came to Ontario as a white, middle-class, university educated European woman. As a refugee woman in Ontario, however, I felt marginalised and vulnerable. I have learned that Eastern Europeans are not quite Europeans and that educated refugee women are not necessarily educated women in the Ontario context.

According to the master narrative of nationhood in Canada, Canada was built on immigration. The counter-narrative, however, claims that Canada was built on the
displacement of original peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) of Turtle Island. In light of these two narratives, I find myself inhabiting a double-skinned body, a body that belongs to the coloniser and the colonised at the same time. As an immigrant to Canada and a white European woman, I am colonising spaces and histories of original peoples. As a refugee woman teacher from the socialist Yugoslavia in the Balkans (i.e., Eastern Europe), I keep sweating under the skin of the colonised; my teaching degree is not recognised, my accent is frequently noted, and my culture is often perceived as inferior to the dominant Canadian culture. In addition, I will never forget the horror of watching the U.S. and Canadian military forces bombing Yugoslavia for 78 days in 1999. Such a location within the colonising discourses and practices resonates with Said’s (2000) description of the binary opposition between the familiar (Europe, the West, the coloniser) and the unknown (the Orient, the East, the colonised). He argues that this opposition is critical for deepening our understanding of European identity: if colonised people are irrational, Europe is rational; if colonised people are primitive, Europe is civilised. This opposition can also be applied to the context of deconstructing and understanding the identity of refugee women teachers in Canada: if Canadian-born women teachers are educated, refugee women teachers are ignorant; if Canadian-born women teachers are rational, refugee women teachers are irrational; if Canadian-born women teachers are civilised, refugee women teachers are primitive. Such a portrait of refugee women teachers disrupts the Canadian master narrative of gender equity and women’s rights, which historically celebrates Canada as a world leader in women’s rights activism and urges that once in Canada refugee and immigrant women are saved and liberated.

How I Ended Up at a Canadian University

Eventually, I enrolled in the intensive English language programme (IELP) at a Canadian university, paying a $2,500 fee for four months of the programme. One of the programme instructors introduced me to the Ontario College of Teachers application guidelines and forms. The 28-page guidelines were overwhelming. All the steps of the application process had to be accomplished in six months. I surrendered and focused on completing my English language programme, while working and taking care of my family. After completing IELP, I enrolled in the undergraduate biotechnology programme at the university. I believed that I would never teach again due to my limited English language skills, but that maintaining my science expertise might enable me to find employment at a chemistry or biology laboratory in the region. Getting into the biotechnology programme was difficult. I had to fill out four different application forms before I was able to register for the programme. Every time I submitted a completed form, the woman in the registrar’s office said, “Oh, that’s the wrong form!” I would take
a new form and start filling it out again. I kept filling out those forms diligently, and eventually completed and submitted the right one. After the assessment and evaluation of my transcripts by the university, my mark average was reduced from 86% to 70%. “Our Canadian standards,” the woman in the registrar’s office said. I was also told that only one year and a half of my degree from the former Yugoslavia is recognised in Canada. I returned to university as a second year student.

What Kept Me at the University

During the pursuit of my biotechnology degree, I was hired by the faculty of education as a research assistant. My research team members encouraged me to apply to the Master’s of Education programme at the university. Given that I had started my Master’s degree in Biochemistry back home, this felt a natural progression for me, and it was a way to preserve my connection with the teaching profession. Since my mark average was reduced to 70%, my application to the master’s programme was rejected. My knowledges were rendered as subjugated knowledges: "hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity" (Foucault, 2003, p. 7). Two colleagues from our research team, however, found this rejection unjust and wrote recommendation letters for me. I was accepted into the programme. I felt very fortunate to have such supportive colleagues. Today, I understand that this event could be seen quite differently through a postcolonial feminist lens; such an event might be seen as a process of institutional othering and marginalisation. According to Edward Said (2000), othering is construction of “Other than Self” as a fixed, inferior, and less than human being lacking any agency. In other words, my teaching degree did not meet Canadian standards, my knowledge was deemed inferior,
and there was nothing I could do about it. I had no agency. I was saved, however, by my
Canadian colleagues. Thanks to my colleagues’ agency, I was allowed to continue my
education in Canada. I witnessed first-hand the troubling identity of the refugee woman
in the Canadian context, as well as the power of people, networks, and communities in a
refugee woman’s life.

**Why I Pursued My Ph.D.**

I decided to explore questions of exile, settlement, and teacher identity through a
systematic inquiry, and pursued part-time Ph.D. studies in education in 2007. I
recognised that my experience of exile in Serbia was far from a romantic journey, but I
did feel that my Serbian experience of exile was less traumatic for me than my Canadian
experience. In Serbia, we were struggling financially, but my teacher identity was alive
and never questioned. In Canada, my husband and I provided our sons with excellent
education opportunities. We built a new house and new networks. At times, however, I
still felt like a *used-to-be, homeless* teacher.

During my Ph.D. studies, I became even more aware of my ambiguous, privileged
and marginalised position in the net-like system of hegemony (Foucault, 1980). I
witnessed the circulation of power within and among the systems of dominant and
subjugated knowledges and recognised that my position of privilege and marginalisation
was a fluid and shifting location due to the interlocking systems of race, gender, class,
ethnicity, education, as well as professional and refugee status in Ontario. Although I
have not been allowed to exercise my science teacher identity in this province, I managed
to negotiate the privileged position of a Ph.D. student.
Moving On: Entering a Transnational Space

This story is a postcolonial feminist text written in the summer of 2011. It presents a snapshot of my refugee experience in a particular time and place. Since then, this study has taught me how to move from unhomely in-between spaces of a postcolonial framework to the multiple homes and border-crossings of transnational feminist thought. Walking together in research with participants—from data conceptualisation to data analysis and representation—enriched my understanding of gender, exile, and teacher identity in Canada.
CHAPTER FIVE: STORIES OF WOMEN, STORIES OF EXILE, STORIES OF TEACHER IDENTITY

This chapter opens with participants' stories of gender, exile, and teacher identity in Canada. Each story begins with a collective poem, which brings together the voices of all the women participating in this study, and then moves towards contextualising and theorising participants' individual and collective experiences. In addition to narrating their own stories, participants have storied my life throughout the research process and constructed an image of a researcher, a refugee female teacher from the same diaspora who continued her education in Canada.

For those five participants who were interviewed in the Serbian language, I constructed a form of bilingual text. This text is presented in two parallel columns: the left column represents original conversations conducted in the Serbo-Croatian language, while the right column provides English translation of the left column. I use this form of data representation to honour participants' cultural identities, their pre-exile knowledge, and their bilingual realities.

Introducing Refugee Women Teachers

I present here refugee women teachers’ short biographies. I developed these biographies from the demographic questionnaire administered during the first interview and from participants’ personal experience narratives that were constructed for each woman, but not included in this dissertation due to the page limitations of the document. I then discuss five collective narratives that emerged from participants’ individual stories.
Biser (Perl)

Biser is a high school mathematics teacher from BiH, a former republic of Yugoslavia. In 1993, Biser escaped from a Muslim enclave in BiH and searched for exile in Serbia, then moved to a Serbian enclave in BiH, to Croatia, and finally to Canada. During this journey, she experienced refugee-hood across multiple cultures and geographies. She arrived in Québec in 1995 from Croatia, another former republic of Yugoslavia, with her husband and a five-year old son. They came as government supported refugees under a government program for mixed-marriage couples from the war-torn Yugoslavia. Biser gave a birth to a daughter in 1997 and stayed home with her children for the next six years. She remembers the Yugoslav civil war as a bad dream. Biser declares her ethnicity as Croatian and her nationality as Yugoslavian.

Biser gave up teaching mathematics in Canada. She emphasized the importance of family in her life, and painted her Québécois self-portrait as a mother and L'Ange Gardien/an Angel Guardian rather than as a teacher. She dedicated the first nine years of her immigrant life to her family. For these nine years, she gave up studying and working so she could raise her two children. In 2003, Biser's daughter started Grade 1, and Biser enrolled in a college degree program for becoming L'éducatrice a lunch supervisor. She completed the college program in 2004 and worked as an occasional lunch supervisor for a year. Biser obtained her éducatrice full-time, permanent position in 2005 and fell in love with her new profession.

Dana (English and Serbian Name; From Danica, Morning Star)

Dana is a Psychology and Pedagogy high school teacher from Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Yugoslavia. She always wanted to be a teacher and, in spite of the
war and immigration, she has never given up her teacher identity. Dana and her husband were married in March 1992, two months before the war broke out in the province. In May 1992, they escaped from BiH to Serbia and applied to immigrate to Canada. In August 1993, Dana and her husband landed in Québec and started their Canadian journey. They applied to come to Canada as refugees, but they were accepted as landed immigrants. They were supposed to bring $7,000.00 in Canadian funds to the country, and received no government support. In 1994, Dana gave birth to a baby girl and stayed at home for four years taking care of her family. Dana and her husband were not able to find jobs in Québec, so they moved to Ontario where Dana’s husband obtained a job in his profession as an engineer. Although she was financially supported by her husband and did not mind house work, Dana felt isolated and missed teaching during her first five years in Canada.

From 2000 to 2006, Dana made five attempts to teach in Ontario. She applied four times to the Ontario College of Teachers for recognition of her teaching credentials, but was not awarded a teaching certificate. She also applied to a pre-service program at a Canadian university, but was not accepted. Since 2003, Dana has worked as research assistant and project manager at an Ontario university, completed a Master’s degree in Education, and pursued a Ph.D. in Educational Studies. She started working as a teaching assistant and part-time university instructor in 2006, and continued her university teaching career to date. Dana believes that hard work pays off, that we are all on a level playing field, and that we are all responsible for our own success in life.
Jagoda (Strawberry)

Jagoda is a French and Latin language teacher from Yugoslavia. Jagoda and her family first escaped from Bosnia and Herzegovina, then a province of Yugoslavia, to Serbia. Because of a big wave of refugees immigrating to Serbia from other Yugoslav provinces at the time, Serbia was experiencing a great economic crisis. Jagoda started working as a Latin language teacher in a rural area. Three years later, she was still struggling to obtain her citizenship papers in Serbia. Jagoda lost her job and was forced to search for a better life somewhere outside the Serbian borders. She was 40 years of age when she arrived in Québec with her husband and two children.

Jagoda spoke French when she arrived, but decided to work rather than continue her education. Jagoda's husband did not speak French when they arrived to Québec, so she became the breadwinner. Presently, Jagoda works as *educatrice* (lunch supervisor) in a kindergarten classroom in Québec. She sees Canada as a society that discriminates against refugees and immigrants, but does not blame Canada for doing so. Jagoda describes Canada as her *Maceha Kanada* (Stepmother Canada) and accepts Canada's injustice towards her. She, however, remains bitter about the injustice she suffered as a refugee woman in Serbia, in her *Mother Country*.

Lana (From Svetlana, Glowing Woman)

Lana is a French language and literature college teacher who escaped from BiH to Serbia in 1994. She stayed at a shelter for refugees in Serbia for a number of months. Lana described those months at the shelter as a journey into *devet krugova pakla*/the nine circles of hell. For days and months, she was surrounded by people searching for their family members who went missing, wounded, or were killed in the war. Long lines of
desperate people were waiting every day for their turn to use the only telephone available at the shelter, and often screaming, crying, or passing out after hearing tragic news.

Lana arrived in Québec as a government sponsored refugee and a single woman who hoped that, once in Canada, she would forget all the sadness and poverty left behind in her war-torn homeland. Lana brought to Canada *intelektualni prtljag*/an intellectual backpack, including her teaching degree and eight years of teaching experience at a college. Only several weeks after her arrival to Québec, Lana visited a local elementary school and started volunteering as lunch supervisor. Four months later, she began teaching French language to immigrant children at a secondary school, and teaches at the same school to date. Lana's students are 12-17 year old newcomers to Québec. From the very first day, Lana made connections with the Immigration Centre and the Yugoslav diaspora in the city. She helped her diasporic community through the Immigration Centre and through personal connections by translating documents and conversations from the French language to the Serbo-Croatian language whenever it was needed. Lana has translated everything from flyers and bills to diplomas and numerous conversations taking place in schools and hospitals in her city. She wants to contribute to Canadian society, and takes great pride in being Canadian.

**Maruška (From Marija, Beloved)**

Maruška is an elementary Serbo-Croatian language and literature teacher who came from Montenegro to Ontario with her husband and her older son in 1995. Maruška was born in Montenegro and lived there until her wedding day, when she moved to BiH to start her married life in the house of her husband’s parents. When the war in BiH broke out, Maruška and her family moved back to Montenegro, and then applied and were
accepted to immigrate to Canada. They came through a government program which was
developed for mixed-marriage couples from Yugoslavia at the time. She is Montenegrin
and her husband is a Serb from BiH. Maruška and her family received one-year of
financial support from the Canadian government.

Two years after her arrival in Ontario, Maruška started working as a Serbo-
Croatian language interpreter teaching Serbo-Croatian language and culture to Canadian
soldiers heading to BiH. She continued her education while taking care of her family, her
husband and two sons. Maruška obtained her Certificate for Teaching English as a
Second Language (CTESL) in 2001 and completed her Master’s degree in Linguistics
and Language Applied Studies in 2003. During her graduate studies, Maruška co-taught
ESL to international students. Several years later, Maruška completed a bridge-in
program for internationally trained teachers and started working as an occasional teacher.
She is proud of her educational accomplishments in Canada, and aware at the same time
that all her lined up degrees have not provided her with a permanent, full time teaching
position in Ontario. Maruška's teaching is "super occasional," but she enjoys working
with children. Maruška's most effective strategy for integrating in the educational system
in Canada and Canadian society has been her desire to learn and move forward.

Mira (From Mirjana, Peace and Harmony)

Mira is a mathematics elementary school teacher from BiH, Yugoslavia. She
stayed in her home town almost until the end of the civil war and suffered from hunger
and life-threatening conditions for four years. Mira left her home town in 1994 and joined
her husband, son and daughter who already had lived in Serbia for a few years. She
arrived in Ontario, Canada with her family in 1994 as a privately sponsored refugee. Mira
and her family were sponsored by her oldest daughter who immigrated to Canada with her family in 1990 as an economic immigrant. Mira was the one who convinced her husband to immigrate to Canada; she brought her family to this country to find peace and to provide her children with a good education and bright future. Mira came to Canada to ensure that her children would never be hungry again.

Mira's husband had a heart condition and was unable to work. She took on the role of the breadwinner. Only a few days after landing in Ontario, Mira started working as a chambermaid at a Canadian hotel and continued to work in this capacity for eight years. In 2002, Mira's husband died from a heart attack. After the funeral, Mira's children convinced her to retire. Mira's life in Canada was and is devoted to her children and her grandchildren. Mira believes that her teaching expertise would never meet Canadian expectations. Unlike Canadian teachers who teach children how to play, Mira taught her students mathematics.

Nada (Hope)

Nada is a Serbo-Croatian language and literature high school teacher who immigrated to Québec from BiH, Yugoslavia in 1995 with her husband and two little daughters. She taught Serbo-Croatian language and literature for 11 years prior to her immigration to Québec. Immediately after her arrival, Nada started volunteering at a second-hand store. She decided not to continue her education in Québec because she did not speak any French at the time. She tried to get employment as a Serbo-Croatian language teacher for Canadian soldiers going to Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war, but she was not accepted because her professional title was a Serbo-Croatian language teacher, rather than a Bosnian language teacher.
Nada gave up her teaching profession because of her limited French language skills, her subject area that was rarely needed in Québec, and her personal characteristics such as being practical, dynamic, devoted to her family, and not overly ambitious. Nada is "pozrtvovana majka" (overprotective mother, mother who is willing to sacrifice her happiness for the sake of her children) and she always puts her family first. Nada works as a manager at the same second-hand store where she started volunteering in 1995 and manages 40 people with care and grace. Nada's supervisor told her once that her store is a well-managed classroom.

**Nina Bloom (Fictional Character)**

Nina Bloom came to Ontario in 1995 with her husband and two sons who were seven and 19 years of age at that time. She was 43 years old and eager to teach in Ontario. Nina Bloom already had 12 years of teaching experience. Prior to her arrival in the province, Nina Bloom taught Serbo-Croatian language and literature and English as a second language at an elementary school in Croatia, Yugoslavia. One year after her arrival to Ontario, she obtained TESL, TEFL, and TOEFL certificates. While studying English at an Ontario college, Nina Bloom was told by one of her instructors that she should not be studying English; she should be teaching it. Soon after this event, Nina Bloom started a part-time teaching job at the College. She continued working in this capacity for eight years until the College management changed. The new management let Nina go. Nina Bloom studied hospitality together with her older son at the same college from 1997-1999. At the same time, she worked full time as an administrator at a hotel. Nina Bloom also studied adult education courses together with her younger son at a local
university from 2007-2009. She is only five credits from her degree, but at the time of this research, she could not continue her studies.

Nina Bloom applied to the Ontario College of Teachers to assess her teaching credentials, but the College recognised only one credit out of 13 credits from Yugoslavia. She feels she is being discriminated against due to the fact that her teacher education from Yugoslavia was not recognized in Ontario. She regrets not finishing her adult education courses at a Canadian university. Nina Bloom feels fully competent, capable and entitled to teach in Ontario, but she finds the teacher re-certification process in this province to be exhausting and discriminatory. She has retreated completely because of this unjust process and this society.

Zlata (Goldie)

Zlata is a Serbo-Croatian language and literature high school teacher who immigrated to Ontario from the war-torn Yugoslavia in 1994. She and her husband came through an immigration programme for ethnically mixed-marriage couples from the former Yugoslavia at that time. As an ethnically mixed couple, Zlata and her husband did not feel safe in any of the former Yugoslav provinces. This situation provided them with the opportunity to immigrate to Canada and receive one-year of financial support from the government. Zlata was in her thirties when they landed in Ontario.

Zlata graduated from the University of Philosophy and Philology and taught Serbo-Croatian for fourteen years at the high school and university level in a large city in BiH. Zlata loved her profession, students, and colleagues. For her, teaching was a mission. Zlata found her first years in Canada difficult; she was a language teacher and spoke six languages (Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian, Slovenian, French, Spanish and
Italian), but did not speak any English at the time. Once in Canada, Zlata studied English fourteen hours a day. Her home was language and teaching, and she could not afford to remain homeless in Canada. Zlata works as project manager and sessional instructor at a Canadian university. She is, however, disappointed with the role and the place of education in Canadian society. For Zlata, the attitude towards education in Ontario is like the attitude of those going to a shopping mall. As a university instructor, she feels lonely and disposable.

All participants arrived from a war-torn country, made both similar and different choices, and charted both personal and collective ways of transitioning, being, and becoming in Canada.

**Story One: Shelter Is Not Enough**

**Moja Kanada**

Ja bih se vratila kad bi opet bila Jugoslavija, ali nemoguće je to.

Kanada je moja mačeha i zašto bi me voljela!?

Bolje uvek može biti.

*I am not CRAZY in love with things here, but realistic I am.*

*What is my country anyway!?*

**My Canada**

I would go back to Yugoslavia, but that's only my dream and nothing else.

Canada is my stepmother and that's all I can expect.

This can always improve.

*I am not CRAZY in love with things here, but realistic I am.*

*What is my country anyway!?*

*My children will never go hungry again.*
Ja sam overkvalifikovana, ali ipak zadovoljna.
I am overqualified, but I am ok with that.
I can die here. Who cares!?
I can die here. Who cares!?
It's my destiny.
It's my destiny.
It's the system.
It's the system.
I came here for my children,
I came here for my children,
I came here for myself.
I came here for myself.

Refugee female teachers participating in this study have all, except Biser and Mira, made attempts to re-establish their teaching careers in Canada. Although eight of the women obtained a position within an educational setting, no woman has returned to her pre-exile professional location. In other words, no woman in this study secured a permanent, full-time employment in her subject area and her school division within the Canadian context.

These women came to Canada as refugees, but their refugee status differed. They all submitted an application to immigrate to Canada as refugees from the war-torn Yugoslavia. Dana, Mira, Nina Bloom, and Snežana came to the country as privately sponsored refugees while the remaining six women arrived as government sponsored refugees. Refugee status—either government sponsored or privately sponsored—has shaped their experiences in a number of peculiar ways. Intersectionalities of refugee-hood and motherhood have significantly marked their professional and personal pathways in Canada, especially those pathways traveled by Biser, Jagoda, Mira and Nada. These women's experience of war in BiH as well as their refugee experience prior to coming to Canada taught them two important things: treba preživjeti (you must survive) and u
Kanadu se ide zbog djece (you immigrate to Canada for your children’s sake). These perspectives are rooted in participants’ strong sense of motherhood as well as in poverty and the life-threatening situations they encountered during the war:

Rat počeo, puca se, granate, samo u filmovima

Moja kćerka koja je imala godinu dana nije mogla bez mlijeka i mene su u stvari nestašice mlijeka natjerale da napustim grad/

U _____ gdje smo živjeli [prije rata], nismo više mogli, jer su nas istjerali. Došli su _____ i _____, uzeli ti stan, uzeli ti pos’o, jednostavno tu više ne možeš da ziviš. Etničko čišćenje...U Srbiji smo probali. I tamo je bilo previše nas izbjeglica.

The war started, shooting, shells, we watched that only in the movies. (Biser, April 20, 2010)

My daughter who was one year old at that time couldn't make it without milk. There was no milk and we had to leave the city. (Jagoda, April 23, 2010)

In ______, where we used to live [before the war], we could not stay because they threw us out on the street. _______ came, took away our apartment, took away our jobs, we couldn't survive. Ethnic cleansing...We tried in Serbia. Serbia was already flooded with too many refugees. (Nada, May 16, 2010)

We would stay underground for three days.

