Katja Sarkowsky

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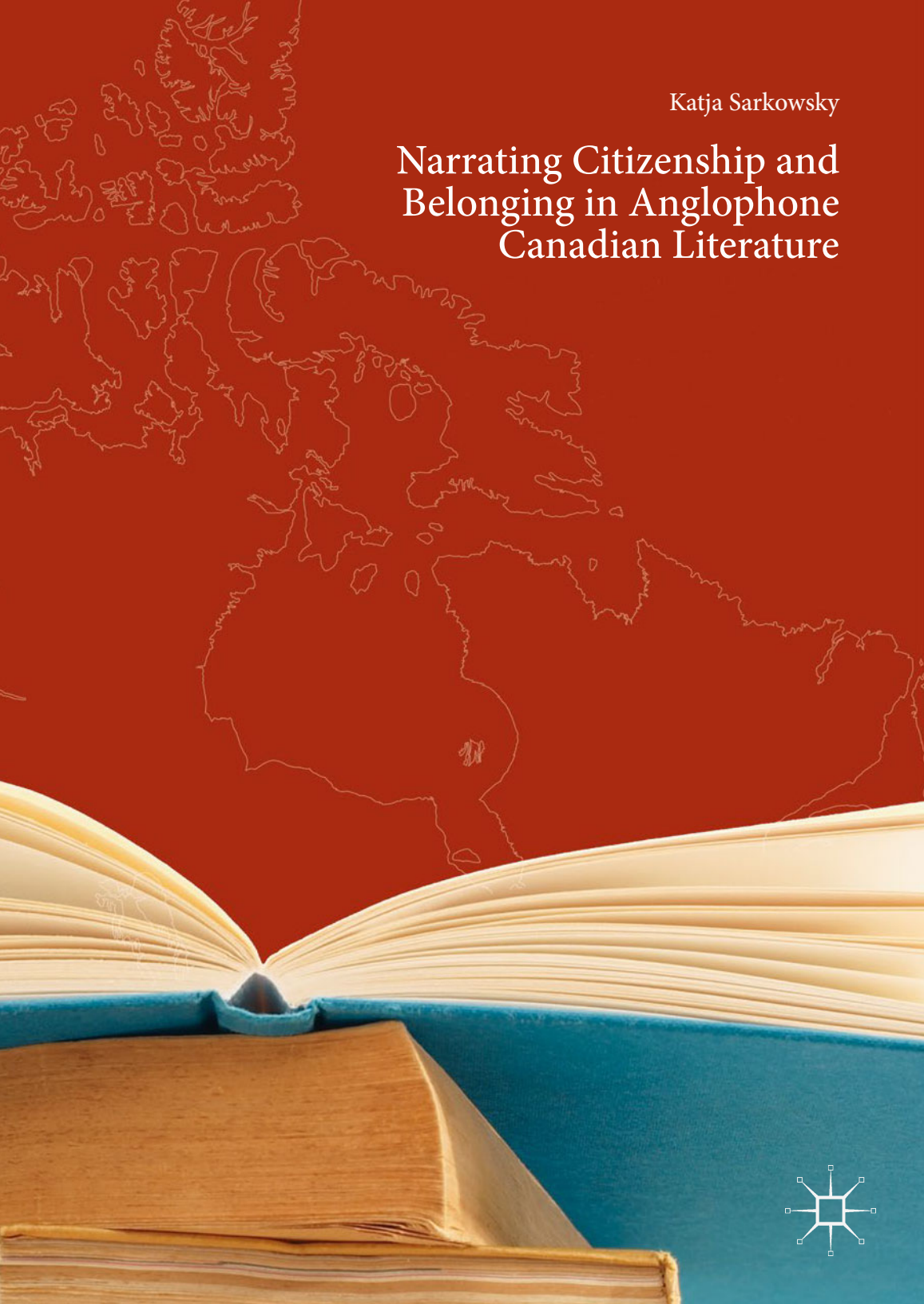

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For Marcus
In memory of Marret Sarkowski (1933–2016)

Preface and Acknowledgements

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The image 'The Crying Need' is taken from *The New Canadian*, June 15, 1939. I thank UBC's Rare Books and Special Collections staff for providing me with a printable reproduction.

Münster, Germany Katja Sarkowsky

Contents

CHAPTER 1

Recognition, Citizenship, and Canadian Literature

1.1 Approaching Citizenship and Literature

In Guillermo Verdecchia's short story 'The Several Lives of Citizen Suárez' (1998), thirteen-year-old Fernando Suárez learns that his immigrant parents will soon become Canadian citizens and that, as a minor, he can receive his citizenship papers in this process as well. His mother Lina appears to be happy about the prospect of naturalization, but Fernando is not. 'For Lina, citizenship, and the passport that was its token, was the conclusion of a long and difficult journey'; after a transition into Canadian life that had been 'violent, upsetting' (Verdecchia 1998, p. 40), citizenship is thus both a documentation of and reward for her long struggle with alienation and dislocation as an immigrant in Canada. Or at least she hopes this will be so, projecting her expectation to finally 'belong' to and participate in a body of 'equal community members,' as Rogers Smith has summarized the most common usage of citizenship (2002, p. 105), upon her change of status from 'landed immigrant' to 'citizen,' her past and her cultural difference absorbed into a Canadian fabric.

In contrast, Fernando's perception of his own disparity from what he perceives as 'Canadianness' is embodied; it is not necessarily visible but deeply felt. He is convinced that he is not 'constituted as a Canadian. His guts were foreign. His lungs were a deviant shape; his nose sensitized to other aromas and flavours. His ear was pitched to other frequencies; his cranial-sacral rhythm was governed by a divergent drummer'

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(Verdecchia 1998, pp. 44–45). For him, Canadian citizenship is not a status that can simply coexist with other statuses; the perspective of having dual citizenship does not impress him, and he sees the acceptance of Canadian citizenship as 'a profound betrayal of various people: his Nona; his grandfather Rafael; his other grandfather Mario; and the beggar boy at the café that afternoon in the capital' (p. 45). His grandmother and his grandfathers are associated with another place and language, and even though this 'other place' makes demands on him that he cannot and does not want to live up to, when he visits, these filiations signify deep connections. With the 'beggar boy,' whose request for a sandwich (or the little sugar bags on the table) his father refuses, Fernando feels a connection he cannot name; he is 'the boy Fernando might have become if they hadn't emigrated perhaps' (p. 45) and thereby seems to offer a kinship of deprivation and empathy that have been denied because of 'the normalcy citizenship conferred' (p. 46). The 'normalcy of citizenship' offers neither consolation nor belonging; instead, for Fernando, it implies estrangement and foreclosed possibilities.

Verdecchia's short story is an excellent case in point for the way in which Canadian literature engaged with citizenship at a point in time during which the concept appeared to indicate a particular political urgency and was thus met with renewed interest. In 1994, political theorists Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman observed a 'return of the citizen,' an 'explosion of interest in the concept of citizenship' in the political and social sciences (p. 352). They attribute this return to political developments of the time, namely the effects of the end of the Cold War, the demise of the welfare state in Western nations, and the increasing ethnic diversification of national populations in Western Europe. Moreover, the effects of globalization, of transnational migration and its reconceptualization as 'transmigration' (rather than immigration and emigration), and the 'nation'—as a political and cultural construct—triggered a debate in which citizenship was rethought as a complex and often-contradictory affiliation within as well as across nation-states. Accordingly, if citizenship was understood as membership in a political entity that is imbued with both rights and obligations, this entity was no longer essentially equated with the nation-state. Concepts such as diasporic or transnational citizenship mirror the diversification of citizenship that emerged due to this fundamental rethinking of the scope of citizenship. Although the ensuing theoretical debates took Canada—Canadian multiculturalism and particularly the relations between Quebec and 'the

rest of Canada'—as a starting point and often as a prime example, they also confirmed that the implications of these nationally specific constellations were much broader.

While the debate first emerged within the social and political sciences, around the same time, literary and cultural studies—particularly American and Canadian Studies—also began to engage with the boundaries of the nation and the boundaries of their academic fields, as well as with the question of 'citizenship' as a concept that appeared to highlight the tensions of belonging, filiation, and affiliation—to use Edward Said's (1983a) terminology—and formal membership. It should therefore come as no surprise that the debates around citizenship, their connection to literature, and the conceptual transnationalization of both American and Canadian Studies coincided. Whereas in the social sciences and political theory Kymlicka and Norman speak of a 'return' of the citizen, in literary and cultural studies, it might be more precise to speak of an 'arrival' of the citizen and of citizenship as a theoretical concept. This indicates a renewed interest in potential societal functions of literature and its embeddedness in social debates, also very much reflected in the conceptualizations of postcolonial literatures. Accordingly, the study at hand proceeds from an understanding of literature as one way of thinking about and even theorizing society, and its premise is that this is prominently done by way of 'citizenship.' In the context of American literary studies, Brook Thomas observed an increasing frequency of scholarly books and articles that were published on the topic throughout the 1990s, the 'issues of concern for literary critics overlap[ping] with those of social scientists' (2007, p. 3); and with regard to Canadian Studies, in their 2008 special citizenship issue of *West Coast Line*, David Chariandy and Sophie McCall comment on the 'newfound awareness of the complex and sometimes conflicted stakes of this term, and of the need to engage in the citizenship debates in ways that are at once historically grounded and intellectually flexible' (p. 5) as a result of both the resurgence of the term and its simultaneously unclear implications.

Thus, in light of the developments referred to by Thomas as well as Chariandy and McCall, it is not surprising that the 1990s also saw the earliest attempts to systematically conceptualize the notion of a specifically *cultural* citizenship, which sought to reconcile the critical potential of literature with its long-standing instrumentalization in citizenship education. Against the background of the canon debates at Stanford University, Renato Rosaldo points out that cultural citizenship is a

matter of both curricular changes and the institutional transformation of higher education. 'The ideal of cultural citizenship,' writes Rosaldo,

> grows out of the conviction that, in a plural society, one group must not dictate another group's notion of dignity, thriving, and well-being. Cultural citizenship also implies a notion of the polyglot citizen. Curriculum debates bring up questions of "Who's the we?" in a plural society and offer hopes of bringing about cultural decolonization by recognizing the value of cultural life in the United States. (1994, p. 410)

Concepts such as Rosaldo's—or Donna Palmateer Pennee's (2004) related notion of 'literary citizenship'—highlight the importance of multicultural curricula and canon diversification. The function of the canon shifts in its representational effect, and so does the function of literature. Martha Nussbaum (1995, 2010) has repeatedly asserted that literature is crucial for readers' development of skills that are necessary for 'good citizenship,' such as empathy and the ability to imagine oneself as another. Even though they are often very different in their political thrust, these recent conceptualizations nevertheless share with more traditional notions of citizenship education—notions that see literature as an introduction to a national 'norm' and thus potentially as a means of assimilation—the idea of producing 'good citizens' by means of education and thus the importance that they attribute to literature as an educational medium. The 'good citizen' they envision is a different one, but a good citizen she is nevertheless.

While the theoretical concept of citizenship in literary studies is principally a product of the 1990s, the *issues* addressed by this concept and the language by which they are negotiated in literature precede its theorization as citizenship by far; so here, it might indeed be appropriate to speak, as per Kymlicka and Norman of a 'return' of the citizen. Brook Thomas's groundbreaking *Civic Myths* (2007) and Kathy-Ann Tan's *Reconfiguring Citizenship* (2015) are book-length examples of how such issues can productively be mapped onto literary texts from the nineteenth century onward. Both studies illustrate clearly that citizenship is 'storied'; as Chariandy has highlighted,

> we inevitably tell stories about citizenship. Of course, this does not mean that we have the ability to conjure up citizenship through individual imaginative inspiration or the intercession of some fitful muse, but rather that

> we narrate not only our identities and practices as citizens *but also citizenship itself* in ways that inevitably reflect our sidedness and desires. (2011, p. 327)

As Verdecchia's short story illustrates, literature is clearly one such way of imagining 'citizenship itself' in its complex discursive constellations of selfhood and otherness, norms and difference—citizenship that is understood as being about *both* political membership and affective belonging. In the story, Canadian citizenship suggests a certainty of placement that Fernando does not experience and, in contrast to his parents, does not seek. The 'normalcy' of Canadian citizenship that Fernando rejects is, for him, a normalcy of pretense and silence; his parents' Canadian life is one of increasing and mutual estrangement. Their impending transition into officially recognized Canadianness appears to solidify a displacement that goes deeper than physical dislocation.

Fernando's desperate attempts to be an 'anti-citizen' by deciding to 'break the law and get caught' (Verdecchia 1998, p. 64) fail. Canadian citizenship is tellingly granted to him in absentia. The grief that grips him at the end of the story, the loss he feels, is a loss that he cannot name, one he can express only in wordless howls. He becomes what Marlene Goldman calls—citing Ian Baucom—a 'domestic interloper' (quoted in Goldman 2012, p. 6) the 'haunting opposite (and double) of the citizen' (Goldman 2012, p. 6) in a context where he not only feels like but also remains a racialized 'Other.' Citizenship appears to leave no space for cultural difference—an ironic and bitter comment on the hopes invested in 'multicultural citizenship' in Canada precisely around the time when 'The Several Lives of Citizen Suárez' was published.

In addition to focusing on the central issue of 'belonging,' the story highlights that 'citizenship' is also about formal membership status and the relationship that exists between state and citizen as well as between citizens. While this is obvious in political debates, it has not always been as self-evident with regard to the discussion of literature; 'citizenship' has certainly been used as a mere metaphor of belonging all too often. So while 'belonging,' as Chariandy remarks, has gained increasing importance in recent discourses on citizenship (2011, p. 329), formal membership and its regulation clearly also play a crucial role in the ways in which literary texts construct citizens and negotiate citizenship. 'Citizen Suárez' also uses citizenship as a metaphor, yet the story revolves around the question of filiation and affiliation that is just

as important to citizenship as formal membership in the nation. The process of naturalization, which Fernando so desperately seeks to avoid, serves to highlight the implicit norms of this membership—the fact that he associates Canadian citizenship with loss is plausible as he feels that he will lose a status that marks the very difference that he feels. Becoming a citizen would gloss over the displacement that he experiences and cherishes as a reminder of an 'elsewhere.' Thus, in the story, 'citizenship' is not a metaphor of belonging, but rather one of assimilation; naturalization—the very term is a telling one—suggests normalization. Difference is made invisible; if anything, for Fernando citizenship is a metaphor of *unbelonging*.

Many literary texts such as Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*, Esi Edugyan's *Half-Blood Blues*, or Lawrence Hill's *The Illegal*address the ways in which citizenship as membership is implicated in specific legal constellations even more directly than in 'Citizen Suárez.' Scholars like Thomas, who takes a law-and-literature approach to American literature, or Chariandy, who looks at the discursive and legal exclusions that so often rendered black citizenship in Canada second-class citizenship, have highlighted the necessity of paying close attention to citizenship as a regulated legal status. These examples indicate that regardless of the ways in which citizens, their subjectivities, practices, and experiences of citizenship are imagined, they are always imagined within the scopes of specific societal and legal contexts.

Despite the repeated declarations of the death of the nation-state and conceptualizations of citizenship as diasporic, transnational, or cosmopolitan, national contexts therefore have remained important reference points for literary negotiations of citizenship. Hence, this study focuses on one national context exclusively, namely on Anglophone Canada.[1] This decision rests on the conviction that despite shared theoretical discourses, for instance, between Canada and the USA or across the Atlantic, the unique legal constellations regarding immigration and naturalization, and the complex history of Canadian citizenship have an impact not only on the way in which individuals and groups experience

[1]The decision to exclude writing from and about Quebec pays tribute to the fact that both the legal and cultural constellations as well as debates about interculturalism differ significantly from Anglo-Canada. The complexities of both Francophone and Anglophone literature in Quebec regarding conceptualizations of citizenship warrant a study in their own right and are thus not addressed here.

everyday life in Canada, but also on how these experiences and their theoretical implications are reflected upon and negotiated in literary texts. As such, Anglophone Canadian discussions serve as a specific example of the way in which literature and citizenship debates intertwine or, more precisely, of how literature is an essential element of a considerable cultural debate concerning citizenship. However, the ramifications of this intertwining exceed the Canadian context by far; as specific as the Anglophone Canadian example is with regard to its historical developments and discursive constellations, it may also be considered representative of the complex ways in which literature can function as part of what Seyla Benhabib has termed 'democratic iterations' (2004, pp. 19–20) in multicultural 'Western' democracies.

The questions that have been raised in Anglophone Canadian literary texts—particularly since the 1980s—concern the distribution of rights and resources, the construction of 'difference,' and the possibility of agency in a multicultural nation. As such, the issues addressed in these texts tie in with broader societal debates about citizenship and the recognition of diverse cultural identities and practices; more specifically, they critically examine and respond to political discussions on a communitarian understanding of recognition and on the possibilities and limits of an official policy of multiculturalism. What is more, literary texts use a vocabulary of citizenship to address issues of rights, conceptions of difference, and membership and belonging to the nation, even if this nation is either reflected upon critically or ultimately dismissed as a framework of reference and identification.

As such, literature is an integral part of what Charles Taylor calls the 'social imaginary,' that is, 'the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations' (2004, p. 23). The social imaginary is not identical with hegemonic national narratives, but they are clearly connected. Stó:lō author Lee Maracle has pointed to how Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledges have been consistently kept out of a public awareness of what constitutes 'Canada' (2015, p. 115); echoing this sentiment with a slightly different twist, John Ralston Saul has argued that Canada is in effect a Métis nation that has suppressed its history of transculturation and Aboriginal contributions to the shaping of Canadian society (2008, pos. 140). In this context, as a central way of defining belonging through political

membership, citizenship serves as a shorthand for the recognition not only of individuals, but also of the social groups to which they belong.

This study sets out to trace the different strategies by means of which Anglophone Canadian literature has negotiated such questions of citizenship—understood as a concept that entails both formal membership and affective and recognized belonging—since the 1970s and particularly the 1980s. In the following section, I will first sketch the legal constellations of citizenship in Canada and the specific Canadian debates in which literary texts participate by their own aesthetic means—namely those of recognition and multiculturalism—before methodically turning to citizenship as a theoretical concept and to how the relationship between literature and citizenship has been conceptualized in an Anglophone Canadian context.

1.2 Recognition, Multiculturalism, Difference: Critical Debates on Belonging

Canadian citizenship has a complex and relatively short history. The British North America Act of 1867 makes no mention of citizenship. Strictly speaking, Canadian citizenship was nonexistent until the Canadian Citizenship Act in 1947, along with its definitions of both 'natural-born' and 'naturalized' citizens, and its provisions for the transition from British subjecthood into Canadian citizenship; for until then, Canadians were simply British subjects (Webber 2015, p. 27) in a complex framework of regulations of residency. 'Citizens' did not enter the constitution until the Constitution Act of 1982 along with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This may merely seem to be a set of legal technicalities that has little impact on how citizenship was and is addressed in literature, yet this impression would be misleading: literary texts take into account the complexities of pre-1947 arrangements, and texts such as Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* meticulously unravel the impact of the *absence* of clear rules and the province-specific regulations that had fundamental bearing on the federal level.

This complex history of Canadian citizenship as a legal construct also provides an important context for the controversial debates concerning multiculturalism that occurred throughout the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the subsequent discussions that focused on 'identity politics' in the 1990s. In Canada and elsewhere, these discussions have raised

fundamental questions about the institutional and societal accommodation of cultural, ethnic, religious, and other differences, and while they may not have always circled around the concept of 'citizenship' per se, its central elements of formal membership and affective belonging were very much at their heart. Pierre Trudeau's declaration of multiculturalism as an official policy in 1971, the Multiculturalism Act in 1988, the Japanese Canadian Redress Settlement in the same year, and key theoretical texts such as Charles Taylor's 'The Politics of Recognition' (1994; originally published in 1992) demonstrate that cultural rights, belonging, and national identity in a highly diversified society were the central issues at stake. 'Recognition' refers to the recognition of diverse cultural identities, and in a second step this recognition, so both assumption and practice, leads to the allocation of specific rights attributed to cultural groups and/or to individuals based on group membership within the Canadian nation-state. Furthermore, even though the discussion leading up to Trudeau's declaration was triggered by the report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism as well as the ongoing controversies over the status of Quebec and its relationship to 'Canada,' belonging and membership emerged as complex issues that also concerned ethnic minorities and (with a different focus) Indigenous peoples.[2]

The theoretical debate about recognition has been dominated by concepts of what Thomas Bedorf (2010) and others have called 'intercultural recognition'; this would certainly apply to Taylor's notion of recognition. In his seminal essay, Taylor's argument is built on an understanding of identity as dialogical that renders the recognition of difference a 'vital human need' (1994, p. 26). He furthermore suggests 'a regime of reciprocal recognition among equals' (p. 50) supported by an allocation of cultural rights to ensure this reciprocity. From the beginning, the question of what was to be recognized and how this would translate into the formulation of rights was highly controversial. Conservatives as well as liberals feared for national unity and the cultural neutrality of legal categories, and they cautioned against potential 'ghettoization' of immigrant communities as a result of multiculturalism

[2] As H. D. Forbes points out, Canadian official multiculturalism was not well received in Quebec, for the *Québécois* tended to see it as an attempt 'to reduce the Quebec nation (that is, the Québécois) to the status of a mere ethnic group' (2010, p. 38). Indigenous peoples tended to reject multiculturalism for the same reason.

(Bissoondath 1994). However, critical activists and multiculturalists also reacted skeptically to the way in which 'cultural groups' could supposedly be identified as such and saw a 'reification' of difference (Bennett 1998) in the legal implementation of multiculturalism and the criteria it required; yet others have highlighted the conformity that is implied in Canadian multiculturalism (Galabuzi 2011). At the core of recognition debates, the issue of 'identity' proved to be difficult to incorporate into a satisfying set of political measures truly respectful of difference when it was to be understood as a shifting, relational term and not as a set of characteristics 'owned' by individuals or clearly defined groups.[3]

These debates found resonance in Canadian literature that fundamentally changed the Canadian literary landscape, institutions, and the contemporary perception of Canadian literary production, as Frank Davey has recently asserted (2016, p. 28). While seeming to be first and foremost a question of visibility and representation, multiculturalism debates not only intersected with fundamental shifts in immigration policies and funding possibilities for small independent publishers, but also more importantly coincided with ethnic and other social movements and their resonance in literature. Even though these changes had already started to surface in the 1970s, a particularly vast amount of texts dealing with 'minority issues' and the historical responsibilities of the Anglo-Canadian majority especially emerged in the 1980s, among them the works of writers such as Robert Kroetsch and Margaret Laurence, or, from a Mennonite perspective, Rudy Wiebe.

Even more importantly, a growing body of literature was being produced by minoritized writers who themselves took on historical injustices as well as contemporary realities that were often shaped by experiences of deprivation, marginalization, and discrimination. Larissa Lai has called the 1980s and 1990s a decisive period in the formation of Asian Canadian literature (2014, p. 5). The different trajectories notwithstanding, the same could be said for 'minority' literatures more

[3] In his 1965 study *The Vertical Mosaic*, that is, before multiculturalist policies, John Porter formulates another critical point. When distinguishing between structural and behavioral assimilation, he argues 'it is indisputable that some form of group affiliation lying between the extremes of the mass and the individual is a prerequisite for mental health. However, there is no intrinsic reason that these groupings should be on ethnic lines. Where there is strong association between ethnic affiliation and social class, as there almost always has been, a democratic society may require a breaking down of the ethnic impediment to equality, particularly the equality of opportunity' (2015, p. 73).

generally. These texts frequently tied in directly with the agendas of social movements in Adorno's sense of engaged or rather 'committed literature': for Adorno, 'committed art in the strict sense is not intended to lead to specific measures, legislative acts, or institutional arrangements, as in older ideological pieces directed against syphilis, the duel, the abortion laws, or the reform schools. Instead, it works toward an attitude' (1992, p. 79). This certainly applies to Anglophone Canadian literature of the 1980s; published in 1981, Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* is one example of this kind of 'committed literature.' This groundbreaking novel appeared at the time when the Japanese Canadian Redress movement was struggling for the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II to be recognized as historical injustice, and in doing so, this widely acclaimed text also drew attention to the historical events and their ramifications that lay behind the redress movement. When the Minster of Multiculturalism, Gerry Weiner, and the President of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, Art Miki, signed the Redress Agreement, excerpts from *Obasan* were read out at the ceremony (Bowen 2010, p. 71). In addition to being *thematically* involved with the question of Japanese Canadian citizenship rights, the novel's role in the ceremony as well as its subsequent canonization clearly illustrates how citizenship can be negotiated both in and *through* a literary text.