We had no choice. Once, I made rice and
then ran quickly underground. Children must [eat]. I ran back to the apartment, a shell exploded, a glass window shattered into a thousand pieces...My daughter ran into the kitchen: "You will never go upstairs again! I will starve, but you will never ever check up on that rice again! Let it go!" (weeps). I was in shock. My daughter is screaming: "Mom, mom, your mouth is full of broken glass!" (Mira, May 23, 2010)

For Biser, Jagoda, Mira and Nada coming to Canada meant peace and safety after years of horror and uncertainty. It also meant a good education and bright future for their children. For these four female teachers who escaped from the jaws of the Yugoslav wars, their family remained their priority:

I never was a career woman, not at any cost...my family comes first. (Biser, May 16, 2010)

I think I was not ready to study...I don’t know, my children were little, I am a devoted mother, I was also troubled with my limitations in French—it took me a lot...
da mogu da učim na francuskom. of time to become able to study in French.

(Nada, April 25, 2010)

While Biser, Jagoda, Mira, and Nada embrace Canada as a safe, welcoming and humanitarian country, Jagoda, Mira and Nada feel that they are treated as second class citizens. Taking into account all their losses and gains since the Yugoslav wars, however, these women have rationalised and accepted their marginalised location in Canada:

**Zašto be ovdje bilo drugačije!?**

**Why Would Canada Be Any Different!?**

Ponekad nepravda zaboli, al' neka; Sometimes injustice hurts, but that's ok;

*u Srbiji bolelo je više.*

*Serbia hurts even more.*

Često ćemo reći, “Ne vole nas ovdje.” We often say, "They don't love us here."

*Ne razmišljam o tome.*

*I don't even think about that.*

*Sto bi me Kanadani i voljeli,*

*Why would Canadians love me,*

*Minimum postovanja imam.*

*As long as I get respect?*

*Dal' me vole*

*They love me,

*Il' ne vole*

*or they don't,*

*Ne brine me mnogo.*

*I'm not concerned about that.*

*Nisu me voljeli ni tamo*

*I wasn't loved in Serbia*

*gdje bješe mi stalo.*

*and there I really cared.*

(Jagoda, April 23, 2010)

**Više moja djeca gladovati neće**

**My Children Will Never Go Hungry**

*Again*

*Nase diplome ne priznaju ovdje,*

*Our credentials are denied here*

*a ja 53,*

*and I was already 53,*
In the above poems, Jagoda and Mira describe their location in Canadian society as being on the margin. Jagoda recognizes that refugee-hood is a transnational phenomenon, and being a refugee in the war-torn Yugoslavia and in Canada involves similar struggles of not belonging. Jagoda reveals, however, that being a refugee in Serbia (then Yugoslavia) was a bigger struggle for her than being a refugee in Canada. As a Serbian woman born in BiH, Jagoda still has a hard time imagining herself as a refugee in Serbia, as someone who was unable to obtain Serbian citizenship, and who remained an outsider to her own people. Abandoned by her Mother Serbia, Jagoda greets Canada as Mačehu (Stepmother) and accepts her Orphan identity with stoicism. Jagoda's Canada is a Stepmother, a foster parent who is capable of respecting Jagoda but not of loving her.

Mira, on the other hand, describes her Canada as a safe, but rough territory and paints an image of a Courageous Mother. She inhabits Canada to protect her most precious possessions, her children. Mira, a mathematics teacher from Yugoslavia, will "clean streets," pursue "ten jobs," and do whatever it takes to protect, feed, and educate
her children. Mira's choice was probably influenced by a strong sense of motherhood and a number of challenges that she encountered during the war. For days and months, Mira and her daughter shared only a fist of rice a day; their lives were in danger on a daily basis; Mira taught mathematics in underground shelters with no heat or water; she received threats from some students who were unhappy with their marks, but Mira stayed true to herself and her professional ethic. Finally, Mira had no choice but to pretend that she was a suicidal person, so she could obtain official permission to leave her home town in BiH and join her family in Serbia. After dropping down to the weight of her 15-year old son, seeing her daughter starve, and recognising that her husband was seriously ill, Mira chose surviving over teaching. She chose a cleaning job and motherhood over a teaching career in Canada.

Dana, Maruška, Nina Bloom, Zlata, and Snežana have experienced their refugee status in a different way; they were more critical of the Canadian immigration and settlement policies and practices and named discrimination by individuals and institutions as the main barrier to teaching in Canada:

**I Was Better Educated Than My Judges Were**

*My teaching credentials were not recognized*

*and this deeply affected me,*

*only one credit they recognized out of 13.*

*“It’s not compatible,” they said,*

*“Canadian experience you don’t have.”*

*You must have heard that line*

*over and over again.*
And what is, please, Canadian experience?

Is it more, more valuable than Croatian,

Serbian,

Yugoslav,

Bulgarian?

Twelve years thrown away.

I was hurt.

Resentful.

I knew,

I was better educated than my judges were. (Nina Bloom, May 26, 2010)

In her poem, Nina Bloom challenges the Canadian Ways of Knowing. She questions the invincible yet ambiguous authority of Canadian Experience and the competence of the educational authorities in Ontario who deemed her teacher knowledge as one "not compatible" with Canadian experiences and standards. Nina Bloom admits her oppression and her pain; she was hurt, resentful and she knew that her teacher knowledge was ignored. Nina points out that the sacred authority of Canadian Experience has been frequently (if not always) used to discriminate and control refugees and immigrants, especially those immigrants coming from socialist countries. She explains:

Because of this terrible change, this profound change, this, this shake up of everything that we knew; this crash…our way of life disappeared, and people here, they are brainwashed, that’s the best word I can find to describe [their statements] “oh those bloody socialists” or “bloody communists.” And if you ask
them, “So, what is bloody about communists? Who are the communists? Who are the socialists? What do they stand for?” They don’t know, because they’ve heard from their governments that socialism is not good, right…But at the same time, those unknowledgeable people, narrow-minded people will approach me in a condescending manner and this is what I resent and I don’t want to be a part of it at all. (May 26, 2010)

Similarly to Maryna Bezylevych (2011), who argues that the collapse of the Soviet Union is often used as an excuse to discard all the knowledge created by it and to make it "easy for Eurocentric universalizing ideologies to occupy the post-socialist territory " (p. 3), Nina Bloom noted that after her way of life disappeared—due to the Yugoslav wars—Canadian society had assigned her an identity as a "bloody socialist," "bloody communist," and an uneducated and inferior person. Nina Bloom's description of Canadian society mirrors Ghodsee's (2010) description of Western feminists as scholars who are informed by the celebratory post-Cold War discourses that demonize socialism, and are resistant to the possibility that socialism may have produced emancipation and even feminism. Nina Bloom resists the signifiers prescribed to her by this society, and attributes them back to those who have approached her in a "condescending manner." In Canada, Nina Bloom has lived a life of "permanent underclass, and even a permanent criminal class, along with a class of aliens, or noncitizens" (Brown, 2006, p. 695), and retreated completely from such a society.

During individual and focus group interviews, we discussed the image of the refugee woman teacher in Canada and the common stereotypes associated with this image. In my first conversation with Zlata, we discussed the ways in which refugee
woman stereotypes operate institutionally within immigration and employment centres in Ontario:

Zlata: And we had at that immigration centre, we had a counsellor, somebody who was supposed to help us but I find it very unprofessionally done and unorganized because we got an immigrant from a non-European country as our host. With all due respect to that person, he doesn’t know anything about Canadian culture and he didn’t know anything about our culture. So, how could you help me if you don’t come to me with an informed kind of approach?


Zlata: With knowledge. I believe they tried their best, but at that time _______ was very new to any immigrants coming from the war-torn Yugoslavia. So, we were assumed to be uneducated, untamed, undisciplined, and treated as people who come from countries that don’t have similar culture or social program.

Snežana: Why do you think so?

Zlata: For example, there were workshops, I went even twice and I said, “This is waste of time. I want to learn, to study my English.” They were showing us how to turn on hot water, and cold water.

Snežana: (ah)
Zlata: They were showing us what a kitchen is, what a bathroom is. EXCUSE ME! So, that means those people were not prepared for us.

Snežana: Exactly.

Zlata: That is, I really emphasize this again, I respect all cultures and all people but I didn’t come from the tree. And you as a host, I expect it’s waste of Government’s money if you don’t know anything about me.

Snežana: That’s right. I definitely agree with you.

Zlata: This is really unprepared and those people who work there, it’s just safe haven for them to get Government money and they didn’t know anything. So, the biggest help for my husband and me were our teachers in the ESL school. They were wonderful, they were really hosts, they were real hosts to us because they had the knowledge; people who traveled, who are educated, who knew about us. You know, who didn’t see us as just people from the war. You are supposed to be a killer or aggressive or violent, you know. They treated us as individuals. They treated us as newcomers because they gave us information. So, I found that immigration centres and employment centres do not treat us as individuals. I was told that I’m only able to clean houses, to babysit kids, maybe eventually to work in retail. I went through all of that.
In the above conversation about refugee woman stereotypes circulating within immigrant and employment centres in Ontario, Zlata pointed out that Canada lacks individual and institutional knowledge about refugee women's cultures, abilities, and identities. She reminds us how powerful the labels of war and refugee-hood can be and how these socially constructed, taken-for-granted categories might reduce one's life to the identity of an "uneducated, untamed, and undisciplined...killer" (Conversation 1, May 15, 2010). Zlata critiques immigrant and employment help centres' programs in Ontario for being ignorant towards newcomers' knowledge, for being a "waste of time" and "safe haven" for Canadian-born personnel. She is deeply hurt by the machinery of the dominant Canadian culture that portrays refugee women as uneducated as well as "more feminine, docile...obedient" (Macklin, 1999, p. 24). Zlata refuses the identity of a push-to-the-box refugee woman, a woman who came down from the tree and must be taught "what kitchen is, what bathroom is" and "how to turn on hot water, and cold water" (Conversation 1, May 15, 2010). It remains unclear to me if Zlata's statement that she "did not come from the tree" refers to her belief that some newcomers come to Canada "from the tree" not knowing "what kitchen is, what bathroom is", but she is not one of them. Nevertheless, Zlata urges Canadian society to treat refugee women as individuals and professionals who need information, guidance, and support rather than as women whose cultural wealth is questionable and insufficient (Clayton, 2005).

Our conversation also revealed that Zlata's and my experiences of settlement were similar to some extent. When listening to Zlata's description of her early days in Ontario, I was slowly drowning in a house of mirrors:
Zlata’s words drummed in my heart and revived the pain and the frustrations that I have experienced since my arrival to Ontario. I was comforted to hear that someone else understands what I have been through. Upon her arrival to Ontario, Zlata was labeled as an uneducated, untamed, and undisciplined low-skilled worker and was hurt by that label. So was I. I was hurt back then in 1999 and now again, in the midst of our conversations. Zlata and I connected right there, in her living room, between heaven and hell, among the ghosts of the Yugoslav past and the Canadian present. We connected through our Yugoslav and our Canadian memories, through our political location of refugee woman teacher in Canada.

(Field Notes, May 15, 2010)

Despite these moments of connections and commonalities between Zlata and me, Zlata argued that refugee women from Yugoslavia are not a homogenous group of women, but unique and educated individuals who are worthy of respect. Although Zlata challenged refugee and immigrant women stereotypes with passion and determination, she surrendered to her own prejudices, while describing her settlement counsellor as an immigrant man from a non-European country who did not know "anything about Canadian culture" or Yugoslav culture and was unable to assist Zlata and her husband in the process of settlement. Although Zlata critiqued the Canadian government for employing the deficit lens in the development of settlement services and programs, she fell into the same trap when describing her settlement counsellor. Was Zlata's perspective of this immigrant based on the behaviour of this individual alone, or rather on her own stereotypes of immigrant and refugees? Did Zlata view this individual as a person ignorant of Canadian and Yugoslav culture, because he was an immigrant or because he
was an immigrant from a non-European country? Was he a man of color? Zlata admits that she is (and we all are) prejudiced: "So, you know, when we talk about all those different issues of [immigration and colonization]...we all are prejudiced, of course, but for gosh sake whole life and learning, isn’t it about breaking away from those prejudices" (Conservation 2, June 12, 2010)? Zlata's ESL teachers, on the other hand, were described as wonderful hosts, as real hosts who had the knowledge, who traveled the world, who were educated, who knew about Canada and Yugoslavia, and who treated Zlata and her husband as unique individuals. Were Zlata's ESL teachers’ immigrants to Canada or Canadian-born individuals? Where they people of colour or white settlers? Were they real Canadian hosts to Zlata because they were Anglo-Saxon, white, and privileged? Zlata's story illustrates how important and how difficult it is, at the same time, to break away from prejudices, stereotypes, and colonial scripts even for those individuals who are the very subject of oppression and colonization.

When discussing the ways in which refugee status has shaped participants' professional goals in Ontario and Québec, most women used the category *immigrant* rather than *refugee woman* to describe their location in Canada. As a researcher, I was the one who would more frequently refer to the term *refugee woman* throughout our conversations. During the focus group interview in Québec, we discussed the distinction between these two categories and discovered that four out of seven women embraced the location of an immigrant rather than a refugee woman. For example, Biser noted that she stopped feeling a refugee the moment she entered the airplane heading to Canada. Maruška also emphasized that she is an immigrant woman rather than a refugee woman, because she can always go back to Montenegro, her home country. Lana, however,
reminded us that our individual perceptions are important, but our official refugee status
in Canada has also played an important role in our lives. She noted that those women
who were accepted to Canada as government sponsored refugees, received one-year of
financial assistance from the Government, and started their Canadian lives in a more
supportive environment than did those women who came to Canada as privately
sponsored refugees. The one-year financial support provided through the Government
program for refugees allowed Lana to volunteer as a lunch supervisor at a local school
and eventually obtain a teaching job and teacher certification. Maruška revealed,
however, that she and her husband left the program early, so they could obtain
employment, move on, and integrate into the Canadian society in an efficient manner:

    We thought it’s better to move [on]. Well, we thought it’s better to move [on] and
    we hoped it will help us develop more skills, you know. I don’t know. This is, I
don’t know if this is related to our subject but you know, I knew some people who
    had those benefits and came under that program for refugees and they were
    slower, you know, to integrate and to adjust to the new, new world. (Maruška,
    April 23, 2010)

Lana's and Maruška's perspectives of the government programs and their effects
on refugees were in opposition. While Lana highlighted the benefits of the program,
Maruška argued that these programs might discourage refugees to seek employment
opportunities and, thus, hinder their professional development and their labour market
currency. In the same vein, Zlata noted that she cleaned houses, babysit kids, and worked
in retail with pride:
It was an opportunity to meet people, an opportunity to get money, and get off that settlement program for a year. We wanted to function in the society. I wanted to earn that $1,000. I felt so ashamed because in our culture to be given money without working, it was, and you are healthy, you are capable of earning...give me anything to do! I was volunteering in the Immigration Centre. Doing ANYTHING just to give back, you know. (May 15, 2010)

Most women considered refugee status a temporary condition, while Lana and I argued that refugeehood will remain an integral part of our past, present and future:

**Izbjeglica za cijeli život**

*Kad kažem vraćam se ovdje*  
i osijecam Kanadu kao svoju kuću,  
pomalo i kao svoj dom,  
ne znači da mi ništa ne nedostaje;  
nedostaje mi moja rodbina,  
moji prijatelj,  
ne mogu ovdje ponovo da ih stvorim.  

**Refugee Forever and After**

*When I say I’m going back to Canada,*  
to my house,  
to my home,  
I don’t say there is nothing I ever missed here;  
I miss my family, my friends,  
I can’t create them over and over again.  

*It’s a complex story;*  
You belong here,  
but what now and how?  
You can’t be a refugee forever,  
but our struggles were great,  
we will die with them,  
cross over,
Participants uncovered a complex and contradictory nature of the refugee identity.

For these women, being a refugee meant:
Being *večni nomad* (an eternal nomad); *na putu bez povratka* (traveling a path of no return); *visiti, biti ni na nebu ni na zemlji* (hanging between heaven and hell); and being a life-long learner (Focus Group Québec; June 13, 2010).

Čovjek bez zemlje (stateless); *isčupan iz korijena* (uprooted); *iscrpljen čovjek* (drained out); čovjek koji kaska (behind); *čovjek sa strane* (outsider); obilježen (stigmatized); *razvrstan* (sorted); *stručan* (an expert); *motivisan* (motivated); and *koristan građanin* (good, useful citizen) (Lana, May 16, 2010);

*Doslja* (newcomer); *neki drugi svijet* (another world) (Jagoda, May 16, 2010);

Hamster in a speeding wheel; an observer who is looking outside-in through a glass door (Nina Bloom, May 26, 2010);

*Obrazovani ljudi* (educated people); *poklon Kanadi* (gift to Canada) (Nada, May 16, 2010);

Human beings, literate people, polyglots, artists and Canadian citizens (Zlata, June 12, 2010).

During the focus group interviews, participants argued that refugees bring great human potential to Canada, but they are often constructed as outsiders, as being different and inferior. Although pushed down through exile and immigration, refugees often manage to stand up and pursue their dreams; they re/establish their careers or adopt new professional identities. Refugees are human beings, knowledgeable and experienced professionals, and life-long learners. They are highly motivated to succeed within the Canadian society and to contribute to Canada's economic and cultural development.

Lana warns that employment is everything to a refugee:

*U principu, jesam dobro integrisana i In general, I am well integrated and*
osjecam se potpuno uravnoteženom (udiše duboko) na tu humanu temu. E sad, professionalna tema je uvijek nešto što (izdiše duboko) kako da kažem, koliko god da radite i, i, Kanadani nemaju stabilnost (udiše duboko) pa je ne mogu ponuditi mnogo ni nekome drugome [imigrantima i izbeglicama], sve je nekako neizvjesno i, i, nestabilno i vremena su dosta i teška za same ljude koji su se i ovdje rodili i školovali i živjeli od početka (udiše duboko) tako da ne mogu ni vama da ponude više nego što i sami imaju, ali (um) destabilizirajući faktor s obzirom da je cijela znači porodica tu kao oslonac, a često su i naslijedja u pitanju, znači ono se prenosi sa recimo koljena na koljeno i sad ti ljudi nasljeduju ogromne sume od životnih osiguranja svojih predaka, nasljeduju kuće i tako dalje dok ste vi tu iščupani iz korijena, nemate ABSOLUTNO ništā (udiše duboko) i za vas je posao nešto balanced (inhales deeply) in terms of my personal integration into Canadian society. Of course, professional integration is something (exhales deeply), so to speak, as much as you work, even Canadians experience job insecurity (inhales deeply) so they are not able to offer any job security to others [immigrants and refugees], everything is uncertain here, and, and, and unstable and these times are difficult times even for those people who were born here, and educated here from the very beginning (inhales deeply), so they are not able to offer you more than they have themselves, but (um) it [unemployment] is less destabilizing for Canadians than it is for refugees because Canadians have family support and often inheritance passed down from generation to generation, many Canadians inherit huge amounts of money through life insurance set up for them by their ancestors, they inherit houses and so forth
Lana's evaluation of employment and its urgency in a life of a refugee echoes Wayland's (2006a) definition of immigrant employment as "the primary settlement need for most newcomers, not least because it helps reduce other barriers to settlement" (p. vi).

Maruška noted that "Izbjeglica je zbunjujuci i emocionalan termin i nazalost termin koji jos uvijek izaziva mnoga pitanja (Refugee is a confusing and emotional term and, unfortunately, a term that still raises many questions)" (Focus Group Québec, June 13, 2010). In the same vein, Zlata described her refugee location in North America:

**My Refugee Dream**

*American Dream*

*and Canadian Dream*

*is giving a chance to anybody,*

*and everybody,*

*to achieve.*

*Yet, for refugees and immigrants*

*from certain geographies,*

*it’s more difficult to achieve.*

*For me it doesn’t apply,*
I didn’t achieve,

I never had American Dream;

my American Dream

was Yugoslav Dream.

Refugee story is harder,

this place doesn’t know anything about us;

we have to prove first

that we are human beings,

and then 10 years later

that we are literate,

that hot is hot and cold is cold,

and they didn’t invent stairs for us

and now we have to learn how to walk. (Conversation 2, June 12, 2010)

According to Zlata, the Refugee Dream is "to achieve," but first and foremost to prove the following: refugees are human beings, they are literate, and they walked up the stairs before they landed in Canada. She also revealed that she never had an American Dream or a Canadian Dream; she came to North America to chase her Yugoslav Dream. Zlata is proud of being born in Yugoslavia. Her life in Yugoslavia was an "aristocratic life"

(Conversation 2, June 12, 2010). Zlata explains:

I never felt tired, I never felt used, I never felt misunderstood, or I was the lucky one, I don’t know. I used to go to, we used to go to every concert, every theater play, we used to go from ___________ to Dubrovnik just to have coffee in Babin
Kuk or you know, like it’s, it was much (um) more humane, I believe… I told my friend, we were talking about finances and, you know, [we] struggle with monthly bills and I said, this is the time when my husband and I have to think about everything [every cent]. And sometimes I feel really feared of, of, you know, being on the street [homeless]. In Yugoslavia we had very good life, everything was good but now it’s time, you know, like every human being has to go through, I believe, ups and downs, you know? There is time to cry, there is time to laugh, so…maybe that feeling of emptiness or (um) that lack of motivation is due to that sense of insecurity, you know, I would say, because if I have to think about tomorrow, you know, I don’t…(Conversation 2, June 12, 2010)

Zlata's lack of motivation to embrace her Canadian life also emerges from her understanding that immigrants and refugees are treated as an underclass in this country. She reveals:

Why all boards in those [Government] agencies are just English Canadians? And those agencies are dealing with social issues and this society is multicultural, we claim to be multicultural, but I don’t see that multiculturalism, yes, we see it only at a food festival or dance festival. ARE WE HERE ONLY TO ENTERTAIN!? That reminds me of colonialism and imperialism; when you brought slaves to dance and play for you. And cook for you, you know, some exotic food. So, that is painful, almost painful for me, really...I want to contribute to this society.

(Conversation 1, May 15, 2010)

In the excerpt above, Zlata challenges the concept of Canadian multiculturalism. She warns that Canadian multiculturalism is just another way of sorting and othering peoples
and communities; refugees and immigrants are viewed as a tourist attraction, a Canadian-only-spectacle, Canada's compassionate facade. Zlata does not want to "dance and play" for Canadians. She wants to contribute to this society in a position equivalent to the one she held in Yugoslavia, a teaching position. Furthermore, Zlata noted that the Canadian Government does not treat only refugees, but also Original Peoples of this territory as an unfit but, at times, convenient group:

We recognize you formally when we want to show [you], like with Olympic Games recently. It was wonderful (sighs) but you pulled out from some back room drawer, you know, native people...It was so sad. It was so sad, you know. And when you see those people, those native chiefs felt that, “you are using me, you are manipulating me again to show the world how tolerant and democratic you are” (ironic) and it was such a charade, a grotesque charade of lies, you know. And I feel that way. I, you know, you are there just when somebody might use you...I felt disposable. (Conversation 1, May 15, 2010)

Lana also expressed her desire to be an active rather than passive (or excluded) citizen, to contribute to this society: “Hocu da budem ravnopravna, da budem dio ovog sistema i da mu doprinosim kao i oni koji su ovdje rodjeni (I want to be equal, to be part of this society and to contribute to Canada as much as native-born Canadians do)” (May 16, 2010). Although Lana transitioned from teaching at a university to high school teaching, she is happier with her job in Québec than she was with her job in Yugoslavia. As a refugee teacher, Lana sees herself as a Helper, a role model to her students and their parents:

Nisam na fakultetu, ali sam beskrajno I am not teaching at university anymore,
In addition to being a role model for her students and their parents, Lana is also perceived by her students, particularly those from Yugoslavia, as a caring and trustworthy teacher. During the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, Lana was a great support to her Yugoslav students:

Još jedna godina suza  
Another Year of Tears

Bilo je teško,  
It was another year of tears;

Beograd su bombardovali,  
Belgrade under the fire,
My students cried,
those moments were hard,
hardest than ever before.

I was far away from the bombs,
yet the bombs got to me
through the worries and the tears,
through my people’s destiny.

Nada goes a step further in describing the works of her refugee identity in Canada: "Mi smo poklon Kanadi, Snježana, ali su nam šanse male (We are a gift to Kanada, Snježana, but our chances [to teach] are slim to none) (May 16, 2010). She explains:

Only if the war never happened...

We would live a normal life in Yugoslavia,
I would have 25 years of teaching,
I would think about retirement,
as university educated people,
we would have our apartment and house,
a life of peace.

Here, we work too much,
i to mi malo smeta u mojim pedesetim.  
I am getting worn out, already in my 50s.

Imam dvije djevojke koje će sad na fakultet,  
I have two daughters at university,

neotplaćenu kuću,  
a mortgage,

moju majku koja je daleko a pomoć joj treba.  
and my mother so helpless and so far away.

Previse je toga na plećima mojim;  
My shoulders are sore;

da radim,  
I must work,

da pomognem dok djeca ne porastu,  
I must help my children,

dok ne postanu ljudi,  
raise them,
moran, moram izdržati.  
I must, I must endure.

Nada's description of Yugoslav refugee women teachers as a "gift" to Canada is reminiscent of Walsh's and Brigham's (2007) statement that Canada must consider teacher re/certification in the context of "immigration policies that aim to attract well-educated and skilled professionals" as well as in the context of "country where birth rates are low, the labor force is aging, and immigration is a crucial component of current and future growth in terms of population and economy" (p. 2).

The Canadian government and larger society perceives these women as uneducated, approfessional, and somehow inadequate; all of the women knew or learned the official language, while most of them continued education in Canada and obtained employment in educational settings that range from kindergartens to high schools and universities. Despite systemic and individual forms of discrimination, most of these women desire and manage to contribute to Canadian society. Echoing Wayland (2006a)
and the Statistics Canada LSIC (2005) report, participants argued that Canadian immigrant and settlement policies fail to recognize multiple stages of the settlement process. They assist refugees only in the first, immediate phase of their settlement, providing them with shelter, food or basic language training. The women concluded that shelter is greatly appreciated, but is not enough. They challenge the Canadian construction of the refugee woman teacher image as one of a manipulative and troublesome woman (Morris & Sinnott, 2003). Participants' stories show that refugee women are not (necessarily) uneducated women, as stated by Statistics Canada (2000), or women of colour who do not speak English or French (Macklin, 1999). Refugee female teachers bring to Canada not only their refugee status but also their "intellectual knapsacks" (Lana, Conversation 1, April 23, 2010), passion for teaching and learning, professional ethic, and social agency. They cross the Canadian border with a *refugee body* and a teacher state of mind. They continue to teach and learn across different settings, including their homes and workplaces.

**Story Two: We Don't Count; They Want Our Children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poruka kanadskoj vladı</th>
<th>To Canadian Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trebamo posebne programe za izbjeglice,</td>
<td>We need special programs for refugees,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plansku imigraciju,</td>
<td>strategic planning and immigration,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dobru koordinaciju,</td>
<td>coordination,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I pri ministarstvu,</td>
<td>Council for Immigration,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komisiju za Imigraciju, Obrazovanje i Integraciju,</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u toj komisiji</td>
<td>and Professional Integration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have been there,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
mogli bi I mi raditi.

Zaposlite mlade ljude u Ministarstvo i centre za imigraciju,
mlade ljude koji odrastaju sa idejom globalizma.
Kreirajte profile izbjeglica I imigranata,
Proverite naše sposobnosti u pola do jedne godine
ne trošite u ludo nase decenije.
Preispitajte politiku i kriterije zapošljavanja,
neka raznovrsnost nastavnog kadra oslikava raznovrsnost kanadskih učionica.
Pokrenite se i promenite,

Potencijal stigne,
Pa se brzo izgubi,

Litijuni dolara kroz prozor bačeni,
The Ministry work is too broad,
I blame the school board.
Ne trebaju oni nas, nego našu djecu.
Je li to discriminacija,
Government structures, agencies and services have provided the Government supported refugee female teachers participating in this study with shelter, but ignored their professional identities. Jagoda argued:

-Kanadsku vladu ne zanima naša stučnost.  
-Canadian Government is not interested in

Uvoze nas zbog broja glava. Ne trebaju oni nas nego našu djecu.  
-We are imported for numbers only. They don't want us; they want our children. (Focus Group Conversation, June 13, 2010).

While discussing immigration and settlement policies, Nina Bloom shifted the discussion focus from the policy implementation to the real intentions behind those policies:

-Nina: (hum) Are the policies questionable? (pause) I don’t know. I, I’m not sure. I’m confused. Still. I see people like you, you took the right path, and then you are being treated differently.

-Snežana: But I was lost for a while too.

-Nina: You were lost, but I’m still lost. I was lost too, for too long. And I’m older. And I started too late. And I was already older. I started too late. And then, I really started too late, because before I finished [my degree] I was fired. I mean, there were no more hours
for me. Still I believe if I had my Canadian degree, I would have
gone back to teaching. I would have found a job. I still believe

THAT, but with a Canadian degree. Why not with a Croatian
degree, with a Yugoslav degree? Why? This is, I don’t know...

Snežana: I’m asking this because when I came to the Canadian embassy in
Belgrade (um) there was this (um) point list and I got 25 points for
my university education, but when I came to Canada I received a
broom.

Nina: Yes.

Snežana: Something is wrong there.

Nina: Something is wrong.

Snežana: Or there is the Canadian (um) Charter of Rights and Freedom
claiming that people cannot be discriminated on the basis of their
origin, but we ARE.

Nina: We are.

Snežana: Because we don’t have Canadian experience. We don’t have a
Canadian degree, so we are discriminated against because we
weren’t born here...Still, you know, what you were saying, in the
media and in some policies and so forth there are some great
ideas, but they are not translated into practice.

Nina: KNOWINGLY so. This is my impression. KNOWINGLY so. It’s not
just that they are trying to; they are not trying, because whatever
Canada tries, if Canada really tries, Canada will do. I DON’T think they really WANT us being treated equally.

Snežana: Why do you think so?

Nina: From my own experience I’m thinking so, because it was made so difficult for me to get (um), to respond to their requirements. For example, as you said, you receive points there [in the Canadian embassy] for your education, but when you come here it’s another story completely.

Snežana: Yea. So, I guess this is interesting. I have to admit I had applied as a refugee, but it doesn’t matter, I still have my degree and they still (um) counted my degree so why would they give me points for my degree if they have no use for it?

Nina: Because this is their policy. They want educated people, but once educated people are here, they ask for their Canadian experience, so this is intentional, really, to make it more difficult for you here and to give advantage to Canadians, because you are not Anglo-Saxon. (Conversation 2, May 26, 2010)

In the conversation above, Nina Bloom argued that Canadian policies are intentionally designed to perpetuate discriminatory practices against newcomers. Similarly to Mojab (1999) who argues that some female teachers do not continue their profession even if they are proficient in English and if their credentials are accredited because their teaching experience is perceived as unfitting to Canadian experience, Nina Bloom
acknowledged that a lack of "Canadian work experience" has been effectively used to exclude internationally educated teachers from the teaching profession in Canada.

To explore the Canadian concept of refugee needs and how these needs have been addressed by immigration and settlement policies and practices, Zlata and I discussed the following questions: What do refugees need? Who decides what those needs are? Are refugees' needs met in Canada? Through this conversation, we unearthed mechanisms of othering and colonization:

Snežana: I hear from the government officials, from some literature, from some research reports, “This is what refugees are missing, this is what they have to learn, this is what they need.”

Zlata: (uhum)

Snežana: And (um) they didn’t talk with refugees. They think they know what we need.

Zlata: (uhum) They provide a recipe.

Snežana: Yes, so is it possible that we know what we need, that we are able to communicate our needs to the Government, and that we would be instrumental in resolving some [settlement] issues?

Zlata: It’s possible if there is enough will to listen to the word, you know, and I think if the decision-makers see this not as another immigrant story that is so exotic and, you know, nothing more, if they see that those people are making fabric of this society as well, and this story is maybe universal story for any woman or for any teacher, regardless of, you know, that person being immigrant or,
you know, Canadian-born, British, French... I think this is a
universal story of human endeavour, how to find your place in
society that you live in or you decided to live in. So only with that
condition, if there is enough will to really properly open their ears
and listen to it. (Conversation 1, May 15, 2010)

In her account about refugee needs, Zlata argues that each refugee woman teacher's story
is a "universal story of human endeavour," a story of finding one's place under the sun.
She believes that the Canadian Government should abandon the existing settlement
formulas and consider refugee women teachers' voices while developing programs and
services for internationally educated teachers. Zlata wonders, however, if the Canadian
Government and the Ontario College of Teachers would have "enough will to really
properly open their ears" and listen to refugee women teachers' voices.

Our focus group conversations confirmed one more time that Citizenship and
Immigration Canada, Government officials serving refugees and the Ontario College of
Teachers continue to use a deficit approach in developing and delivering their programs
and services. Zlata stated that nothing has changed in the process of immigration and
settlement since 1995:

Zlata: I'm very critical because I feel as part of this society and I'm upset
that this society or the governing apparatus is not using all the
potential that members of this society have and I feel like they, you
know, they are there to get tax payers’ money and that's it, you
know. Nothing, there is no communication. So, every day I'm more
and more disappointed. I feel today it is worst than it was (sighs)
15, 14 years ago when I came [to Canada] or

Snežana: Why?

Zlata: or I didn’t know. Maybe at that time I didn’t know, but later on,
when I started being more involved in social and political issues, I
was teaching one course on feminist literature so, I was more kind
of (um) interested in reality of this phase (inhales deeply). What I
read today, at least in newspapers, is worse than it was 15 years
ago, because there is really kind of dictatorial behaviour on the
Government’s part towards the citizen. We are just told what is
going to happen to us and

Snežana: Your hands are tied.

Zlata: Your hands are tied and nobody is saying anything, nobody can do
anything about it, and that is a terrible sense, you know, that we as
Canadians, as a nation, as a state we are talking about
dictatorships around the world, and I feel, really, we have it here.
(sighs) And that is (ahhhhh) that makes me very unhappy but also,
you know, I don’t know, I don’t know, you have to work

Snežana: You have to survive.

Zlata: you have to survive so I believe that people are not acting or
reacting because they are tired worrying about survival. So, it’s a
perfect, perfect system, (ironically) you know, you exhaust your
Zlata pointed out that newcomers to Canada and even Canadian-born citizens are overworked and too exhausted to get politically and meaningfully engaged in Canadian society. She implies that this strategy of excluding Canadian citizens from the political life of the country has resulted in a terrible sense of "dictatorship," but not in a country far away, but rather here, in our own backyard. Zlata's portrayal of the current state of the immigration and settlement affairs in Canada also reveals that her critical lens might have developed not only over time, but also as a result of her Canadian education and her teaching career at a Canadian university. Zlata, however, does not reflect on her privilege to work as a university instructor. This might be the case, because Zlata's teaching position is a part-time contract position and carries a significant amount of uncertainty:

Maybe that feeling of emptiness or (um) that lack of motivation is due to that sense of insecurity, you know, I would say, because if I have to think about tomorrow, you know, then I don’t… all my energy is kind of focused on today.

(Conversation 2, June 12, 2010)

When describing her experience of attending a bridge-in program for internationally educated teachers, Maruška noted that at first she was excited about attending this "fancy pilot project," (Conversation 1, April 23, 2010) but once in the program she realised that the program had some major weaknesses. For instance, a group of internationally educated teachers with low English language skills was accepted in the program. These teachers were sent to Ontario schools to complete their teaching practicum where they dealt with a number of language and authority issues. These
teachers not only struggled with their communication skills in the classroom, but also lacked support from their associate teachers. They spent $5,000 and eight months of their lives to participate in this program that ended up confirming that they were “not good enough”:

You know, I loved them, they appreciated, you know, they, they trusted me and they liked me and, you know, I was very touched by that, but I knew that I couldn’t help them and I already saw it, because at that time I was longer in Canada than most of them. Some of them were really, really newcomers and then I saw their enthusiasm and hope, you know, but I was really like (um) (um) a bit disappointed because I knew what was going to happen. I felt, you know, that they are not going to find a job.

Maruška tried to give constructive feedback to the program coordinators and instructors but her feedback was resisted:

Maruška: Well, I got in conflict with the coordinators because I felt that the program was not appropriately established and held, you know. I felt so super sorry for those people who paid, some of them struggled really horribly to pay for the courses and their English skills were not good, you know. Well, so it means, ya, it’s good that you are now in the program and you ARE learning a lot. That is really amazing, but it’s still just a beginning. They [program providers] need to be clear because I know what happened when those people were accepted to their practicum. Associate teachers
sometimes were shocked that those people got accepted into the program. They couldn’t communicate with them.

SNEŽANA: Do you know how I feel about that? They were set up for failure.

Maruška: (uhum) Well, when you are starting a program, people are recruiting you, they are passing on that enthusiasm, they need you in the program. At the end of the program, they are changing the story because I realised...that the coordinator of the program was sending different messages to the students and to the Ministry of Education. Well, she also knew, but she was just pumping the people with false hope, you know. So, it didn’t work that way. Well, they need to be honest because those people hoped for a job and for them it was devastating to pay $5,000 for the program and still stay jobless.

SNEŽANA: I just see these programs as being out there but not being focused, not being to the point and they are actually distracting people and people waste their time and their money and at the end of the program somehow they get the message: “You are not good enough.”

Maruška: Ya, you are right. This is what those people had (laughs ironically) at the end of the program, “We are not good enough,” and actually they were told that in the practicum, the first day, what was for most of them devastating. I had a friend from Poland who couldn’t accept that. She said, “Well, why are you telling me that?
I feel more competent than you." She told that to her Associate Teacher. (Conversation 1, April 23, 2010)

Maruška revealed that her most effective strategy for integrating in the educational system in Canada and Canadian society was her desire to learn and move forward. She has been stimulated first and foremost by her professional growth and the opportunity to learn. Maruška also noted that some other characteristics such as whiteness and a positive attitude might come in handy in the process of teacher re/certification and employment. She described the most successful participant in her program for internationally educated teachers:

*Maruška:* She was very intelligent, she is very intelligent.

*SNEŽANA:* How long was she in Canada [at that time]?

*Maruška:* She was only two years [in Canada]. This is why I regarded her as very successful, you know, two or three.

*SNEŽANA:* Where was she from?

*Maruška:* She was from Eastern Europe.

*SNEŽANA:* Ok.

*Maruška:* And she was very beautiful (laughter). So, this is why

*SNEŽANA:* Maybe it helped. (laughs)

*Maruška:* Absolutely! Absolutely! Absolutely!

*SNEŽANA:* She was a woman, a beautiful woman. Ok. (laughs)

*Maruška:* Absolutely. Ya. You know, she was very attractive and very intelligent.

*SNEŽANA:* What was her subject?
Maruška: She had a lot of degrees and she had a Master’s degree from her country and I don’t know actually what her degree was. She had Master but then later I saw that she kept on taking courses. She told us later that she was hired by a Catholic District School Board, you know. She is Catholic. Ya. And then she is teaching also religious education and, you know, well, I started laughing right away because when we were at the end of the program, they passed a questionnaire and they asked us, “Who do you think will find job first?” (laughs)

SNEŽANA: Oh. (laughs) What a question!?

Maruška: I thought about her. She was so blonde, so pretty, so tall, you know, everybody knew she’s going to succeed here. (laughs) Ya. I, I thought, I KNEW that in my case, [I will not] because I used to have something rebellious [about me] and then I was showing that I was unsatisfied with the program. Well, I knew that program, that some things were disastrous. She knew it too, but she never admitted seeing that, you know. She was very focused on her own stuff and goal.

SNEŽANA: Now, you are talking about attitude.

Maruška: Yes.

SNEŽANA: You are saying that having a positive attitude is helpful.

Maruška: YES.
In the excerpt above, Maruška portrays a successful teacher in Canada as being white, middle class, female, young, attractive, educated, ambitious, self-centred, compliant, and Catholic. This description echoes to an extent the description of Canadian teachers as presented by Dei, et al. (2000), Dlamini (2002), Egbo (2009), McMahon and Armstrong (2006). Maruška believes that white, middle class female teachers (although often ill-prepared for teaching students with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds) have better chances to obtain teaching jobs in Canada.

During the focus group held in Québec, participants argued that the Ministry and the Government agencies serving refugees lack strategic planning; coordination of federal, provincial and regional immigration and settlement practices; and consideration of refugee female teachers' voices in the development of above mentioned processes. Once in Canada, refugee female teachers are misplaced and left on their own. Although encountering multiple challenges in re-establishing their personal and professional lives in Canada, participants continue to believe in themselves and other refugee female teachers:

**Izbeglim nastvnicama**

*Ostanite u struci,*

*radite ono što volite,*

*ucite jezik i struku paralelno,*

*jezika se ne bojte.*

**To Refugee Women Teachers**

*Stay in your profession,*

*do what you love to do,*

*learn the language and profession,*

*it’s up to you.*

*Vase znanje i iskustvo su veliki,*

*ne gubite vreme,*

*Don’t fear any language,*

*your knowledge will do,*
The above poem, created from multiple women's voices during the focus group interview in Québec, shows that refugee status and a lack of language proficiency is not necessarily a great disadvantage as suggested in the literature (Phillion, 2003; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh et al., 2011). Refugee female teachers come to Canada with their "intellectual knapsack" (Lana, Conversation 1, April 23, 2010) and strong teaching and learning skills. In this poem, participants celebrate refugee female teachers' knowledge and ability, but at the same time they surrender to the authority of the Canadian Ways of Knowing as was already noted in a number of empirical studies (Martinovic & Dlamini, 2009; Myles et al., 2006). More specifically, participants advise other refugee women teachers to give in, to discard their international degrees and pursue Canadian education.

Participants made the following recommendations to policy makers and educational authorities in Canada: (a) develop new immigration programs for refugees; (b) establish a Council for Immigration, Education and Professional Integration that will coordinate federal, provincial and municipal immigration and settlement processes; (c) create an immigrant portfolio database including individualised assessments of credentials and work experiences; (d) develop six to twelve-month teacher induction programs for immigrant and refugee teachers, involving language training, method
courses and practica; (e) revisit the hiring policies and procedures within immigration and employment centres and hire young people who are growing up international; and (f) revisit district school board hiring policies and procedures to integrate internationally educated teachers in the teaching profession. Lana noted that, in terms of immigration policies and practices, “there is no other country like Canada” (Conversation 2, May 16, 2010), but those policies and practices can always be improved, especially if the Government and the immigration and settlement services would view refugee women teachers as professional and contributing citizens and seriously consider their voices in the development of immigration and settlement programs, policies and practices.