While this is a particularly obvious example of the multilayered ways in which literary texts engage with questions of membership and belonging, there are, of course, numerous others. To name but two from the 1980s, Jeannette Armstrong's novel *Slash* (1985) not only takes up the demands of Indigenous activists in the context of the American Indian Movement in the 1970s, but also critically explores constitutional questions concerning Indigenous rights that were prevalent in the late 1970s and early 1980s right before the patriation of the constitution; and in 1987, Michael Ondaatje explored immigrant communities as producing and claiming space in 1930s Toronto in his novel *In the Skin of a Lion*, thus highlighting the role of immigrants in nation building at a time of heated debates about the reach of multicultural policies shortly before they were codified into law.

The 1990s in particular saw an enormous productivity of minoritized writers, and it was especially after the events at Oka—the conflict between Mohawk activists and the *Sûreté du Québec*—that Indigenous

writers made their voices more forcefully heard. These developments led to the paradoxical situation that the diversity of ethnic minority writing was increasingly seen as representative of 'CanLit' in spite of the continuing discrimination against ethnic minority groups—thus, whereas the possibilities for cultural self-representation had increased, the attention attributed by the larger society to continuing discrimination had actually decreased.[4]

An example of this inconsistency can be seen in the public reaction to the 'Writing Thru Race' conference in 1994 and its explicit creation of space for writers of color. As Lai contends with regard to Asian Canadian writing in particular,

> if the breaking of silence was the important political labour carried out by activists, writers, and critics in the 1970s and early 1980s, then the late 1980s and the 1990s are marked by a recognition of the difficulty in speaking and writing. (2014, p. 9)

These difficulties had to do with the 'problems inherent in racialized subject formations' (ibid.), as well as with an overall climate that, while generally more open to 'minority issues' and their literary treatment, clearly displayed the limits of political accommodation. The controversy concerning the organizers' decision to open the daytime events of the conference exclusively to writers of color and Indigenous writers has been discussed at length (see, for instance, Kamboureli 2000, pp. 90–92; Lai 2014, pp. 213–27; Tator et al. 1998, pp. 86–110). Here, it suffices to point out the obvious discrepancy of minority literature as increasingly incorporated into the national canon and the inability or unwillingness of the larger public (as well as of prominent writers) to recognize the different circumscription of spaces of literary expression for minoritized writers. As Carol Tator, Frances Henry, and Winston Mattis point out, the conference 'raised important questions about representation, cultural and racial identity, cultural appropriation, and racial and cultural barriers to access in the cultural industries' (1998, p. 86). Since much of the controversy revolved around the fact that the workshops initially were to be sponsored from public funds (which were subsequently withdrawn),

[4]For an identification and critical evaluation of this trend, see Mathur (2007, p. 141). In a recent article, Paul Barrett et al. (2017) identify a gap between the public reception and success of black writers in Canada and their neglect in academic scholarship.

this clearly also became an issue of citizenship. To borrow Nancy Fraser's wording from another context, questions of representation in this case concerned 'the procedures that structure public processes of contestation' (2008, p. 279): in light of the still existent stratification of the public sphere, setting up temporarily exclusive spaces in which marginalized groups do not have to explain their specific sociocultural position(s) and marginalization, but can instead develop strategies to productively address and change it (a form of temporary 'counterpublic,' to use another of Fraser's (1990) concepts), can significantly contribute to more nuanced public deliberations in the long run.

Thus, if the political and philosophical implications of recognition are considered against this background, it becomes clear that the literary production of writers of color and Indigenous writers in the past four decades has not only documented a specific form of success (increasing cultural self-representation, canonization, changing syllabi, etc.), but has also illustrated the limitations of 'recognition' as a concept. As highlighted above, while dominant models of recognition tend to focus on the recognition of cultural identities, literature testifies to the internal heterogeneity of cultural groups and critically investigates the very notion of group identity on which the concept of multicultural recognition rests. Also, literary texts insist on an understanding of recognition as an acknowledgment of political and cultural agency with highly ambivalent and conflict-ridden relationships at heart: between minority and majority populations as well as between individuals and the several (cultural, religious, ethnic, social, etc.) groups to which they 'belong.' Literary texts thus significantly complicate the issue of recognition as being about 'identity' since they complicate identit*ies*. The analogy between individual and collective identities assumed by theories of recognition clearly fails in face of the multiple affiliations of individuals, including transnational ones; these connections are manifest and explored in and through literature.

Even though the issues related above came to remarkable prominence with the multiculturalism debates of the 1970s and 1980s, a closer look nevertheless reveals a much longer history of negotiating diversity. As this history clearly illustrates, there were issues of political, cultural, and social agency that could not be captured by the term 'recognition' alone in a context shaped by cultural diversity and racial hierarchies. Rather, questions of representation, identification, agency, rights and obligations,

as well as membership and belonging were concerns crucial for citizenship debates. In the literary field early reactions to the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II, such as Dorothy Livesay's (1950) radio play *Call My People Home*, document the growing importance of a concept and terminology of citizenship in literature that had already become well established in social and political discourse long before formal Canadian citizenship became instated in 1947. The conceptual framework of citizenship, as I argue in this study, has been of crucial importance to the ways in which Anglophone Canadian literatures have addressed questions of membership, belonging, agency, and the accommodation of cultural difference; it has become increasingly important after World War II and even more so due to the accelerated processes of globalization since then. However, this concern in literature reached its peak in the 1980s and 1990s and has shifted toward citizenship in connection with human rights since the late 1990s, particularly after 2001. Literary texts do not simply mirror these concerns, but actively imagine and negotiate them by thinking through models and alternatives of social and political organization; they do so critically as well as affirmatively, and usually do so with much skepticism and ambivalence without having to adjust to what may realistically be 'doable.' As Martha Nussbaum has insisted, literature is not just about what 'is' but it imagines what might be possible (1995, p. 5), therefore enabling a very specific perception regarding citizenship, in addition to assigning literature a function *for* citizenship.

Using the term 'citizenship' with regard to literature, here, does not assume the texts' uncritical stance toward 'the nation' and formal membership in the nation; many texts are skeptical, at times even dismissive of or hostile to the Canadian nation or the concept of the nation per se, while others critically explore the political and cultural engagement of individuals and groups within and beyond national space. Neither does it mean to suggest that *all* literary texts take up issues of citizenship. Even though many—albeit by no means all—writers who identify as members of minoritized groups seem to display a special investment in citizenship, the ways in which their texts address issues of cultural and political agency vary widely; this variety of approaches and aesthetic means corresponds to a broad range of understandings of 'citizenship,' both politically and culturally.

1.3 Conceptualizing Citizenship: Membership and Belonging

Numerous attempts have been made to define 'citizenship' in fields of tension between rights and obligations, formal membership and affective identification, voluntary decision, birthright, or coercion (Kymlicka 1995; Turner 1992).[5] An emphasis on citizenship as transcending a merely formal status of membership in the political entity of the nation is crucial to current debates. In this context, citizenship is substantive rather than formal, entailing both rights and obligations; it not only regulates the relationship between the state and individuals, but also between individuals, between social groups, and between groups and the state. The *affective* component of citizenship is central to all these aspects: referring to Alan Cairns's understanding of citizenship as having 'both a vertical and a horizontal dimension' (Cairns quoted in Andrew 2004, p. 95), Caroline Andrew points to citizenship as a way in which 'all members of a civic community define their common belonging to that community' (2004, p. 95), therefore firmly linking the question of citizenship to a form of community identification—however strong or weak.

This unavoidably raises the question of how the boundaries of this community are drawn, by whom, and what membership in this community actually entails. Clearly, as current debates in many Western societies have amply illustrated, not everyone who holds a passport of a particular country necessarily feels him- or herself to be part of the community formally circumscribed by this membership, that is, of the 'imagined community' of the nation (Anderson 1991); and just because an individual imagines and feels her- or himself to be part of this community, this does not necessarily mean that others will recognize that feeling as legitimate. Their patriotism and nationality did not prevent second-generation Japanese Canadians, the Nisei,[6] from being seen

[5] Citizenship as a form of coercion is particularly important for Aboriginal concerns, since historically granting citizenship to Indigenous peoples was 'aimed toward the goal of eliminating 'the Indian Problem,' as it was sometimes called, by absorbing Native people into the body politic, thus making them effectively disappear. If they were citizens, then by definition they could no longer be Indians' (Cariou 2007, p. 57). This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

[6] While 'Nisei' denotes the second, Canadian-born generation, 'Issei' refers to the first (that is, the immigrant) generation. The terms 'Sansei,' 'Yonsei,' and 'Gosei' for the third, fourth, and fifth generations are also in use, but play no role in the context of the texts analyzed in this study.

as enemy aliens during World War II; racial paranoia overrode both the rights and rules of citizenship. Thus, even formal membership in a national community to which one might also feel emotionally attached does not necessarily entail recognition of the rights that are theoretically connected to this membership.

The complexities of this constellation can be well grasped by means of juxtaposing two facets of citizenship, that is, membership and belonging. Marcus Llanque defines these terms as 'key concepts' (2015, p. 103) to capture different layers and types of commitment, with membership characterizing the organizational form of the 'association' and belonging that of the 'community' (2010, p. 168). In the context of this study (and along similar lines), I understand 'membership', as the formal status as a member of a political entity, most commonly the nation-state; this status is regulated by law and procedures and connected to both rights and obligations. 'Belonging,' in contrast, has a strongly cultural, identificatory, and affective component; even though it might also follow patterns and structures, it is not codified in the same way as membership and is therefore much more flexible and subjective.[7] In light of such complexities: Who defines the boundaries not so much of the nation-state but of the civic community to which the individual 'belongs' as a citizen, individually and as a member of various social groups? How is that boundary established, how is it policed, and by what means can it be changed? And: Is this 'imagined community' necessarily identical with 'the nation'?

As Jessica Berman has noted, 'community' is most productively understood as a narrative process rather than a constellation: 'communities come into being to a large extent in the kinds of stories of connection we have been told or are able to tell about ourselves' (2001, p. 3). This obviously applies to the kind of community that is seen as the locus of citizenship in any given context—regardless of whether it is the nation or another collective—as well as to citizenship itself. Thus, the juxtaposition of membership and belonging does not emerge as a dichotomy but as two necessary facets of citizenship: citizenship as formal membership and as bound to institutions finds its necessary supplement in a form of belonging that is highly affective and strongly interconnects

[7] However, even this distinction is not entirely clear-cut, as 'membership' is also a cultural construction (see Llanque 2010, p. 164).

with questions of identification or even identity and subject constitution. As Aloys Fleischmann and Nancy Van Styvendale stress, 'the juridical and political dimensions of citizenship are inseparable from its affective aspects, just as the public spaces of its narrativization are bound up with its private articulations' (2011, p. xii). Despite this intertwining, however, the distinctions between these different aspects and spheres—that are neither stable nor unchanging—need to be taken into account in the analysis, and as I will illustrate, literary texts critically negotiate rather than dissolve these boundaries.

Fleischmann and Van Styvendale's emphasis on the public/private distinction raises the more general question of 'spaces' of citizenship; public spaces and private articulations are not confined to the nation-state. Accordingly, the spatial aspect of citizenship has become particularly prominent due to the impact of transnationalization and globalization on both the nation-state as an institution and the lives of individual citizens. Even though the establishment of the modern nation-state made national space the privileged locus of citizenship (Stephens 2010, p. 32), the increasing implication of the nation-state in complex supranational networks has brought about two general tendencies to account for the effects of these more complex entanglements on citizenship. One such tendency proposes that citizenship—like the nation-state—is an outdated concept in the face of developments that clearly question, if not deconstruct, the classic locus of citizenship and its corresponding community, the nation. The other line of argument seeks to expand the concept of citizenship to cover extended fields of enactment and belonging: along this line, concepts such as 'cosmopolitan,' 'transnational,' or even 'global' citizenship indicate that the nation (state) is no longer the privileged, let alone the only locus of citizenship.

While the above-named modifications of the term 'citizenship' seem to gesture toward an expansion of spaces in which citizenship can be conceptualized, there are also other concepts that rather seek to narrow and localize the kind of belonging indicated by 'citizenship.' In the Canadian context, both theoretically and literarily, regions and cities have become central loci for the conceptualization of citizenship; more broadly, the very debate about urban spaces has investigated possibilities for enacting citizenship on levels 'below' as well as beyond the level of the nation. The increasing attention to cities clearly ties in

with genealogical explorations of the very concept of citizenship: not only contemporarily, but even more so historically, the city has provided a central space for the enactment of and the ways of thinking about citizenship. As Brook Thomas and others remind us, 'etymologically, 'citizen' originally designated the resident of a city, especially one with civic rights and privileges that were linked to the protection a city provided against outsiders' (2007, p. 6). In contrast, the focus on transnational connections pays tribute to the increasing mobility of populations and the de- or translocalization of community building and takes the 'opportunity to reconceptualize, redefine, and renovate the idea of citizenship through a rhetorical interrogation of national origins and their expression as citizenship' (Von Burg 2012, p. 352). These transnational connections are historically rooted in forced as well as voluntary migrations triggered in the context of colonialism and, later, post-World War II mass migration from the 'periphery' to the 'centers'; however, particularly after the immigration reforms of the 1960s they have also led to an unprecedented diversification of the Canadian population, and hence to even more urgent questions of 'who belongs,' in which way(s), and to what effect.

The question of the various 'spaces' in which citizenship is conceptually framed and enacted in cultural and political practice is, of course, not the only challenge posed to a concept of citizenship that rests on an assumption of universality and application regardless of differences between citizens. As the debate about recognition illustrates, the question of how to accommodate 'diversity' not only posed a challenge to social organization and the interaction of social and ethnic groups vis-à-vis the state and each other, but also to the ways in which 'citizenship' is understood. Critics have argued for the need to conceptually take differences into account; Iris Marion Young (1990) has suggested a notion of 'differentiated citizenship' to counter the unequal access that different social groups have to political participation—an inequality that contradicts the assumption of citizenship as 'universal,' yet is nevertheless a reality in Western nations with socially, religiously, and ethnically diversified populations. Thus, against the background of historical developments, the specifically Canadian challenges to concepts of citizenship have usually been framed along three tiers: the role of Quebec, the position of Indigenous peoples, and the question of how diverse immigrant cultures can or should be accommodated. Hence, the term 'multicultural

citizenship' seeks to capture the different policies that have been drafted in order to accommodate different cultural groups within one political unit.[8]

There are close connections between the idea of a multicultural citizenship and the emergence of the category of 'multicultural literature.' As the following subchapter will illustrate, the inclusion of culturally diverse literatures—in school and university curricula, for instance—has been perceived as an important tool of furthering multicultural citizenship. At the same time, as I will also show, although these two constructions may initially appear to be conceptually complementary, they do not sit easily with one another when it comes to the compatibility of official multiculturalism and the narrative strategies of multicultural literatures. Where the concept of multicultural citizenship seeks to allocate rights of cultural practice along defined lines of group identification and cultural communities, literatures tend to critically explore and question the very boundaries needed to draft policies and define their applicability. So while policies of implementing multicultural citizenship and multicultural literatures are not mutually exclusive, they clearly operate on different levels—up to a point where as a tool of 'multicultural citizenship,' 'multicultural literatures' may deconstruct the very notion of 'multiculturalism.'

1.4 Citizenship and Canadian Literature

As Verdecchia's short story—discussed in the beginning—illustrates, literary texts address all of the above-mentioned aspects; literary engagements with citizenship include questions of belonging as well as an emphasis on the importance of formal membership. Furthermore, by focusing on the 'imaginable' of social and political life, literature prompts its readers to use the imagined scenarios as a vantage point for self-reflection as well as reflection upon society's structures (Nussbaum 1995, p. 5), cultural self-images, and social policies, including that of multiculturalism. I suggest calling the negotiations of citizenship that are

[8] For detailed discussions of liberal multiculturalism and its effect on conceptions of citizenship, see, for instance, Kymlicka (1995). The concept of multicultural citizenship leaves aside other aspects of social stratification and identification, namely gender and sexuality, but also questions of class. Literary texts, as will be shown, lend themselves particularly well to the analysis of citizenship in light of intersectionality.

performed in literary texts 'cultural citizenship,' a term which has continued to have a significant impact on literary and cultural studies since its coinage by Rosaldo. As Rosaldo's previously cited essay documents, the concept highlights the importance of institutional structures as frameworks of or obstacles to belonging; it points to the fact that both membership and belonging are not simply individual attributes and feelings, but are closely connected to the ways in which institutions as well as nations and other collectives phrase and regulate who belongs and who does not. In this context of regulation, inclusion, and exclusion that is citizenship, the conceptualization of cultural citizenship in turn points to the close intersection of culture, language, education, and the political.

There are a number of understandings of 'cultural citizenship' in circulation. While some of the concepts of cultural citizenship that have developed since the early 2000s use the term to address forms of participation in the 'cultural field,' most often with specific attention to the new communication technologies and consumption (Stevenson 2003; Isin and Wood 1999; Miller 2001), others pay closer attention to the ways in which acts of citizenship not only present interventions in political processes, but also how specific cultural forms are used to address issues of citizenship. Both Rosaldo's (1994) essay and Donna Palmateer Pennee's notion of 'literary citizen-ship' examine the didactic work literature performs, as well as literature as a medium that 'represents ourselves to ourselves' (Pennee 2004, pp. 79–80) and the way it operates as a form of civic education that—particularly in an age of globalization—critically investigates the nation as 'made' and that produces critical—and ideally polyglot—citizens.

These varying uses of 'cultural citizenship' point to different levels on which the relationship between literature and citizenship can be theorized. My own use of 'cultural citizenship' in its connection to literary texts is twofold. Firstly, it seeks to capture critical issues raised in literary texts about the ambivalent and often fragile relationship between a nation attempting to come to terms with diversity and specific groups with differing understandings of how to do so; these concerns are phrased in a language of citizenship in many texts, which in turn asks what is conceptualized as citizenship and to what effect. And secondly, given the historical and cultural moments in which these texts have been produced, the concept of cultural citizenship is used to capture the ways in which these texts engage with their sociohistorical and cultural context as part of what Seyla Benhabib has termed 'democratic iterations'—that

is, to capture the political work of culture as a form of discursive intervention.[9]

In my understanding of cultural citizenship, I take Pieter Boele van Hensbroek's definition as a helpful point of departure. Boele van Hensbroek considers 'cultural citizenship in a quite specific domain, not as *cultural* aspects of *political* citizenship, but as citizenship in matters of culture' (2010, p. 320), and he conceptualizes the 'cultural citizen' as being analogous to the 'political citizen' when he writes:

> The political citizen can put forward the positive claim to be involved, that is, can claim political actorship while rejecting any claim of some to be a 'natural', 'divine' or 'traditional' guardian of power.… Similarly, the cultural citizen can claim co-authorship and thus also the right to challenge any authoritatively or traditionally established cultural consensus and hegemony. While political citizenship concerns the process of decision-making in society, cultural citizenship concerns those of meaning-making. The essence of the idea of cultural citizenship is then: *to be co-producer, or co-author, of the cultural contexts (webs of meaning) in which one participates.* (p. 322)

In his understanding of (political) actorship and (cultural) co-authorship, Boele van Hensbroek distinguishes between *domains* (the political and the cultural, domains that are not juxtaposed but that overlap and intertwine), which he does not regard as identical with liberal notions of the 'private' and the 'public' but as trajectories of participation. Furthermore, without explicitly saying so, his model suggests different *means* of participation. With Boele van Hensbroek's model in mind, I propose the notion of 'co-authorship' as a form of articulation, as culturally articulated acts and *practices* of citizenship that negotiate membership and belonging as complementary *facets* of citizenship. Boele van

[9]Within the context of my argument, I am adopting and slightly adapting Benhabib's term. Benhabib defines 'democratic iterations' as 'complex processes of public argument, deliberation, and exchange through which universalist rights claims are contested and contextualized, invoked and revoked, posited and positioned throughout legal and political institutions, as well as in the associations of civil society,' pointing to her understanding of iteration as varied repetition that makes sense of 'an authoritative original in a new and different context' (2011, p. 129). She does not explicitly include literature as an institution in the context of which societal norms and concepts are reiterated and necessarily varied. However, I find her concept helpful to capture what I understand as literature's 'soft' way of intervening and participating in social and political discourses.

Hensbroek's model operates with notions of 'impact' and 'relevance' (pp. 326–27) that will, given my focus on textual strategies, be largely left aside here. While literary texts—such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, or Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*—have been ascribed concrete effects in the social world, this impact is usually difficult if not impossible to measure, making the texts 'committed literature' in Adorno's sense rather than an effective replacement for political action. Also, my own understanding of 'cultural citizenship' and 'co-authorship' sees literary texts in critical dialogue, as part of public deliberation, rather than as an action the relevance of which can be statistically measured.

Hence, this study rests on a number of claims. For one, it assumes that by a variety of aesthetic means, literature and other cultural forms take up questions of citizenship that have been and continue to be central issues in Anglophone Canadian literatures since World War II, and that these questions have been framed in a *terminology* of citizenship exceptionally often since the 1980s. This engagement with citizenship, my second claim, can be critical and deconstructive as well as affirmative, and it ties in with specific societal and political debates about cultural diversity, citizenship, and broader questions of belonging and recognition in Canadian society. Given the close link between the conceptualization of 'CanLit' and the Canadian nation (Corse 1997), my third claim is that, like Canadian literature understood as an 'institution' (Brydon 2007; Mathur 2007; Szeman 2003), the questions of citizenship that are negotiated in literature oscillate between a focus on the 'nation' and its critical investigation as well as a focus on the challenges and alternative trajectories presented by globalization, transnational connections, and community building. Against the historical background of elaborate mechanisms of exclusion, my fourth claim implies that the investment in 'citizenship' is certainly the most urgent—especially, albeit not exclusively—for minoritized groups, also by way of the critical investigation into and challenge of the underlying concept of Anglo-normativity and assimilation. Last but not least, these claims lead me to propose that the ways in which these issues are negotiated in Anglophone Canadian literatures, and the ways in which they intertwine with and relate to other societal discourses, point to two potential generalizations: firstly, that with regard to the analyzed dynamics, Anglophone Canadian literature can be read as paradigmatic of a critical, ambivalence-ridden exploration of the meanings of citizenship in a world of globalization and transnationalization, enabling comparable

cultural processes to be observed in other industrialized immigration societies, albeit with significant variations; and secondly, that these analyses promise significant insights into the function(s) of literature as societal discourse which must ultimately be seen as a form of 'democratic iteration.'

1.5 Outline of This Study

The following chapters will closely examine the ways in which exemplary literary texts take up the issue of membership and belonging, questions of justice, rights, and obligations, as well as how and to what effect they phrase them in a terminology of citizenship. That is, they consider how the selected texts use direct references to citizenship discourses and discourses of national identification or even the terminology of citizenship to renegotiate issues of membership and belonging and thereby function as acts of co-authorship. As previously indicated, my basic assumption is that since the 1980s in particular, minoritized literatures have made intense use of this terminology, and that this—coinciding and overlapping with the renewal of a strong theoretical and political interest in citizenship—may reflect the specific urgency that questions of membership and belonging have for groups whose (formal and affective) citizenship status has previously been contested or denied, or even continues to be in question. As the texts under consideration illustrate, the keen awareness of this uncertainty concerning membership and belonging is not simply a matter of the past, as it continues to shape the present and has been informed by a self-reflexive awareness of the theoretical debates and their implications since the 1990s.