**Story Three: We Are a Gift to Canada, But Our Chances (to Teach) are Slim to None**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They Were Ready to Teach</th>
<th>They Were Ready to Teach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They had the discipline,</td>
<td>They had the discipline,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they had the knowledge,</td>
<td>the knowledge,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they had the wisdom,</td>
<td>the wisdom,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they had the willingness.</td>
<td>the willingness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They wanted to teach</td>
<td>They wanted to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and they loved it,</td>
<td>and they loved it,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it was their career,</td>
<td>it was their career,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they loved it.</td>
<td>they loved it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Da, bile smo i ostale,*

*Svoj posao smo voljele,*

*Yes, we were and we are,*

*We loved teaching,*
Participants reported a number of internal and external barriers to re/establishing teaching careers in Canada. They identified multiple forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of Ex/Yugoslavian and Eastern-European origin, ethnicity, age, language or accent, and non-Canadian education. Most of them described these forms of discrimination as external or systemic barriers to teaching in Canada. Some of them, however, discussed these barriers as being both external and internal forces. For example, all the women who came to Canada in their late thirties gave up education. They believed that they were too old for such an endeavour:

*Kad sam ja sve to stavila na papir šta dobijam I šta mogu da izgubim, ja sam odlučila da se ne doškolujem. Ja sam već tad imala preko 40 godina I mislila sam da investirati u sebe, po mom mišljenju, nije bilo rješenje jer trebalo je investirati u djecu.*

*(Jagoda, April 23, 2010)*
Jagoda encountered three personal barriers to establishing her teaching career in Canada. First, Jagoda came to Québec for her children and protecting them was her first priority. Second, she planned to continue her education and re-establish her teaching career, but she was told by one of the local school principals that her chances of getting a teaching position in Québec, even with a teaching certificate obtained, was only 50:50. For Jagoda, this probability of obtaining a teaching position in the province was not good enough; she did not want to sacrifice her family time and her children's future for embarking upon such a risky adventure. Third, she believed that coming to Québec in an age of 40 was another barrier to her professional career; she felt too old to continue education in Canada:

**Odrekla sam se škole**

*Ulagati u sebe nema smisla,*

*jer moja djeca rastu i u njih ulagati treba.*

*Odrekla sam se škole i ne žalim,*

*ne, ne žalim,*

*jer da sam okupirana sobom bila tko zna kakva bi se nevolja zbila.*

**I Gave Up School**

*Investing in me didn't make any sense;*

*my children were growing up,*

*it was time to invest in them.*

*I gave up school,*

*I have no regrets,*

*I wasn’t the centre of the universe,*

*my children’s future was at stake.*
In addition to these three barriers to settlement and teaching in Québec, Jagoda also encountered financial difficulties. Jagoda's husband did not speak any French when they arrived to Québec and was not able to obtain employment. Jagoda became the family provider, took care of her children, and paid all the bills. She could not devote any time to education in her already busy schedule. Finally, she experienced two external barriers to teaching in Canada: non-recognition of her international teaching credentials and discrimination by a parent who did not trust Jagoda's teaching credentials from Yugoslavia. As a result, the parent transferred his child to another school to keep him away from a teacher educated outside Canada. With all these internal dilemmas and external obstacles in front of her, Jagoda gave up teaching. She was willing to work harder than anybody else in her school, but she grew to understand that her work and expertise would be dismissed anyway.

Nada reported encountering only two systemic barriers to her integration in Canada: lack of French language proficiency and non-recognition of her teaching credentials and experiences. She, however, argued that it was her personal choice to give up teaching in order to work, take care of her children, protect her family, and lead a humble, but decent life. For Nada, family always comes first. She is more than satisfied with her manager position at a second-hand store. Nada warns, however, that refugee women have limited professional opportunities in Canada; they do what they are given to do. She concludes that refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia are a gift to Canada, but their chances to teach are slim to none.

Unlike Jagoda and Nada, Dana did not give up teaching. Moreover, she did not give up any of her interests and responsibilities to re-establish her teaching career:
Snežana: You described to me one of your days, what you do, and you do so 
many things in 24 hours, so how do you do that? How do you 
manage to work, to study, to clean, to cook, to go for a walk with 
your dog (um), to laugh with your 

Dana: My daughter (CT) 

Snežana: (laughs) 

Dana: No, actually, I, it’s a good question. I do, I can manage that. I still 
can. Maybe the reason lies in the flexibility of my work [hours]. I 
remember, at one point, it was very, very overwhelming for me to 
manage all of it, and this happened when I first started my Ph.D. It 
was the hardest time of my life in Canada in a sense of work load 
and I don’t want to live like that...but otherwise I still have enough 
time to do it all (Conversation 1, May 12, 2010) 

At first, I was impressed by Dana's skills and wisdom to reconcile all the complexities of 
her life and "do it all." A few minutes later, however, I became intimidated by my own 
struggle to survive such an endeavour. I was forced (or I forced myself) to give up my 
social life, quality time with my family and friends, exercise, sleep, laughter, and 
creativity. I grew into a There-Is-a-Red-Line Mother and Wife, one who drew a line 
between her and her family in order to protect her personal space, her career and 
education, her thing. I intentionally carved this space in the midst of my home and my 
family to protect and nurture my Life-Long Learner/Teacher identity. I recognize that this 
firmly guarded space is my core, my sanctuary; a space of a learner, a science teacher, an 
aspiring academic.
I wished I were a *Rebellious Mother*, one who came to Canada for her children's sake, but also for her personal and professional growth; a mother who supports her children's aspirations, but still follows her own dreams; a mother who does less housework, delegates more, and does not feel guilty for doing so. I wished I were a *Rebellious Mother*, but I feared I was never rebellious enough. Since I started my Ph.D. studies in 2007, I was supported by my family in a number of ways. At times, my husband would wait for me with dinner already served and my sons would do shopping, vacuuming, or dishes. My Ph.D., however, became an add-on to my already busy *Devoted Mother and Wife/Research Officer* schedule. After work, I would retreat to my home and glue myself to housework, reading, and writing. I gained 30 pounds, struggled with back pain for two winters, and searched for elegant but comfortable shoes for one entire fall. I made peace with house dust, undone beds, and quick meals. At times, the lines between my research, my dreams, and my reality would blur due to work overload and an overwhelming emotion of inadequacy and despair. I think I managed to survive by escaping occasionally to conferences and scheduling writing days with my supervisor and a few colleagues. I had to escape multitasking and balancing, for a day or two, to focus on one thing at a time; it allowed me to keep my sanity. I tried to stop my life until I completed my Ph.D. and I failed. I kept running in a hamster's wheel, hoping that perhaps there was a way out or (at least) a way forward.

Zlata—who continued her education in Canada and obtained a part-time teaching position at an Ontario university—reported non-recognition of her teaching credentials and experiences, as well as discrimination of refugee women in the Canadian society, as systematic barriers to her settlement in Canada. She is aware of individual circumstances
that shape each refugee woman's life such as marital status, motherhood, age, membership in a refugee diaspora, and personal connections to people and the landscape. She argues, however, that the role of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the role of the government agencies serving refugees, and the role of education authorities in Ontario are critical for the refugee women teachers' settlement in the province. Zlata emphasizes that lack of language proficiency is not necessarily the biggest barrier to teaching or succeeding in Canada. Zlata, who is a Serbo-Croatian language teacher and who speaks seven languages, noted that language is her home and she could have not afforded to stay homeless in Canada; she had to learn English and she did. Zlata came to Canada under the government program for mixed marriage couples, was financially supported by this program, and was able to study English for 14 hours a day. Although Zlata has learned English and obtained two part-time jobs in Ontario, she feels excluded from the Canadian society, a society based on the politics of difference, colonial hierarchy, and systemic marginalisation of refugee and immigrant women, as well as Original Peoples of this land. She feels disposable.

Nina Bloom lives somewhere in-between her Yugoslavian and her Canadian life. In Ontario, she has experienced discrimination based on her place of origin and has completely retreated from Canadian society. She left the professional/public sphere behind and anchored herself within the safe domestic sphere, sheltered by her family and her books: "I retreated completely" (May 19, 2010).

Jagoda and Nina Bloom reported a lack of financial support as a barrier to teaching in Canada:

*Ja sam (um) mogla napraviti sta je Lana*  
*Ja could (um) have done what Lana did, but*
napravila, mislim da se doškolujem ali the warranty and the possibility, there was
garancija ili mogućnost, nije to bila no warranty, the 50:50 possibility of
nikakva garancija, mogućnost od 50% za getting a teaching job after re/certification
mene nije bila dovoljna da bih se zadužila was not good enough for me to get in debt
(um) da bih (um) žrtvovala porodicu jer ja (um), to (um) sacrifice my family, because
bih DEFINITIVNO morala da je žrtvujem sacrificing my family was DEFINITELY the
posto moj muž nije znao ni francuski ni only way of accomplishing my
engleski. Znači ja sam morala da se brinem re/certification since my husband spoke
i o djeci i O NJEMU, a njemu je trebalo neither French nor English. I had to take
malo više vremena da postane care of the children and OF HIM; he
funkcionalan i nezavistan. needed more time to become functional and

My Education in Canada

We were quite an attraction there,
they couldn’t fathom
why would a mother and a son
go to university at the same time.
It was good to learn
and to study as one.
And then my mother died
and I was not able to concentrate,
and then financial problems came,
I should,

I will concentrate again. (Nina Bloom, Conversation1, May 19, 2010)

Narratives told by participants reveal a number of self-imposed psychological and culturally-constructed barriers to settlement, such as personal perceptions of having limited language competencies, being "too old" to continue education, and remaining a permanent outsider to Canadian society. For example, Jagoda and Nada both felt too old to continue their education in Québec, while Nada revealed that she is not an integrated citizen but rather an observer:

Snežana: We talked about feeling at home and you said “not quite,” but (um) you’re still here, you are not moving back. You are not going anywhere, you are staying here.

Nina Bloom: No, I am staying here, yes. But no I wouldn’t say I’m integrated, no.

Snežana: Ok, what would you say?

Nina Bloom: What would I say? I would say I’m not integrated, I am an observer.

Snežana: Oh, that’s interesting.

Nina Bloom: Yeah, this is the word that describes me here, an observer. This is what I am.

Snežana: Yeah, that’s so profound.

Nina Blooms: (laughs)

Snežana: No, I love it, I love it, I really love it because sometimes, you know, I look at myself and my life and I think I’m watching a movie
and it’s very similar to what you are saying...You really named it, you nailed it. Hmm…

Nina Bloom: Yeah this describes me really here. On occasions I will participate in some activities, right, but still it’s like looking through a glass door or looking inside but I don’t feel like I’m an outsider, no, no, no, this is not the impression, but still I observe...

Snežana: Do you have any idea how you would get in and become an integrated citizen rather than an observer?

Nina Bloom: No, I do not want to integrate, this is the position I want to have, I want to take, I took it willingly.

Snežana: Why, why is that?

Nina Bloom: Why? The other side [of the glass door] is not so attractive to me, not at all. This way of life and socializing is superficial, I think. I don’t see deep connections, social connections here, and I don’t see sincere relationships between and among acquaintances and friends. “Friends,” I don’t even want to use the word. So I think it’s’ very superficial here, social, social life is on the surface.

(Conversation 2, May 26, 2010)

Some unique aspects of refugee-hood were also brought up in each individual narrative. Women discussed their choices and priorities in terms of their personal and professional lives and the ways in which these preferences facilitated and/or hindered these women’s integration in the Canadian education system and society. For example, Biser—who stayed home with her newborn daughter for six years—preferred house work
and motherhood over education and teaching. Jagoda gave up her teaching career to invest her time, energy and money in her children's education rather than her own; while Nada argued that she was not only too old to learn French and continue her education in Québec, but also practical, protective of her family, and not overly ambitious. Another example of uniqueness can be illustrated by comparing and contrasting Jagoda's and Nina Bloom's narratives: Jagoda felt too old to continue education in her early forties, while Nina Bloom completed college in her early fifties, started an undergraduate degree in her late fifties and concluded: "What is life without learning" (Conversation 1, May, 2010)!

In addition to self-imposed barriers to teaching (i.e., these women's personal perceptions of their capacity to teach in Canada), the women also identified a lack of information, a lack of coordination between immigration and settlement services, ignorant education authorities, and systemic discrimination as systemic barriers to their integration in the Canadian education system. In congruency with western literature discussed in chapter two, non-recognition of international teaching credentials (Miller, 2008; Mojab, 1999; Peeler & Jane, 2005; Phillion, 2003; Walsh et al., 2011) and teaching experiences (Mojab, 1999; Walsh et al., 2011) was present in each woman's story. Furthermore, participants reported systemic discrimination on the basis of origin and ethnicity, confirming the research findings presented by Rhone (2007) and Mojab (1999).

Nada tried to obtain employment as a Serbo-Croatian language teacher for Canadian soldiers going to Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war, but she was triple discriminated against in the job application process. More specifically, Nada was discriminated against for speaking Serbo-Croatian rather than Bosnian, for obtaining her Serbo-Croatian language degree from Belgrade, Serbia rather than from Sarajevo, Bosnia
and Herzegovina; and for being a Serb rather than Bošnjak. She was perhaps additionally discriminated against as a woman, a woman who dared teach Canadian solders. Despite her expertise, Nada failed to convince the Canadian government that she was born in Bosnia and that she speaks the Bosnian language "koji je do juce bio srpsko-hrvatski (which used to be Serbo-Croatian until yesterday/before the Yugoslav wars)" (Nada, Conversation 1, April 25, 2010). Nada argued:

**Ja pričam bosanski, ako on postoji**

"I Speak Bosnian, if Such a Language Exists"

Teško je kanađanima objasniti:

"Izvinite, koji Vi jezik govorite?"

"Francuski."

"Gospodine, ali Vi živite u Kanadi. Zar to nije kanadski jezik?"

"NE, ja pričam francuski. Moj kolega priča engleski."

"I ja pričam srpsko-hrvatski. Ne postoji bosanski jezik."

"Kako ne postoji? Oni to imaju na papiru."

Pa isto tako kao što ne postoji kanadski ili američki jezik; postoji engleski I fracuski. "Just the same, there is no Canadian or American language; it's English and French."

Nije mu jasno.

"Until yesterday; Bosnian was Serbo-
“Ja sam živila u Bosni. To je moj maternji jezik.”

“I wasn’t lucky,

I nisam imala sreće da me prime,

or I was, I don’t know.

ili nesreće, ne znam.

They lasted for five-six months.

Radili su pet-šest mjeseci.

They closed the door.

Ugasilo se.

Nada was pushed by the Canadian military forces to the bottom of the teaching hierarchy, labelled as unqualified for a teaching job, and dismissed as a potential employee.

According to the Canadian military personnel, Nada did not know which language she spoke for over 40 years of her life. This perception of Nada’s "disability" to speak Bosnian (and to know her) is in congruence with Said's (2000) concept of othering non-western nations. Nada was signified by her potential employers as a less human other; they knew her better than she could ever know herself. The objective of such an approach was to construe Nada and her people as a population of degenerate types in order to justify conquest of a European nation and to "establish system of administration and instruction” (Bhanha, 2000, p. 101) in the Balkans and in Canada. Moreover, Canadian peace-keeping intervention in the Balkans at that time and the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999 show that Canadian imperialism has been exercising a "rationalized violence taken to a higher level than ever before-through fire and sword, but also through the attempt to control hearts and minds" (Abdel-Malek, 1981, p. 145). Nada gave up teaching in Canada, but her work supervisor noted that Nada's second-hand store is an efficient and well organized classroom.
Zlata's, Dana's, and Snežana's narratives demonstrate that a lack of language proficiency is not necessarily the key barrier to settlement as it is often suggested in the Western literature on refugee women (Carr-Hill et al., 1996; Phillion, 2003; Walsh et al., 2011). These three women were not only able to learn English upon arrival in Canada, but also to pursue graduate education and obtain employment at Canadian universities. They argue that a lack of cross-cultural knowledge among government officials serving refugees is even more critical in the process of refugee women's settlement than the women's language proficiency. This lack of cross-cultural knowledge is, unfortunately, often and unjustly attributed to refugee women teachers rather than to their host governments and services teachers (Peeler & Jane, 2005; Remennick, 2002).

During the focus group interviews, participants identified a number of resources they drew on during the process of settlement: family (e.g., husband and mother), love (e.g., love for family, love for learning and love for teaching), individuals (e.g., neighbours, diasporic community members, ESL teachers and Canadians in charge), Immigration Centres, personal characteristics (e.g., optimism, courage, and desire for independence), community engagement, and Christian faith. Lana's settlement journey, for example, was driven by her mother's words: "Ulaži u sebe" (Invest in yourself), while Zlata was encouraged by one of her immigrant neighbours to go back to school and supported by one of her former Yugoslav professors in her effort to enrol in a graduate program at a Canadian university. Lana also noted: "Pružajući oslonac drugima, pronasla sam vlastiti oslonac" (I helped myself by helping others). Lana feels fortunate, because she came to Canada as a government sponsored refugee and was able to volunteer at a local school, which then led to a teaching position. In addition to this
financial support from the government, Lana acknowledged her status as a single woman as beneficial in the process of teacher re/certification. She explains:

Investirala sam sve, znači uložila sam sve
I invested everything, literally everything.
bukvalno u to da se nađem u struci zato što
in my profession because this is the only
je to jedini posao koji ja znam I volim da
profession I know and I love, it inspires me
radim, koji me ispinjava, a pošto ja nisam
and I did not maybe (inhales deeply)
možda (uzdiše duboko) ovaj, da kažem na
achieve much on a personal level, I was not
ličnom planu bila ispunjena na neki način,
moved, I didn’t have a family, I did not
jer nisam bila udata, nisam imala svoju
come with children so I had to have a great
porodicu, nisam došla sa djecom, znači
love (laughs) of my life and my great love
morala sam da imam jednu veliku ljubav u
was my profession. I had a free path in
svom (smeje se) životu a to jeste bila moja
front of me, nobody waited for me at home,
struka na neki način. Znači imala sam
there was no family, no obligations, so I
nekako otvoren put, ništa se od mene nije
had the freedom to work at the school from
očekivalo kad dodjem kući, nije bilo
9 am to 3 pm, to attend classes from 4 pm
porodice, nije bilo te vrste opterećenja tako
to 10 pm, to come home exhausted and
da sam ja imala tu slobodu da mogu od
nobody else had to suffer. A single woman
četiri sata podne pa do kasno naveče do
can invest more time and energy in her
10 sati budem na predavanjima, da dođem
career than a woman who has a family. I
tako umorna I taj umor niko nije morao da
think it [teacher re/certification] is harder
trpi kod kuće I tako dalje. Kad je osoba
for those women who, for example, get
sama, može lakše da se posveti karijeri
pregnant, give birth to a child, raise
nego kad je neko u porodičnom odnosu.
children, and so on. I THINK it is more
Sunshine’s perspective of refugee women teachers’ struggle to re/establish their teaching careers in Québec echoes Lana’s understandings. Sunshine believes that refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia have struggled to teach in the province because they are first and foremost "real housewives" (Conversation, June 27, 2010):

**Refugee Women Teachers in Québec**

*They were housewives,*

*they tried to preserve their old ways of life,*

*they spoke Serbian at home and didn't practice French enough.*

*they didn't know where to go and where to start.*

Despite this generalization about refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia, Sunshine described Lana and Jagoda as competent teachers:

**They Were Ready to Teach**

*They had discipline,*

*the knowledge,*

*the wisdom,*

*the willingness to teach,*

*it was their career;*

*their passion and their love.*
They only needed to learn about the kids;
it’s not that our kids are different,
but they are brought up more loosely than the Yugoslav kids.

Most of the Yugoslavs were well brought up,
were not divorced,

had a family.

I could feel their values,
the respect,
being seen but not heard.

We used to have this with our kids,
but we changed our ways
and now our kids are the kings of today.

They had to learn about the kids,
and that was it,
they were ready to teach,

willing to learn,
make friends,

and learn an awful lot from them.

When asked what she has learned from refugee women teachers, Sunshine, however,

replied:

I Learned an Awful Lot From Them

I learned how they are going out with guys,
how they met one another,

I learned about your tradition,

about your weddings

and dying,

fascinating!

In two years,

I got to know them.

I sought to find out more about refugee women teachers’ professional knowledge, so I asked Sunshine again: "What can Canada learn from refugee women teachers?"

Sunshine was unable to articulate these women’s professional contributions to the Canadian education system and society:

Oh my goodness, I wouldn’t know. It’s... to me the way the system works, if a teacher wants to teach here he has or she has to learn certain ways, but it’s the system. I don’t think we could change that, but once you see this I have the feeling that we can learn a lot from these teachers if we go at it with an open mind...Like the same thing with them too. I mean if a teacher comes here and has the feeling that he can teach exactly the way he was doing it in his country, he’s bound to have problems. So to me (um) we’re asking for open-mindedness on both sides.

(Conversation, June 27, 2010)

Although Sunshine argued that we must blame the system for discriminatory immigration, settlement and employment practices and that we are not in charge, she concluded that we are partners and key players in these processes:
The Missing Link

We need professionals to sit down with them
and look at their curriculum
and study what you can do or what you want to do.

You need the patience to go through the system,
another attitude,
to obey certain rules.

I blame the school board.

When these people arrive
and they go through immigration,
they should go to the school board
and the school board should say
“You are a teacher and we want you,
and here are the steps you follow...”

For Zlata, the main strategy for succeeding in Canada is also a two-way education, a simultaneous education of refugee women teachers and Canadian society to make Canada a better place. Dana suggested the following settlement strategies for refugee women teachers: developing good management and interpersonal skills, using technology, and making time for personal growth. She also added that "a good sense of humour helps a lot" (Conversation 1, May 1, 2010). As a refugee woman teacher who
encountered numerous struggles in Serbia (then Yugoslavia) and Canada, Jagoda found her strength in the Christian faith:

*Imala sam jenu staru komšinicu, baba*  
*I had an older female neighbour,*

*Desu pokojnu, koja je živjela sama, koja je*  
*grandmother Desa, who passed away,*

*isto izbjeglica iz prethodnog rata iz Like i*  
*lived alone and was a refugee from Lika*

*kaja mi je bila kao majka tamo. Kad mi se*  
*who immigrated to Serbia during the World War II, and who was to me as mother.*

*činilo više da ja ne mogu, ona bi mi*  
*When I would struggle, she would say:*

*stara za sve.” Kad bi ja rekla, “Ne могу*  
*“Jagoda don’t worry, God takes care of everything.” Whenever I would think*

*više,” otac Miloš bi mi rekao (um) “Možeš,*  
*“That’s it. I can’t handle this anymore,”*

*jer Bog je dao svakome krst onoliko težak*  
*Father Milos would say, “Yes, you can.

*koliko on može da ponese.” I kad god sam*  
*God only gives you as much as you can*

*bila u krizi, samo sam na te dvije stvari*  
*handle.” Whenever I had crisis, father*

*mislila: to što mi je rekao on I što mi je*  
*Milos’ and Desa’s words gave me strength*

*rekla baba Desa i meni je to davalo snage i*  
*and I do think that God takes care of*

*ja stvarno mislim da se Bog stara za sve.*  
*everything. (Conversation 1, April 23, 2010)*

I also witnessed the presence of Christian faith and tradition in Lana’s, Nada’s and Maruška’s lives when entering their homes to conduct interviews. All three of them had a Christian Orthodox icon of their Patron Saint on the eastern wall of their dining room. Lana, who lost her mother and her younger sister to cancer, furnished her home with ten icons, including *Svetu Petku ili Svetu Paraskevu* (Saint Paraskeva), protector of women, a
woman saint who helps the sick and the poor. "At times, I found myself looking at those icons, looking through their eyes, wondering about our long history of wars and migrations, and asking Svetu Petku (Saint Paraskeva) when will our exiles (if ever) end..." (Field Notes, May 15, 2010).

During the focus group conversations, each woman drew a map of her teacher identity in Yugoslavia and Canada. They described teaching in Yugoslavia as a mission of love, protection, knowledge and inspiration. Biser, who transferred from teaching high school mathematics to being a lunch supervisor in a kindergarten, noted that her teacher identity has not changed since her arrival to Canada; she was and still is andeo čuvar (a Guardian Angel) who first and foremost cares about her students and their well-being (Focus Group, June 13, 2010). Lana emphasised that her love for her students and her profession has never changed and added that she is even more proud of her high school teaching in Québec than her college teaching in Yugoslavia. Lana believes that teaching French to immigrant students is her life purpose; Lana's teaching is kljuc opstanka (keys for survival) for her students. Nada's teacher identity has transformed into a manager identity, but her personality has never changed; she embodies "ljubav, otvorenost i entuzijazam (love, openness and enthusiasm)" (Focus Group, June 13, 2010). Nada has continued to use her teaching skills in her manager's role; she manages her employees the same way she used to manage her class.

Jagoda's teacher identity has, however, endured radical changes. She was a strict teacher in the pre-war Yugoslavia; one who always had high expectations of her students. However, after escaping from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia, Jagoda was told by some of her students' parents that as a refugee she does not have the right to give low
marks to their children. Jagoda persevered; she kept high expectations of her students. As time went by, however, she felt even more pressured:

*To je dotle išlo da smo mi morali održavati (um) sastanke kojima su prisustvovali roditelji, psiholog, direktor, zamjenik [direktora], ja, ja sam se osjećala tamo kao na haškom sudu, kao da mi sude a ja sam se prilagodila kolko sam mogla jer meni su rekli još dok sam bila u Novom Sadu da...sve izbjeglice koje su radile u prosvjeti bilo u Hrvatskoj bilo u Bosni...imaju kriterij koji je neprihvatljiv. Meni nije bilo važno da ja tu djecu nešto naučim; meni je bilo važno da ja prehranim moju djecu.*

*It became so challenging that we had to hold meetings with parents, a psychologist, the principal, the vice principal, I, I, felt like I was before the Hague Tribunal, defending myself, and I adjusted as much as I could because I was told in Novi Sad that all the refugee teachers coming from Croatia and Bosnia...have unacceptable criteria. I did not care about teaching those children something important; I cared only about feeding my own children.*  

(Conversation 1, April 23, 2010)

In Québec, Jagoda became even more tolerant. She became *nežna i brižna baka* (a gentle and caring grandmother) who first and foremost takes good care of her kindergarten students. Jagoda is happy that she did not pursue teacher re-certification in Canada and believes that as a teacher with high expectations of her students she would never fit in the Canadian educational system:

*Ja sam se toliko iscrpljivala I onda sam shvatila pa šta bih ja radila da ja radim na nekom većem nivou gdje stvarno treba nekoga nešto da naučim? I...susreti sa I was getting so exhausted, and then I realised, what would I do if I were teaching students at a higher level where, in fact, I must teach somebody something?*
And...encounters with parents, with children, and then I understood that giving up school was the right thing to do, because in such an education system, with spoiled children, with demanding parents--and most of them are not even aware that they are not their children's friends--I would have ended up either insane or fired.

(Conversation 1, April 23, 2010)

Jagoda's perspective of Canadian elementary education can be juxtaposed with Sunshine's comments about Yugoslav and Canadian children:

It’s not that our kids are different, but they are more, how can I say that, they are to me, and I don’t like to generalize, but they are brought up more loosely, you know, than the Yugoslav kids. In my mind, most of the Yugoslavs that I met were well brought up...all the ones I met were not divorced, they were a unity, they were a family unity with both parents raising them, and I could feel and sense their values, very, very good values that were there. Being seen but not heard. We used to have this with our kids, like when you had guests they all had to be polite...We used to be like this, I was brought up like this, that you are seen but not heard, but now most of our kids are what you would call the kings of the family. (Conversation, June 27, 2010)

In the excerpt above, Sunshine argued that Canadian children are less disciplined than Yugoslav children. She also discussed this difference in terms of classroom teaching,
when she noted that Yugoslav women teachers were ready to teach, but first they had to know the kids. Unlike Jagoda who was highly suspicious of her teaching ability in the Canadian classroom, Sunshine believes that Jagoda is an excellent teacher:

Sunshine: I respected her. She had two kids and her husband wasn’t working at the time, and she said she was too old to go to school, which is sad because I hired her in the daycare and she was paid half the salary of a teacher, and every chance I had I would put her in front of a classroom because she was excellent. I’d put her in a classroom and have her take the day off in daycare. That was something. I respect her because she has no regrets. In her mind, she couldn’t go back to school and she’s happy as she is.

Snežana: Ok, so if you were to work with refugee women teachers again, would you change your approach? Was there anything you would change, do differently?

Sunshine: I would try to push them more. (laughs softly)

Snežana: (laughs) Ok, I love that! Why?

Sunshine: Because I saw that they could do it and I didn’t know that at first, but now I saw that they could do it and I would push them more, because to me it’s a, it’s a source, you know, it’s good for us, it’s good for our system, it’s good for our kids too to be in contact with other people. That’s how you break all the barriers and they [refugee women teachers] can bring a lot to us and that’s what I
would do. I would sort of push them more...to go for it.

(Conversation, June 27, 2010)

During our conversations, Jagoda had difficulties grasping the teaching methods and the learning objectives of the Canadian classroom. She did not understand why elementary school students are treated as learners incapable of learning: "Onda recimo, ne smiješ ni na šta da ga tjeraš; ni da uči jer on ne smije da se umori. To dijete ne smije da se umori, ne smije, ako je propterećeno to je stres, ne smije...što da radiš? Pa zašto onda ide u školu? Osnovna škola jeste jedna vrsta o bdaništa da bi se rešio problem čuvanja djece roditelja koji rade. (For example, you are not allowed to force him/her [the student] to do anything, not even to learn, because s/he is not supposed to get tired. That child is not supposed to get tired, no way, if s/he is overwhelmed, that's stress, s/he is not supposed...What are you doing? Well, why is s/he going to school then? Elementary school [here] is a kindergarten so children can be taken care of while their parents are at work.) (Conversation 2, May 16, 2010).

Mira's professional identity also changed; she sees herself as a retired woman rather than a high school mathematics teacher. In Canada, she gave up her teaching career due to a lack of language proficiency and a big burden of family obligations. During conversations with her granddaughter, Mira concluded that her teaching skills are not the greatest fit for the Canadian classroom: "In Yugoslavia kids learn how to sum and subtract; here they learn how to play" (Conversation 1, May 23, 2010). Unlike Mira, Dana argues that her teacher identity stays with her and takes her places: “Once a teacher, always a teacher” (Conversation 1, May 12, 2010). Dana noted that she would succeed in any country in the world due to her hard work and determination. Maruška and Snežana
also negotiated their professional identities in Canada. Maruška transitioned from being a teacher who is deeply in love with her profession to being a life-long learner and a "super occasional" (Maruška, Conversation 1, April 23, 2010) teacher. Snežana was forced to abandon her mission of being an inspiring science teacher and embrace a journey of a research officer, a Ph.D. student, and a life-long learner. Finally, Zlata who used to teach Serbo-Croatian language and literature at the secondary and college level in Yugoslavia—and who presently works as a university instructor at a Canadian university—admitted that teaching in Yugoslavia was misija (a mission), while education in Ontario is prodavnica jeftine robe (a second hand store): "Osecam se iskoristenom, za jednokratnu upotrebu (I feel used, disposable)" (Focus Group Conversation, June 13, 2010). Zlata reminded us, however, that we should stay true to our teaching profession in spite of all these internal and external barriers:

I Want to Paint on the Walls of the Cave

As humans we first thought about biological survival,

but at the same time people thought about art

and described their life every day,

and that is missing, you know,

those paintings on the walls of the cave.

I don’t have it, you know?

It’s biological existence only

and I’m lucky to have the theatre

and literature

and people,
to learn something new,
to write a poem or two.

*My freedom is my teaching,*
*I am exhausted but happy,*
*it keeps me alive.*

*My office work doesn’t give me that motivation*
to be alive,
to be brave,
to paint on the walls of the cave.

According to Lana, refugee female teachers bring to Canada not only their "*intelektualni prtljag* (an intellectual knapsack)" but also transnational knowledges and identities that enrich Canadian educational system and Canadian society. Lana describes her transnational location:

1999.

*Srbija je bila bombardovana,*
*Suzdržana sam bila od svakog komentara;*
*još jedna nesreća više*
*i kraj priče,*
*nisam mogla,*
*ne mogu ni danas da pričam o tome.*

1999

*Serbia was attacked again,*
*and it was the end of the story,*
*I couldn’t,*
*I still can’t talk about that.*

Voliš Kanadu,

You love Canada,
In the above poem, Lana reveals that she has three homes: Canada, Serbia and the United States of America and that anything that is happening in either one of her homes influences the rest. This statement is in congruence with the transnational feminist argument that local and global define each other (Alexander & Mohanty, 2010). Lana also argues that the difference between Canadian and Yugoslav teaching methods is exaggerated. Lana explains:

Pa, ja ne mislim da je to baš toliko različito Well, I don’t think that it is so different and
I mislim da čak ovdje u Kanadi jedanput I even think that here in Canada when you
kad već dobijete da tako kažem posao u once get your teaching job, many
struci dosta toga je nama prepušteno, znači methodological decisions are in your
vi ste potpuno slobodni da vašu nastavu hands; you are absolutely free to plan your
planirate onako kako vi želite (um) i ono lessons on your own accord and what is
što je jako važno čini mi se to je rezultat really important is the result at the end of
koji se na kraju pokaže, metodu nekako the day, therefore every teacher adapts
profesor svaki prilagođava jel’ tako his/her method to facilitate student success
uspijehu (smeje se blago) koji želi da (laughs softly). It seems to me that a
postigne sa učenicima. Prema tome čini mi combination of diverse teaching methods is
Lana’s description of teaching methods in Canada and Yugoslavia makes me wonder if the often discussed gap between refugee and immigrant teachers’ knowledge and Canadian Ways of Knowing is just an effort to perpetuate the politics of difference and discrimination; to ignore and erase international and transnational knowledge of teaching and learning; to dominate, control and colonize the Other-than-West; and to dismiss Canada’s opportunities to learn from the rest of the world.

Dana, who made five attempts to obtain a teaching certificate in Ontario, finally gave up this Sisyphus endeavour, continued her education, obtained a Master's degree, and started teaching at a Canadian university. Dana noted that the way of teaching in Canada is "totally different" (Conversation 1, May 12, 2010) from teaching methods in Yugoslavia:

Dana: (um) it’s different, because I think that in, in our high school we had different subjects, right? And those subjects we weren’t able to choose, those subjects were predetermined depending in what
stream you were involved, right? (um) The way of teaching is
different. It is totally different. I think that the teaching [in
Yugoslavia] was based (um) on lot of memorization, on lot of
facts, on a lot of general knowledge while in Canada, to my
surprise, many, many courses, many credits are project based,
students involved in hands-on activities, they don’t (um)
memorize a lot of things, they don’t have different kinds of exams
that we had. It’s totally different. They don’t have oral exams at
all, right? We had in our schools oral exams, writing exams all
the times. Students have different kinds of deadlines that they need
to follow. We didn’t have deadlines. We had to study on an every-
day basis and we never knew when we are going to be examined,
questioned, or have oral exams, right? So I think that the stress that
we had compared to what students have here is a way higher, was a
way higher when we were students, right? That’s my impression,
maybe...

Snežana: Did you get (um) an impression that it [difference] is present
across the subjects or particularly in your subject? When you talk
about hands-on things, because I am coming from a science
background

Dana: (uhum)

Snežana: so I had many hands-on activities in my teaching.

Dana: YES!
Snežana: So, it [difference] depends on the subject as well.

Dana: I think that in their [Canadian] system it doesn’t depend on the subject. I think that every subject is based on hands on, even language, even (um) everything that they do and that’s what we were learning at the Master’s level, about different kinds of schools, different kinds of changes in the curriculum that they had during the last, I don’t know, let’s say 50 years, right? So, that was, that was a learning experience for me, but what I liked about Canadian school system was that they are very much based on the constructivism, they are very much based on discussions with students rather than intimidating them by examining them all the time. I like the idea that students are involved, that students are, in a sense, appreciated and their opinion is appreciated and they are involved in the curriculum. That’s my impression, right? So, I don’t know...

Despite the listed differences in teaching methods, Dana enjoys her teaching in Canada and argues that her teaching competence, her passion for teaching, and her hard work make her a teacher without borders:

*I think it is a tremendous amount of work behind me and my husband to be where we are right now ... I’m sure if we were in France or in England or anywhere else in the world that if we wanted to do that we would be able to do that. I don’t know if we would feel differently because European countries are a little bit different, they have different (um) attitudes with immigrants, right? So, Canada is*
multicultural, there are a lot of immigrants, so you don’t feel as much different...

But, I think professionally I would be able to strive everywhere if I, if I wanted to.

(Conversation 1, May12, 2010)

In the passage above, Dana implied that she had better chances to teach in Canada than in any European country due to the Canadian immigration policies and Canadian multiculturalism. She argued, however, that her and her husband’s hard work would pay off in any country in the world. In her discussion about hard work and success, Dana overlooks her white privilege and reveals a neoliberal perspective of success. Dana holds that she and her husband, and by extension other immigrants and refugees, are solely responsible for their success in the society. Such a perspective counteracts any social responsibility for systemic inequities and discrimination. Dana prioritises her personal experience over any social critique.

Dana has re-established her teaching career in Ontario, but inhabits an unhomely space still wondering "what is my country anyway!?” (Conversation 2, June 20, 2010). Similarly to Lana, Dana also argues that local and the global are connected, that what happens in Canada impacts Serbia (then Yugoslavia) and vice versa:

*Snežana:* How did you feel in 1999 when Canada and the U.S. bombed Belgrade? Did that in any way influence your integration here?

*Dana:* (laughs softly) Well how we felt, we all felt… I mean my husband and I, we all felt so angry and so disappointed, and partly not just because we live in Canada, but Canada was at least used to be a peaceful country, they are usually the ones who proposed peace in different kinds of countries. So that’s why when they supported it, I
was very disappointed and I still am, I still am. And I think that considering how many of Serbs (um) live in Ontario and in Canada in general, I think it’s an insult to our community, but it happened anyway, it happens anyway so what can you do?

Although Dana deeply experiences these connections between Canadian and Yugoslav realities, she feels helpless and unable to reconcile these two realities. She also observes that life in Canada is more individualistic than life in Yugoslavia:

_There was more social life back home, we knew all those people and because you knew your neighbors, you trusted them, and we had more collective life, and here it’s a more individual kind of life. It’s funny, we moved so many times and we never got to meet and to become close to those people [our neighbours], really, not because we don’t want to but it is impossible. They are all in their individual worlds, right!? Yeah, what happened two years ago, and was fascinating for me, our first next door neighbor, like two of them old people, we knew them like “hi” and “bye” and we found out that the old lady died after a month or so… our next door neighbor, our windows look at each other. We didn’t realize that anything was happening there, we didn’t see people coming, we didn’t know that our first, next door neighbor died. So you see it’s just, that would never have happened in our country._

In terms of her experiences of individualism and friendship in Canada, Dana further explained:

People are just too isolated I would say…It’s just all about their own lives. So I don’t know if it’s because we are culturally different or because it’s the way of
life. I think it’s more the way of life, it’s part of their culture. You know, "mind your own business" [culture]. We socialize only with people from our country...I hardly have any Canadian friends. It’s a shame really, but it’s true. There is a big difference in the way we think...we don’t see things through the same lens...I’m a very emotional person and...they are pretty much cold and reserved, and yes they all are very pleasant...They are all polite, everything is like nicely wrapped, but you never know what’s inside of that little gift...I can’t be friends with somebody who is just polite to me I guess...my Ph.D. supervisor is my friend, Canadian friend, but I don’t know if anyone else is, really... (Conversation 2, June 20, 2010)

Teacher identity transitions and transformations experienced by participants are presented in Table 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Teacher Identity in Yugoslavia</th>
<th>Teacher Identity in Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biser</td>
<td>Guardian Angel</td>
<td>Guardian Angel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>Born to Teach</td>
<td>Teacher Without Borders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagoda</td>
<td>Strict Teacher</td>
<td>Caring Grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lana</td>
<td>Passionate Teacher</td>
<td>Key to Québécois Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maruška</td>
<td>Passionate Teacher</td>
<td>Life-long Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mira</td>
<td>Ethical Teacher</td>
<td>Grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nada</td>
<td>Passionate Teacher</td>
<td>Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nina Bloom</td>
<td>Passionate Teacher</td>
<td>Observer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snežana</td>
<td>Inspirational Teacher</td>
<td>Life-long Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zlata</td>
<td>Missionary</td>
<td>Disposable Person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although participants encountered a complex matrix of oppression and isolation upon their immigration to Canada, they resisted and navigated this matrix by using their social agency (Mahler & Pessar, 2001), including passion, hard work, and motivation. They also employed their Yugoslav knowledge, work ethic, and interpersonal skills to resist the downward social mobility that they encountered through immigration. For instance, Zlata studied English 14 hours a day, completed a Ph.D., and obtained a teaching position at a Canadian university. Lana volunteered at a local school, obtained a teaching certificate in Québec, connected the members of her diaspora with a Canadian female principal who had the power to hire a number of Yugoslavs at her school, and continued to assist others, including her immigrant students and this researcher. Due to the deficit lens employed by the Canadian host culture, refugee women teachers participating in this study were viewed as uneducated and suspicious. They demonstrated, however, that this deficit lens hinders but not necessarily eliminates their abilities and opportunities. Moreover, participants constructed a new image of the refugee woman teacher in Canada by exposing the ways in which race, class, gender, age, ethnicity, and professional status, in addition to refugeehood, shape the oppression and the privilege of refugee women teachers in the Canadian context (Figure 2). Moreover, some of participants own perceptions (e.g., undermining their language competencies, feeling too old to continue education in Canada and viewing Canadian teaching methods as being radically different from their own) acted in synergy with systemic discrimination they encountered in Canada and decreased these women’s chances to teach.
Figure 2. Refugee women teacher identity negotiated and constructed through participants’ stories.
Participants’ negative self-perceptions confirm the belief that internationally educated teachers often internalise the deficit approach to assessing their knowledge and skills in Canada (Myle et al., 2006; Phillion, 2003). Mira, Jagoda, Nada, Biser, and Dana, for example, hold that their teaching style and practices had to be modified (or even improved) to meet Canadian teaching standards. Maruška also demonstrated that even when internationally educated teachers obtained teacher certificates, they still had a significantly lower chance of obtaining full-time permanent employment in comparison to their Canadian-born colleagues as suggested by Mojab (1999) and Pollock (2006). Although Maruška obtained a Certificate in Teaching English as Second Language in 2001, a Master's Degree in Linguistics and Language Applied Studies in 2003, and an Ontario teaching certificate several years later; she remains a "super occasional" (Conversation 1, April 23, 2010) teacher in Ontario.

The assumptions and prejudices about refugee women teachers—those held by Canadians and those endorsed by refugee women teachers—significantly shaped these women’s lives. For example, the government officials, who were in charge of a Bosnian language program for Canadian soldiers heading to BiH, assumed that the Bosnian language is distinct from the Serbo-Croatian language and that Nada, a Serbo-Croatian language teacher from BiH, was not qualified to teach Bosnian. This assumption that Bosnian and Serbo-Croatian language are two different languages deprived Nada of a teaching opportunity in Canada. Nada also believed that at the age of 38 she was too old to study and chose to work in a second-hand store. Unlike Nada, a number of women (i.e., Zlata, Maruška, Dana, Nina Bloom, and Snežana) continued their education into their forties and fifties. An assumption a Canadian school principal held also had a
powerful influence on Jagoda's life. The principal told Jagoda that her chances to teach in Québec, even after obtaining a teaching certificate, are 50:50. Such an assumption presented by a Canadian school principal, an educational authority, discouraged Jagoda from continuing her education and obtaining a teaching certificate. Similarly to Nada, Jagoda believed that in the age of 43, she was too old to study and decided to invest in her children's education instead. Biser did not feel too old to study, but her priority always was and still is her family rather than her career. She insists that she is a mathematician and, as many other mathematicians, has limited language skills. This deficit perspective of her language proficiency convinced Biser to give up high school mathematics and embrace a lunch supervisor position in a local kindergarten. Unlike Biser, Dana believes in her teaching expertise, hard work, and life-long learning. This combination of self-confidence and love for learning helped Dana survive five unsuccessful attempts to obtain a teaching certificate in Ontario, and pursue a teaching career at a university. Nina Bloom, who was labelled by Canadian society as an unqualified teacher, retreated to a clerical job at a hotel. During our second conversation we noted, however, that teaching is still our thing:

_Snežana:_ We don’t like conflicts, we don’t want, you know, we like to please others, we like to serve, we like to, you know, show our love and admiration. In my life, however, there is, there is a red line, so you can push so far and after that I don’t let you push further, and I guess my career, my education, that’s the line. So, people come to Canada and give up different things, but I guess my career is the only thing I would never ever give up, so I’m not sure if I’m clear?
Nina Bloom: (uhum) Yeah, oh definitely.

Snežana: And actually a friend of mine told me once “It’s very interesting. I’m listening to you and I can see how caring a mother and wife you are, but you still have your own life, your own space. How do you do that?” I guess my education and teaching and learning, I guess that’s the space I always cherish and protect.

Nina Bloom: Of course, it’s very fulfilling. Teaching is what I love too, and I miss that this was, you put it very nicely, this is yours, this is your thing as you call it. Yeah, this is my thing too where I don’t let anybody in and I don’t share that with my family either.