The political narrative of citizenship—as that of recognition—has been summarized as one of increasing inclusion and progression toward a broader applicability of the concept; T. H. Marshall's (1950) influential concept traces a development from civic to political and eventually social rights, and Axel Honneth (1995) identifies a similar process regarding recognition when he sees both the scope and groups of people to which it applies extended. Nevertheless, processes of exclusion continue to be inherent to any concept of citizenship. As Engin Isin has convincingly argued, citizenship rests on the alterity of those who belong and those who do not; an understanding of the citizen dialectically requires the non-citizen. Categories of alterity, however, are far from stable. Looking at citizenship not in terms of exclusion and inclusion, but in terms of a constitutive otherness, he argues:

> The logic of exclusion assumes that the categories of strangers and outsiders, such as women, slaves, peasants, metics, immigrants, re-fugees, and clients, preexisted citizenship and that, once defined, it excluded them. … By contrast, the focus on otherness as a condition of citizenship assumes that in fact citizenship and its alterity always emerged simultaneously in a dialogical manner and constituted each other. (Isin 2002, pp. 3–4)

From this angle, the notion of citizenship presupposes, in fact depends on, an 'outside' to the 'inside' demarcated by citizenship; the language of citizenship is a language of alterity, even when it aims at further inclusion and expansion of scope.

This clearly manifests itself in the ways in which the terminology of citizenship and citizenship as a metaphor of belonging are deployed in Canadian literatures. In Verdecchia's short story, dual citizenship is not an option for its young protagonist, since he experiences the very acceptance of Canadian citizenship, a procession from landed immigrant to citizen through naturalization, as a betrayal of prior affiliations that are fundamental to his self-understanding. His conception of citizenship is indeed one of alterity that also links membership to belonging, but as such it presents an ironic reversal of how this connection is mostly conceptualized. This and other texts that will be discussed in the following use the concept of citizenship to serve, broadly put, a number of functions: to address and redress historical injustice; to challenge, deconstruct, and constitute communities of experience—ethnic, local, national, transnational; and to renegotiate scope, forms, and the spaces of enactment of belonging, membership, and recognition. Thus, in the following analysis of exemplary texts, I will not only pay close attention to the way in which they thematically address citizenship as membership and belonging, but also to how they respond to and participate in their respective discursive and historical contexts.

This analysis focuses on the different physical and symbolic spaces in the context of which literary texts negotiate their concerns. The second and the third chapters take the nation, the classic locus of modern citizenship, as their focal point, highlighting the dynamics of critical affirmation as well as deconstructive strategies directed at the nation. Chapter 2 explores how the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II and the Redress Movement are literarily staged as a question of citizenship in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (1981), *Itsuka* (1992), and *Emily Kato* (2005). I argue that in their critique of the treatment of

Japanese Canadian citizens during and immediately after World War II (*Obasan*) and their narration of the redress movement (*Itsuka*, *Emily Kato*), Kogawa's novels ultimately affirm national belonging and the importance of including Japanese Canadians in the national narrative. This affirmation, I suggest, has to be read in a historical continuity of Japanese Canadian struggle for citizenship that goes back to the 1930s, and Kogawa's novels are directly placed in that continuity by means of explicit reference to historical discourse, documents, and persons.

Using Jeannette Armstrong's *Slash* (1985) and *Whispering in Shadows* (2000) as main examples, Chapter 3 concentrates on the negotiations of alternative national and other belongings within and beyond the Canadian nation-state in Indigenous literatures. Both novels engage with the complexity of Indigenous activism directed at state institutions and the nation-state and affirming 'alternational' (Tan 2015, pos. 109) collective contexts. While *Slash* focuses on the activism of the American Indian Movement during the 1970s as well as the patriation debate in Canada in the early 1980s in order to assert the non-compatibility of Indigenous self-conceptions and citizenship with multicultural Canada, *Whispering* stresses transnational Indigenous solidarity and political agency in the context of a globally directed and locally implemented environmental citizenship. The nation emerges as a central but abstract referent in all texts that are discussed in these two chapters. As the Aboriginal texts analyzed here particularly highlight, citizenship—local, regional, national, or transnational—is always enacted in specific locales and often directed against the nation-state; thereby, they also emphasize the critical distance to a concept of citizenship bound to the colonial nation-state, while at the same time, in *Slash* in particular, negotiating Indigenous citizenship in the *Aboriginal* nation, drawing on a long-standing debate on Indigenous nationhood and anticipating its revitalization in the 1990s.

Taking up the questions raised by this abstraction and the subsequent need for locality, the fourth and fifth chapters turn to concrete places where citizenship—as both membership and belonging—is negotiated and enacted in the texts. Chapter 4 is built on the assumption that the connection between subjective constitution, agency, and citizenship as both co-actorship and co-authorship is most pronounced in self-referential narration. It hence investigates the narrative construction of and claim to place as an enactment of cultural citizenship in Canadian life writing. Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* (1973), Cheryl Foggo's *Pourin'*

Down Rain (1990), and Fred Wah's biotext *Diamond Grill* (1997) negotiate both prairie and British Columbian spaces as inscribed by competing claims to space and history that are—in Foggo's and Wah's examples—inscribed by transnational migration histories and diasporic community building. In many ways, Campbell's text anticipates Indigenous life writing that is fictionally manifest in Armstrong's *Slash* as well; highlighting community-based forms of belonging, in content and narrative structure it not only conveys a counter-history to hegemonic Canadian narratives from a Métis perspective, but also a non-nation-state directed enactment of political and cultural citizenship, albeit with a nation-oriented pedagogical agenda. Foggo's exploration of the prairies as a historically inscribed black space stresses—like Campbell's text—the importance of family history for individual belonging as embedded in place and the nation as well as in transnational webs of black diasporic connections. Finally, while seeking to disregard the nation and national membership, Wah's biotext nevertheless constantly returns to them in order to investigate non-nationalistic forms of participation and belonging as embedded in a history of both voluntary and involuntary migrations, racism, and denial of presence. Places and subjectivities, as this chapter on Canadian life writing will show, are thus not only inscribed by competing as well as mutually complementary histories; these inscriptions are also central to the negotiation of the possibilities of co-actorship and co-authorship.

In Chapter 5, I will discuss the multicultural city as another central location of citizenship enactment and conception. In the history of citizenship, the city holds a special place as the 'original' locus of citizenship, which was then replaced by the modern nation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; nevertheless, with the demise of the nation-state, the city has once again become crucial in contemporary citizenship debates, as Isin (2002), Holston and Appadurai (1996), and others have repeatedly argued. Thus, the city—which is investigated here using the example of Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987) and Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* (2005) with a coda on her recent novel *Love Enough* (2014)—serves as a specific location for the enactment of transnationalized forms of citizenship. At the same time, the specific narrative construction of the city in these novels has to be contextualized in contemporary debates about citizenship, immigration, and diaspora: while Ondaatje's novel, I suggest, is firmly grounded in nation-state-oriented discourses of multicultural recognition in which

the immigrant is caught between remembering and disremembering the pre-migration past, Brand's novels must be placed in more recent debates about diaspora and global cities as 'nodes' that are more loosely connected to the nation-state in which they are located. While Brand's novels appear to present the city as a subversive location for citizenship practices that bypass the nation, they also draw attention to the city as a 'difference machine' (Isin 2002, pp. 49–50) that not only enables but also limits the agency of racialized, gendered, and queer subjects.

Specifically *Canadian* spaces and places are crucial for the negotiation of citizenship, belonging, and agency discussed in these four chapters, but these spaces also point to the urgent questions regarding citizenship as a potential model for increasingly transnational forms of belonging. While the concept of diaspora that is considered in Chapters 4 and 5 places this question in a field of tension between the national and the transnational, the conclusion cursorily considers the questions raised by Canadian literary texts set in exclusively non-Canadian locations. Even though the diasporic subjectivities grounded in both Canadian locales and in transnational connections that are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 challenge established notions of the nation, however abstract it may seem, as the privileged locus of citizenship, the non-Canadian settings of the three novels touched upon in the conclusion—Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* (2000), Esi Edugyan's *Half-Blood Blues* (2011), and Lawrence Hill's *The Illegal* (2015)—highlight an aspect inherent but not explicit in the previously discussed texts (with the exception of Brand's *What We All Long For*): the shift from citizenship discourse to human rights discourse, or, to be more precise, the presentation of citizenship rights as a question of human rights. Post-war developments such as the founding of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have then led to what Will Kymlicka has called 'the increasing 'internationalization' of state-minority relations' (2007, p. 3); Kymlicka argues that 'the trend towards liberal multiculturalism can only be understood as a new stage in the gradual working out of the logic of human rights, and in particular the logic of the idea of the inherent equality of human beings, both as individuals and as peoples' (p. 89), and that this has a direct impact on questions of citizenship. In *Anil's Ghost*, a novel set in Sri Lanka, the notion of citizenship is explicitly used to critically investigate a concept of universal human rights. Esi Edugyan's *Half-Blood Blues* looks at the centrality of citizenship as a racialized trope of belonging in Nazi Germany. Finally, in Lawrence

Hill's *The Illegal* normative notions of citizenship as a status of belonging and ability not only function as gatekeeping mechanisms against refugees and racial 'Others,' but also as a mechanism of domestic control. In light of these examples, the conclusion not only revisits the issues regarding citizenship's scope and its conceptual ability to capture forms of belonging within and beyond the nation-state; it also asks about the scope of the circulation of citizenship debates pertaining to a concept of national literature. Therefore, last but not least, the concluding chapter considers the role of literary criticism and its adoption of citizenship as a framework in line with David Chariandy's question 'how did we in the social sciences, and especially the humanities, come to bet upon 'citizenship'' as a paradigm 'in various forms of progressive discourse today' (2011, p. 334). Based on Edward Said's understanding of not only the text's but also the critic's worldliness (1983b, pp. 34–35), it therefore seeks not only to place literature, but also literary and cultural criticism as part of Benhabib's 'democratic iterations.'

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CHAPTER 2

‘This Is My Own!’: Negotiating Canadian Citizenship in Joy Kogawa’s Novels

2.1 National Belonging and the Violation of Citizens’ Rights

Until the 1990s, the nation-state was regarded as the taken-for-granted locus of citizenship, even though this exclusive connection is, historically speaking, relatively young. The transnational turn in the fields of social sciences and humanities indicated a deep sense of unease with the political as well as the analytical concept of the nation that has been underlined by a substantial number of citizenship studies models that aim to uncouple citizenship from the nation and have proliferated since then. While some of these concepts seek to capture the specific positionalities of marginalized groups and thus draw attention to the ways in which ostensibly universal citizenship is implicated in social stratification—queer citizenship, gendered citizenship, Indigenous citizenship—others, such as diasporic or cosmopolitan citizenship, conceptualize affiliations across and beyond national borders. Yet, while many of these concepts seek to move entirely away from national frameworks, I agree with Kathy-Ann Tan’s assertion that despite such debates, ‘national citizenship still continues to be *the* dominant model of citizenship’ and that it is therefore ‘necessary to examine how alternative nonnational [*sic*] models of citizenship … are located first and foremost *within* the nation and its imaginaries’ (Tan 2015, pos. 5145–53)—a necessity that is additionally emphasized by the fact that nation continues to be a central reference in citizenship studies.

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In literary texts, the nation is targeted by both affirmative and deconstructivist strategies. Canadian writers have positioned themselves in a variety of ways vis-à-vis the nation (and the nation-state) by way of a vocabulary of citizenship, which ranges from outright dismissal to degrees of affirmation. As Magdalene Redekop has put it, the 'connection between the story of a nation and the stories written by its citizens may be highly problematic, but connection there undeniably is' (2004, p. 263). The centrality of this link is nowhere more obvious than in texts that address the violation of rights of racial or other minorities. Will Kymlicka's observation that human rights have increasingly contributed to framing the understanding of citizenship and state-minority relations since the end of World War II (2007, pp. 27–55) is not only to the point for much of the literary negotiations of citizenship that have transpired since the reemergence of the concept in the 1990s, but also illustrates that human rights are often conflated with citizenship rights in a deconstructivist approach to the nation as a locus of citizenship, which I will turn to in subsequent chapters. However, this observation applies only in part to the literary treatment of rights violations before and during World War II, of which the internment and subsequent dispossession of Japanese Canadians and the 'repatriation' of Japanese Canadians to Japan in 1946 are central examples. There is a strong tendency to highlight the violation of rights as *citizens*' rights that effectively serves to affirm national belonging and the centrality of the nation-state. The fact that approximately 18,000 of the 24,000 Japanese Canadians affected by the War Measures Act of 1942 were Canadian *citizens* (Bangarth 2008, p. 47; also Miki 2005, p. 2) is a crucial point of criticism at the time, as well as an early example of the literary treatment of this historical experience of rights violation, not least because the Geneva Convention prohibited the nations from interning their own citizens. Both the resistance to and the historical reappraisal of the internment and the struggle for redress during the 1980s stress the importance of Japanese Canadian citizenship status and the violation of citizens' rights committed by the state, and they attest to what Roy Miki has identified as a more strongly developed sense of individual rights as human rights among the sansei and successive Japanese Canadian generations (2005, p. 144).

The stigmatization, dislocation, and internment of Japanese Canadians as enemy aliens that occurred during World War II have found much resonance in fiction, autobiography, and poetry. Roy

Kiyooka remembers having been turned into an enemy in the Canadian prairies after the attack on Pearl Harbor when he writes

> i remember "JAPS SURRENDER!"
> i remember all the flagrant incarceration/s
> i remember playing dead Indian
> i remember the RCMP finger-printing me:
> I was 15 and lofting hay that cold winter day
> what did i know about treason? (1997, p. 170)

'Treason' was what Japanese Canadians were suspected of qua ethnicity in a political climate that tended to conflate 'Japanese Canadian' with 'Japanese' in a Canadian racial formation based on assumptions of Canadian citizenship as 'white.' 'Treason' is the judicial term for betraying one's nation, a crime no Japanese Canadian was convicted of. The betrayal goes the other way, as much of Japanese Canadian treatment of the topic implies: It is the Canadian nation that betrayed its citizens of Japanese descent by interning and dispossessing them, by dispersing the community, and by 'relocating' community members to Japan immediately after the war. While Kiyooka does not explicate this oscillation between treason and betrayal, the following lines imply it. The poem moves from the act of remembering to what is remembered, a memory which attests to the generalized suspicion that Japanese Canadians—a population deemed 'inassimilable'—were forced to endure. Kiyooka ironizes this stereotype of the culturally incompatible Japanese when he continues:

> i learned to speak good textbook English
> i seldom spoke anything else.
> i never saw the 'yellow peril' in myself
> (Mackenzie King did). (p. 170)

Japanese Canadians—such as Kiyooka's family—who lived east of the Rocky Mountains were not interned, but were nevertheless subjected to wartime racial paranoia. In Kiyooka's poem, Prime Minister Mackenzie King serves as a stand-in for state institutions and the policies they enacted, in addition to broadly representing the failure (or unwillingness) of the nation-state to treat all of its citizens' rights with equal respect.

The internment experience and its long-term effects on the community as well as on the individual psyche have been dealt with extensively in Japanese Canadian fiction—Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* (1994), Terry Watada's fictionalized biographies in *Daruma Days* (1997), and Kerri Sakamoto's *The Electrical Field* (1998) have explored a variety of narrative forms that address the traumatic wartime experiences and frame them in a larger historical context of anti-Asian sentiments in Canada. The by far most extensive amount of academic attention has been and continues to be directed at Joy Kogawa's 1981 *Obasan*. In the following, I will provide a reading of both Kogawa's seminal novel and its sequel *Itsuka* (1992) and its revised version *Emily Kato* (2005).[1] Groundbreaking as Kogawa's work is, these novels are not representative of the way in which Japanese Canadian literature addresses the historical experience of marginalization and dislocation. However, they present striking examples for critical negotiations of national citizenship and the violation of citizenship rights that stand in a continuity not only with Kogawa's previous poetic work (cf. Sywenky 2009), but also engage with—and to a significant extent perpetuate—previous Japanese Canadian discourses on citizenship and citizen's rights. As Roy Miki has argued, 'seeking the full rights of citizenship, including the right to seek redress, had always been a large part of what 'Japanese Canadian' meant, throughout the 20th century' (2005, p. 11). Kogawa's novels tie in with this struggle that has dominated Japanese Canadian discourse since the 1920s and that, despite its severe criticism of the nation, has nevertheless sought and affirmed national belonging. 'Citizenship' is not only a central topic in the novels; it also serves as a metonymy of national belonging and recognition. The ways that the novels focus on the internment experience (*Obasan*) and on the struggle for redress (*Itsuka*, *Emily Kato*) call Canada to task for violating its own political and ethical values. They not only address the ways in which Japanese Canadians have systematically been excluded from the 'imagined community' of the nation, to put it with Benedict Anderson (1991), but also frame these mechanisms of exclusion as violations of citizenship rights and in doing so lay

[1] *Obasan* has generated a substantial body of criticism since its publication, *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* much less so; only more recently have critics such as Glenn Deer (2011) or Benjamin Authers (2016) turned to readings of the two novels that do not focus on an (negative) aesthetic comparison with *Obasan*. I will address the question of reception in more detail below.

claim to national belonging and citizenship. Unlike in most of the other texts to be discussed in this study, the nation is a criticized, but overall positively connoted addressee and framework of desired inclusion.

This 'nation' is, on the one hand, an abstract entity: As an imagined community, it frames identifications, the formulation of values, and the demands on the citizen's loyalty; as such, it is the abstract addressee for claims pertaining to belonging and recognition. On the other hand, it is concrete: It is manifest in institutions that serve as embodiments and representatives of the nation (e.g., the government, administrations, courts, or border officials), and which regulate lives of citizens as well as non-citizens. Kogawa's novels take up both the formal aspect of citizenship as membership, that is, as legal status, and its dimension of affective belonging and recognition. It is precisely the tension between these two poles that the novels focus on. By doing so, they engage as literary texts by their own specific means with the political and the theoretical debates of citizenship of time and therefore operate as acts of literary citizenship. As such, they are not merely reflective of the socio-historical circumstances in which they are produced. Rather, as Benjamin Authers has argued, 'art has a *constitutive* role, working to delineate and perpetuate rights discourses, even as it is also responsive to socio-cultural norms and ideas' (2016, p. 22). As such, the novels tie in with the historical struggle for Asian Canadian citizenship rights *and* with contemporary debates about recognition and redress. Building in particular on Kirsten McAllister's (1999) and Roy Miki's (2005) work, I will highlight the striking continuities between the rhetorical strategies deployed by Japanese Canadian activists during the 1930s and 1940s when addressing the dislocation and dispossession of Japanese Canadian citizens, and the kind of language and argumentative logic chosen during the 1980s by the activists of the Japanese Canadian Redress Movement as presented in Kogawa's novels. While *Obasan* draws directly on the discourses of the 1940s in its treatment of the historical experience of internment, dislocation, and dispossession, the revision process from *Itsuka* to *Emily Kato* clearly reflects the transnational shift in citizenship debates that shaped the 1990s and early 2000s. If *Obasan* and *Itsuka* have to be read with regard to the discussions about Japanese Canadian redress and the implications they had for the overall understanding of citizenship in Canada, then *Emily Kato* is deeply embedded in the proliferation of discussions about redress and reconciliation, in addition to embodying the stronger connection between questions of citizens' and human rights particularly after

9/11. As will be shown, all three novels retain a focus on the affirmation of national belonging, albeit to different degrees, with *Emily Kato* being more explicit than the previous texts by expanding to emphasize the urgency of transethnic solidarity and the responsibility—of both the nation-state as well as the individual—to learn from national history in order to avoid repeating its mistakes and failures.

Since *Obasan* explicitly draws on Japanese Canadian citizenship discourses of the 1940s (on the Japanese Canadian newspaper *The New Canadian* specifically), I will first reconstruct some of these debates that *Obasan* references; specifically, I will focus on the debates in *The New Canadian*, the only Japanese Canadian newspaper that was permitted to publish throughout the war. In a second step, I will argue that these debates' focus on the affirmation of Japanese Canadian loyalty, belonging, and citizenship in particular has shaped the 'citizenship agenda' in *Obasan*. The novel has been discussed extensively with regard to its inscription of traumatic individual and group memory into national memory yet with little systematic attention to questions of citizenship. While drawing on this substantial criticism, I will focus how *Obasan*—in its simultaneous criticism and affirmation of the Canadian nation—incorporates and adapts these earlier debates to inscribe Japanese Canadians into the national narrative of Canada, and how this inscription shifts focus from *Obasan*'s publication in 1981 to *Emily Kato*'s in 2005. Kogawa's novels, I suggest, combine liberal notions of citizenship as rights-based with a republican understanding of citizenship focused on obligation. Nevertheless, the focus of both the rights claims and the notion of obligation shifts over the course of the almost twenty-five years that lie between the novels' publications. In *Obasan*, the narrative alternates between the protagonist Naomi's present in the early 1970s and flashbacks of the past that unravel her family's displacement and dispersal during World War II. The novel creates a tension between the characters' remembrance of the traumatic past and their present in which they seek—in their respective ways—to come to terms with that past and the violation of Japanese Canadian citizens' rights. Naomi finds herself caught between different positions of whether not only remembrance, but also its recognition and acknowledgment by a national public is a question of citizens' rights. *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* narrate the struggle for redress in the 1980s; in these novels, Naomi has come to recognize the importance of that acknowledgment, but they have her struggle with the form of the desired acknowledgment. If the novel *Obasan*

is—as a literary text—very much part of that struggle for the right of recognition, *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* serve a more strongly documentary purpose regarding the reconstitution of the Japanese Canadian community through the painful struggle for redress: Its legitimacy is no longer a question. Much more emphatically than *Obasan*, its sequels present the involvement in the redress movement as a citizen's obligation not only toward her/his community, but also toward the community of the nation—a twist, that again can once again be reconnected to the Japanese Canadian citizenship debates of the early twentieth century.

2.2 Struggling for Recognition: Japanese Canadian Citizens

In North America, the 'concept of 'desirable civil subjects' has been closely intertwined with the notion of 'whiteness,'' as Mita Banerjee has argued (2014, p. 103). Accordingly, citizenship debates in the first decades of twentieth century have to be understood in light of a discursive construction of national belonging as exclusively 'white' that was manifest in the legal restrictions targeting minority groups, Indigenous and black people as well as citizens of Asian descent, with regional specificities. Persons of Japanese (or more generally Asian) descent living in Canada could be British subjects with residency rights in Canada, both naturalized and Canadian-born. For the majority—those residing in British Columbia—this status did not automatically imply the right to vote, though: In 1875, the province explicitly barred Chinese immigrants from the polls; persons of Japanese and East Indian ancestry were disenfranchised in 1895 and 1907, respectively. Since voting rights at the level of the Dominion were directly linked to the right to vote in provincial elections, this automatically resulted in a simultaneous national disenfranchisement—as well as the denial of access to a number of professions such as the fields of law or pharmacy, for which being on the voters' list was also a prerequisite.

But citizenship rights were abrogated on a more informal level as well: Well-educated Japanese Canadians were—in practice—largely excluded from a number of white-collar professions such as teaching in public schools or positions in the administration, and the issuing of trade and fishing licenses to Japanese Canadians was a constant bone of contention in British Columbia. A strongly anti-Asian atmosphere and 'Yellow Peril'

paranoia went hand in hand with both the increasing legal exclusion of Asian immigrants and rhetorical as well as physical violence against persons of Asian ancestry. 'Orientals,' regardless of their actual nationality, were seen as 'alien' and 'inassimilable'; citizenship understood as fully belonging to a collective, to the 'imagined community' of the nation, was a 'white,' that is, a Euro-Canadian matter, as particularly Patricia Roy (1981, 1989, 2007) has convincingly shown.[2]

Notwithstanding the legal exclusion from both entry and citizenship,[3] the de facto abrogation of citizenship rights was social and economic rather than narrowly political. The British sociologist T. H. Marshall (1950; see part. chapters 2 and 4) has highlighted the social and economic dimension of citizenship in the 1950s, and while 'citizenship' was primarily a legal issue and a question of national loyalty in hegemonic Canadian discourses throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the debates in the Japanese Canadian community and community activism for citizenship rights included questions of economic and social as well as political rights early on. In addition, closely linked to the conceptualization of citizenship in these debates was the claim that Japanese Canadian citizens indeed could and should make group-specific cultural contributions to the Canadian national project.