Snežana: Yeah, it’s you, it’s deeply you, it’s something... and you know as women we share a lot, I think, but there are some things that...

Nina Bloom: Are only ours.

Snežana: Yes, maybe we are just too selfish, (laughs softly), you know?

Nina Bloom: I don’t think...

Snežana: But you have to have something that is yours, just yours.

Nina Bloom: Exactly, it’s only, only yours, untouchable.

Despite all the assumptions and prejudices about refugee women teachers’ abilities and opportunities in Canada—those hold by Canadians and those embraced by refugee women teachers themselves—these women's stories challenge the deficit perceptions of refugee women teachers in Canada and portray these women as university educated professionals, life-long learners, and competent teachers.
Story Four: Storying the Researcher

When I first began my research, I was aware that there would be stories told about me by the participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I was sensitive to those stories of me as a researcher and a Ph.D. student from the Yugoslav diaspora in Canada and sometimes actively worked to alter them, to explain my social locations and research aims in more detail during each interview, and to avoid asking participants the questions of success and failure. I was afraid that such questions might have disturbed or even insulted participants. Guided by the storying stories model and my own curiosity, I documented the ways in which my/researcher's life was storied by refugee female teachers and a Canadian female principal. Stories about me stayed with me as I moved from the field to field texts to research texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Some participants told me stories of Snežana—the researcher. For example, Maruška noted that my research has transformed me into a more valuable person:

And all those moments, all those histories you put, you know, into chronology and I think it is an immense, an immense thing that you did, and I actually believe you became very, very valuable as a person, you know. Oh, definitely! I am totally...that's very inspirational even for me, and I think that only the positive is coming from you. (Conversation 2, May 15, 2010)

Sunshine, the Canadian female principal participating in the study, storied me as a refugee female teacher who (like other refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia) needs "the patience to go through the system, another attitude, to obey certain rules even if it’s hard" (June 27, 2010). She saw my role as being one of a researcher-activist and
emphasized the importance of my doctoral work not only for refugee female teachers, but also for other internationally educated professionals.

Other participants focused on their own stories. Some of their stories, however, mirrored my own dilemmas, provoked my self-reflection, and generated additional stories of the researcher. For instance, Jagoda never mentioned or described me in her storytelling, except once when I asked her why she agreed to participate in my study. Jagoda responded that she was invited by her friend Lana and that was the reason why she trusted me and agreed to participate in my study. Jagoda's personal stories, however, triggered some of my own dilemmas. Jagoda noted, for example, that she never was the centre of the universe, so she has focused on her children rather than herself. As a result, Jagoda gave up schooling in Canada and invested her time and financial resources in her children's upbringing and education. She strongly believes that pursuing teacher recertification in Québec would mean sacrificing her family. Jagoda gave up her teacher identity. I did not. I continued my education and obtained two Canadian degrees. I started questioning myself: "Have I invested enough time, energy and love in my children's upbringing? Am I a self-centered, centre-of-the-universe mother? Have I sacrificed my children? How has my commitment to education influenced my parental roles and responsibilities? Who paid the price?" (Reflexive Journal Entry, June 27, 2010).

After analysing participants' portraits of Snežana—the researcher—and my own reactions to and interpretations of their particular responses, I added these portraits to the participants' gallery of refugee woman teacher images (e.g., to the images of a Helper, a Guardian Angel, and a Life Long Learner). I have not re-established my teaching career in Canada. However, due to my Canadian education and my researcher role, participants
have described me as an established woman who continued her education, obtained Canadian degrees, and now is "treated differently" (Nina Bloom, Conversation 1, May 19, 2010). Since participants have defined Canadian education as a prerequisite for reestablishing a teaching career in Canada, their stories of me as the researcher from the same diaspora might further illuminate the refugee female teacher identity formation in Canada. With this in mind, I identified participants’ stories of me and my own responses to their stories and collapsed them into the following 11 images: Refugee Female Teacher from Yugoslavia, Researcher, Ambitious/Career Woman, Hard-working Woman, Self-centered Woman, Financially Supported Woman, Established Woman, Younger Woman, Inspirational Person, Feminist Writer, and Marginalised Citizen. Some of the images such as those of an Ambitious Woman and a Marginalised Citizen emerged from individual participants’ narratives, while the images of the Researcher-Activist and Feminist Writer were born solely in the process of storying the researcher. These stories of me as the researcher further describe teaching and learning competencies and dilemmas of refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia:

Am I Really a Tabula Rasa?

When I came to Canada

and continued my education,

I entered a labyrinth,

and a few years later I became one,

looking outside and searching within.

My education was my freedom,

my teaching was my freedom,
now, both stolen, taken away from me.

Am I a teacher?

Or once I used to be?

What should I do?

What could be done?

Nothing, perhaps;

my family pays the price,

in a hamster’s wheel,

too busy to live.

Story Five: Silences and Gaps in Our Stories

(Ni)Sam ja bijela i privilegovana

I don't think about myself as being white and privileged.

Maybe white skin opens some doors...

I know what you mean,

no, you weren’t privileged,

you worked hard, that’s all you did.

Čovjek voli da se uklapa.

Da, bijele sam kože kao

Kanađani, Englezi, i Francuzi,

i to mi prija, ali u tukoži nisam bila.

I Am(Not) White and Privileged

I don’t think about myself as being white and privileged.

Maybe white skin opens some doors...

I know what you mean,

no, you weren’t privileged,

you worked hard, that’s all you did.

One likes to fit in.

Yes, I am white

like Canadians, English and French,

I am pleased, I have to admit,

but I have never been in that other skin.
Although participants' stories were burdened with womanhood and motherhood, they rarely named gender as a basis of discrimination. For example, Dana noted that she never felt discriminated against because of her gender, while Jagoda and Mira concluded that they always lived in a matriarchal family. Biser and Nada reported that giving up school was their personal choice while Dana never had any difficulties balancing her multiple roles of being a Ph.D. student, a university instructor, a wife, and a mother. Additionally, Nina Bloom—who immigrated to Canada and abruptly discovered that she could take care of herself—still felt that she was not discriminated against on basis of gender but rather on basis of ethnic (non-Anglo-Saxon) origin. This statement mirrors the understanding that marginalised groups in the West often view gender as a less salient category than class, ethnicity or religion (Ghodsee 2010; Whitsitt 2002). This, however, does not mean that gender is not a useful category of analysis for understanding those struggles. The absence of interest or concern about gender among refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia deserves a closer investigation. Zlata revealed her personhood:

**I Am a Person**

I am a woman.

I am a person with much potential.

I wouldn’t say qualities,

I don’t know how somebody would judge that,

Qualities or not qualities,

but potential.

I like to challenge and expand,

be useful,
Most of the women believed in personhood and gender equity, while Jagoda and Mira disclosed that they always lived in a matriarchal family. Jagoda and Mira, for example, insisted on immigrating to Canada despite their husbands' disagreements, brought their families to this country and became breadwinners for their families. Unlike the usual interpretation of men as breadwinners, Jagoda's and Mira's narratives complicate this view. In choosing immigration to Canada and becoming family providers, these women appear to have social agency (Mahler & Pessar, 2001), perhaps more agency than their husbands had. Although these women’s primary roles are seen as located in their families, they are also expected to work outside of their homes, due not only to a difficult economic status, but also to the consideration of professional identity as an important part of their lives. Work outside of the home in Canada is a part of familiar trajectory for these women, entrenched in the course of Yugoslav socialist history.

Dana spoke about gender issues in a similar manner:

*Dana:* I never felt inferior in that sense ... I consider myself very strong and very capable and I never perceived men as being stronger, more capable in any sense...

*Snežana:* And you never felt discriminated

*Dana:* No.

*Snežana:* on that basis?

*Dana:* I really don’t have that experience.
Snežana: So (um) you don’t have that experience, what about your upbringing?

Dana: Yes. I think that my mother influenced all three of us; my sisters and me in that sense, because she is a very strong, independent woman. I lost my father when I was a teenager and she was my main role model, she was always and she still is a very, very strong woman, and she is the one who doesn’t accept gender differences, maybe that’s why, not maybe, but for sure. (Conversation 1, May 12, 2010)

Dana's perspective of gender equity might have been rooted in her personal experience, in the fact that she lost her father early in her life and her mother became the breadwinner and Dana's role model. At the same time, this perception might have also been influenced by Yugoslav gender equity policies and practices at that time. Although these policies did not ultimately remove sexual divisions and traditional family roles, women in Yugoslavia and other Eastern-European socialist countries had access to free education and employment opportunities. As a result, most women did not feel excluded, or politically less equal than men (Watson, 2000).

Similarly to Dana, Nina Bloom never felt discriminated against on the basis of gender, but she is aware that this world is a man's world. After experiencing exile and immigration, she made a discovery:

(Perhaps) I Could Take Care of Myself

I made a discovery,

an important discovery,
a discovery that throughout the years
I was made to believe
by my parents and my husband
that I need my husband to take care of me.
I’m not capable to take care of myself
and he’ll take care of me,
and he did,
I give him credit for that,
I just needed to be pretty,
for years, many, many.

And then everything came down in a crash
and I saw...
certainly I can,
perhaps I can
take care of myself. (Conversation 2, May 26, 2010)

Gender as a basis of discrimination was named and discussed to some extent in
my conversations with Zlata. Similarly to Nina Bloom, Zlata argued that this world is a
men's club:

Zlata: I’m not feminist in that radical sense, but I am a feminist.
SNEŽANA: What do you mean by "radical sense"?
Zlata: Radical meaning that I have to fight, I have to fight for my rights
and I have to prove that I am better than men. No, no, I’m so proud
to be a woman and I don’t think anything bad [about men], you
know, or I don’t feel myself superior towards men. I feel we are
different, we communicate and complement each other, you know?
So that is my meaning of radical sense, you know, I am not talking
about being feminist in the form of the black/white or good/bad
binary, no I am not talking about that, but I am a feminist and I
don’t like patronizing...(Conversation 2, June 12, 2010)

Zlata explains what it means to be a feminist "in that radical sense:"

"HE" Is Not There to Educate Us

I don’t like that patronizing tone,

the one assuming that woman is a child-bearer,

a housewife,

and nothing more.

We are outsiders,

the marginalised,

and HE’s there to educate us,

to bring enlightenment to our life,

because we are just small brains,

and don’t know anything else,

but look beautiful and cook,

give birth and serve the man.

We are creation,
we create life,

how can you oppress creation of life?

It doesn’t.

it doesn't work,

we are something,

something almost divine... (Conversation 2, June 12, 2010)

Zlata also compares the gender relations she experienced in Yugoslavia with those encountered in Canada:

Zlata: I feel also that Canada has issues, equality issues in terms of
gender, you know. And I was shocked because, as you know, I
never felt in Ex-Yugoslavia that I’m discriminated because I’m a
woman.

SNEŽANA: (uhum)

Zlata: In Ex-Yugoslavia women were kind of more dominant [in higher
education], I believe, but here it is still a patriarchal society and
you can feel it in every sense, but patriarchal in a Victorian sense.

(CT)

SNEŽANA: Oh, how would you describe that?

Zlata: I would say like women do not have access to that men’s club.

SNEŽANA: Oh.

Zlata: Ok!?

SNEŽANA: That’s interesting.
Zlata: Men’s club like if we think just, just an example of Virginia Woolf, an excellent writer, she, my gosh, just a century ago (laughs softly) or may be a little bit less, she wasn’t allowed to go to the library...Your place is in the kitchen. You are assumed, if you are a woman, to have kids. So, I find it disturbing. This is, my gosh, 21st century and we are (inhales deeply) going around the world as Canadians and preaching to others about human rights and we don’t apply that at home. I find it to be very challenging not only in regard to immigrants, but also in regard to being a woman in this country, you have to yet fight for liberation (laughs) let’s say.

(Conversation 1, May 16, 2010)

In the excerpt above, Zlata argues that the Canadian feminists’ agenda sanctioned by the Canadian government advocates for the political and legal rights of women across the world, but ignores the systematic causes of women’s marginalization in Canada rooted in traditional constructions of femininity and a capitalist state of mind. Zlata's deconstruction of Canadian feminism is similar to the one Mohanty (2002) proposes, in which Mohanty describes the shift of U.S. feminism towards the right as a great challenge to true advocacy for women’s rights and warns that such feminism does not challenge the capitalist system that perpetuates not only gender inequality, but inequalities of all sorts.

Unlike Zlata, Nina Bloom argues that she is not a feminist:

Nina Bloom: Well, this is a men’s world. I live in a men’s world. I am a woman here. I certainly feel women are discriminated against, but it’s not
something, I’m not a feminist, I will never be a feminist. I will fight for my rights, I wouldn’t use the word...what would I say? (um) I just accept I think the reality that this is a men’s world.

SNEŽANA: Ok. So you said, “I’m not a feminist.” How would you describe a feminist?

Nina Bloom: Aggressiveness. Aggressiveness. For me it’s aggressiveness. It never appealed to ME.

SNEŽANA: (uhum)

Nina Bloom: I think with aggressive people (undistinguishable) I think (laughs) I read it somewhere many years ago, yes, "avoid aggressive people" and I try to do that. I don’t like confrontation and as long as I can go without losing my face I will go and (um) avoid confrontation if it’s possible at all. I hate that. I hate aggressive people, loud, aggressive people, I don’t like them. (Conversation 2, May 26, 2010)

Nina Bloom perceives feminists as aggressive women who love power, want to take over and control men, and are a threat to her world. This perception implies that feminism in Yugoslavia was constructed as a dangerous and undesirable activity. Moreover, in her poem (Perhaps) I Can Take Care of Myself, Nina Bloom admits that her sense of self-determination was born for the first time in the midst of her refugee-hood but refuses to believe that she is capable of living and surviving on her own, surviving without her husband who has taken good care of her. Although Nina Bloom failed to challenge her aversion towards aggressive feminists, she makes the roots of her female identity visible:
Nina Bloom: *I was made to believe by my parents and my husband that I need my husband to take care of me...my husband made me believe that, my husband, he’s, was very protective of me for all our married life and he was like, “Oh, I will take care of you. You don’t worry. You just be pretty.”* (laughter)

Snežana: *Oh.*

Nina Bloom: *And I didn’t and I was pretty and I didn’t worry and life was wonderful.*

Mirroring many of the Eastern Block women's perceptions of gender equity and emancipation (Bazylevych, 2011), Yugoslav women teachers claimed that they were already equal to men before immigrating to Canada. Although such claims might be premature, these women came from a socialist country that, prior to the civil war, demonstrated high labor participation rates for women and a high number of women professionals, scientists, and politicians.

Other concepts rarely mentioned by participants were the concepts of whiteness and white privilege. While Dana noted that hard work pays off and that her and my position as a Ph.D. student has nothing to do with our white privilege, but only with our hard work, Nina Bloom reveals:

**White Privilege**

*I don’t feel that I’m privileged because I’m white,*

*not at all, no.*

*I never thought about that,*
I never had that feeling at all.

No, no, I never thought about that,
I completely ignore that.
For me it has no meaning,
no relevance,
it’s the same like having brown eyes,
or blue eyes,
it has as much relevance to me,
the color of my skin.
"You are saying,
I am not racist
and I don’t think other people are.”

Yeah,

exactly,

which is wrong.
I’m not but other people are;
they think they are better than me. (Conversation 2, May 26, 2010)

Zlata contributes to this discussion by defining whiteness as a contradictory term:

Written on My Skin

Our language,

every language is composed of those binary oppositions;
good-bad,
white-black,
and we don’t think about the real meaning
and we use it lightly.

We are politically correct
and we know we shouldn’t be using black
attached to a certain race
or a certain group of people,
and the word loses its polyphony,
its meaning.

I try not to take words for granted,
I don’t think I use it with prejudiced meaning
or an offensive one.
I don’t think…

The history of my culture is written on my skin. (Conversation 2, June 12, 2010)

Class was mentioned several times implicitly in the form of financial difficulties in Jagoda's, Mira's and Nina Bloom's stories. Nina Bloom was, however, the only participant who mentioned class stratification in Canadian society in an explicit way:

We Live in a Deeply Divided Society

And this is how it is,
a deeply divided society.
Where do I see my dentist?

Where do I see my doctor?

Only in their offices.

They go to different places than I do,
right?

Don’t they?

I don’t have the money to go to theatre,
once a year maybe,
where I would see them?

I don’t go to the expensive restaurants where they go,
right?

There is a deep division,
it’s such a deep,
such a deep divide. (Conversation 2, May 26, 2010)

Discussions about heterosexism never arose. This silence might have been rooted in the cultural underpinnings of a patriarchal, mostly Christian, Yugoslav society and the fact that as a researcher I never considered asking questions of sexuality. Now, when I think back to the time I developed my interview protocols, I realize that I subconsciously, rather than intentionally, ignored such questions. I assumed that refugee status, gender, race, class, and ethnicity are more salient in participants' lives than their sexuality and so I omitted questions of heterosexism from the equation of this research. Why did participants avoid such conversations? Was this silence related to their marital status and
their heterosexuality? Only one of the women was single, while nine of them were in heterosexual marriages. Would it be possible to track this neglect back to my cultural-insider status and my connections to a culture that promotes "heterosexual citizenship through legal and other means" (Mohanty, 2006, p. 10)? It might also be concluded that discussions about sexuality never took place, because I never asked such questions. If this was the case, I probably led the participants to assume their perspectives of sexuality and heterosexism were irrelevant to the study.

Moving On: Towards a Collective Narrative

In this chapter, I compiled 11 personal experience narratives into five collective narratives of exile, settlement, and teacher identity in Canada. I discussed participants' individual stories in relation to the main research questions and learned that giving shelter to refugee women teachers is not enough. Refugee women teachers want to study, work, grow, and contribute to the Canadian society. Although most of these women remained excluded from the Canadian K-12 educational landscape, they described themselves as passionate and competent teachers. My life was also storied by the participants, further illuminating the refugee female teacher identity in the Canadian context. Silences and gaps in our stories were also noted. These collective narratives have informed my understanding of socially constructed categories such as race, class, gender, and refugee status.
CHAPTER SIX: THEORISING EXILE, SETTLEMENT, AND TEACHER IDENTITY

Canadian identities are becoming more transnational due to immigration, "technologies, transportation, and global connections between people" (Paudyal, 2010, p. iv). In this regard, the following chapter offers a re-vision of contemporary Canada (and Canada's educational system) not as a static and self-serving terrain but a participant in transnational relations. In congruence with the transnational feminist understanding of subject formation, participants' collective narratives revealed that race, class, gender, culture, age, ability, ethnicity, nationality, political identity, professional identity, and refugee status in Canada are not fixed, but rather constructed in contextually specific ways (Grewal & Kaplan 2001; Lock Swarr & Nagar 2003) and synergistic in their effects (Butler 1993; Narayan 1993; Rosaldo 1980; Visweswaran, 1997). Although all the women participating in this study were Canadian citizens, in most cases these women assumed (or were assigned) the status of a permanent outsider. Canadian immigration and settlement bodies, services, and practices excluded five out of ten participants from the teaching profession in Ontario and Québec. I utilize a transnational feminist consideration of Canadian/Yugoslavian, North American/Eastern European, and Western/Eastern borders and critique their power. I problematise nationalist and state-bound definitions of social problems (Grewal & Kaplan 1994; Kaplan & Grewal 2002; Mohanty 2003) and teacher knowledge (or any other knowledge). I use this framework to explore and critique immigration, settlement and teacher re/certification policies, services and practices. I argue that the discourse of educating, civilizing and saving refugee women teachers locates the main immigration and settlement problem in these women's non-Canadian
status and in them crossing national and knowledge borders, while the main immigration
and settlement issues lie in the politics of difference, in capitalism, imperialism, and
neoliberalism. I critique a Canadian colonial praxis of accepting but marginalizing
refugees, a discriminatory praxis that accepts refugee bodies but resist their minds and
souls.

**Intersectionalities**

In Ontario and Québec, refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia were perceived
and constructed as *other* through the Canadian state’s management of these women's
national, ethnic, political and professional categorization. Throughout this dissertation, I
have argued that refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia are not a disempowered
population. I looked at power from a different angle, and challenged the Cold War
categories that continue to inform Western scholarship about post-socialist societies and
knowledges. Finding a balance between acknowledging that refugee women teachers are
marginalised in Canada, on the one hand, and considering how they exercise social
agency and continue their (teaching) careers, on the other hand, was a difficult task. To
address this complexity, I employed the transnational feminist notion of intersectionality
(Mohanty, 1992) and found that gender is not the most salient social construction in the
life of refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia. Yugoslav refugee women's mobility in
the Canadian educational system also complicated conceptualization of these women as
uneducated and subjugated women in their new country. This complexity manifested
itself in a particular non-Western/Yugoslav version of feminism where refugee women
emphasized their refugee/social locations, support networks and personal characteristics
(e.g., being a hard worker and a life-long learner)—rather than gender—as the most
salient factors shaping their careers in Canada. This decreased manifestation of the
gender script in the participants' narratives supports arguments for intersectionality in
gender analysis. Gender interacted with other significant categories such as race, class,
etnicity, age, ability, marital status, political identity, professional identity, and refugee
status to produce diverse degrees of privilege and oppression in these women's lives.
Echoing Visweswaran's (1997) definition of gender, participants constructed gender as
“an entry point into complex systems of meaning and power” (p. 616).

It was evident from participants' stories—although not always explicitly
acknowledged by them—that they encountered multiple struggles in their professional
field in Ontario and Québec due to their social locations of being a refugee/non-Canadian
teacher, being older, and being a woman. These three oppressive locations of their
identities intersected and intensified each other making their settlement process even
more challenging and uncertain. Although the refugee women teachers participating in
this study did not feel discriminated against on the basis of gender, their gender roles (and
multiple responsibilities attached to those roles) often hindered their teaching careers in
Canada. In addition to multiple female roles such as raising children and taking care of
housework, some women were conditioned to assume the additional role of a
breadwinner in Canada. In opposition to Mohanty's (2003) materialist feminist analysis
that renders home work as exploitative work, participants perceived neither their
housework nor their motherhood as being abusive, but rather fundamental to their
survival; their family remained their priority. However, these women's multiple
responsibilities—in synergy with the assigned refugee (i.e., aprofessional) status—
discouraged if not disabled a number of women to continue their education and teaching careers in this country.