Roy Miki has identified four instances in Japanese Canadian history that illustrate this connection and that

> serve as touchstones in [Japanese Canadians'] struggle to achieve the full rights of citizenship: the court challenge of Tomey Homma to put himself on the voters' list; the political efforts of the Canadian Japanese Volunteer

[2] However, as John Porter in his monumental 1965 study *The Vertical Mosaic* has already shown, while Asians were to be excluded as a matter of course, non-English European immigrants were not necessarily welcome, either. Porter quotes the writer and professor of economics Stephen Leacock to make this point, and the quote sheds light on Leacock's understanding of both citizenship and the parameters of inclusion and exclusion: 'Learning English and living under the British flag *may make a British subject in the legal sense, but not in the real sense, in the light of national history and continuity.* … I am not saying that we should absolutely shut out and debar the European foreigner, *as we should and do shut out the Oriental.* But we should in no way facilitate his coming' (Leacock 1930 quoted in Porter 2015, p. 67; emphasis mine). While this quote illustrates a general anti-immigrant sentiment, it also highlights the specific position Asian immigrants occupied in this imagery of national coherence as 'white.'

[3] It needs to be pointed out again that formally, there was no Canadian citizenship before 1947. This legal situation notwithstanding, the debates nevertheless made constant use of the term 'citizenship.'

> Corps during World War I; the quest of Japanese Canadian fishers to gain equal fishing rights; and the major effort of the Japanese Canadian Citizens' League to lobby the federal government in Ottawa [in 1936]. (2005, p. 25)

The issues at stake here—the franchise, the right to serve in the armed forces, and equal economic opportunities—also dominated the debates in the Nisei (that is, second-generation) press before December 1941.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor initiated dramatic changes in the situation of Japanese Canadians that presented both a watershed and a continuation of earlier constellations, as Ann Gomer Sunahara ([1981] 2000) has argued in *The Politics of Racism*: A watershed since the subsequent internment and dispersal policies of the Canadian government led to a destruction of community structures on the West Coast; a continuation because these policies and their underlying logic can be understood as a radicalization of earlier policies, appealing to and building upon the same racial paranoia and economic competition that had shaped not only discriminatory policies in BC before World War II, but also the anti-Asian violence of 1907 in Vancouver.

The internment, dispossession, 'repatriation,' and dispersal of Japanese Canadians from 1942 to 1949 brought about further questions concerning issues pertaining to citizenship, rights, membership, and the recognition of belonging. Measures such as the detention of thousands of Japanese Canadians at Hastings Park in Vancouver under terrible conditions; the splitting up of families by sending men to road camps and women and children to ghost towns in the B.C. interior; the sale of possessions left behind (in the custody of state officials); and the mostly forced so-called repatriation—that is, deportation—of both Japanese nationals and Japanese Canadians to Japan in 1946 that aimed at preventing another 'concentration' of Japanese Canadians at the West Coast were justified by the taken-for-granted fundamental 'racial' difference of Japanese Canadians, the threat they were seen as posing because of that difference, the assumed unreliability or disloyalty that went with it in public perception, and the demands of 'public opinion' in British Columbia.

In this context of racial discrimination, the call for full citizenship rights by Japanese Canadians not only presented a claim to the nation and to full and substantial membership in the imagined community of the nation; it also has to be understood as a challenge to the racist

notion that 'Asians' could never be full members of the Canadian nation. While a dominant strategy of Japanese Canadian activists and writers was to employ the claim that at least the Nisei were 'Canadianized,' that is, assimilated, and thus 'deserved' full citizenship rights (cf. McAllister 1999) the arguments put forward in publications such as the English-language newspaper *The New Canadian* also aimed at debunking the 'whiteness' of Canadianness and 'Canadian' citizenship to a certain extent. Not least because of the prominence with which the portrayal of Aunt Emily in *Obasan* and its sequels draws on the journalist Muriel Kitagawa (who wrote for *The New Canadian*),[4] it is mainly the strategies and positions formulated in *The New Canadian* in the 1930s and 1940s that find an echo in Kogawa's novels.

The New Canadian was founded in 1938 and began publishing regularly in February 1939. It was initiated and realized by young well-educated Nisei writers and activists, many of who came to play important roles as writers, commentators, organizers, and administrators. The 1930s had been a decade of intense lobbying for the franchise, and Japanese Canadian activism was increasingly shaped by a split between the Issei generation and the coming-of-age Nisei. According to Miki, 'the publication became a major vehicle in the formation of a 'nisei voice' and the medium through which younger writers such as Muriel Kitagawa began to articulate their Canadian perspectives' (2005, p. 36); the writings of Kitagawa are, as will be elaborated further below, often directly cited in *Obasan*.

Citizenship and the Nisei's relationship to the Canadian nation as responsible citizens—even though not granted full rights of participation such as the vote—were a central agenda of *The New Canadian*. From the beginning, its objective was defined not as targeting only the political and social betterment of one ethnic group, but as geared toward the advancement of the nation at large.[5] The angles chosen for the debates

[4]The retitling of the earlier *Itsuka* as *Emily Kato* in 2005 is of course indicative of the prominent role of this character.

[5]While the cooperation of the newspaper with the British Columbia Security Commission during World War II (see, e.g., Miki 2005, p. 69) clearly raises the question to what extent *The New Canadian* can be read as representative of the Nisei public during

on citizenship and the actual claims made shifted significantly between 1939 and 1949, depending on the specific situation: from the franchise via the right to serve in the army, internment, property losses, and 'repatriation,' and back to the franchise. Building on the struggles of the 1930s that culminated in a Nisei delegation to Ottawa in 1936 (see Miki 2005, pp. 30–36), the right to vote dominated the discussion in the beginning and again, to a certain extent, after the war.

But regardless of whether the focus was placed on the franchise or other topics, the strategies used in the arguments followed identifiable patterns. *The New Canadian* oscillated between a liberal-individualist understanding of citizenship as status and a set of rights, and a civic-republican understanding of citizenship as practice and contribution to the nation. On the one hand, the newspaper made the repeated claim that, since Japanese Canadian rights were citizens' rights, they should be of concern not only to the state but to all citizens, regardless of their background; granting and protecting these rights benefit the entire community and the ideals that the nation is built upon—democracy, fair play, equal rights of difference in creed, or culture. On the other hand, *The New Canadian* stressed the importance of individual and group contributions to the nation; Japanese Canadians, it was argued, were obliged to contribute as Canadian citizens like all others *and*, at the same time, as citizens with a cultural background that diverged from that of the majority. *The New Canadian* thus emphasized the notion of 'deserving' citizenship, suggesting that vital contributions to the national collective during the 1930s and early 1940s served as a strategy to increase Japanese Canadians' credibility as loyal citizens in the eyes of the public; accordingly, violations of citizenship rights were criticized not only as targeting one racial minority group, but as an active hindrance to Canada's war effort: The ban of Japanese Canadians from military service and the restrictions imposed on their overall economic opportunities were accordingly depicted not only as discrimination, but as shortsighted policies that did not fully draw on national potential.

In its discussion of the war effort, *The New Canadian* cautioned its readers against an 'overemphasis' on the experience of discrimination;

the time of internment, it remained the only Japanese Canadian public forum at the time that created and maintained an idea of community. For a more detailed debate of *The New Canadian* and its policies, see Miki (1985, 2005), Sarkowsky (2008).

Fig. 2.1 *The New Canadian*, June 15, 1939

particularly in times 'like these,' that is, in times of war, Japanese Canadians as Canadian citizens should put aside their (however well-founded) grudges and contribute full-heartedly to the national efforts against Hitler and Nazi ideology. The debates about military service and economic opportunities both built on a highly gendered understanding of citizenship and a discursive connection between 'family' and 'nation' that the Japanese Canadian community shared with larger society. As Nira Yuval-Davis has it, 'women are associated in the collective imagination with children and therefore with the collective, as well as the familial, future' (1997, p. 45). This connection is illustrated in a cartoon, which was printed in *The New Canadian* before the war, on June 15, 1939, entitled 'The Crying Need' (Fig. 2.1).

In this image, the anonymous artist draws on the familiar iconography of the nation as 'family'—the same iconography that had been used to declare 'Asians' as inassimilable[6]—and depicts citizenship as a 'home' provided by the nation, a home from which a woman embodying the Japanese Canadian Citizens' League (JCCL) and her crying child (the Nisei) are banned by British Columbia. BC is characterized as a man, implying a husband or father-like figure (who refuses to 'face' the misery

[6]I thank Mita Banerjee for alerting me to this irony, which can be read as an appropriation of the family metaphor to extend the scope of the 'Canadian family' to include Japanese Americans.

he is causing by his rejection). The whole image conveys a message of abuse within a family; this image is presented as classically gendered—the begging woman, caretaker of the child, is seemingly helpless and lacking all rights. The use of the family image builds on the viewers' understanding of gendered power structures (and, within the logic of the nuclear family as the norm, also the possibility of its abuse) in order to convey its message of unjust treatment; hence, there is an explicit critique and simultaneous affirmation of gendered power. At the same time, the cartoon is clear in its target: It is the province of British Columbia that bars Japanese Canadians from the home of full citizenship rights by not allowing them on the voters' list; Canada the nation, as well as the notions of democratic fair play associated with it, is left out of the picture. Thus, 'Canada' and the possibilities of loyalty to the nation despite unfair treatment are left intact by putting all the blame on the province, allowing the cartoonist to simultaneously criticize and affirm the structures of the nation.[7]

While the literary texts that are considered here rarely distinguish between British Columbia and Canada, they do take up the recurring links between 'family,' 'community,' and the 'nation' used by *The New Canadian* in such cartoons, as well as—and much more frequently—in print. The connection between these concepts per se does not necessarily suggest a direct continuity between the debates in the Nisei newspaper and the way in which Kogawa addresses questions of citizenship. However, I will argue that in conjunction with other factors Kogawa's novels built a line of argument that draws on these historical predecessors and in effect uses these references to create a sense of (discursive) community across time—and across post-World War II dispersal.

2.3 The Urgency of History

The historical connections and analogies on which Joy Kogawa's novels *Obasan*, *Itsuka*, and *Emily Kato* rely not only serve to stage a historical struggle for recognition, but also a contemporary revision of notions of Canadian citizenship. The tension between hegemonic versions of history and individual memory is without a doubt one of the important

[7] For a more detailed discussion of this and other political cartoons published in *The New Canadian*, see Sarkowsky (2008).

lines of reading that has contributed to *Obasan*'s extensive critical reception (Lo 2007, p. 308). It frames the revisionist agenda of the novel by offering a counter-history to the then dominant version of Japanese Canadian internment as a legal wartime necessity, that is, in its narrative perspective, a subjective one, but that also in the course of the novel, aligns itself with a collective memory of displacement, dispossession, and dispersal, by means of asking not only how established historical authority is established but also how it can be challenged.

Obasan engages in this challenge by combining its fictionalization of an—autobiographical—experience with explicit references to historical personae as well as the inclusion of historical documents—two strategies that are continued in *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato*. The two sequel novels closely follow the activities of the redress movement in Toronto, and reading these novels alongside a historical account such as Roy Miki's *Redress*, particularly its chapter on the internal strife of Toronto's Japanese Canadian organizations, reveals the thinly veiled correspondence to some of the movement's protagonists. These fictionalizations, however, differ fundamentally from the use of Muriel Kitagawa as a blueprint for Emily Kato in all three novels: The recourse to Kitagawa and her writings, I suggest, links the novel's argumentative strategies to the previously sketched strategies of *The New Canadian* and hence creates a continuity not just of argumentative lines but also of community activism. In his crucial study *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice* (2005), Roy Miki has shown how the redress movement reconstituted the dispersed Japanese Canadians as a community, and Kogawa's focus implying such continuities to earlier Japanese Canadian activism and journalism emphasizes community building over dispersal and assimilation.

In *Obasan*, Kogawa frequently cites or paraphrases passages from Kitagawa's journalistic writing as well as her letters. Formally, this creates a hybrid text, the kind of historiographic metafiction that Linda Hutcheon has defined as 'those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages' (1988, p. 5), therefore creating a tension between the deconstruction of any notion of objectively knowable history and the affirmation of a counter-history previously marginalized.

The effect of Kogawa's use of Kitagawa's writing in *Obasan* is accordingly twofold: While clearly aware of the constructed character of 'history'—connected here directly to individual perspective by

focalization and narrative voice—the novel nevertheless lays claim to a form of historical truth and thereby goes beyond deconstruction. The political agenda of the novel crucially depends on this combination; in effect, despite its self-reflexivity and the careful attention to perspectivity, it sets out to counter the—at the time largely accepted version of—wartime measures as justified with the (hi)story of loyal citizens who have been unjustly interned. In addition, it serves to provide the debates and demands of the redress movement with historical depth and a sense of continuity, given that the struggle of redress is not merely conveyed as a contribution to the mistreated community, but as a benefit to the entire nation.

The use of texts originally written by Kitagawa is the most obvious strategy to model Aunt Emily after Kitagawa in *Obasan*, and it makes her the spokeswoman for a particular kind of position vis-à-vis questions of citizenship, membership, and belonging. Kogawa adopted the following passage from Kitagawa's writing almost verbatim[8]:

> At first I was rather shy about it, though very proud, because in spite of hardships, of hunger too, there was this feeling of *belonging*: "This is my *own*, my native land!" Then as I grew older and joined the Nisei group taking a leading part in the struggle for political liberty, for economic equality, I waved those lines around like a banner in the wind: "This is my own, my *native* land!" Later still, after having been ordered out of my home town, having got permission to live in Toronto, after our former home had been sold over our vigorous protests, after having been re-registered, finger-printed, card-indexed, roped, and restricted, I cry out to you: "*Is* this my home, my native land?" *Well, it is.* (Kitagawa 1985, pp. 287–88)

Kitagawa refers here to Sir Walter Scott's 'Lay of the Last Minstrel, Canto IV'—more widely known as 'My Native Land'—and its third line 'this is my own, my native land!' In her adaptation of this passage in *Obasan*, Kogawa retains Kitagawa's play with emphasis, yet her modifications seek to foreground the inevitability of Japanese Canadian

[8]At the time of *Obasan*'s publication, Kitagawa's text was not publicly accessible but archived at the University of British Columbia, so Kogawa had worked with the archived letters and essays; Roy Miki published them as part of *Letters to Wes and other Writings* in 1985. For the significance of this archival material for Kogawa's writing process of *Obasan*, see Sywenky (2009, p. 351).

belonging, despite the nation's betrayal of its citizens. The ending of this passage in *Obasan* reads: 'I cry the question: '*Is* this my home, my native land?' The answer cannot be changed. Yes. It is. For better or worse, *I am Canadian'* (Kogawa 1981, p. 40), thereby stressing her 'Canadianness' even more emphatically than Kitagawa did. Kitagawa's own continuation of this passage illustrates her deep frustration with the marginal status of Japanese Canadians as well as the obligation she considers to be the basis of her activism and the hope for a more democratic future[9]:

> My Canadian birth certificate wasn't enough, and my record… in a very small way… as a fighter for TRUE Canadian democracy wasn't enough to prevent all that happened to me, because racially I am *not* Caucasian. I have to have something better than that. I have to have a deeper faith in Canada, a greater hope for Canada. My daily life and my future must be an integral part of Canada. I have to be a better Canadian than most of the Celtic or Anglo-Saxon variety… which hasn't been difficult lately… but which ought to be difficult if and when you, and I, succeed in our work. (1985, p. 288)

Here, the contribution of Japanese Canadian citizens to the Canadian nation is portrayed as an affirmation and re-establishment of violated values, a return of the nation to its roots and true foundation. Throughout the three novels, this is precisely the attitude that Kogawa ascribes to Emily Kato. Hence, Kogawa's use of Kitagawa's writings in *Obasan* primarily provides a sense of the political dilemma in which patriotic Nisei found themselves at the time; Emily Kato's diary entry *cum* letter to her older sister (Naomi's mother) once again echoes Kitagawa's writing and reflects this conundrum: 'It's people like us, Nesan … who have had faith in Canada, who have been more politically minded than others—who are the most hurt' (Kogawa 1981, p. 100). Taking into account the time of *Obasan*'s production, these references to and citations of Kitagawa's work not only serve as acts of historical documentation, but they also function to legitimize the emotional investment of later redress activism (in which Emily is strongly involved) as an issue of recognition and citizenship.

[9]The text was written in 1946/1947 when the actual internment was over, yet Japanese Canadians continued to be barred from British Columbia and many were even deported to Japan.

However, Aunt Emily's position in *Obasan* should not easily be taken for granted as the expression of the novel's agenda; Naomi's skepticism as well as the juxtaposition of the two aunts and their different ways of dealing with the experience of the trauma of dislocation and dispossession makes this very clear. In *Obasan*, the two aunts are simultaneously depicted as extremes of potential responses to the traumatic experiences of the past well as embodiments of the second and first generations of Japanese Canadians: Aunt Emily, sister to Naomi's mother, and her father's sister-in-law, Ayako, the eponymous *obasan* (Japanese for 'aunt') of the novel's title. Naomi appears to feel with more sympathy toward her *obasan*'s silence than toward Aunt Emily's activism, and it is, after all, Naomi's perspective that is privileged by the narrative point of view. At the same time, Naomi's development in *Obasan* as well as its sequel *Itsuka/Emily Kato* can be seen as a shift from the silence embodied by (the 'Japanese') *obasan* to a more activist and self-assertive position closer to ('Canadian') Aunt Emily's position. Kogawa's seemingly strict juxtaposition of culturally coded ways of dealing with trauma may be problematic because it appears to stage 'Japanese' acceptance and silence against 'Canadian' activism. While the former presents the image of a law-abiding citizen who silently suffers individual hardship for the greater good, the latter is characterized, as the references to Kitagawa's writings indicate, by an insistence on a citizen's status and the rights it entails; it is also characterized by an active, even activist understanding of citizenship, in which the fight for an official acknowledgment of their violation itself becomes a necessary act of citizenship. In short, Emily Kato's position mirrors the sketched stance taken by *The New Canadian*, entailing both a liberal-individualist and a civic-republican understanding of citizenship.

Kogawa's use of Muriel Kitagawa in *Obasan* has been frequently discussed, and it has also met with some criticism. According to Scott McFarlane, the depiction of the character Emily Kato has less agency than and therefore is merely a "'domesticated' version' of the 'real' Muriel Kitagawa, which mainly serves to emphasize the victimization of Japanese Canadians (1995, pp. 406–407). In contrast, Glenn Deer has recently sketched a development of the activist in Kogawa's novels (i.e., in reference not only to *Obasan* but also to *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato*) which foregrounds not so much Emily Kato but the changes that Naomi undergoes regarding her views of political engagement (and thus also her view of her activist aunt who embodies a perspective of 'getting involved' as a citizen's obligation)—a shift that Deer attributes to Kogawa's own

development since the publication of *Obasan* (2011, p. 68). In *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato*, Naomi's transition from a quiet and withdrawn woman to someone who becomes actively involved in the redress movement is thus also a shift toward a changed understanding of justice and community. As Deer has pointed out, *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* rework some of the memories presented in *Obasan*, therefore giving certain aspects more weight than they had previously received; in turn, *Emily Kato* rewrites some fundamental aspects of *Itsuka* (2011, pp. 44–45). These changes, I argue, are related on the one hand to the rhetorical strategies of *The New Canadian* that are taken up again and moved from the perspective they had previously occupied in *Obasan* (as Aunt Emily's somewhat marginalized opinion) to a more central position (as the strategies of a political movement that is now the focus). On the other hand, as I will address in more detail in Sect. 2.6, these shifts also relate to the increasing transnationalization of the citizenship debate that took place between the early 1990s and the mid-2000s, particularly after the events of 9/11.

The inclusion of Kitagawa's writing is not the only way by which *Obasan* and its sequels literally 'document' historical injustices: All three novels close with a historical document, *Obasan* with an excerpt from the memorandum sent by the Co-operative Committee on Japanese Canadians to the House and the Senate of Canada, April 1946 (Kogawa 1981, pp. 248–50) and *Itsuka* with the 'Acknowledgment' of redress by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. It is worth considering these two documents and their implications for a moment before turning to the strategy of their inclusion in the novels, particularly at each of their respective ends. The Co-operative Committee on Japanese Canadians (CCJC) was a humanitarian group active in the defense of Japanese Canadian rights during and after the war (Bangarth 2008, p. 41); its members sought to voice the protest that had become increasingly difficult albeit not entirely impossible for the affected Japanese Canadians, as has been shown in Sect. 2.2. Closing the novel with the voice of Anglo-Canadians instead of Japanese Canadians has caused some critics to consider this problematic move an indication of a perpetuation of the silencing of that group. Likewise, the closing of *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* with Mulroney's acknowledgment may cause the official apology to be seen as overriding the activism of those who ceaselessly fought for it for a decade. While such a reading of both documents is plausible, I suggest that the choices Kogawa made strengthen what I see as a strategy of simultaneously criticizing and affirming the (Canadian) nation. Even though

Marie Lo critically comments on readings of the novel (she only considers *Obasan*) that see it as contributing to a national narrative of fall and redemption (2007, p. 316), these two documents appear to stress just that, namely that the CCJC's memorandum is a testament that despite the Canadian population's large-scale support of the government's measures in the 1940s, there were those (non-Japanese Canadian) citizens who not only resisted but also reminded 'Canada' of its responsibility toward all citizens and of its democratic ideals. Similarly, by including Mulroney's acknowledgment rather than, say, a statement by National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC) President Art Miki, attests to the nation's ability to eventually 'make it right' and reclaim and restore its ideals.

This strategy itself has been critically read as one of 'expressive realism' (Belsey quoted in Jones 1993, pp. 121–22) which is based on a naïve belief in the possibility of authentic representation. However, as Manina Jones has argued, it can also be read (and this seems more convincing to me)

> as interrogating just such expressive realist assumptions, demonstrating how individual experience itself is socially constituted … The documentary-collage interrupts the classic or expressive realist illusion of complete, coherent reality in its presentation of documentation in its 'raw' form. (1993, p. 122)

The two documents that close the novels—the CCJC memorandum which reminds the House and the Senate of habeas corpus and thus of the very foundations of national self-understanding—are indeed unchanged and 'raw,' as they emphasize the violation of Japanese Canadians' rights as violations of national ideals. However, as the juxtaposition of Kitagawa's text and Kogawa's version thereof shows, not all documentation in *Obasan* is in its '"raw" form' but has instead been modified to highlight the importance of citizenship not only as entailing legal rights but even more so to stress citizenship as an active form of belonging.

Kogawa's explicit recourse to historical persons and documents is not the only strategy by way of which she negotiates historical and contemporary notions of Japanese Canadian citizenship and national belonging. *Obasan* focuses on the dispersal of families, whereas *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* more obviously turn 'family' and 'kinship' into metaphors

for ethnic and national communities. In *Emily Kato* in particular (more strongly than in either *Obasan* or the 1992 version of the novel, *Itsuka*), this strategy links the Japanese Canadian community and the redress movement closely to questions of national belonging and citizenship, and by so doing echoes the focus on the 'family of the nation' frequently referenced, for example, in *The New Canadian*. In Kogawa's novels, images of family link the biological family to the nation and negotiate questions of loyalty, agency, and citizenship in terms of such a connection.

2.4 Family Feuds: Writing the Redress Movement

The iconography of the family is central for discourses of the nation; 'nation,' as Anne McClintock points out, 'derives from *natio:* to be born. We speak of nations as 'motherlands' and 'fatherlands.' Foreigners 'adopt' countries that are not their native homes and are naturalized into the national 'family'' (1997, pp. 90–91). While biological families are torn apart in *Obasan*, *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* address the question of family, nation, and belonging metaphorically by means of describing the violation of Japanese Canadian citizens' rights and the betrayal morally associated with it in terms of violated family obligations. In a sermon given by Emily's Anglo-Canadian friend Eugenia (a sermon not found in *Itsuka* but added in the later *Emily Kato*), she explicitly works with the terminology of the family in order to highlight the depth of the betrayal:

> It's been an education for me, being pals with Emily. She's told me more than I've wanted to hear about her history and ours. And because I know Emily, it's not academic. It's family. Betrayal inside our family. … Were Canadian citizens—Japanese Canadian citizens—more loyal to Japan than to Canada? No, they were not. They were, they are, as Canadian as are we all. The 'we-ness' I refer to is that of citizenship. We're connected to the past as citizens of this country. We citizens betrayed our fellow citizens and we betrayed the meaning of citizenship. (Kogawa 2005, pp. 150–51)

The concepts of family and nation are linked by the bracket of citizenship as a model for membership, belonging, and mutual obligation. This bracket of citizenship works across seemingly separate histories—'her history and ours'—that merge in the commonality of 'we-ness,' that is, the unity of Canadian citizens. Both the familial link and the gravity of the

betrayal are intensified by the context of Eugenia's sermon: Its core is Peter's betrayal of Christ and hence it codes the violation of Japanese Canadians' rights as a violation of Christian values and expectations—this rhetorical move ascribes to Japanese Canadians the status of victims and sufferers in a Christian nation. Fighting for redress, therefore, aims at reconciliation within the family of the nation, promising—in the logic of this Christian imagery—to the perpetrators (the sinners, the betrayers) redemption, and forgiveness.

Closely connected to the metaphor of the nation as a family is the impact of the discrimination and marginalization of Japanese Canadian citizens upon both their community and individual families, often shown in *Emily Kato* as being closely intertwined. This link serves to negotiate meanings and forms of membership and belonging that are ultimately bound to the nation: National, community, and familial reconciliation are ultimately inseparable. There was strong dissent in Toronto's Japanese Canadian organizations regarding the form of redress, with the question of individual compensation a particularly bitter bone of contention. As Naomi relates in *Itsuka*, 'Japanese Canadians are indeed not needy. We're middle-class, law-abiding citizens. A model minority' (Kogawa 1992, pp. 208–9). In light of Japanese Canadian economic success in the post-war years, some community leaders fear that redress demands of individual compensation may seem 'greedy' and potentially trigger racist repercussions. In *Redress*, Roy Miki has reconstructed the 'Toronto cauldron' (2005, pp. 187–214) regarding the bitter fight over strategy, and Kogawa's depiction of the internal struggles of the Japanese Canadian community appears to only thinly veil its 1980s historical protagonists. Seen by some as replaying 'the community's divided loyalties of the 1940s' (Miki 2005, p. 188), the rift also ran between the generations, and Kogawa carefully interweaves community strife with intergenerational conflict in her exploration of family as a metaphor of national belonging. As Emily says about Peter Kubo, one of the leading figures of the antagonist faction of the Redress Movement:

> He shortened more than his father's name. … He cut off his father all together. It's tragic. … Peter should have been proud of him. It was happening all the time back then— niseis shunning their parents. I did my share. Poor Peter. I've known him for years. *He's always tried to belong. He'd do anything to belong.* Anything, anything, a-ny-thing. (Kogawa 2005, pp. 136–37; emphasis mine)

Emily's characterization of Peter Kubo as desperately wanting to belong once again highlights the crucial difference between membership and belonging: Kubo's changing of his (Japanese) name and his disavowal of his (Japanese Canadian) family indicate his conviction that true belonging not only exceeds membership, but must also be paid for. For Emily, the only possible answer to the cultural self-hatred that has surfaced from this history is the reconstitution of family unity on all levels—national, ethnic, and familial. As the narrator Naomi links this with a rather stereotypical understanding of 'Japanese' values, which she sees as potential guidelines:

> Aunt Emily says we're dysfunctional because we've had—she calls it a cultural lobotomy. There's a button in the brain—that's what she thinks—and there is a universal law. If you honour your fathers and your mothers, the button stays on hold. Kind of makes sense, don't you think? Centuries of grandparent-pandering in Japan and they're the longest-living people in the world. (Kogawa 2005, p. 55)

As the example of Peter Kubo illustrates, this dysfunction not only characterizes the entire community, but also individual families. The novel highlights the strategic centrality of the family metaphor by taking up the issue of domestic violence in Japanese Canadian families, presenting it as a result of cultural dysfunction, as an effect of historical processes of dispossession and discrimination and their internalization by individuals. Reactions to these direct or familial humiliations include illness, anger, and violence. Bodily reactions to pressure and traumatic memories already find manifestations in *Obasan*, yet *Itsuka* and particularly *Emily Kato* create a continuity between individual reactions to racial and sexual violence, on the one hand, and to community feuds, on the other. Individuals—like Naomi, like her friend Anna—react physically to 'anything [they] can't stomach' (Kogawa 2005, p. 172), such as racism and vicious public attacks from within the community.

While female characters appear to internalize their experience as sickness, some male characters turn to violence against others, which is portrayed as a gender-specific flipside of the same coin in the novel.

> [Kim] unbuttons her sweater and shows me a bruise on her upper arm, dark purple and red, an angry red with some greenish yellow. … She pulls the sweater up. "He doesn't hit me with his fist or anything. Well—he did once. *I shouldn't have married a nisei.*" (Kogawa 2005, pp. 168–69; emphasis mine)

The domestic violence that Naomi's friend Kim is exposed to is seen as an effect of the specific problems encountered by the second generation of Japanese Canadians: the experience of material, political, and symbolic dispossession as well as the pressure to position oneself between, or rather to take a stand for, one of the two presumably fundamentally different cultures—that of the Japanese parents and that of the (white) Canadian nation. As Naomi puts it, 'We're just not at home anywhere' (Kogawa 2005, p. 169). Emily's 'cultural lobotomy' as cited by Naomi is a strong image: It is based on an image of an 'illness' (inassimilable cultural difference) that is being treated by a forced loss of (cultural) memory—it can only be countered by remembering, by the reconstitution of cultural memory. This memory then forms the basis for individual and collective healing processes; the struggle for citizenship, understood not only as the legal status of formal membership, but as recognized cultural and political belonging, functions as the linking element—for individuals, families, the ethnic community, and the entire nation.

2.5 Citizenship, Recognition, and the Shift from the National to the Transnational

Obasan and its sequels illustrate how contentious the understanding of full citizenship is, and how much it depends upon acts of recognition at various levels. The characters are all citizens in the legal sense—they are all 'Canadians' by birth or by naturalization. Nevertheless, this status neither prevents the older generation from being denied their voting rights, nor does it save them from the violation of those citizenship rights they do possess: As argued previously, even legal 'citizenship' of Canada in the 1940s did not ensure full participation, at least not to citizens of Asian descent. Recognition in the sphere of 'equal legal treatment,' to refer to a distinction made by the social philosopher Axel Honneth, was denied. In Honneth's view, 'subjects in modern societies depend for their identity-formation on three forms of social recognition, based in the sphere-specific principles of love, equal legal treatment, and social esteem' (Honneth 2003, p. 180), and the denial of equal legal treatment results in fundamental violations of human rights and of equality expectations as Canadian citizens.

In the context of the novels, one might argue that legal equality had been fully achieved; voting rights had finally been granted in 1948,

and, as Jack Jedwab and Vic Satzewich point out, 'Japanese Canadians, a racialized group that was widely vilified and the target of severe government repression and discrimination in the 1940s, have achieved a remarkable degree of social acceptance and upward mobility' (2015, p. xxiii). Thus in terms of political and economic citizenship, there were, or seemed to be, no open issues. However, as the struggle for redress illustrates, 'citizenship' entails indeed more than formal equality; this 'surplus' is best captured by the discussion about the different levels of recognition necessary to fulfill the individual's and group's expectations for justice toward a larger collective, in this case the Canadian nation. The recognition demanded in *Emily Kato*, the recognition necessary for an understanding of one's role as full citizen, is that of Honneth's third sphere, social esteem; the importance of this becomes particularly obvious toward the end of the novel:

> Eleven a.m. The prime minister stands. The magic of speech begins—this ritual thing that humans do, the washing away of stains through the speaking of words. … In the future I know we will look back at this moment, as we stand and applaud in spite of being warned not to. We'll remember how Ed Broadbent crossed the floor to shake the prime minister's hand, and we'll see all this as a distant star, an asterisk in space to guide us through nights that yet must come. The children, the grandchildren, will know that wrongs were done to their ancestors. And that these things were put right. (Kogawa 2005, p. 267)

This moment of *public* recognition that exceeds the question of legal rights is staged to create an impression of urgent immediacy for the reader. Unlike in so many other passages of the novel, the use of the present tense is not interrupted by memory, but instead gives way to a decisive act of anticipation regarding the future remembrance of this crucial moment. The 'washing away of stains' refers to Japanese Canadians, who are finally cleared of the charge of having been enemies *qua* race in the eyes of the public as well as the Canadian nation that has been 'stained' by the violation of its own values and the denial of this injustice over decades. Thus, the crucial point in the novel can be found in the exact form in which the different groups in the novel envision this act of recognition that publicly acknowledges them not only as citizens, but as a relevant group whose past is unconditionally part of the national past—and whose present significantly contributes to the national present as well as to the nation's future.

Hence, *Emily Kato* explores how historical misrecognition or non-recognition, to use Charles Taylor's (1994, p. 25) terms, has an impact not only upon the status of communities within the larger society, but also on individuals in direct relation to their community membership and their membership in larger collectives. The experience of violence as a group, in this case as Japanese Canadians, produces violent individuals and dysfunctional communities and families. In *Emily Kato*, the experience of non-recognition results in severe breaches between the generations, domestic violence, and even in individual bodies turning against themselves in sicknesses that seem to have no physiological origins.[10] These can all be read as instances that constitute acts of, or, in the case of sickness, internalizations of non-recognition with serious individual and collective consequences. Individual subject-formation is directly connected to how citizenship—understood as both membership and belonging, as formal and substantive—is imagined in the novel. In *Obasan*, *Itsuka*, and *Emily Kato*, Japanese Canadians and Japanese Canadian history are affirmed as *Canadian* and reinserted into the national imaginary. This insertion is accomplished by passionate activism and completed by the act of recognition in parliament, and the effects of historical and contemporary racism that manifested themselves in ill and violent bodies can now be turned into images of healing by Kogawa:

> "I feel that I've just had a tumor removed," Dan says, "I finally feel that I'm a Canadian." We've all said it over the years. "No, no, I'm Canadian. I'm a Canadian." Sometimes it's been a defiant statement, a proclamation of a right. And today, finally, though we can hardly believe it, to be Canadian means what it hasn't meant before. Reconciliation. Belongingness. Home. (Kogawa 2005, p. 269)[11]

There is an obvious shift in this passage: from the affirmation of Canadian citizenship as *nationality* and legal right to its affirmation as a *feeling* that is tied to belonging, or rather, the recognition of belonging in a particular place and national context. The sense of home and place

[10] For a more detailed analysis of this aspect, see Sarkowsky (2008, pp. 37–38).

[11] The sentiment voiced by Dan in this passage is one of the many direct references to the historical event to be found in Kogawa's redress novels. The sentence "I feel that I've just had a tumor removed" was uttered after the ceremony by Canada's 'Judo King,' Mas Takahashi (Kogawa, n.d.).

achieved here in 'three steps' (reconciliation, belonging, home) crucially depends on the act of public recognition, that is, the acknowledgment of previous acts of injustice and disavowal. This recognition is, as Dan's comparison suggests, the 'removal of a tumor' (from the individual body as well as the 'body' of the nation), and thus an act of healing. The previously discussed family metaphor strongly suggests the connection between citizenship as an individual status and multicultural citizenship as conceptualizing and addressing the individual as a group member; it thus dissolves the public/private divide to some extent, and the deployment of 'illness as metaphor' (Sontag [1978] 2001) has a similar effect. At the same time, it re-emphasizes the link the texts seek to establish between individual agency, citizenship, the nation, and ethnic identity.

This connection is, within limits, renegotiated in *Emily Kato* by shifting the view to account for analogies across ethnic groups. Marie Lo has argued that *Obasan* already creates explicit transethnic analogies and solidarities, particularly with First Nations people (2007, p. 318). I agree with this assessment yet suggest that, while such connections functioned to Canadianize Japanese Canadians in a process of (not unproblematic) indigenization in *Obasan*, this strategy serves more emphatically a citizenship agenda that connects citizenship to questions of human rights in *Emily Kato*. Transnationalization has probably been one of the most important developments in the citizenship debates of recent years. Even though I will discuss this development and its potential implications in the context of literature in more detail in a later chapter, I would like to point to its important ramifications regarding my reading of *Emily Kato* in particular: While the stronger emphasis on the family metaphor already marks a significant aspect of Kogawa's reworking of *Itsuka*, the later novel not only places a much stronger emphasis on transnational connections that are only hinted at in *Itsuka*, but also links the dispossession of Japanese Canadians to the violation of other groups and their rights, including those in the present. By so doing, it positions the question of citizenship in the contemporary framework of the 'War on Terror' and, more broadly, in the context of human rights.

The family background of Cedric, Naomi's lover, is one of the most significantly reworked aspects of *Emily Kato* when compared to *Itsuka*. In *Itsuka*, he is of French Canadian/Métis heritage, integrating the French Canadians and Indigenous peoples into an otherwise thoroughly 'Anglo' narrative; in *Emily Kato,* he is 'Armenian, Haida, Japanese. That's my blood lineage. English and Jewish by adoption' (Kogawa

2005, pp. 127–28). This complex constellation resonates a notion of 'Canada' that has been charged by its critics with a 'fetishization of its multicultural make-up' (Kamboureli 2007, p. viii). Kogawa presents the revised Cedric as an almost literal embodiment of the Canadian self-image as a multicultural nation since the 1980s. At the same time, Cedric's specific heritage as presented in *Emily Kato* is important because the novel begins with a reference to the Armenian genocide of 1915, a reference that throughout the text serves as a reminder of the destructive power of forgetting and the centrality of historical memory across national borders.

This reminder is taken up in the closing chapter of the novel; Julie McGonegal has called this chapter a coda, since 'this particular section of the text is not written as part of the overall narrative, but rather constitutes a discrete space of reflection and composition on events relating to (but not of) the novel's overriding concerns' (2011, p. 96n1). However, I would argue that citizenship *is* the overriding concern of the novel, so any categorization of it as coda rests on formal rather than thematic aspects. In this closing section, years later the narrator formulates the historical experience of Japanese Canadians as a lasting warning for the present in the context of a rhetoric of the 'new Pearl Harbor' and the global 'War on Terror' after the attacks of September 11, 2001, and skeptically reflects on both the capacity to remember and the capacity to learn from the past:

> Although the uprooting and displacement of Muslim communities in North America has not occurred, the new 'war on terror' makes victims of our own loyal citizens. Families are taunted. Places of worship are targeted. On the basis of appearance alone, people are relegated to the companies of the despised and viewed with suspicion and fear—on sidewalks, in elevators, at border crossings and airports, and in school playgrounds. Many Canadian Muslim children may never record their self-confidence. (Kogawa 2005, pp. 272–73)

In the context of the novel, this not only suggests a parallel between the scapegoating of ethnic and religious minorities in times of war, but also highlights the paradox of citizenship: The focus of the narrative voice on the discrimination of 'our own loyal citizens' narrows down the question of human rights to the question of citizens' rights, and thus also clearly illustrates the problems of an extended understanding of citizenship—the

understanding of the citizen always presupposes the distinction from the non-citizen (Isin 2002, p. 3). Therefore, Kogawa's 'coda' 'resists and challenges uncritical analyses of Canadian multiculturalism, including those that focus specifically on her own work, by representing the project of democracy as perpetually unfinished und unfulfilled' (McGonegal 2011, p. 77). Clearly, full democracy is not simply re-established in Kogawa's vision with successful redress; rather, redress becomes a part of the necessary as well as continuous struggle for further democratic developments and for full citizenship through the enactment of citizenship. This is not disconnected from the nation, but it continually points back to the nation. McGonegal has noted that

> conventionally, Kogawa criticism has functioned as a containment strategy that disconnects Canada's racist past from its putatively tolerant and harmonious present. In this way, Kogawa's most popular novel, *Obasan*, has been consistently situated in a developmental nationalist narrative which presents the story of the Japanese Canadian internment as a happy-ever-after tale of national reconciliation and unity. (2011, p. 77)

While I largely agree with this critical assessment, I nevertheless consider Kogawa's novels (*Obasan* as well as *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato*) to intensely and affirmatively engage with the nation—not to disavow it (despite all criticism), but to (re-)claim it and to inscribe Japanese Canadians into the narrative of the nation—a narrative that is far from being unbroken and certainly not teleological, but a narrative that nevertheless holds a strong promise of belonging. So even when Kogawa creates obvious transnational references, such as to the genocide of the Armenians, and by doing so calls for political and social responsibility across national borders, in the last instance the reference to citizenship formulates a claim to the nation that fails to live up to its own standards and its obligations toward its members—a position that, as I have illustrated, had already shaped the agenda of *The New Canadian* seven decades earlier.

In this regard, *Obasan* is very much in line with the concerns and debates at the time of its publication, and its reception attests to this: '*Obasan* played a significant role in the redress movement as evidenced by its being quoted by both Ed Broadbent [leader of the New Democratic Party] and Gerry Weiner [secretary of multiculturalism in Prime Minister Mulroney's government] during the announcement of

the settlement with the government. Thus *Obasan* has played, and continues to play, a significant role in the way in which the internment is understood' (McFarlane 1995, p. 402).[12] *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato*, however, in their continued affirmation of the nation despite of the criticism, appear out of sync to a certain extent in regard to their trust in the nation at a time when the investigation of difficulties of speaking and writing dominate Asian Canadian literature in the early 1990s and when literatures shifted toward more strongly diasporic modes of negotiating citizenship in the late 1990s and early 2000s. 'The subject of diaspora and the subject of citizenship do not map easily onto each other,' notes Lily Cho. 'The former emerges from a commitment to the communal and an insistence upon difference; the latter is founded upon the rights of the individual and the necessity of suspending difference in the name of the universal' (2007a, p. 468). Kogawa's novels present a complex negotiation of the relationship between community, citizenship, and nation. If *Obasan* foregrounds the destruction of the Japanese Canadian community and its effect upon families and individuals, *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato* focus on both the reconstitution of this community and its recognition as part of the Canadian nation. While *Itsuka* can indeed easily be read as 'a happy-ever-after tale of national reconciliation and unity' (McGonegal 2011, p. 77), *Emily Kato*'s coda turns the revised novel into a cautionary tale: The destructive power of 'othering' and scapegoating ethnic groups, it reminds the reader, can be activated at any time of crisis. The transnational and transethnic analogies and solidarities highlighted particularly in *Emily Kato* do not call national borders into question as arbitrary boundaries of belonging; rather, they serve as an affirmation of national citizenship while seeking to redefine the nation as an inclusive, rather than an exclusive space of belonging.

2.6 Citizenship and Redress

Kogawa's novels, *Obasan* in particular, crucially contributed to a political and cultural process in which the dispossession and displacement of Japanese Canadians were eventually remembered and redressed by 'the nation.' My close reading of the novels seeks to highlight both historical discursive continuities and discursive shifts corresponding (not always

[12] For a detailed discussion and critique of the reception, see Miki (1998, pp. 142–45).

easily) to contemporary debates about citizenship and looks for the topical and narrative specificities that make Kogawa's novels a prime example of how literature can function as an act of a nationally oriented cultural citizenship—with obvious differences between *Obasan* and the two later novels. While *Obasan* focuses strongly on historical and cultural memory, its sequels document a struggle for community recognition and, in the process, community rebuilding. Recognition and community rebuilding depend to a large extent on the historical memory of dispossession and on contemporary experiences of discursive marginalization of a 'model minority'; yet, from *Obasan* to the later novels, the agenda obviously shifts from a focus on experience of victimization to actively challenging and fighting the justification of citizens' rights' violations as a wartime necessity. Naomi's personal development is only the most obvious manifestation of this shift; and just as the violation of Japanese Canadian citizenship rights is not only a violation of one group's right, her (and her friends' and relatives') struggle for redress is one for national inclusion that exceeds the specific ethnic group.

In many ways, Kogawa's novels thus exemplify what Donna Palmateer Pennee has called a form of 'interventionist diplomacy,' a 'practice of acquiring wilful literacy to produce forms of communal knowledge of people different from yet similar to 'ourselves,' whomever we are' (2004, p. 79). Like Rosaldo's (1994) notion of cultural citizenship briefly discussed in the introduction, Pennee's understanding of 'literary citizenship' has a strong pedagogical edge. Her notion of literature as 'interventionist diplomacy' is helpful for capturing literature's participation in societal discourses, and Kogawa's novels certainly stress the national framework at the center of Pennee's considerations. Pennee's understanding of literature as a multicultural national conversation centers on an inclusive concept of multicultural citizenship and, despite its emancipatory potential, herein also lies a potential problem: It tends to overwrite the various positionalities from which different societal groups enter that conversation and acquire that 'wilful literacy.' From the perspective of the recent proliferation of citizenship as a concept 'against' the nation in the dual sense of '*opposed*' and '*next to*' (Kipnis quoted in Cho 2007b, p. 105), both Pennee's literary citizenship and Kogawa's novels imply an understanding of citizenship that is 'active,' to put it with Engin Isin, in that it follows 'scripts and participate[s] in scenes that are already created' in contrast to the practice of *activist* citizens who 'engage in writing scripts and creating the scene' (2008, p. 38). The

claim to citizenship in Kogawa's novels, inherent both in the cultural memory work and in the struggle for redress, is bound to notions of Canadian citizenship that should be fully expanded to include Japanese Canadian citizens by having 'belonging' supplement formal membership.

There is a close correlation between the narrative of 'good citizenship' as deployed by Japanese Canadian journalists and activists from the 1940s onwards, the language used by the government in the context of redress, and the notion of citizenship in Kogawa's novels. In her discussion of redress and forgiveness, Julie McGonegal takes up the problematic aspects of this connection when she asks, referring to the government document included in *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato*: 'What should we make of the explicit reference to Japanese Canadian 'loyalty and commitment' to the Canadian nation? Might it suggest that as a so-called 'model minority,' Japanese Canadians are more 'worthy' of an apology and reparations than other groups …, that practices of 'good citizenship' reap 'rewards'?' (2009, pp. 144–45). The affirmation of the nation and a particular understanding of citizenship as multicultural inclusivity tend to disregard, as I read McGonegal's critical question, citizenship as a practice that questions the established script of belonging and membership. While Kogawa's novels passionately counter the understanding of Canadian citizenship as inherently 'white,' they also subscribe to a notion of rights and loyalty that largely remains within the established scripts of liberal and civic-republican understandings of citizenship.

The struggle for redress, as presented in *Itsuka* and *Emily Kato*, is an important entry point to the questions that redress poses to the concept of national citizenship in the 1990s and early 2000s. As Roy Miki has put it, 'the Japanese Canadian redress movement was implicated in major government initiatives that attempted to strengthen national identity at a time when its hold was rapidly loosening' (2005, p. 324). If redress in Kogawa's novels is tied to the notion of recognition as a guarantor of national inclusion, the debate about redress and reconciliation with regard to Indigenous peoples follows in part a very different trajectory that contextualizes both in a larger framework of colonial policies (Henderson and Wakeham 2009) and which rejects the politics of recognition as perpetuating colonial power structures (Coulthard 2014). This rejection is indicative for a historically and politically further-reaching challenge that 'alterNative' concepts of membership and belonging pose to hegemonic notions of national citizenship and which will be at the center of attention in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER 3

‘Dismissing Canada’? AlterNative Citizenship and Indigenous Literatures

3.1 Aboriginal Citizenship in Canada

As has been shown in the previous chapter, Joy Kogawa’s novels about the Japanese Canadian internment experience and the successful redress movement rely strongly on notions of recognition. The position vis-à-vis the nation-state as the primary locus of citizenship is, despite all criticism, affirmative: The failure of the nation-state is presented as its failure to live up to its own ideals of citizenship and human rights, and this failure can and must be remedied. Even though Kogawa’s affirmative agenda is by no means representative for Japanese Canadian literature, it reflects the specific challenges posed to the concept of citizenship in the context of a settler nation coming to terms with racialized notions of belonging and membership.