Essentialist notions of *intrinsically* female qualities were used by Biser, Jagoda, Mira, and Nada to explain their choice to give up education in Canada. Motherhood, the responsibility to take care of their family, modesty, and practicality are all perceived as important internal reasons for choosing family over the teaching career. Most of the participants emphasized their primary focus on children, as opposed to husband. Motherhood is taken to mean more than womanhood overall. Thus, Yugoslav refugee women teachers are seen first and foremost as mothers, and secondarily as wives and teachers. While they are subject to traditionalist understandings of gender, refugee women teachers employed competing and new gender discourses focused on their professional and transnational identities and became the agents of change in the teaching profession.

**Capitalism, Neoliberalism, and Exile**

Narratives of refugee women teachers—both those who were educated in Yugoslavia, and those who were educated in Yugoslavia and Canada—critiqued the deficit lens used by the Canadian educational authorities use in the process of teacher re-certification. The women demonstrated that their Yugoslav education and teaching experience proved to be more than valuable in the process of settlement. Although some participants were louder than others in critiquing this deficit lens, most of them identified a number of salient features of capitalism and neoliberalism including competition, consumerism, classism, free market economy, extreme individualism, and alienation.
Some participants gave up further education and teaching in Canada, because they were aware of their limited language skills and their outsider status, but also because of their belief that they were not competitive enough, if at all, in a free market economy where Canadian-born, raised and educated teachers have an innate advantage. Jagoda, Nada, Mira, Biser, and Nina Bloom surrendered to the neoliberal idea of competition and separating the fit from the unfit. Jagoda, for example, assumed an *Orphan* identity, admitting that she would never fit rightly in this society and that her exclusion or disadvantage was her own fault or at least her limitation. She, however, argued that refugee women teachers are not taken seriously by the Canadian government and educational authorities. Mirroring Grant's (1967) sentiment that adult Indians must vanish while their children might be saved by the Canadian state/education, Jagoda concluded that refugee women teachers are not accepted to Canada for their own sake (or expertise), but for the sake of their children who will be saved through Canadian education and eventually become real Canadians. This idea of accepting refugee women teachers for their children’s sake was also evident in Nina Bloom’s story. Her application to immigrate to Canada was originally rejected by the Canadian official who found Nina Bloom—who was then in her early 40s—too old to benefit Canadian society. However, after her reply that she brings to Canada two sons, the official changed his mind and accepted her application. Like Grant (1967), this Canadian official initially implied that little can be done with and for Nina Bloom, but Canadian education could certainly save Nina Bloom’s children and Canada’s aging nation.

A number of participants highlighted that giving up teaching in Canada was their choice and a natural order of things. It is evident from such responses that these women
have internalized the principles of free market economy encountered in Canada and accepted the workings of capitalism and neoliberalism as normal and natural. They grew to believe that social responsibility for systemic inequities vanished in the light of their individual responsibility for securing (or not) their place in Canada. Some of them were also discouraged from continuing teaching careers in Canada due to their high standards and their fear of failure. Biser, for example, received an offer to teach mathematics but she rejected the offer because she believed that her French was not good enough and that she was not able to give her best in the classroom. The rest of the women, however, proved that they were more than competitive in the Canadian free market economy. Unlike Jagoda, Mira and Biser who gave up their teaching careers in Canada to put food on the table or take care of their children; Dana, Maruška, Zlata, and Snežana, who were financially supported by their husbands, managed to continue their education and obtain teaching or research positions at Canadian schools or universities. Lana demonstrated that being a single woman helped her compete and succeed in obtaining a teaching position in Québec in only four months while Snežana noted that she was able to continue education in Canada and obtain an administrative research position at a Canadian university by working hard and sacrificing her family time and her social life.

Describing the urge for consumerism in Canadian society, Zlata noted that Canadian university students experience education like a trip to “the shopping mall” (Conversation 1, May 15, 2010). They see their instructors as brokers who are expected to give students high marks for their high tuition fees regardless of their efforts or learning outcomes. Moreover, a university instructor is not seen as an authority figure, but rather as a lonely and disposable body. Similarly to Zlata who recognized the
exploitative nature of a capitalist, profit-driven society and argued that the Canadian
Government exhausts its citizens to manipulate them, Nada revealed that she “works too
much,” that “her shoulders are sore”, but she “must endure” (Conversation 2, May 16,
2010).

Some participants also recognized that an extreme individualism has been
promoted (and embraced) in Canada through capitalist and neoliberal agendas. Such
extreme individualism underplays family values and results in isolation and alienation of
its citizens. To protect their family values such as motherhood; Biser, Jagoda, Mira, Nina
Bloom and Nada gave up their teaching careers in this country. Dana also spoke about the
ghosts of individualism and alienation. Since her arrival to Canada in 1993, Dana has not
gotten to know her neighbors, because we all live here in a “mind your own business”
(Conversation 2, June 3, 2010) culture. She also noted that her Ph.D. supervisor was her
only Canadian friend because she was warm, emotional and loyal, which is “very rare to
find” (Conversation 2, June 3, 2010).

Although a significant number of participants gave up their education and
teaching careers in Canada due to financial difficulties, only Nina Bloom clearly
articulated classism as a salient feature of the capitalist Canada. She experiences Canada
as a “deeply divided society” (Conversation 2, May 26, 2010) in which she is unable to
see her dentist and her physician anywhere else but in their offices; Nina Bloom does not
have the money to attend the places regularly attended by her dentist and physician such
as expensive restaurants and theatre plays. According to Nina Bloom, different social
classes in Canada might interact for business purposes but never for the purposes of
socializing or making friends. A deep divide between social classes underpins this society.

Another gift of capitalism and neoliberalism unwrapped by the refugee women teachers in Canada was an overwhelming and almost paralysing sense of employment insecurity accompanied with fear and anxiety. These women came to Canada after the civil war that was a great shock to all of them, but not so great to erase their memories of socialism and employment security. Jagoda fights her fears of getting ill, being fired or retiring by taking one day at a time. She refuses to think about tomorrow, about a future that can bring her and her husband only an old age, disability and financial insecurity, if not a financial catastrophe. Zlata—who has two part-time jobs at a Canadian university—echoes Jagoda’s concerns when she says that she and her husband count each and every cent. Zlata is afraid that one day they would wake up “on the street” (Conversation 2, June 12, 2010), broke and homeless. This sense of financial insecurity does not allow Zlata to think about her future in Canada; whenever she has to think about tomorrow, she refuses to do so. “Carpe diem [Seize the day]” (Conversation 2, June 12, 2010), she says and she lives. For Zlata, tomorrow in Canada is an unknown and scary place.

Transnational Spaces on Canadian Soil

Despite an abundance of immigration and settlement policies legislated in Canada, some policies are racist and discriminatory while other are just pure rhetoric; they are hardly ever implemented and are often overlooked for the sake of state security and Canadian rightness. For example, the IRPA (2002) contributes to the marginalisation (rather than protection) of refugee women teachers. The Act dictates that economic immigrants are chosen on the basis of the criteria that requires higher education and work
experience so that they benefit Canadian society and the economy, while refugee women (teachers) are primarily selected as persons who under the IRPA are Convention refugees in need of protection (IRPA, 2002, 3.2.c.). According to the above definition, a refugee woman teacher is perceived as a person who needs protection rather than as a highly skilled professional who contributes to the economic and cultural growth of Canadian society. Such policies position refugee women teachers not as internationally educated teachers—the term currently used in policy and teacher re/certification discourses—but as uneducated, aprofessional, and unqualified women who seek a shelter rather than a teaching career. The refugee woman's professional location in Canada gets even more complicated due to the fact that immigration and settlement policies address only the initial phase of refugee women teachers' settlement—shelter, clothing, food and language training—leaving these women to sink or swim, while no one is held responsible (except the women themselves). The only remaining phase of settlement Canadian government and educational authorities consider is either to fix refugee women teachers through multiple educational programs and degrees—which are often expensive and time consuming endeavours—or to keep them away from teaching "Canadian” children. Who these Canadian children are is yet to be discovered.

Participants evaluated government programs and services for refugee female teachers as unsuccessful. Immigrant and employment centres are described as "safe Heaven" for Canadian-born officials and “a waste of the government’s money” (Zlata, Conversation 1, May 15, 2010), while bridge-to-work programs such as ATAPITE and Teach in Ontario were assessed as multi-million funding opportunities benefiting only Canadian-born instructors and program providers. These bridge-to-work programs not
only focused on fixing refugee women teachers and their lacking (or even dangerous) pedagogies, but also worked on convincing program participants that they were not good enough. Although the above mentioned policies, legislations and bridge-to-work programs were developed with an aim to prohibit discrimination, the findings of this study support the arguments a number of past research studies present that identified institutional barriers, discriminatory practices and the politics of difference as the main barriers internationally educated women teachers encounter in Canada (Mojab, 1999; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh et al., 2011).

Canadian hierarchies of knowledge are treated as natural hierarchies of knowledge (Foucault, 2003). In such a context, immigration and teacher re-certification policies and practices purposefully produce insiders and outsiders (Miller, 2008). The Canadian Government left participants to sink or swim in a dark sea of low-wage jobs, far away from their teaching profession. Some participants show, however, what it means to be a teacher without borders, a teacher who holds not only Yugoslav and Canadian degrees, but also possess the wisdom of survival and resilience under her skin. Several women also revealed the transnational nature of their existence in both personal and professional life. In terms of personal identity formation, Lana demonstrated her overarching, transnational identity by describing Yugoslavia, Canada and the US as her home while Zlata—who still struggles to embrace Canada's landscapes as her own—talked about chains of homes, about "one home with different rooms and different floors" (Zlata, Conversation 1, May 15, 2010). Maruška also noted that she never felt homeless in Canada; she has two homes, Canada and Montenegro. In terms of professional identity and transnational geography, Dana emphasized that she is a teacher without borders and
that her knowledge and her hard-working personality would make her succeed (i.e., teach) in any country in the world. These women brought to Canada an international pedagogy and a socialist state of mind and, in turn, new insights into *Canadian Ways of Teaching, Knowing, and Being*. Moreover, these women pursued Canadian education and embraced new, transnational pedagogies. Even those women who gave up teaching careers in Canada were and remained passionate educators. They invested their money, time, and knowledge in inspiring and educating their children and their grandchildren. Through this research study, they warn refugee women teachers immigrating to, or already inhabiting, Canada that they should forget about the Government support and continue their education. Although Jagoda, Mira and Nada noted that they were too old to continue their education in Canada, all the women concluded that "it’s never too late to learn" (Focus Group, Québec, June 13, 2010). Moreover, Nina Bloom proclaimed: "What is life without learning!?" (Conversation 1, May 19, 2010).

Credentials and work experience of refugee women teachers are often “mediated by the unequal distribution of power along lines of gender, class, race, language, ethnicity, national origin and the state of economy” (Mojab, 2000, p. 33). Such a deficit model in assessing international credentials and experiences challenges the notion of diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice in Canadian society. To resolve the insider/outsider dichotomy in (teacher) education, Canadian education authorities should consider refugee women teachers' stories in policy development.

**Gendered Geographies of Teacher Knowledge**

Charting the ground for an analysis of refugee female teachers' identities and the politics of teacher re-certification for internationally educated teachers in a globalising
world is a comprehensive and challenging task. To accomplish this task, it is important to address the questions of definition: Who are refugee female teachers? Are they educated outside of their host country, internationally or transnationally? What are their qualifications and work experiences? What counts as teaching credentials? What counts as teaching experience? What counts as teacher knowledge? The questions of context are also critical: Which/whose teacher knowledge is considered teacher knowledge in a globalizing world? How do questions of social locations intersect in determining this cartography? Who produces knowledge about refugee female teachers and from what location? What are the politics of production of this knowledge?

I approach this cartography from my own cultural, historical, political, and intellectual location, as a refugee female teacher educated in Yugoslavia and Canada, interested in questions of teaching, learning, and knowledge production in a transnational Canadian context. Finding a balance between acknowledging that refugee women teachers are being marginalised in Canada on the one hand, and considering how they exercise social agency on the other hand is a difficult task. To address these complexities, it is important to assume that refugee women identities are not fragmented and agonizing but rather "locating and stabilizing" (Paudyal, 2010, p. 59). Globalization, technological development, and mass media have radically reduced the migrant-nonmigrant binary. It is not only the immigrants and refugees who are “in the process of negotiation and transformation to form a transnational identity, but also the people from the host societies that are adopting multiplicities of identity" (p. 61).

Despite Paudyal's (2010) belief that newcomers and native born citizens learn from each other and adopt transnational identities, Canadian education authorities operate
on the assumption that their pedagogy is the right pedagogy. Such an assumption imposes a Canadian (or even a provincial) teaching model over the rest of the world. Such an approach to teacher knowledge is based on the assumption that Canadian (Ontarian or Québécois) Ways of Being, Knowing and Teaching can be neither expanded nor questioned. Refugee women teachers’ frustration is often directed against the imperialism of Canadian pedagogy and its urge to exclude or fix (Said, 2000) refugee women teachers. Participants’ narratives highlighted a number of issues related to the Canadian woman teacher/refugee woman teacher binary: (a) policy renders refugee women teachers as unqualified; (b) Canadian teaching experience is superior to non-Canadian teaching experience; (c) fewer employment opportunities are available to refugee women teachers even when they obtain their Canadian credentials; and (d) the imperialism of Canadian pedagogy positions refugee women teachers as inferior. Although this power imbalance has been occasionally criticized in the literature (Mojab, 1999; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh et al., 2011), these persistent conditions mark refugee women teachers as learners of Canadian knowledge rather than teachers and agents of new, transnational knowledge. Moreover, participants learned from teacher re/certification processes in Canada how hard it is to convey that Canadian Ways of Knowing are not necessarily superior ways of knowing or the ways of knowing that are out-of-reach for internationally or transnationally educated women teachers. If talking about transnational teacher knowledge means talking about gendered geographies of power, it becomes possible to understand the many ways in which Canadian and U.S. White settler colonization continues to chart the geography of teacher knowledge in North America and in the rest of the world.
Participants’ narratives revealed their socialization as women (i.e., mothers and wives) as a significant filter to their self-perception as teachers and professionals (Elliott & Drake, 1999). They are allowed to be mothers, wives and housewives, but not supposed to be ambitious career women (and for some of them being or becoming self-centered career women was the only way to re/establish their teaching careers). This perception shaped refugee women teachers' professional identities and affected their action as teachers. Their sense of inadequacy was often simply an implicit belief ingrained in their refugee stories. For example, Jagoda developed an *Orphan* identity and a *Teacher/Grandmother* identity while Mira entirely dismissed her teaching identity and established her Canadian life as a *Courageous Mother*. Similarly to Mira, Biser focuses on her mother role and follows a script of an *Overprotective Mother*. After giving birth to her daughter, Biser stayed home for six years to watch after her child 24 hours a day. These choices and identities show that participants have not necessarily come to Canada as wives/partners and mothers, but have reverted to these domestic-sphere-identities under the pressure of immigration and settlement processes, including non-recognition of international teaching credentials and experiences as well as lose of social networks and supports.

Dana and I, however, keep balancing our career and motherhood. Dana noted that balancing her multiple priorities is an easy and natural activity. I learned, however, that being a mother, a wife, a cook, a research officer, and a Ph.D. student at times becomes a heavy burden. I discovered through this study that I am a *There-Is-a-Line Mother*, a devoted mother who supports her family with all her heart, but her support is conditional; my education and my professional career remain nonnegotiable.
Although mostly dismissed by Canadian education authorities, the Yugoslav refugee women teachers' pedagogies (in contrast to the Canadian capitalist, neoliberal pedagogy) is correct in its criticism of capitalism, classism, racism, and sexism. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of the U.S. imperialism led to the breakup of Yugoslavia and aggravated these women’s life conditions. They lost their safety net, including guaranteed employment, child care, support networks, as well as social benefits. These experiences made them even more sensitive to the workings of colonialism and imperialism. Through a lens of transnational feminism that emphasises the links between local and global, it becomes possible to see that the imperialism of Canadian pedagogy puts at risk true teaching knowledge, as this pedagogy does not challenge the capitalist system that is rooted in multiple and diverse inequalities, nor does it keep an open mind towards new, alternative, and borderless ways of knowing. Transnational teacher consciousness challenges the Canadian Pedagogy to develop a framework for embracing transnational ways of knowing in a time of forced migrations, globalisation, and international development. This borderless teaching must grow out of critiques of Anglo-Saxon White, Western, and elitist pedagogy. Transnational teacher knowledge makes it impossible to speak of a Yugoslav or Canadian pedagogy and seeks to uncover new, more informed and less oppressive ways of knowing. Such knowledge permeates national borders either through migration or social media and calls for a new feminist professional and academic solidarity that transcends the notions of national and knowledge borders.

Although the nation of Canada often praises itself for promoting multiculturalism—in contrast to the U.S. melting pot national identity model—Canada
has followed the U.S. imperial script for the last two decades. These two sister-states have successfully used their so-called world peace agendas not only to rule North America but also to lay claim to territories across the world. Canada must also recognize that her current immigration policies set high requirements for both immigrants and refugees (e.g., high levels of formal education, the ability to re-settle in 12 months in the case of refugees, the ability to speak at least one official language or to learn it quickly, relatively young age, excellent health, and the ability to adjust quickly to the Canadian culture), bringing to the country a new population of newcomers who are critical thinkers and transnational knowers. These newcomers are able to decode (and to challenge) Canadian colonial scripts. Echoing Alexander's and Mohanty's (2010) call for the production of liberatory knowledges, I argue that we—refugee women teachers and our Canadian colleagues—must engage in the struggles over the production of transnational teacher knowledge through a two-way-street education and in the heart of our very own "imperial beast" (p. 42).

**Implications for Transnational Praxis**

This study informs immigration and settlement policies and practices, transnational feminist theories, as well as research methodologies concerned with knowledge, power, and feminist solidarity in an increasingly globalizing world. It also outlines possible directions for future research on migration, gender, and (transnational) teacher knowledge. Although this research project focused specifically on the experiences of refugee women teachers from the former Yugoslavia who immigrated to Ontario and Québec between 1993 and 1998, the findings of the project will be useful to people other than participants. The study offers a deeper understanding of refugee
experience in general and refugee women teachers’ experience in particular. Policy makers, teachers’ associations, and provincial associations for transnationally educated teachers, if open minded and working for change, might find the findings of this study informative and beneficial in the process of developing immigration and settlement policies, bridge-to-work programs, and additional supports that are vital for refugee women's integration in Canadian society and the economy. The study also sheds light on the ways in which refugee women teachers have been perceived by Government officials, employment help centres and educational authorities in the country. Next, participants' stories demonstrate these women's contribution to Canadian society, the economy, and the lives of native-born Canadians. Finally, the findings of this study call for new questions and research endeavours.

**Engaging with Differences and Commonalities**

According to participants, the biggest barriers to teaching in Canada were stereotyping, discrimination, and the deficit model of difference. While some women reported difference in teaching methods between Yugoslavia and Canada, others argued that they did not experience a big cultural and pedagogical difference between these two countries, but encountered a big difference in economy, politics, and perceptions of individualism and collectivism. They described the politics of difference as the main drive of Canadian society and economy, resulting in exclusion and discrimination. Participants also noted that Canadian colonial, capitalist and patriarchal structures have forced them to suppress some so called feminine characteristics such as being emotional, caring and social and express those characteristics that are traditionally constructed as masculine (e.g., being rational, effective and independent). For refugee women teachers,
the politics of difference is a greater obstacle to teaching in Canada than the commonly listed factors such as lack of language proficiency and/or a lack of teaching knowledge and experience. Some refugee women come to Canada as university educated professionals who want to participate in and contribute to Canadian society. For these reasons, refugee women’s education, profession, and work experience must be considered as key elements in refugee women’s identity formation. On one hand, participants’ narratives of (not)teaching in Canada problematise the concept of White womanhood and warn that this complex notion must yet be unpacked and understood. On the other hand, theories of teacher knowledge might benefit from including the dimensions of gender, geography, and transnational pedagogy. Refugee women teachers' identities are not necessarily unhomely (Bhabha, 1994) or free-floating, but rather multihomely and anchored in their education, experiences and knowledges. These women's homes are not necessarily imagined homelands, but rather real territories of being and belonging, multiple and fluid homelands. These identities permeate multiple borders across time and space and anchor refugee women teachers in multiple social fields and realities. Current colonial politics of imposing Western concepts and issues into refugee studies, teacher education, and teaching in a globalising world must be challenged. This work could be done through locating, exploring, and honouring transnational spaces and pedagogies already flourishing on Canadian soil. It could be done through "shifting the unit of analysis from the local, regional and national culture to relations and processes across cultures" (Alexander & Mohanty, 1997, p. xix).
Re-visiting Immigration and Settlement Policies and Practices

Refugee women teachers have highlighted the federal, provincial and municipal responsibility for immigration and settlement in Ontario and Québec and described education authorities and teacher re-certification programs in these two provinces as being ignorant, superficial, and discriminatory. According to participants, the factors influencing decision-making in immigration and settlement processes include: (a) government officials' lack of familiarity with refugee women's cultural, social, political and professional backgrounds; (b) dominant stereotypes of war, exile and refugee women; (c) politics of difference, othering and patronising; and (d) exclusion of refugee women's voices in the decision-making processes.