In contrast, Indigenous literatures reflect the additional complexities of citizenship resulting from the legal structures of colonial relations, and they tend to deconstruct rather than affirm national affiliations—at least those with the settler nation-state. In ‘It Crosses My Mind,’ Métis writer Marilyn Dumont points to the potentially coercive quality of Canadian citizenship for Indigenous peoples when she writes: ‘“Are you a Canadian citizen?” I sometimes think to answer, *yes, by coercion, yes, but no… there’s more*, but no space provided to write my historical interpretation here, that *yes but no*, really only means yes because there are no lines for the stories between *yes and no*’ (2001, p. 263). Anything but

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a promise of recognition and equality, Canadian citizenship is regarded as a national membership forced upon Indigenous peoples; Dumont understands it as a hegemonic discursive construction that overwrites the nuances of its conflictual emergence. As Warren Cariou has read this passage, Dumont insists that 'the compulsion to choose one or the other can itself be refused' (2007, p. 59), and with it the alterity of 'yes' or 'no' to Canadian citizenship. If Dumont's 'yes but no' implies the conflicting affiliation that Canadian citizenship presents to Indigenous peoples, Thomas King humorously explicates them by directly juxtaposing two competing models of nationhood and citizenship in Canada. In the central episode of his short story 'Borders' (1993)—which is probably King's most widely anthologized and extensively discussed short story alongside 'One Good Story, That One'—the young narrator and his mother cross the US-Canadian border from Alberta into Montana. At the American border post, the narrator's mother refuses to comply with the expected declaration of national membership:

> "Purpose of your visit?"
> "Visit my daughter."
> "Citizenship?"
> "Blackfoot," my mother told him.
> "Ma'am?"
> "Blackfoot," my mother repeated.
> "Canadian?"
> "Blackfoot." (King 1993, p. 135)

While she clearly draws on a juxtaposition of 'American' and 'Canadian' in other passages of the short story, she refrains from doing so when these labels denote national membership. This encounter clearly highlights the asymmetrical power relations that exist between a representative of the nation-state and an Indigenous individual (see Gruber 2007, p. 360); at the same time, it questions them. For the border guard, 'Canadian' refers to national membership, and 'Blackfoot' indicates a kind of belonging that is simultaneously subordinate to and embraced by the nation-state; in contrast, for the narrator's mother, 'Blackfoot' is not just a cultural, but also a political affiliation—it is belonging *and* membership—which causes her to refuse privileging Canadian nationality over tribal nationality. The self-confident appropriation of a terminology of nationhood, the claiming of citizenship as a tribal-national

rather than a state-national affiliation, and the ultimately successful crossing of the border—effectively staged for television cameras—overwrite hegemonic spatial and political inscriptions at least for a brief moment. In so doing, the narrator's mother questions the reach of citizenship in the (from her point of view colonial) nation-state and rejects the logic of a multicultural Canadian citizenship that—while recognizing 'national minorities' (Kymlicka 2001, pp. 91–119)—nevertheless subordinates Aboriginal identifications to state-national membership. Instead, she adopts the language of citizenship to shift the meaning of a seemingly 'particular' and subordinate identity—that of tribal affiliation—to a national identity *predating* the colonial nation-state. Her position is thus a tribal-nationalist one; she claims an identification that Audra Simpson has described with regard to the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke as follows: 'They insist on being and acting as peoples who belong to a nation other than the United States or Canada. Their political form predates and survives "conquest"; it is tangible … and is tied to sovereign practices' (2014, p. 1). Consequently, although the narrator's mother refuses, as Davidson et al. observed, 'to locate herself within the discourse of "nation," as defined by Canada and the United States' (2003, p. 123), she does not refuse to locate herself within the discourse of nationhood. On the contrary, her refusal to comply with the border guard's request to position herself within the discourse of the nation-state is made effective through its very appropriation of a vocabulary of 'alterNative' nationhood and citizenship.[1] The insistence on her Blackfoot identity as a form of citizenship, rather than as an exclusively cultural affiliation which is subordinated to the political identification with the settler nation-state, is a clear statement of an affiliation with the Blackfoot nation as a cultural *and* political community that exists at eye level with 'Canada.'

The two competing models of citizenship and nationhood juxtaposed in this short story highlight the specificities of Aboriginal citizenship as 'uncertain' (Borrows 2001) in the context of settler nations: On the one hand, they point to the definition of Indigenous status and citizenship within the settler nation-state; on the other hand, to the position of First Nations as non-state but nevertheless political entities vis-à-vis the nation-state. While obviously not the same, both aspects are interlinked:

[1]The term 'AlterNative' is borrowed from Drew Hayden Taylor's play entitled *AlterNatives* (2000).

In section 35, Canada's Constitution Act of 1982 recognized Aboriginal treaty rights, and since then, as Michael Coyle and John Borrows have acknowledged, 'Canadian courts have ruled that treaties must be interpreted in accordance with the common intention of the treaty partners and that oral promises made during treaty negotiations cannot be ignored when interpreting treaty texts' (2017, p. 8). Despite a tentatively positive evaluation of post-1982 developments, many critics regard Canadian courts as inappropriate loci to negotiate the interpretation of Aboriginal treaties (and their implications for Aboriginal citizenship), since these were intended as political, not primary legal instruments to regulate the relationship between distinct societies. The rights of Indigenous nations to determine the criteria of citizenship or the scope of individual rights in cases of conflict with the Canadian Charter highlight the conundrum of nation-to-nation relations in a colonial legal and political framework.

Historically speaking, the shifting understanding of how 'Indigeneity' related to the status of a 'Canadian citizen' is an important element in today's complexity of Aboriginal citizenship in Canada; the crucial question was how mutually exclusive these statuses would be defined—and to what extent Indigenous status would be understood as analogous to a form of citizenship, signifying the individual's position not only within the framework of the Canadian nation-state but also within her/his Indigenous nation. Until the 1960s, as Claude Denis writes, Indigenous people

> were left with a difficult choice: on the one hand, they could maintain a devalued but meaningful Indian status and, on the other hand, they could abandon their Indigenous identities as the price for acquiring Canadian citizenship. A person could not, in other words, at once be "Indian" and a Canadian citizen. (2002, p. 113)

In the 1960s and early 1970s, attempts were made to not only rethink the relationship between the nation-state and Aboriginal peoples but also address the question of universal Canadian citizenship vs. group-specific rights based on the treaties. The direction was by no means unambiguous: While the *Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada* in 1967, the 'Hawthorn Report,' coined the concept of 'Citizens Plus,' a concept that was in effect 'designed as an alternative route to the norms of Canadian citizenship—not as a means for maintaining or encouraging

separate Aboriginal cultures' (Kernerman 2005, p. 67), the Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy (the notorious so-called White Paper) of 1969 sought to end the special relationship between Indigenous communities and the federal government in favor of equal citizenship for Aboriginal peoples, arguing that it was the unique legal status that disadvantaged the Indigenous population in Canada (Miller 2000, p. 331). The policy paper proposed measures detrimental to the suggestions of Indigenous leaders and was met with fierce resistance and quickly shelved: The Citizens Plus statement or 'Red Paper' formulated by the Indian Chiefs of Alberta in 1970 countered the White Paper's understanding of equal citizenship as entailing the same rights for every Canadian citizen: the White Paper, in its assumption of 'universal' citizenship as the basis of citizens' equality resulted in the abolition of a treaty-based status for Aboriginal peoples; 'equal citizenship' thus meant additional inequality by terminating a legal relationship between collective political entities. Adopting the terminology of the Hawthorn Report, the Indian Chiefs of Alberta argued for a differentiated form of citizenship within a Canadian framework, the 'citizen plus' model, 'which is to say that, in addition to enjoying full Canadian citizenship, persons of Indigenous descent would also carry a form of Indigenous citizenship' (Denis 2002, p. 114), therefore making it possible to combine an understanding of citizenship as individual status with a concept of citizenship as on collective identity and rights.

Although these concepts of Indigenous citizenship were positioned in a Canadian national context, both the political debates and the ways in which Indigenous writers have addressed crucial questions of membership and belonging have increasingly shifted to Aboriginal citizenship as positioned in competing national frameworks. The ways in which Indigenous writers have dealt with citizenship since the 1980s explore a range of possibilities between complex negotiations of membership and belonging that include the Canadian nation-state as a reference point and those positions that disavow the settler nation-state and propose various forms of tribal nationalism. As I have shown in the previous chapter, Joy Kogawa's novels and their criticism of rights violations during and after World War II are based not only on the identification of a historical wrong, but also on the desire to have Japanese Canadian history recognized as part of the Canadian national narrative. Analogously, the contribution of Indigenous peoples to Canada is also an important trope of Indigenous citizenship debates; as John Ralston Saul remarks in

A Fair Country, 'we are a métis civilization. What we are today has been inspired as much by four centuries of life with the Indigenous civilizations as by four centuries of immigration' (2008, pos. 154), arguing for the recognition of the Aboriginal contribution to what Canada is today. What is to be recognized is not the cultural distinctiveness of minoritized groups, as Charles Taylor (1994) has conceptualized it, but the hybridity of Canada's cultural heritage, hence a form of re/cognition as Winfried Siemerling has called it, a complex process of reciprocity that includes shifting the ground of cognition (2005, p. 2).

Some of the literature that has emerged in response to or as part of the reconciliation debate works along these lines; for instance, in his autobiographical *One Native Life*, Richard Wagamese writes that 'we're all neighbours: that's the reality. This land has the potential for social greatness. And within this cultural mosaic lies the essential ingredient of freedom—acceptance. That's an Aboriginal principle I've learned' (2008, p. 4). However, as previously indicated, the concept of recognition is deeply contested in Indigenous contexts, and much of the reconciliation process and debate have been criticized for failing to contextualize the abuse of Indigenous children in residential schools in the larger framework of colonialism (Henderson and Wakeham 2009, pp. 4–5).

The following sections will focus on Jeannette Armstrong's two novels *Slash* (1985) and *Whispering in Shadows* (2000). While *Slash* has received considerably more critical attention than *Whispering in Shadows*, I will argue that both texts investigate the complexities of the relationship between Indigenous peoples, the Canadian nation-state, and an Anglo-Canadian society in terms of membership and belonging, albeit in very different ways. *Slash* chronicles the life of an Okanagan man, Tom Kelasket; an indigenization of the *bildungsroman* that calls into question the notion of individual autonomy, the novel engages not only with relational subjectivity and the centrality of community practice, but also with the activism of the American Indian Movement (AIM), with the patriation of the Canadian constitution in 1981/1982 and with the questions pertaining to Aboriginal rights, sovereignty, and citizenship this entailed.[2] Published 15 years later,

[2]For an excellent detailed reading of *Slash* in the context of both the patriation debate and the ensuing court cases regarding tribal rights, see Authers (2016), Chapter 5.

Whispering retains a focus on the possibilities and limitations of political activism; an equally critical modification of the *künstlerroman*, it is more fragmented and seemingly less directed in its narrative form, yet also connects the life story of its protagonist with an investigation of societal co-authorship. Both novels present their respective protagonists not as active, but activist citizens in Engin Isin's (2008, pp. 37–39) distinction, seeking not to reproduce established forms of participation, but to change the political 'script' of citizens' involvement. As I will show in the following sections, there is a discernible shift in focus from *Slash* to *Whispering*, and this shift has an impact on the notion of citizenship investigated in the novels: *Slash* is mostly concerned with Indigenous affairs and rights in the context of the Canadian and US American settler nations, exploring the possibilities of Aboriginal citizenship in nation-states that not only neglect Indigenous citizens politically, socially, economically, and culturally, but also fail to live up to their treaty obligations. Despite the protagonist's disillusionment with the nation as a political addressee of Aboriginal concerns in Canada, the nation nevertheless provides the central framework for the novel's negotiations of citizenship. In contrast, in *Whispering* the framework shifts from national to global Indigenous concerns, largely bypassing the nation-state and conceptually linking the local and the global level in its concerns of what will be discussed in terms of a modified understanding of environmental citizenship. In both *Whispering* and *Slash*, the local is the beginning and end of individual engagement. However, in *Whispering*, environmental issues are foregrounded and presented as globally interconnected; sovereignty is not only about systems of governance, but also about a broader understanding of individual and collective agency, and the local is inextricably linked to the global. *Slash* explores forms of activism and citizenship that are compatible with Indigenous communities' distinctiveness, whereas *Whispering* presents a struggle of environmental citizenship. However, in contrast to how the term is mostly understood, namely as a largely isolated facet of citizenship action that is linked to the natural environment, in *Whispering*, Penny's involvement with logging, food safety, etc., is intertwined with the rights of Aboriginal peoples worldwide as well as with a far-reaching sense of responsibility and stewardship.

3.2 'Second Class Citizens Instead of First Class Indians': Patriation in *Slash*

Jeannette Armstrong's 1985 novel *Slash* is clearly located in a specific time of conflict over what citizenship and the nation were to mean for Indigenous peoples in Canada, ranging from the assimilation policies of the 1950s through the period of the 'White Paper' in the late 1960s, the activism for cultural and political autonomy in the 1970s that was pushed by the AIM and other groups, to the patriation debate in Canada of the early 1980s. Armstrong uses her I-narrator, Tom Kelasket, also known as 'Slash' because of a wound he received in a fight, to narrate an individual development that can be read through the lens of what William Bevis (1987) has called 'homing-in'[3]; additionally, Tom's story not only serves to probe into crucial issues of Aboriginal agency in Canada (and the USA) over a time period of approximately twenty-five years but also examines the question of resistance as bound to culturally specific ways of addressing and resolving political conflict. By the end of Tom's narrative, told retrospectively by the protagonist as an older man who looks back on his life and losses, the novel proposes a form of activism that begins and ends with the local community, that may engage in translocal and transnational projects where appropriate, yet seeks to avoid any engagement with the nation-state that might suggest a legitimacy of this nation-state as a negotiating partner.

Throughout the novel, 'citizenship' is therefore bound to the question of how the individual relates to which community, and to what extent and by what means he/she seeks involvement. What constitutes 'community' varies: It can be a familial, tribal, pan-Indigenous activist or a national constellation. The novel has received much critical attention, particularly with regard to its depiction of politics and activism.[4] At the same time, it also has a strong didactic agenda; the novel was

[3] Bevis has—controversially—identified the pattern of 'homing-in' in novels of the so-called Native American Renaissance, thus referring centrally to novels by James Welch, Scott Momaday, or Leslie Marmon Silko. However, the pattern he describes, that is, the crucial role that the Indigenous protagonist's return plays for (usually) his subject constitution and identity formation, can also be identified in modified form in Indigenous novels in Canada, such as Armstrong's *Slash* or Richard Wagamese's *Keeper'n Me* (1994).

[4] See, for instance, Davey (1993), Dobson (2009), Sarkowsky (2001), and Van Styvendale (2008).

produced for the Okanagan Indian Curriculum Project and was originally directed toward eleventh graders (Authers 2016, p. 129), an aspect often neglected in readings of the novel that see it as pedagogical, but tend to limit this effect to the adult reader (cf. Hodne and Hoy 1992). Manina Jones has argued that the

> pedagogical pedigree of *Slash* is an element of the novel conspicuously neglected by academic critics, as if acknowledging its didactic purpose, or its status as juvenile (rather than 'naïve') fiction, or its intentional address to white audiences through the curriculum project, would be the most embarrassing recognition of all. (2000, n.p.)

The novel's educational effect, I want to argue in this context, lies not only in its presentation of Tom's story itself as an educational project (Jones) that focuses on the individual's understanding of relationality, community, and cooperative values, but also in the way in which this learning process explores non-state-directed citizenship practices.

In this context, the I-narrator is not merely a character, but serves to 'test' said practices and attitudes. At different points in his life, the protagonist searches for a place in each of these community forms, beginning and ending with the familial and the tribal; pan-Indigenous and national frameworks are dismissed as long-term options of identification to various degrees, and this identificatory development is reflected in the text's explorations of different forms and scopes of activism. In its documentation of Indigenous struggles in Canada, the novel—or rather, its narrator—initially finds purpose in AIM-style activism, particularly in the USA: The takeover of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, DC, in 1972, the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973, and other AIM protests are confrontations with the settler state. Tom's narrative constantly returns to his and others' rage, and militant action provides both support to others and an outlet for that rage. 'The Indian on the "warpath,"' as Nancy Van Styvendale argues, 'while surely a stereotype, is also a discourse harnessed by Native peoples in response to colonial trauma' (2008, p. 208), and the activists, including Tom, consider themselves to be warriors for their people. This is clearly an empowering self-image for the young men, even if the image borders on what Gerald Vizenor has called 'kitchymen,' that is, a 'simulations of the media' (1994, p. 151): 'All the guys wore reflective shades and red headbands with a hunting knife hanging at the side of their legs. … Those

shades really gave the guys a mean look. I guess that's what we wanted. A mean image' (Armstrong 1985, p. 152). The tone of this description already indicates the distance that Tom will later seek from this kind of activism: Even though the image that the young men adopt offers them the possibility of identification with a warrior tradition and thus signals strength and agency in the face of historical and contemporary degradation, it remains an image that has been overwritten and circulated by popular media representations of the 'Indian' and offers little beyond the logic of resistance and constant reaction in light of discrimination and dispossession rather than the substantial self-determination that Tom and others in the novel seek.

Over the course of the older narrator's recollection, the young protagonist slowly moves away from a form of activism that engages with the nation-state as an adversary. Part two and three of the novel first cover Tom's move to the city and his time in jail ('Trying It On') and then his engagement with AIM and his restless move across the continent ('Mixing It Up'). In each section, however, he returns home to the Okanagan. Each time, his return is triggered by a growing feeling of what he misses and what potentially has the power to heal him: community, the land, and spiritual emplacement. I agree with Van Styvendale that 'the text does hold out and affirm a clear goal: the return home and recovery of inherent Indigenous ways and rights' and to Tom's 'rightful cultural inheritance' (2008, p. 209), but I would also add that this exceeds the narrative move of recovery and community reintegration (Bevis's understanding of 'homing-in') and includes his realization that confrontational activism has merely provided him with a transitional solution to the question of agency in face of colonialism, dispossession, and second-class citizenship.

While the activities of the AIM continue to engage with the nation-state and its institutions, the controversy over how to position oneself toward the patriation of the Canadian constitution within the community causes Tom to take a position of 'dismissal' toward the nation-state and Canadian citizenship at the end of the novel. In the historical patriation debate, there were concerns among Aboriginal leaders that treaty rights would not be taken into account; in opposition to the patriation package, Indigenous organizations therefore sent a delegation to Great Britain in an attempt to convince the British Parliament not to adopt it (Webber 2015, p. 44). In the novel's take on these controversies, the

debate over whether or not Indigenous peoples should demand to be included in the newly drawn constitution provides the clearest layout of the fundamental paradox faced by Aboriginal communities in their struggle for rights and recognition: It is an engagement with a nation-state that is considered to be illegitimate in the first place. On the one hand, negotiating with given state would imply the acknowledgment of its legitimacy (the position Tom increasingly occupies), while on the other hand negotiating may be the only way to at least secure some rights (his partner Maeg's position). It is important, though, as Matthew Green has argued, that Tom does not present his position as superior to others'; dissent is expressed and respected (1999, p. 63). Tom's acceptance of Maeg's involvement in the constitutional struggle and his own decision to stay home with their son reflect his increasingly non-patriarchal understanding of himself as an Okanagan man who combines paternal qualities with maternal ones (ibid.); it also reflects an understanding of citizenship that is not based on a private–public distinction.

In the reception of *Slash*, there are two diametrically opposed positions regarding the novel's relationship to the Canadian nation-state: Frank Davey's reading of *Slash* as engaging with Canada as a necessary framework and Kit Dobson's reading of the novel's 'dismissal' of Canada. For Davey, 'there is considerable irony in an Indian novel giving such seriousness to constitutional processes and national Canadian discourse – particularly at a time when the nation itself finds such process and discourse virtually unworkable' (1993, p. 66). By so doing, Davey argues, *Slash* presents Indigenous peoples as 'the one trans-provincial community able to imagine Canada as a single, dynamic political field' (p. 100). In this interpretation, activism and political protest as well as the close attention to political processes reconstruct Canada at a time when its constitutional foundation was seriously questioned. Accordingly, in his reading of the novel, Davey understands the 'possibility of citizenship as an Indian' as something that 'draws Slash Kelasket out of his arrogant and narcissistic despair' (p. 261)—citizenship in this interpretation seems a narrative of progress from the margins of society to its center:

> On a national level it is the idealistic expectation of First Nations people that they may eventually be able to participate in the writing of constitutional and legislative documents which enables them to envision Canada as a field for their caravans, sit-ins, and demonstrations. (ibid.)

In the historical debate, such expectations existed in at least parts of the community. These expectations direct the hope for 'co-actorship' (political citizenship) and 'co-authorship' (cultural citizenship) at the nation-state as its foremost or even exclusive arena. In the novel, however, as in the historical constellation, little more than hope exists to secure treaty rights with the shift from the British North America Act to the constitution, from British Parliament to Canada. Even the characters that support the struggle for the inclusion of Indigenous rights in the constitution see this as a pragmatic rather than an idealistic goal as well as the last and only chance in face of an otherwise hopeless situation. As Maeg puts it:

> This way we will get some measure of control and not be left out in the cold. It may end the years of struggle and suffering. Canada is here to stay. All our leaders are trying to make sure of is that we join Canada in a way that is not too harsh for our people. What you are proposing will only cause more strife and bitterness. We will lose out in the end, because it is unreasonable. It's unrealistic. (Armstrong 1985, pp. 243–44)

Securing the potential for 'co-authorship' is seen here as an unavoidable compromise in a situation of blatant power asymmetries.[5]

But Maeg's position is not the only one and, as I suggest, not the privileged position in the novel. In the course of the narrative, Tom's own position moves closer to a stand that is formulated by his cousin Chuck:

> What's wrong is the wrong motivation for the damn thing. Indian people are against patriation. Period. Some of them can't sort out the difference between that and being against it because Indians aren't included in the talks, they're going to Ottawa to give Trudeau shit for not letting them in on the talks. Can't you see how absurd that is? If they were going to Ottawa saying, "Bullshit to any constitution but our own, for each of our Indian Nations," the feeling would be much different. (pp. 238–39)

[5]Assessing patriation, Kiera Ladner argues that while 'it is true that the dreams of Indigenous constitutional activists were not fully realized, and Aboriginal organizations were unsuccessful in their efforts to insert a shield to protect Indigenous rights from the state and settler society,' nevertheless 'given the political, conceptual, and attitudinal obstacles, those who waged this battle for constitutional recognition achieved something many believed impossible' (2015, pp. 270–71). The opposition against the process as presented in the novel, however, is more fundamental, seeing the very involvement in the process as a 'domestication' of Indigenous sovereignty (Burrow quoted in Ladner 2015, p. 270).

As the juxtaposition of these different positions attests to, the rift over the paradox of negotiating Aboriginal rights with an institution that is considered illegitimate in the matter runs through communities as well as families. For Tom, as for his cousin Chuck, existing landownership is the core of Indigenous self-determination and of any kind of Indigenous citizenship, regardless of whether it be tribal or Canadian, so accordingly when he formulates this position, he draws on a language of nation, state, and citizenship: 'We don't need anybody's constitution, what we have is our own already. We hold rights to the land and to nationhood. We just need to have it recognized. We want to keep it' (p. 241). Tom comes to realize, as Benjamin Authers has pinpointed it, 'that an activism that takes place within the context of Western political structures is its own trap, perpetually characterizing Indigenous peoples as having to seek rights from the state, and so defining them in the context *of* the state' (2016, p. 132). In contrast to the state-directedness of both his previous activism and the struggle for constitutional recognition, Okanagan citizenship, as Tom comes to understand it, is bound to tribal communities understood in national terms; as such, they are not subsumable within the Canadian nation-state.

Initially, Tom's position appears as that of a 'hardliner' refusing any kind of compromise; at the same time, Maeg's phrasing ('unreasonable,' 'unrealistic') also suggests that Tom is a dreamer and visionary—both of which are positive terms in Okanagan and other Aboriginal cultures: 'Aboriginal peoples live in a dream state of vision. As Native people we are trained to bring dreams up into reality, into the real world. As a Native person I am trained to bring out people's visions' (Cardinal and Armstrong 1991, p. 108). Nonetheless, Tom is not the only dreamer; earlier in the novel, it is Maeg who takes the power of her dreams for granted. After a long struggle, Maeg seems to have lost her belief in dreams, whereas Tom has come to build on the power of the seemingly unreasonable, the 'dreams of what could be' (ibid.).[6] Tom's fundamental

[6]In his conversations on Indigenous creativity with Jeannette Armstrong, Douglas Cardinal here speaks first and foremost about architecture. However, as the overall conversation suggests, both Cardinal and Armstrong regard dreaming and creativity as an integral part of all aspects of human life, including politics understood as a way to improve society and coexistence.

position is in line with that of Okanagan elders which occurs in a different context earlier in the novel, in which one elder argues against negotiating reserve cut-off lands for the very reason that such a negotiation would signify the recognition and legitimation of the reserve system (Armstrong 1985, pp. 168–69) in the novel—an association that at least in hindsight lends additional authority and weight to Tom's refusal to get involved in constitutional activism. The agenda of the novel—supported by Tom's retrospective narrative at a point in time when he himself speaks as an elder, that is, from a position of community authority—appears in line with Slash's position on the issue rather than Maeg's. The fact that she dies on her way to a rally can be read as an indication that her line of argument and choice of activism (national, accepting the Canadian government as a partner in negotiations) are dangerous and possibly deadly.

Given Armstrong's narrative choices, my own interpretation of *Slash* is closer to Kit Dobson's reading than to Davey's. *Slash*, argues Dobson, is set in Canada but it is not a Canadian novel and therefore 'provides a damning critique of the colonial governments of North America—and does so without needing to focus solely on that colonial relationship either, moving into an indigenized terrain that relates to Canada, but that does not rely upon it' (2009, p. 113). This does not mean, however, that the novel 'dismisses' Canada as a reference point; rather, it portrays the protagonist's dilemma by both engaging and refusing to engage with the nation-state. The novel's eventual dismissal of Canada as a relevant framework for Aboriginal sovereignty follows from an engagement with the Canadian nation and its institutions. Despite the dismissal, this engagement is crucial for the novel's negotiations of 'citizenship,' for it explicitly draws attention to and counters the normative understanding of citizenship as bound to the nation-state and offers alternative forms of citizenship. While this alternative is not yet explicitly the tribal-nationalist model that would emerge in the 1990s and early 2000s, Armstrong's novel nevertheless explores a form of community membership and belonging that is clearly politicized, that refuses absorption into and arrangements with the Canadian nation-state, and that insists on its own set of rights and obligations for community members—for citizens. As such, the novel's political agenda points to an underlying

conflict of 'social imaginaries' as 'the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations' (Taylor 2004, p. 23), a conflict both of epistemologies and of notions of how societies function, deal with differences, and resolve conflict, pertaining to how individuals relate to one another and to the community. By way of the narrator's development and the political decisions he faces, Armstrong's novel indicates such conflicts as well as individual and communal options with regard to citizenship.

3.3 Global Indigeneity and Environmental Citizenship: *Whispering in Shadows*

Whispering in Shadows—Armstrong's second novel, which was published in 2000—shares a number of concerns with *Slash*, namely the exploration of the question how activism and politics relate to community, and whether these are the only forms of meaningful engagement with the world to make it a more livable place. Like *Slash*, *Whispering* connects these explorations with emphasis on the importance of spiritual balance, community, and the land; its protagonist Penny eventually returns to the Okanagan, just as Tom does in *Slash*. Nevertheless, *Whispering in Shadows* addresses questions of co-actorship and co-authorship, participation, and belonging in more depth than the earlier novel within a transnational, even global Indigenous context. Overall, the novel tends to ignore rather than counter the Canadian nation-state. The theoretical and literary shift toward reflections of the impact of transnationalization that had occurred in the fifteen years between the publication of the two novels is also discernible in Kogawa's work, which was discussed in the previous section. In North American Indigenous contexts, this literary transition—manifest for instance in novels such as Leslie Marmon Silko's 1991 novel *Almanac of the Dead* or Armstrong's *Whispering*—has yet another emphasis and reflects an increasingly hemispheric, even global orientation of political activism regarding the rights of Indigenous peoples, including the struggle for UN recognition as a central means to pressure settler nation-states to fulfill their treaty obligations toward

Indigenous communities (Henderson 2008, p. 30).[7] *Whispering*, as this and the following subchapter set out to show, increasingly expands the radius of the novel's protagonist from confrontations with the Canadian nation-state to transnational activism, with the latter grounded in a strong awareness of and eventual return to the local. On the plot level, this expansion implies a shift of co-actorship toward a form of environmental citizenship which is not restricted—as John Barry (2006, p. 21) has cautioned—to ecological issues, isolating them from social, political, and economic dimensions, but to an environmental citizenship that regards ecological, economic, social, and cultural dimensions as intertwined.[8] On the meta-level of the novel's own cultural work, this expansion intervenes into notions of both Aboriginal and environmental citizenship by means of considering them inseparable.

Armstrong's *Whispering in Shadows* is a collage of narrative sections, memory snapshots, letters, diary entries, and poems mainly focalized through the Okanagan artist-activist Penny Jackson; the letters, as Julia Emberley has argued, are 'linked by a maternal genealogy among daughters, mothers, grandmothers, and even great-grandmothers' (2016, p. 220),[9] and it might be added that Penny's relationships to her two daughters are more explicitly fleshed out than her relationship

[7] In *Indigenous Diplomacy*, James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson sketches the international diplomatic efforts by Indigenous peoples to achieve UN recognition, a struggle that plays a role in Armstrong's novel, even if the protagonist reflects critically on the potential impact of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* of 1996. The UN Working Group of Indigenous Populations behind the declaration established four criteria for the concept of Indigenous peoples: prior land occupation; voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness; self-identification and recognition as distinct groups; and the experience of subjugation and marginalization (Henderson 2008, p. 45). While critical of the actual impact, the novel nevertheless stresses the importance of an internationalized struggle and of global Indigenous solidarity. It clearly shares the assumption behind these endeavors that settler nation-states failed to live up to their obligations and that international pressure was necessary.

[8] Barry offers the term 'sustainability citizenship' instead of environmental citizenship, a concept 'which focuses on the underlying structural causes of environmental degradation and other infringements of sustainable development such as human rights abuses or social injustice' (2006, p. 24). Despite the term's problematic history—'environmental citizenship' was allegedly coined by Canada's federal ministry of the environment (Szerszynski 2006, p. 75)—I argue that 'environment' captures precisely the broad understanding of intertwined ecological, social, political, economic, and cultural factors seen as so integral to Aboriginal concerns in the novel.

[9] There is one letter addressed to a man, Gard—a letter never sent. Overall, though, I agree with Emberley's emphasis on the importance of a maternal genealogy.

to her son. All in all, there is a strong emphasis on women's bonding as a crucial basis for individual agency and assertion of relation, including relations of citizenship. While due to its oral narrative form and its insistence on the individual's constructedness through relations, *Slash* can be read as a critical modification of the *bildungsroman*, *Whispering* adopts and adapts the form of a *künstlerroman*, investigating both Penny's personal and political struggles and the function of art in a contemporary world of labor alienation and environmental destruction. Art and activism are two forms of political participation that are grounded in the land and lead her back to the Okanagan and to family and community—despite the often conflicting demands that they have on Penny.

The novel negotiates different but eventually intertwined enactments of citizenship. On one level, Penny and her fellow activists confront (and are confronted by) the settler nation-state as Aboriginal people. Two episodes in the novel, different as they are, not only highlight the ways in which Aboriginal citizenship—even as 'citizenship plus'—sits uneasily with a hegemonic understanding of national citizenship in Canada, but also—and more importantly—challenge citizenship as a '*distinctive* mode of belonging to a greater collectivity' (Szerszynski 2006, p. 78), a mode that not only implies 'being' but also 'doing.'

In my first example, Penny is interrogated by a border official not only with regard to the 'purpose of her visit,' which, given her activist engagement, is already suspicious, but with respect to her Indigeneity:

> The Immigration man studies her passport for several more minutes. "Are you Indian?" "Yes. I guess by your description I am. I'm Okanagan." "How much Indian blood do you have?" "I don't know. Do I need to know that to visit the USA?" "I need to know how much blood you have." *I'm full of blood. Just cut me and see. … A red line that moves like a river roaring over the falls at my grandparents home, harnessed to feed the power lighting of your office. A river you will not stop no matter how many dams you build, no matter where you divert it. I have a lot of blood. Who took yours?* (Armstrong 2000, p. 194)

The border as such is 'an imaginary line imposed by invader nations with governing laws that are arbitrary' (Harjo 2002, p. 205), a colonial imposition, overriding and overwriting earlier tribal inscriptions of space yet nevertheless extremely powerful in its affirmation of categories

and their effect on reality. Thus, the situation is doubly paradoxical: The border official harasses the Aboriginal woman by questioning her status as Indigenous against the background of American definitions of Indigeneity based on blood quantum. He clearly does not want to let her cross: He does not allow her to cross as a Canadian citizen—she can only cross as 'Indian,' and this position he seeks to debunk by questioning not only her tribal identity but her 'legitimacy as a Native person' (Cariou 2002, p. 914).

Penny's reply counters his understanding of 'Indian' as a threatening classification that needs to be contained by official categories and definitions with her self-identification: She may be 'Indian' by his definition, but she identifies as Okanagan and rejects the homogenizing category of 'Indian.' As her own thoughts on the exchange, printed in italics, highlight, she juxtaposes his focus on 'blood' with other natural images, silently countering his racism with alternative definitions of what blood means: life, energy, and shared humanity rather than essential indigeneity. The border official's parting words, 'You Indians think you can just waltz around anywhere you like. There are laws, you know. … Now move along' (Armstrong 2000, p. 195) once again address her as 'Indian,' defining her as a potential trespasser who needs to be reprimanded and reminded of both national borders and national laws.

Penny reacts to this humiliating encounter by reversing the roles that the situation in its assignment of positions had staged:

> God, if they only knew the depth of insult those border crossings are to us. There are laws! My ass. It was pure lawlessness, and still is, that allows aggression and theft of our lands. This is my country and why am I the alien? Who is the real alien here? (ibid.)

'This is my country' refers to the land on both sides of the borders, thus rhetorically erasing the border altogether. 'My country' is a claim beyond the question of national membership; it is the claim to indigeneity as a primary, trans-state position very much in line with what Rudolph Ryser has called the 'nation' as juxtaposed to the 'nation-state' (2012, p. 11).

Ironically, 'Indian' is a category rejected by both—the border official and Penny—albeit for different reasons. For Penny, it stands for a definition using terms that are not her own, whereas for the border guard it defines the 'alien within' (Goldie 1993, p. 11; Macklin 2011, p. 41), the alien being the 'other' against which the citizen is defined. In contrast to the stranger and the outsider, Isin has therefore defined the 'alien'

as being 'entirely outside the realm of sociation and association' (2002, p. 31). By asking herself, '*Who is the real alien here?*,' Penny appropriates this terminology of alterity and in doing so embeds her interaction with the border official in a century-old colonization process, in which European colonizers sought to complement the physical displacement of the Indigenous population with its discursive alienation. However, it is, as Penny reminds the reader, Indigenous peoples who have the older claim to the land and the colonizers' descendants who are 'alien' to it.

Hence, this episode links citizenship to the dual aspect of 'belonging' as affiliation and a form of ownership, an aspect that is further foregrounded in the second episode I would now like to turn to. In a showdown between loggers and Indigenous activists and their supporters, a Native elder makes an argument that draws on a dual strategy of justification for his refusal to give way to the machinery:

> "This is our hereditary territory. The Supreme Court of B.C. is still in session on this matter and you know it. You do not have the permission of my people to move your machines into this area. You are breaking the law of our lands. You are violating the laws of the Creator. I am ordering you to stop your machines." … "Fucking Indians and tree huggers! Go home!" "I am home. This is my home. It has always been and it always will be, regardless of what you do to it. I am here for the duration. Get used to it." (Armstrong 2000, p. 115)

While crossing the border, Penny is pushed into a position where she—like King's protagonist in 'Borders'—has to decide between affiliations that are officially defined as mutually exclusive except within the scope of hierarchical affiliations; here, however, the elder claims both means of identifications and appeals to the rights manifest in 'two citizenships.' Accordingly, he not only refers to the Supreme Court's outstanding ruling on the issue (i.e., to Canadian law), arguing as a Canadian citizen, but he also cites 'the law of our lands' and 'the laws of the Creator,' therefore asserting himself as an *Indigenous* citizen.[10] As such, he claims

[10]It is significant that Armstrong has chosen to depict a situation in which the loggers, even by Canadian law, are acting illegally (just like the border official harassing Penny). On the one hand, this may point to an uneasy accommodation of the Aboriginal characters with a double structure of law and citizenship, and make the violations seem to be the actions of individuals. However (and this is more likely), it may also critically indicate that the violations of Indigenous rights are seen as systemic: In each and every case, they are committed or at least tolerated by representatives of Anglo-Canadian law.

the rights of home: Just as Penny claims 'her country,' the elder claims his land and the rights this entails. However, these rights (as becomes clear throughout the novel) are deeply embedded with a sense of responsibility that exceeds the nation-state and once again leads to symbolic and rhetorical erasures of the US-Canadian border.

The episode's obvious insistence on locality and place is a central element for the kind of negotiations of citizenship that the novel enacts. *Whispering in Shadows* does not use the vocabulary of citizenship or nation as explicitly as Armstrong's earlier novel *Slash*, but it nevertheless also centers its agenda on a figure that I would like to call as per Isin, the 'activist citizen.' As previously pointed out, Isin contrasts 'activist citizens' with 'active citizens,' the former 'engag[ing] in writing scripts and creating the scene' and the latter 'follow[ing] scripts and participat[ing] in scenes that [have already been] created' (2008, p. 38). At the border, Penny is confronted with a constellation in which she has no power; there is no possibility for interruption and rewriting that would not lead to immediate repercussions and a demonstration of her powerlessness. However, at the same time the text as such literally—by way of its *mise-en-page* that stages Penny's critical thoughts in italics—attempts to do just that: interrupt, write a new script in which the narrative of the nation-state is debunked in favor of a tribal, potentially transnational citizenship. In the confrontation at the logging camp, the elder uses a dual strategy of 'active' and 'activist' citizen: On the one hand, he points to the Canadian court system as a decisive institution to settle the conflict; on the other hand, he shifts the legitimation of the Indigenous claim away from land rights questions—to be settled within the juridical Canadian system—and to a broader framework of an Indigenous presence that long predates European arrival and makes colonization an episode in a different epistemological framework and a time frame that does not adhere to the ideology of progressive linearity of the Canadian nation-state.

Although the novel avoids an explicit language of *national* citizenship, it promotes from the very beginning a hemispheric, even global, understanding of Indigeneity and of Indigenous citizenship that is understood as environmental stewardship—a form of simultaneously transnational and localized citizenship that puts an emphasis on rights (to uncontaminated food, for instance), but also on obligations and responsibility toward the environment. His responsibility is neither confined to specific national contexts nor bound to national membership. What is more,

Whispering explicitly connects this transnational responsibility to hemispheric solidarities among Indigenous peoples, and is grounded in its respective time, just like the earlier novel *Slash*. Whereas *Slash* has been shaped by the experiences of the AIM and the constitutional debate as discussed above, *Whispering* focuses on environmental activism and with relevant ramifications concerning issues of citizenship. As Nick Stevenson has argued, even though radical environmentalism dates back to the 1960s,

> the 1990s saw the emergence of ecological questions within a global context. Talk of a global environmental commons points to the complex and interconnected chains of causation that connect human activity, different world regions and the fortunes of nature. This evokes a community of fate that escapes the sovereignty of nation-states. (2003, p. 73)

Despite the fact that Indigenous peoples' long-standing engagement with environmental concerns is undoubtedly a fundamental aspect of the Aboriginal struggles against colonialism, the specific connection between environmental issues as a *global* concern and (equally globalized) Indigenous activism and issues pertaining to human rights violations has only very recently found its manifestation in literary texts such as Armstrong's. Coinciding with increasingly prominent debates about 'global Indigeneities' since the 1990s, unlike *Slash*, *Whispering* attempts to explicitly link the global and the local and thus go beyond the North American context. The tension between the local and the global omits the nation and drives the citizenship agenda of the novel.

The close relationship that exists between Indigenous peoples across the Americas pervades the novel's spaces and settings, with numerous episodes highlighting the cultural and political importance of what Chadwick Allen (2012) has called the 'trans-Indigenous.' The novel's exploration of non-statist (and non-national) citizenship across borders is most prominent throughout the protagonist's increasing involvement in economic and political cooperation with Indigenous peoples in the South. In the longest single unit (or chapter) of the novel Penny and her partner David travel to San Cristobal and Ocosingo—the center of the EZLN activities—in Chiapas, Mexico, as part of a small delegation of Aboriginal activists and NGO workers. There is a strong pedagogical element: Penny's newly

attained knowledge about the poverty, the oppression of the Mayan people and culture by the Mexican government, and NAFTA's devastating economic effect on the Indigenous population does not only inform the protagonist but also the reader about the conflict. As oftentimes in *Slash* and to a lesser extent regarding other concerns in *Whispering*, the novel uses expansive explanatory passages, mostly in direct speech, to draw attention to and interpret crucial issues. As Heike Härting has suggested, the novel 'generates a critique of the legitimizing practices of globalization while articulating narratives and communities of anti-global resistance' (2004, p. 262), and it does so by using a variety of settings (e.g., Canada, the USA, Mexico), organizational frameworks (friendship centers, conferences, the trip to Chiapas), and narrative modes (such as Penny's diaries and poems, direct dialogue, and internal monologue).

But the communities evoked are not only communities of resistance. While the chapter highlights the centrality of solidarity among Indigenous peoples worldwide and of the concept of regional autonomy, it establishes a basis of commonality that extends beyond the experience of colonization, denigration, and anti-colonial and anti-globalization resistance. With Penny as the focalizer, the novel—and this unit in particular—creates a community of strength drawn from the attachment to the land. When she shares the space and the meals of their Indigenous hosts, Penny experiences a feeling of familiarity; among them Penny, who had previously struggled with insomnia, now 'has no trouble falling asleep. … The room feels friendly and familiar. *She feels like she is back home when she was little and Tupa is there crooning to her when she is frightened'* (Armstrong 2000, p. 182, emphasis mine). The relationship established here is one of sharing, care, and nonverbal understanding. These commonalities, however, do not belie the different positionalities of the North American Aboriginal visitors: At the end of the section, Penny becomes enraged 'for all she is somehow complicit in, simply by being' (p. 184). This by comparison privileged positionality not only assigns responsibility as the 'calculable (ontic) orientation towards others' but also 'answerability' as the 'incalculable (ontological) orientation towards the Other' (Isin 2008, p. 31).

The positioning of this section in the novel is telling: Penny and David's journey is literally placed at its center, framed by two fragments on globalization from her diary, and entails everything that Penny will be concerned with in condensed form from then on: Indigenous rights,

regional autonomy, food sovereignty, the search for the adequate forum, means, and focus of activism, as well as the agency of individuals in globalized frameworks. As in *Slash*, this agency ultimately depends on the individual's embeddedness in the local, with the local understood as a place inscribed by both stories and relations of place *and* an awareness of a more broadly conceived environmental connectedness. As such, the local serves as both the foundation and the *raison d'être* of any involvement. As Penny tells her sister Lena toward the end of the novel:

> Maybe it's our community together in a certain way on the land which makes us a full person. A thing deeper and more enduring than any one of us, which we need and makes us whole. Something which gives deep comfort and security. Which gives us grace. Maybe it's the natural state we are blueprinted for. (Armstrong 2000, p. 273)

'A full person' is a person in relation, in relation to family and community, the land, stories, and ritual across time. The motif of return is not simply one of 'healing.' The circumstances of Penny's final return to the Okanagan are dramatic, for she has been diagnosed with cancer and eventually returns home to die. While insisting—like *Slash*—on the centrality of the local, the novel refrains from offering an easy closure. Not only does Penny succumb to one of the potential effects of the environmental destruction that she has spent her life fighting against, but she also realizes the relational toll that her political work has had:

> How could I have spent so much time speaking out to people and not have been able to get my own daughter to see it. Damn it! I was given responsibility for her and her sister and brother! I'm so stupid. I should have spent all my time making sure they did things differently. (p. 259)

She realizes that she has neglected her obligations as—as Isin calls it—a 'parent-citizen' (2008, p. 1).

This is not only manifest in Penny's development and processes of discovery of her primary ties, but even more so in the kinds of juxtapositions the novel stages, namely the poles of rootedness and rootlessness. In one of the activist camps, Penny encounters a woman who is described as being without any firm attachment:

> Clarisse. Thirty-some. Gaining weight. Divorced with a good settlement. Faded blonde hair. Childless. Third generation Canadian. No real roots anywhere. Retired father and stepmother in Oshawa. Mother in Florida. A half sister, in Texas. Dispossessed without knowing of what. (Armstrong 2000, p. 100)

Clarisse's rootlessness, as it is presented through Penny as a focalizer, seems absolute: no partner, no children, her family spread across the continent. The term that potentially might have indicated a form of belonging—'third generation Canadian'—is immediately refuted in the next sentence: 'no real roots anywhere,' reducing 'Canadian' to an empty label. Calling her 'dispossessed' signals the narrative voice's sympathy, but it also reverses some of the classic role assignments inherent in narratives of dispossession: Even though Native people have been dispossessed of their lands—historically and politically—this (white) character is the 'really' dispossessed one, just as the border official is the 'real' alien. This becomes obvious when this type of portrayal is countered by Penny's own experience of homecoming which affirms her belonging in both affective and spiritual terms:

> I forgot how this feels. It's like we're being embraced by something so strong yet so gentle. Oh, my people. You are my medicine. Heal this small family of its wounds. Help us become whole again as part of you. I give thanks that you are still here. I pray that you will always be here. I pray for each of you and I give myself back to you. I give you my children to be part of you again. I commit myself to honour you and do all that I can, that there will always be community, in this way, here and wherever such community thrives. I give myself back to this land, our home. (p. 135)

The people and the land increasingly merge; Penny gives herself, and in fact her life, to the struggle for the land. As in *Slash*, activism comes at the highest price, the price of a life. This marks the stage where the novel seeks to explore the limits of different forms of responsibility (toward nature, toward community, toward family, toward oneself). To borrow Isin's terms once more, the novel asks how 'responsibility' and 'answerability' relate; in either case, the orientation of the (activist) citizen in *Whispering* aims beyond or against the Canadian nation-state in favor of both local and trans-indigenous affiliations.

3.4 Writing Indigenous Citizenship: Narratives and Metaphors of Belonging

'Indigenous citizenship,' writes Kirsty Gover, 'encompasses a range of conceptual frameworks, denoting cultural and political membership in an Indigenous community, participation in Indigenous law-making, and a distinctive legal status governing the relationship between Indigenous citizens and tribal or settler governments' (2017, p. 454). For the negotiation of citizenship in and through contemporary Indigenous literatures in Canada, all of these frameworks are of paramount importance, even though they do not come to bear equally in all texts that address such issues. In the novels and short stories that are discussed in this chapter, the framework of Indigenous lawmaking, for instance, has not played a role, yet it clearly does so in other Indigenous texts such as Lee Maracle's *Celia's Song* (2014). To varying degrees, the other frameworks listed by Gover not only provide an important background for the plots, but also contribute significantly to how Armstrong's two novels negotiate Indigenous citizenship and belonging. They engage with citizenship as membership and belonging, but also as a 'right to politics' (Stanton 2006, p. 32) and participation. The characters are presented in their struggles to 'co-author' the specific constellations in which they move, to 'act' in Isin's sense of 'enacting the unexpected, unpredictable, and the unknown' (2008, p. 27), presenting a 'rupture of the given' (p. 25) rather than a merely ritualized practice of participation.

While the texts address questions of membership and belonging in their structure, narrative strategy, plot, and character constellations, one might nevertheless inquire to what extent they potentially also do this *as texts*, therefore also functioning as a form of 'co-authorship.' Even though the novels discussed in this chapter do not have the measurable impact Boele van Hensbroek (2010) insists on in his conception of cultural citizenship as 'co-authorship' (the kind of impact *Obasan* had), they can still be seen as part of Benhabib's 'democratic iterations' (2004, pp. 179–80) that not only engage with issues but also with individual readers as part of civic education. Although this is particularly central to *Slash* as a text that was commissioned for young readers, I have shown that it also applies to *Whispering in Shadows*.