Jagoda, Biser, and Nada who gave up their teacher identity listed a number of settlement barriers they have encountered since their arrival to Québec. They found, however, that those barriers such as language proficiency, age, family commitments, and personal characteristics were mostly rooted in their individual circumstances and personal choices rather than immigration and settlement policies and programs. For example, Nada noted that after her arrival to Canada she did not want to continue her education. Lana argued, however, that the main responsibility of government organizations and educational authorities is to not only provide refugee women teachers with shelter, but also a well planned immigration and settlement process which would include coordination between Canadian embassies in resource countries, Ministry of Immigration and Settlement, provincial teaching authorities, and municipal agencies assisting refugee women teachers in the process of settlement. She even went a step further suggesting that the Ministry of Immigration and Settlement should establish an educational body within
the Ministry to coordinate the process of immigration and the process of settlement in Canada. This Body would create refugee women teachers’ professional profiles based on their applications, make those profiles available in the form of a database, and then use those profiles and interviews with refugee women teachers to inform the development of settlement programs offered to these women. Such an approach would then enable federal, provincial and municipal agencies to coordinate immigration and settlement programs and build effective settlement models based on refugee women teachers’ needs, abilities, and aspirations.

Participants suggested the importance of considering refugee women voices in the development of immigration and settlement policies and practices; establishing a unique program for refugees that considers first and foremost their professional expertise; launching a Council for Immigration, Education and Integration that will employ and support professional teams of people comprised of immigrants, refugees, and native-born Canadians; interviewing refugees immediately upon their arrival to Canada, use those interviews for developing professional portfolios, and compile these portfolios into a searchable database; pursuing strategic planning for refugees' professional integration in Canadian society and the economy; creating short-term (six-12 months) teacher education and/or bridge-to-work programs that focus on language proficiency, curriculum content and teaching methods.

Following the process of data analysis and interpretation, I extended the original list of participants' recommendations by including six additional considerations. Firstly, it is vital not only to provide bridge-to-work programs for refugees and immigrants in multiple locations, but also to monitor and evaluate these programs. Secondly, follow up
studies conducted over time (e.g., two and/or five years after the completion of the program) with the program participants would offer useful data to program providers and policy makers. Thirdly, it is necessary to revisit and potentially revise the hiring criteria for the Citizenship and Immigration Canada personnel, particularly for refugee claim officers to include people with transnational experiences and identities (e.g., young people brought up in a contemporary multiethnic Canada, immigrants and refugees). Fourthly, it is critical to provide government officials serving refugees—and other stakeholders including employers and educational authorities— with professional development programs that deal with cultural, social and political knowledge of both the country of origin and the country of exile.

**Calling for Transnational Feminist/Teacher Solidarity**

District school boards administrators (as well as students' parents) might also find the expertise of internationally and transnationally educated teachers beneficial for their culturally diverse schools and classrooms. Moreover, professional and collegial encounters between native-born, immigrant and refugee teachers might result in the development of new transnational pedagogies. Such pedagogies would have the potential to generate a number of teaching and learning solutions that are much needed in contemporary Canada.

If we are to develop more inclusive policies and practices, we are to

1. use approaches that move beyond the binary structure of existing refugee-Canadian relations;
2. propose new immigration and settlement initiatives which reflect transnational norms, principles, and processes and actualise the human rights explicit and implicit in the *Charters of Freedom and Employment Equity Act*;

3. enhance understanding and recognition of transnational educational values and principles; and

4. establish radical sites of transnational teacher knowledge across educational settings to challenge the deficit model of difference and build bridges between Canadian and transnational pedagogies.

This redesign must take place in an alternative site, a contact zone where native-born, immigrant and refugee male and female teachers negotiate and revise teaching practices, norms, values and identities scripted and articulated through the production of transnational meanings and knowledges. We need to keep in mind, however, that the two main reasons for coalition breakdown are the following: “1) people do not learn to trust one another across divisive social differences, and 2) people do not learn how to sustain working relationships in contexts of sometimes powerful distrust and disagreement” (Narayan, 1998, p. 33). In situations such as these, issues of marginalization and othering must be addressed on a daily basis.

The participants also offered a number of guiding principles to other refugee women teachers. They emphasized the importance of self-confidence, Canadian education and social networks, including their diasporic and their professional communities in Canada. These women, highly invested in teaching and learning, also argued that refugee women teachers are role models not only for other refugee women, but also for refugee and immigrant students and their parents. Finally, they call for
feminist and professional solidarity while resisting a free market economy and other oppressive features of capitalism and neoliberalism.

Refugee women teacher's personal and professional knowledge is important for "both the changed consciousness of individuals and the social transformation of political and economic institutions" (Hill Collins, 1990, p. 221). It is also vital to remember that Yugoslavian refugee women teachers’ stories are just a few of many micro-narratives waiting yet to be told and heard if Canada is to become a "better place" (Zlata, Conversation 2, June 12, 2010).

**Employing New Research Practices**

In terms of research methodologies, transnational feminist researchers might benefit from employing, scrutinizing, and developing new research practices such as focusing on migration of both peoples and ideas, bringing the politics of location to the forefront of every inquiry, pursuing and highlighting the need for political education, linking global issues in a systematic way, using a critical anticapitalist and antiracist lens, taking up multiplicity and intersectionality of women identities, focusing on common differences and struggles, simultaneously acknowledging systemic oppression and social agency, and working for change and feminist solidarity. Such an approach would provide researchers with a more comprehensive methodological guide, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of the knowledge hierarchy. To mirror and to honour these complexities, transnational feminist researchers can engage with multiple and alternative modes of data analysis, re/presentation, and interpretation. They can practice responsiveness, flexibility, and data-driven methodological decisions in the research process, allowing for shifts and/or crossings between theoretical frameworks,
research methodologies, and research methods (e.g., in this study, data led the researcher to move from a postcolonial to a transnational feminist framework, combine transnational feminist research practices with methods of narrative inquiry, including poetic transcription, the storying stories model, and concentric storying as alternative modes of data analysis and re/presentations). Such an approach provides researchers with an analytical research tool for defusing physical and conceptual borders, balancing knowledge and power across time and space, highlighting complexities of women lives, and building bridges towards a transnational feminist pedagogy.

Remaining (Research) Questions

While recognizing that the Canadian Immigration and Settlement policies are biased and discriminating against refugee women and that there is an urgent need for conducting policy analysis and more empirical studies on this topic, this study focused on settlement experiences of Yugoslavian refugee women teachers who were White, middle class, and university educated professionals prior to their immigration to Canada. Such a focus allowed me to identify the ways in which these characteristics facilitated (or not) these women's integration in the teaching profession in Ontario and Québec.

The study reveals five counter narratives of immigration, settlement, and teacher identity. Firstly, a lack of proficiency in the official language is not the biggest barrier to settlement; any language can be learned. Secondly, refugee women’s self-imposed barriers (e.g., beliefs that they are not capable of learning the language or too old to continue their education) might become the biggest barrier to these women’s settlement. Thirdly, refugee women's post-migration identities are shaped by their involvement in and contribution to the host country's society and the economy. Fourthly, the government
agencies serving refugees fail to address refugee women's professional needs. As a result, most refugee women teachers grow to believe that the path to settlement is paved with Canadian degrees. Finally, the study challenges the concept of the refugee woman as a troublesome creature trapped and forgotten in an in-between, unhomely space (Bhabha, 1994). It portrays this woman, rather, as a skilled professional rooted and stabilized across cultures, countries, and continents. Education and a sense of privilege brought from the homeland can motivate refugee women to move from a space of negotiating two cultures to a space of connecting and living two or more cultures at the same time.

A number of questions still remain: What are the experiences, transitions, and identities of refugee male teachers from Yugoslavia who immigrated to Canada? What are the experiences, transitions, and identities of refugee women teachers from Yugoslavia who stayed in the Balkans? To what extent (and how) are these male and female experiences similar or different? What are the current obstacles in the process of teacher re/certification in Canada? Are these obstacles similar or different across the country? How do exile, immigration and settlement influence the lives and the pedagogies of refugee teachers with diverse racial, ethnic and political backgrounds? What are the attitudes of government officials and educational authorities towards refugee teachers and their expertise? How are refugee teachers perceived by their Canadian-born colleagues and school administrators? What do students have to say about refugee teachers and their pedagogies? What are the images of refugee women teachers in Canadian textbooks and curriculum? What are the images of teachers in Canadian textbooks and curriculum? Are there similarities in Canadian and immigrant teaching methods? Are their similarities in how Indigenous teachers and immigrant teachers
negotiate their access to teaching? Could encounters with exclusion and discrimination become points of shared difference between Indigenous and immigrant teachers? If so, is there potential for building alliances?

The multicultural ideologies that underpin contemporary Canadian programs and policies for immigrants and refugees are also being debated as newcomers face additional economic challenges and growing surveillance and control of their everyday lives. International migrants are also living increasingly transnational lives, maintaining homes and social lives at multiple locations, which alter their opportunities for political and social resistance. Research that addresses the impacts of these rapidly evolving migration patterns in the Canadian context or through international comparisons is particularly welcome.

As we keep wondering about the questions posed in this chapter (and pursuing them with passion and care), it is important to understand that Canada is growing transnational in terms of population and immigrant/refugee/indigenous/Canadian knowledge and will benefit from immigration only "if there is enough will to really properly open their ears and listen" (Zlata, Conversation 2, June 2010) to the nuances and promises of transnational teacher knowledge. It is also important to remember Nina Bloom’s (Conversation 2, May 26, 2010) words: “whatever Canada tries, if Canada really tries, Canada will do.”
Epilogue

That night I dreamed of a world map. Majestic and lazy continents were resting on the endless water. They all looked alike, nested in a deep dream. All of them were asleep except Europe and North America. These two continents were awake, vibrating and communicating with each other through bright golden rays. I was relieved, "I am not leaving Europe once and for all; I am bringing Europe and North America together." A few seconds later, my dream sank into a deep dark sea. The next morning, we left Yugoslavia.

For 15 years, I wondered about this dream, about those golden rays bridging the ocean. What are they? Where did they come from? Where are they heading? What is that golden link between Europe and North America? This dissertation helped me understand my dream: the golden links are neither airplane routes nor meridians; they are my bloodstream, my breath, my heart beat. I am the link.

We are the golden rays, my dear colleagues and friends; we, refugee female teachers from Yugoslavia. On our shoulders, we bear all the past and future lives of Europe and North America, all the shortcomings and strengths of Canada and Yugoslavia. We cross borders and make linkages. We mark the local and the transnational of teaching and learning in Canada.
References


Lapadat, J., & Lindsay, A. C. (1999). Transcription in research and practice: From standardization of technique to interpretive positionings. *Qualitative Inquiry, 5*(1), 64–86.


doi:10.1016/j.tate.2010.11.004


## Appendix A

### Transcription Conventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sounds:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking before someone speaks</td>
<td>um, ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve never thought of that before</td>
<td>hmph (=huhm, ha, huh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative sounds</td>
<td>yup (=yep), yeah (=yah, yea, ya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening + encouragement</td>
<td>uhum (=aha, uha, mmm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental sounds</td>
<td>(tapping), (knock at door), (shuffling papers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Tone of speaker Louder | CAPITAL LETTERS |
| Tone of speaker Whisper | small letters |

| Words emphasized but not louder | CAPITAL LETTERS |

| Words spoken while laughing | (laughs) |
| When laughing softly or with sadness | (laughs softly) |
| Laughter when both parties are laughing at something | (laughter) |
| Other | (coughs), (sighs), (inhales deeply), (exhales deeply) |

| Words spoken but confidential | ________________ |

| Pauses 5+ seconds | (pause) |

| Interruptions | use (inter.) where the break happens |

| Self-talk or repeating what someone else said | use “quotes” |

| Repetition | type out the repeated words, words, words |

| Punctuation: |         |
| end of thought | a period (.) at the end of the complete idea |
| end of phrase / clause | use a comma (,) |
thought not completed use an ellipse . . . as the thought trails off

Cross-talk: two or more speakers speaking at the same time/over each other (CT) and leaving speaker lines single spaced & one indented: Interviewer: Words, words & words. Interviewee: Words, words & words

Tape is unclear/ muffled and can’t make out word or phrase of one speaker (indistinguishable)

Appendix B

Individual Interview Protocol (First Interview)

Title of Study: Creating a Life in a Foreign Space: Refugee Women Teachers from the Former Yugoslavia Reclaiming Professional Identities in Ontario, Canada
Researcher: Snežana Ratković, Faculty of Education, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Susan Tilley, Faculty of Education, Brock University

A. General Demographics and Work History

Name: __________________________________________


Marital Status: Married □ Single □ In Relationship □

Number of Children at the Time of Arrival to Canada: _____
Age of children at the Time of Arrival to Canada: _______

Nationality: ______________________________________

Ethnicity: _______________________________________

Level of Education: College □ University □ Master □ Doctorate □

Years of Teaching Experience to Date: _____________

Type(s) of Teaching Experience in former Yugoslavia:

Elementary School □ High School □ College □ University □

Type(s) of Teaching Experience in Ontario:

Elementary School □ High School □ College □ University □

Years in Canada to date: ___________________________

Years in Ontario to date: ___________________________
B. Open-ended Interview Questions Given to Participants Prior to Interview

1. Tell me your story of exile.
2. How have you experienced your settlement in Ontario?
3. How have the exile and settlement in Ontario influenced your teacher identity, your professional goals and expectations?
4. How has being a woman influenced your experiences of exile and settlement in Ontario?
5. Why did you choose to take part in this research?

C. Probing Questions Which Researcher May Use to Stimulate Conversation

1. Tell me your story of exile.
   • Why did you come to Ontario?
   • How would you describe your experience of exile?
   • What did the exile mean to you personally?
   • What did the exile mean to you professionally?
2. How have you experienced your settlement in Ontario?
   • What were your expectations before your arrival to the province?
   • Have your expectations been met to date? Why? Why not? Please explain.
   • What were your first activities and experiences in the province?
   • How has the way you see/define yourself shaped your settlement activities and experiences?
   • How have the ways others in Canada see/define you shaped your settlement activities and experiences?
   • How has who you were in the former Yugoslavia changed or affirmed in Ontario?
3. How have the exile and settlement in Ontario influenced your teacher identity, your professional goals and expectations?
   • What were your first professional activities and experiences in the province?
   • What cultural/professional practices of the former Yugoslavia have enhanced/hindered your efforts to reclaim professional status in Ontario?
   • What cultural/professional practices of Ontario have enhanced/hindered your efforts to reclaim professional status in the province?
   • How has the way you see/define yourself shaped your professional transition activities and experiences?
   • How have the ways others in Canada see/define you shaped your professional transition activities and experiences?
   • If you were to offer a statement of an important barrier or facilitator to becoming a teacher in Ontario, what would it be?
• What were the most effective strategies you have used to reclaim your professional status in the province?
• How has your professional identity changed or affirmed in Ontario?
4. How has being a woman influenced your experiences of exile and settlement in Ontario?
• What were the most effective strategies you have used to balance your multiple roles (e.g. role of a mother, wife, partner, friend, and professional) while trying to reclaim your professional status in Ontario?
• How do you view yourself in relation to your family, your community, your work, your education, and government agencies supporting refugee women’s integration in Ontario society and the economy?
5. Why did you choose to take part in this research?
Appendix C

Individual Interview Protocol (Second Interview)

Title of Study: Creating a Life in a Foreign Space: Refugee Women Teachers from the Former Yugoslavia Reclaiming Professional Identities in Ontario, Canada
Researcher: Snežana Ratković, Faculty of Education, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Susan Tilley, Faculty of Education, Brock University

1. Since the last interview, have other things come to mind that you would like to discuss?

2. In the last interview we discussed your experiences of exile, settlement, and teacher identity construction and negotiation in the Ontario context. Did the last interview influence your perception of these experiences?

3. Since the last interview, have any particular incidents related to your experiences come to mind?

4. Where there any particular incidents during your exile, or since the last interview, that completely changed your professional goals and expectations?

5. In the last interview, you listed the most effective strategies you have used to balance your multiple roles (e.g. role of a mother, wife, partner, friend, and professional) while trying to re-claim your professional status in Ontario. At this point in time, would you choose to employ different strategies in balancing these multiple roles? Why? Why not? Please explain.
Appendix D

Focus Group Interview Script

Title of Study: Creating a Life in a Foreign Space: Refugee Women Teachers from the Former Yugoslavia Reclaiming Professional Identities in Ontario, Canada

Researcher: Snežana Ratković, Faculty of Education, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Susan Tilley, Faculty of Education, Brock University

I would like to remind you that our conversations during this focus group interview must be kept confidential. Keeping our conversations confidential means keeping confidential any information about any participant in the Focus Group that is not currently in the public domain or readily available to the public; any participant’s personal that might reasonably allow identification of the person; as well as any and all information concerning participants’ personal and professional lives that is disclosed during this Focus Group Interview.

I would also like to set the ground rules for this focus group interview: (a) everyone is encouraged to express their opinion, (b) there are no correct or incorrect answers to any of the questions, (c) everyone's opinion is valuable and shall be respected, and (d) a certain amount of time will be allocated to each question. The session will be recorded so that all your ideas and thoughts can be captured.

I invite you to stay after each focus group interview if you would like to discuss any potential concerns regarding the focus group discussion. If you need support working through any challenging circumstances faced during the focus group interview and/or individual interview you may also wish to consult the Human Rights and Equity Officer at Brock University, Research Ethics Officer of Brock University, and/or Distress Centre of Niagara. I also want to remind you that your participation in the study is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. You also may leave the interview at any time you wish.

Today, I want us to spend some time discussing your experiences of exile, settlement, teacher identity construction and negotiation in the Ontario context, and the ways in which your gender may have influenced these experiences. Specifically, I want to hear your views of exile and settlement in Ontario, as well as challenges you have faced and opportunities you have embraced in your attempt to reclaim your professional status in the province. I would also like to hear from you how people—including policy makers, government officials, researchers, and yourselves—can work to support the integration of refugee women teachers in the teaching profession in Ontario. Over the next 2 hours, I'm going to ask you 8-10 questions. Please share your honest opinions and thoughts on each of the questions. Your input is an important part of our effort to better understand how you and other women like you feel about the exile, settlement issues, and professional identity construction and negotiation in Ontario…
Appendix E

Focus Group Participant Confidentiality Agreement Form

Title of Study: Creating a Life in a Foreign Space: Refugee Women Teachers from the Former Yugoslavia Reclaiming Professional Identities in Ontario, Canada
Researcher: Snežana Ratković, Faculty of Education, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Susan Tilley, Faculty of Education, Brock University

I agree to maintain the confidentiality of information disclosed during focus group interviews. I understand this to mean I will keep confidential:

- any information about any participant in the Focus Group that is not currently in the public domain or readily available to the public.
- any participant’s information that might reasonably allow identification of the person.
- any and all information concerning participants’ personal and professional lives that is disclosed during the Focus Group Interview.

I agree to the above terms of this agreement.

Signed_______________________________ Date_____________

Printed______________________________

The Research Ethics Board of Brock University has officially given clearance for this study (File # 09-215 Tilley).

Thank you for your help!

Please take one copy of this form with you for further reference.

I have fully explained the procedures of this study to the above participant.

Researcher Signature: _________________________ Date: _____________________
Appendix F

Focus Group Interview Protocol

Title of Study: Creating a Life in a Foreign Space: Refugee Women Teachers from the Former Yugoslavia Reclaiming Professional Identities in Ontario, Canada
Researcher: Snežana Ratković, Faculty of Education, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Susan Tilley, Faculty of Education, Brock University

Opening:

1. Please introduce yourself and tell us how long you have lived in Ontario.

Introduction:

2. Think of yourself as a teacher before exile and presently. Draw a stick figure of yourself, or a representation of yourself, or a symbol, or a word that describes a) your teacher identity before exile and b) your teacher identity presently. Explain to the group the similarities and differences.
   [Allow each participant to describe the moment and their experiences]

Key Questions:

3. What made you decide to come to Ontario?
4. What were your expectations before your arrival to the province? Have your expectations been met? Why? Why not? Please explain.
5. List top three barriers and top three supports to integrating refugee women teachers in the teaching profession in the province.
6. How has being a woman influenced your experiences of exile and settlement in Ontario?

Ending Questions:

7. Imagine you are preparing a 1-minute talk on re-establishing professional status in Ontario to a group of refugee women teachers who just immigrated to the province. What would be your key points?
8. What effective strategies could policy makers and teachers’ associations use to integrate refugee women teachers in the teaching profession in the province?
9. Why did you choose to take part in this research?
10. Are there other questions we should address in this focus group interview to get a better understanding of your knowledge and experiences related to exile, settlement, and professional identity construction in exile?

Debriefing: [Summary of the discussion thus far]
I would live your feedback. Is this an adequate summary? I would like to remind you again that our conversations during this focus group interview must be kept confidential. Thank you again.
Appendix G

Participant Member Checking Form

Title of Study: Creating a Life in a Foreign Space: Refugee Women Teachers from the Former Yugoslavia Reclaiming Professional Identities in Ontario, Canada
Researcher: Snežana Ratković, Faculty of Education, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Susan Tilley, Faculty of Education, Brock University

Dear Participant:

Thank you again for participating in the study. Your experience is a valued part of the entire research process. Please review the story titles/interpretative stories/the personal experience narrative.

My intention is to provide a meaningful interpretation of your experience with respect to women’s professional identity construction in exile. With this in mind, please feel free to add your own interpretations and clarifications to any part of the member checking package by responding to the following questions:

- Does what I have written make sense to you?
- How does this account compare with your experience?
- Have any aspects of your experience been omitted? Please include these wherever you feel it is appropriate.
- Do you wish to remove any aspect(s) of your experience from this text?
- Please feel free to make any other comments.

I would appreciate you marking your comments/changes directly in the printed text or by attaching additional pages. Please return the copies with your changes and your signature of approval.

Thank you again for your valuable input.

Sincerely,

Snezana Ratkovic, Ph.D. Candidate
snezana.ratkovic@brocku.ca

Dr. Susan Tilley, Associate Professor
stilley@brocku.ca

This confirms that I have read through the story titles/interpretative stories/personal experience narrative constructed by the Researcher and have added my own interpretations and clarifications, where needed. I am comfortable that the new modified texts provide a meaningful representation of my experiences related to exile, settlement, and professional identity construction in exile.

Participant Signature: ______________________________ Date: ______________