I would like to briefly return to the constitutive role of literary forms in negotiating citizenship, since they also function as a more narrowly conceived form of cultural citizenship, namely as a literal 'co-authorship.' Critics have pointed to the hybrid generic form of both *Slash* (Fee 1990; Hodne and Hoy 1992) and *Whispering* (Härting 2004); in both novels, this is not so much reflective of as it is constitutive for how they negotiate citizenship and belonging. I have suggested earlier that *Slash* can be read as a critical modification of the *bildungsroman*, while *Whispering* engages with the specific subgenre of the *künstlerroman*. This is neither meant to imply that these texts merely play on established European genre conventions and their—problematic—assumptions about autonomous and implicitly gendered subjectivity; nor is it meant to be an uncritical celebration of hybridity. Rather, I argue that in their specific form and critical engagement with genre conventions, both novels also engage with understandings of the individual's relationship to community, of agency, and of citizenship underlying these conventions. They draw on the Euro-Canadian genre as much as on the genre's critical modification particularly by minoritized women authors and on Okanagan conceptions of language, land, and community as explicated by Armstrong in numerous essays and interviews. Moreover, the novel's generic hybridity is a constitutive element of its exploration of Indigenous cultural citizenship.

As previously asserted, *Slash* could justifiably be read through the lens of what William Bevis (1987) has termed the 'homing-in' paradigm. Bevis's concept seeks to capture a specific pattern he sees in Indigenous writing (at least during the time period between the late 1960s and the 1980s) that effectively counters a process of individuation that is understood as a separation from one's community. While this is plausible, I would like to suggest that Tom's formation process in *Slash* presents a further-reaching critical engagement with the *bildungsroman* and its specific relation to a nationally conceived subjectivity. According to Lisa Lowe,

> the bildungsroman emerged as the primary form for narrating the development of the individual from youthful innocence to civilized maturity, the telos of which is the reconciliation of the individual with the social order. The novel of formation has a special status among the works selected for a canon, for it elicits the reader's identification with the bildung narrative of ethical formation, itself a narrative of the individual's relinquishing of particularity and difference through identification with an idealized "national" form of subjectivity. (1996, p. 98)

The 'idealized "national" form of subjectivity' that *Slash* engages with is complicated by its referential doubling: The novel engages both with the protagonist's relationship to his Okanagan community as a cultural *and* political entity as well as with his increasing disavowal of a Canadian national formation as a relevant addressee for his activities. His subject formation is, as I have illustrated, characterized by a concentric mobility between the Okanagan and 'other places,' the former serving as a stable psychological and narrative reference point that is not only described in poetic detail but also takes on the quality of a character in its own right; by comparison, the locations Tom passes through on his search for a meaningful positionality are exchangeable non-places.

Tom's narrative of return to the Okanagan and his founding of a family thus indicate a genealogical hope for the future generation that is stressed by the strongly autobiographical mode to which this indigenized *bildungsroman* is related. Even though the prologue and the epilogue have received comparatively little critical attention, they provide an important angle to understand how the novel negotiates belonging. As Manina Jones has pointed out, the novel 'fashion[s] itself as an educational project' (2000, n.p.), and it most obviously does so in its brief sketch of its (fictional) autobiographical motivation and occasion. There is an important shift from the autobiographical tone in the 'Prologue' to that in the 'Epilogue.' The prologue appears to present a conventional understanding of autobiographical narration as introspection and the attempt to understand one's process of formation through narrative, but it already presents the community orientation that is the outcome of this introspection: 'I must examine how I changed and what caused the changes. I must understand it and, understanding it, I may understand what changes our people went through during those times' (Armstrong 2000, p. 13). Not surprisingly, the epilogue is even more explicit in its emphasis on community, now coded in a terminology of genealogy. While the main body of the novel ends rather abruptly with the desperate voice of a young father who just lost his wife, the epilogue links autobiographical storytelling to teaching: 'I have made my stand and chosen my path and I decide to tell my story for my son and those like him because I must' (p. 253). The poem at the very end of the novel—whose voice this is remains unclear—is one of both grief and hope; it expresses an understanding of individual and collective connection to place across generations, and this, the reader is to understand, is part of the novel's educational agenda.

Read as a *bildungsroman*, the novel thus questions what constitutes an ideologically desired subjectivity: The 'Canadian' subjectivity intended by policy initiatives such as the White Paper and unsuccessfully attempted by characters in the novel such as Tom's cousin Jimmy—with its emphasis on economic success and cultural assimilation—is clearly rejected. Jimmy's situation appears as a tragic in-between: 'He had gotten the education he had wanted. He had a degree or something in Business Administration. The strange thing was that none of the Indian Band Councils hired him' (p. 219). *Slash* explores a land- and community-based subjectivity that does not explicitly reconcile difference, as Lowe has argued for the classical *bildungsroman* (1996, p. 98), but instead insists on respect for difference both between and within nationally conceived communities; in the logic of the novel, Indigenous (or more specifically Okanagan) citizenship means participation in practices that affirm such respect and cooperation within the community and affirm it vis-à-vis structures—such as the Canadian legal system—that seek to subordinate cultural difference to the 'imagined community' of the colonial nation-state. Tom's *bildung* is thus his learning process of how to be an Okanagan, rather than a Canadian citizen.

Whispering can be productively read as a similarly critical engagement with a prominent subgenre of the *bildungsroman*, namely the *künstlerroman*. The ideological formations are similar as far as the emergence of an 'idealized "national" form of subjectivity' (Lowe 1996, p. 98) is concerned, but the artist's vocation that is at the center of this subgenre places the subject in a—at least on the surface—more emphatically individualist framework. Roberta White has defined the *künstlerroman* very generally as telling 'the story of an artist's intellectual and emotional growth; usually it describes an inward journey leading to a discovery of the artist's vocation' (2005, p. 13). But just as *Slash* offers a non-hegemonic understanding of Indigenous subject formation, *Whispering* redirects the genre of the *künstlerroman* to explore the ambivalent artist-protagonist's oscillation between different poles of engagement that are difficult to capture by means of juxtaposing the internal and the external: Penny's activism, the expression of her political concerns through her art, as well as the clash between her understanding of art as critical intervention and its increasing absorption as a commodity by the art market, is a development that clashes with her desire to be with her family as well as the land. Hence, while the novel clearly describes the development of an artist coming into her own, this development is not monodirectional and refuses to isolate art from other aspects of life and life learning.

Even though the novel occasionally portrays Penny's conundrum of being a woman artist torn between the desire for creative solitude and the social expectations of motherhood (as well as that of having a partner who fails to understand her artistic ambition), overall, art is a socially embedded and not a solitary activity in *Whispering*. The recurrent metaphor of the 'shadow,' which is also manifest in the novel's title, initially appears to capture the excruciating despair that Penny occasionally finds herself in and therefore caters to the stereotypical image of the artist who is fundamentally isolated from her or his environment and threatened by depression. After Penny has destroyed most of her paintings at a gallery in an epiphany that she, despite all her good intentions, is nevertheless 'riding on the back of the suffering' (Armstrong 2000, p. 205) and is thus complicit with the very system she abhors, she finds herself in the car with David:

> He whispers to her, about not letting her go, about not letting anything happen, *but the gathering shadows of twilight in the street surrounding them whisper, too. The leaves which are falling in the crisp wind are scudding along the pavement, whispering. The shadows close in around them long before she stops crying*. (p. 206, emphasis mine)

Despite the fact that the 'shadow' appears time and again as a looming, potentially threatening 'other world,' as it does in this passage, the metaphor nevertheless also explores a connectedness that is not immediately discernible. Härting has drawn a connection between the use of this particular metaphor in *Whispering* and the poem 'Moonset' by Pauline Johnson that serves as one of the epigraphs to the novel and whose stanzas all end with the word 'shadow-land.' Härting argues that both the speaker in the poem and Penny 'examine the relationship between colonial and indigenous languages, between the land, community, and the individual body' and by citing Johnson, 'Armstrong signals the need to investigate culturally hybrid practices of identity and representation from an indigenous perspective' (Härting 2004, p. 258). I would like to suggest that the function of Armstrong's reference to Johnson goes beyond mere analogy, though. By citing the early twentieth-century Mohawk poet who only superficially adhered to colonial models, Armstrong places Penny (and herself) in a genealogy of Indigenous women poets/artists who draw on multiple cultural influences as part of their own cultural agenda (as Armstrong does with both the *bildungsroman* and the *künstlerroman*). Particularly the last

two lines of Johnson's poem 'I may not all your meaning understand, /but I have touched your soul in shadow-land' (quoted in Armstrong 2000, p. 5) shift the negative connotation of 'shadow' to indicate another, parallel, but not necessarily threatening world in which Penny resides at times, thus making 'shadow' a metaphor of a complex literary and spiritual connectedness rather than retreat and isolation. As such, it also serves to highlight the text's generic hybridity and its play with genre conventions as part of the cultural citizenship that the novel enacts.

Both King's short story that was discussed at the beginning of this chapter and Armstrong's novels take up crucial questions not only regarding the role of Indigenous peoples within the Canadian nation in their very different ways, but additionally seek to reformulate that relationship very fundamentally: King does by comically exposing the use of reified images for national narratives, whereas Armstrong seeks to override the nation in favor of localized or tribal identification, on the one hand (mainly in *Slash*, but also to some extent in *Whispering*), and hemispheric Indigenous solidarities on the other hand (in *Whispering*). By so doing, the novels and short story discussed here pay close attention to specific constellations, thus carefully negotiating the possibilities for Indigenous agency between different discourses (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and legal positions vis-à-vis the nation and the state.

Armstrong's and King's texts document the paradox of seeking to circumvent the nation in an exploration of alternative constellations of agency, while at the same time engaging with the Canadian nation-state as a dominant construct. Kit Dobson has emphasized a visibility of the state to Indigenous citizens that by far exceeds its visibility to its Anglo-Canadian citizens, its presence in Indigenous communities and everyday lives (2009, p. 126). This overbearing and often oppressive presence is made explicit in the Indigenous texts that have been discussed in this chapter; this not only generates an urgency to formulate forms of 'co-authorship' and 'co-actorship' that counter the demands of the nation-state ('Borders,' *Slash*), but also redefine its premises ('Borders'), or even transcend them (*Slash*, *Whispering*). In this sense, they are as 'timely' and spatially specific as Kogawa's novel; they call attention to the specific places and spaces of enactment of citizenship, an issue that I will turn to in more detail in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

Writing Lives: Cartographies of Citizenship and Belonging

4.1 Place, Life Writing, and Citizenship

The previous two chapters have explored the narrative constitution of subjects and practices of citizenship in the context of specific rights struggles, Japanese Canadian redress and Indigenous self-determination; each of the texts engaged with hegemonic understandings of citizenship, its structural mechanisms of exclusion, and—in *Slash* and *Whispering in Shadows*—with alternative frameworks of membership and belonging. Armstrong's novels in particular not only highlight the embeddedness of citizenship struggles in specific discursive and ideological contexts; they also point to the importance of place. Even though the relation to the land and to specific places tends to be especially pronounced in Indigenous literatures' negotiations of citizenship, the importance of 'place' for citizenship and belonging, for co-authorship and co-actorship, is not exclusive to Aboriginal writing. The 'nation' is an abstract concept that is spatially manifest; citizenship is always enabled and enacted *somewhere*: in institutionalized localities such as in parliament or at the border, but also on the streets, at community centers, and in resistance camps. Therefore, while the nation remains abstract, the places of engagement with the nation are necessarily concrete.

Theories of modernity have juxtaposed the concept of 'space' as an abstract notion to the more concrete 'place' (see, e.g., Giddens 1990,

K. Sarkowsky, *Narrating Citizenship and Belonging in Anglophone Canadian Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96935-0_4

pp. 18–19), and postcolonial critics have taken up this distinction to capture what is perceived as a pre-colonial spatial embeddedness of place vs. the colonial abstraction of space (e.g., Ashcroft 2001, pp. 15–17, 158–61). Clearly, the abstract space of the nation can easily be contextualized in a modern understanding of space as 'disembedded' (Giddens 1990, p. 21); however, the association of 'abstract space' with the modern and of 'concrete place' with the pre-modern does not do justice to the complex relationship between space and place in a framework of transnationalization processes that clearly have a bearing—as for instance Armstrong's *Whispering* illustrates—on the ways in which the possibilities of citizenship are negotiated both in theory and in literature. Rather, the understanding of space and place terms as interdependent and mutually constitutive that has emerged in the context of the so-called spatial turn can draw out the complex relationship between the nation and the places where membership and belonging to the nation or other collectives are enacted. For Michel de Certeau, '*Space is a practiced place*' (1984, p. 117), and in turn, he sees place spatialized by practice, hereby defining space as the dynamic counterpart to (inherently static) place. More recently, sociologist Martina Löw has formulated a relational and processual notion of space and place. In this understanding, space and (human) action are not separated; space is produced and structured by action, and action is in turn influenced by and interwoven with space; the construction of space includes place, while place is inscribed by the larger and potentially shifting spatial constellations of which it is a part (Löw 2001, p. 271). Such revaluation of space has had important implications for literary studies. Since the end of the 1990s, developments in literary and cultural studies have paid tribute to the insight that space and place are constitutive of rather than mere settings for or backgrounds to the plots. This interdependence of space and place with action is not merely reflected in literature; what is more, literary texts—understood as a form of social practice, as part of democratic iterations—constitute elements of spatial constellations as well as of the inscription of places.

Critics have frequently commented on the importance of 'space' in and for Canadian literature (New 1997); it has been repeated so often (both affirmatively and critically) that is appeared to have become a truism. While I do not intend to make generalized claims about the significance of space in Canadian literature, with regard to how citizenship and belonging are negotiated in 'CanLit,' I would certainly want to argue that place and space are not only crucial but also complicated by

specifically Canadian constellations. This significance extends beyond the necessary attention to the places where citizenship is enacted; when the dynamics and relationality of space and place are taken seriously—as insisted by theorists such as de Certeau and Löw—the significance of space is able to go beyond the question of mere setting, entailing an exploration of how specific localities bring forth particular citizenship practices, and how, in turn, these practices transform space and place. Armstrong's novels explore the place specificity of co-actorship and co-authorship by juxtaposing an embedded, placed community to displaced activism which is either enacted 'on the move' or in cities, in either case away from the place of the protagonist's genuine belonging. Even in Joy Kogawa's novels (discussed in Chapter 2), with their strongly pronounced concern with the nation as an abstract concept, place is not only important as the site where citizenship is practiced and recognized (at parliament and in community centers, but also in the more abstract national 'public' presented by the media); over the course of the novels, there is also a shift from the prairies (where Naomi's narrative begins and ends in *Obasan*) to the city (most significantly pronounced as a locality of citizenship activity in *Emily Kato*) that seems to indicate the close proximity of the urban to the practice of citizenship. While this is essentially the reversed move of Armstrong's protagonists, both cases offer a very specific understanding of citizenship that is enacted in place.

These differently directed moves—away from the city toward a more rural locale and toward the city as a central locus of the modern understanding of citizenship—reflect a pronounced juxtaposition of 'small towns' and 'the city' both in Anglophone Canadian literature and the bearing it has on the conceptualization of 'Canada.' As Caroline Rosenthal has argued,

> the small town seemed to capture Canadianness to a far greater extent than the city, because it allowed for renditions of a regional and local rather than a national identity. Cities often serve to epitomize national ideas, whereas small towns capture regional identities. (2011, p. 23)

Thus, ironically, 'local' or 'regional' identities seem to transport notions of 'Canadianness' more strongly than the multicultural and cosmopolitan city—which at the same time, by virtue of its diversity, embodies the national self-image. However, the central argument in this and the next

chapter maintains that both spatial constellations provide crucial locations for the enactment of citizenship and help shape the possibilities of citizenship practice and identification. The scope of this enactment is not congruent with the location, however: Citizenship enacted in a rural location is not automatically 'regional' or 'local,' and neither is the enactment in an urban setting necessarily 'national' or 'cosmopolitan.' Rather, the locatedness and directedness of citizenship is complicated by historical factors (as illustrated in Kogawa's novels), by culturally specific conceptualizations of community and citizenship (as shown in Armstrong's work), and by diasporic mobility and constellations.

While fiction illustrates the close link that exists between citizenship and place, it is in life writing that the interconnectedness of the narrative construction of subjectivity, place, agency, and citizenship is most prominently revealed. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson introduce the term 'life writing' very broadly as 'writing that takes a life, one's own or another, as its subject' (2010, p. 4); given that this effectually would render the term without any explanatory value (fiction, too, is, after all, about life and lives), they then restrict their actual use of the term to *self*-referential writing practices, thereby not covering biography as life writing (p. 5). While I agree that there are crucial differences between the ways in which autobiographical and biographical writing narrates a life, I will nevertheless use the term 'life writing' in this chapter to cover writing that is explicitly referential, but not exclusively self-referential. Even though the biographer is in a different position than the autobiographer, both present a life strategically and selectively; biography is by no means the neutral depiction of another person's life but as much as autobiography and memoir the result of selection, omission, and interpretation, and this applies not only to 'biographies proper,' but also to biographies embedded in autobiographical writing. After all, like autobiography, 'biography is a form of narrative, not just a presentation of facts' (Lee 2009, p. 5). Accordingly, in my reading of how the texts to be analyzed in this chapter include life stories other than that of the autobiographer, I will focus on the question of these stories' function in life narrative.

Like the *bildungsroman* that was briefly discussed in the previous chapter, the genre of life writing is one of the subject formations, usually beginning in childhood—that is, a life stage in which the individual is or may be a citizen, in which he or she is ideologically interpellated as a particular type of normative or deviant citizen, but in which she/he is not (yet) a political agent. Hence, in its scope, its focus on becoming

and its attempt at individual meaning-making, life writing can be read as countering the conception of the 'citizen' as 'fully cooperating over a complete life' and thus as a 'perpetual adult' (Lanoix 2007, p. 115). Subjectivity is always ideologically inscribed in literature, and life writing offers the possibility of observing the narrative workings of what Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson have called the 'ideological I' in autobiographical writing:

> The ideological 'I' is at once everywhere and nowhere in autobiographical acts, in the sense that the notion of personhood and the ideologies of identity constitutive of it are so internalized (personally and culturally) that they seem "natural" and "universal" characteristics of persons. Yet changing notions of personhood affect autobiographical acts and practices; so do the competing ideological notions of personhood co-existing at any historical moment. (2010, p. 77)

Thus, the narrative construction of personhood and subjectivity is grounded in notions of how individuals relate to collectives, whether they be national, religious, ethnic, or linguistic, and this has implications for how these narratives, in turn, are seen as affecting the understanding of these collectives. Canadian life writing has been placed in direct relation to Canadian nationhood, both affirmatively and critically. Susanna Egan and Gabriele Helms have described life writing in Canada as 'preeminent among the genres in which the evolving character and concerns of the nation have been and continue to be written' (2004, p. 216). Joanne Saul has argued with regard to a particular type of Canadian life writing that she—citing George Bowering—calls 'biotext' (and one of the texts that will be discussed in this chapter will exemplify this) that it 'question[s] notions of national belonging by disrupting the narrative that incorporates the displaced subject into a national and cultural uniformity' (2001, p. 263). In either case, as an act of affirmation or of resistance, the construction of individual subjectivity is seen as inextricably intertwined with its national context or rather, with ideological notions of selfhood that dominate national discursive space and discourses of citizenship.

In this light, this chapter explores the link between place, history, citizenship, and life narratives in Canada; it proceeds from the assumption that reflections on and recollections of individual lives—not despite but precisely because of their constitutive process of selection, omission, and

fallibility of memory—present important considerations of how the individual belongs, fails to belong, or is prevented from belonging to collectivities and how these individual lives are conceptualized as lives of successful, failing, or resistant citizens. In what follows, I will examine three very different texts pertaining to the prairies and the British Columbia Interior, each of which deals with the genre conventions of life writing, its autobiographical as well as biographical aspects very differently, and each of which distinctly relates subjectivity to specific places as well as to the nation. I claim that the texts that will be discussed in this chapter—Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* (1973), Cheryl Foggo's *Pourin' Down Rain* (1990), and Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* (1997)—negotiate the individual emplacement in a specific geographical and historical framework as a crucial component of the possibilities for citizenship and belonging, or lack thereof; they explore and test the possibilities of agency in a strategic reference to community and/or family members and their life stories. To borrow Kathy-Ann Tan's words, all of the individuals whose lives are presented here are minoritized 'bodies that repeatedly have to (re)negotiate their very existences in the public spaces of the nation in which they … reside, compelled to challenge and overturn the ways in which they have been interpellated, identified, and read' (2015, pos. 313), but the ways in which this interpellation is reflected upon and turned into a narrative struggle for self-definition vary, and so does the role of other individuals' life stories embedded in autobiographical reminiscence.

Campbell's autobiography was published in the 1970s during a time of intense Indigenous activism, and it connects in form and narrative structure to other texts at the time; it also draws, as I will discuss in more detail below, on both Indigenous and non-Indigenous autobiographical conventions. Despite her rise to prominence, Campbell's first book, *Halfbreed*—which was published when she was thirty-three—remains her most widely discussed book to this day. The other two texts that will be examined in this chapter are both part of what has been called the 'memoir boom' of the 1990s (Eakin 2014, p. 32), even though they could not be more different in form: whereas Foggo's is a seemingly straightforward memoir about coming of age as black and female in Alberta in the 1960s and 1970s largely adheres to autobiographical conventions of chronological structure and development and is complemented by illustrative photographs as well as a family tree to help guide the reader, Wah's is a formally self-reflexive, postmodern

collage of memories and stories centered on the Chinese-Canadian family restaurant in Nelson, BC that actively questions the conventions of life writing and narrative self-construction. *Pourin' Down Rain* was Foggo's first book that has received little academic attention to date, despite its groundbreaking subject matter. In contrast, by the time *Diamond Grill* was published, Wah was already well established and internationally respected as a poet, and his autobiographical text has generated expansive critical response.

Reading these three texts alongside one another, I want to draw attention to the ways in which each not only narratively constructs a self in place, but also explores the implications of that place in regard to belonging and possibilities of agency and citizenship. The narratives all use the stories of community and family members not only as a relational framework to embed and frame their own story, but also to narrate the intersection between a concrete place, history, and the struggle for substantive citizenship. In all three texts, the respective ethnic group's historical exclusion from formal citizenship plays a crucial role for how substantive citizenship is conceptualized not only as the unhindered possibility of political co-actorship, but also of co-authorship, of the re-writing of places that have long been constructed as 'white' and that now are claimed as palimpsestic spaces of overlapping and intertwined ethnic histories. Nevertheless, the relation between place, nation, and citizenship is conceptualized very differently in the texts. Even though the text insists on the affirmation of a political and cultural constellation that predates the establishment of the Canadian nation-state, Campbell's narrative positions itself partly against and partly within the nation with a strong educational agenda directed at a national audience. Foggo presents the renegotiation of place and citizenship in a decidedly national framework: Hers is about a black *Canadian* historical revision. I aim to show that both Campbell and Foggo's texts make the place-specific history of their families and ethnic groups not only the basis of the narrative self-construction but also of their claim to belonging and their educational agenda. In contrast, Wah's biotext is decidedly anti-pedagogical and deconstructivist, seeking not only to counter but also bypass the nation, a paradoxical endeavor that is frequently and self-reflexively revealed throughout the text.

4.2 Narrative Structures and Cultural Citizenship: Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*

In 1973, thirty-three-year-old Métis activist Maria Campbell published *Halfbreed*, an autobiographical account that traces her life from her childhood in Saskatchewan in the 1940s to her political activism in the 1960s. It has become a classic since its publication, a culturally and politically important text that has served as a crucial encouragement to many Indigenous writers (Acoose quoted in Million 2009, p. 59). *Halfbreed* is considered a 'watershed for Native literature' as well as a 'standard' (McKenzie quoted in Fagan et al. 2009, p. 258). By now, it has become an essential component of school and university curricula. Much of the text's criticism has focused on the construction of identity, and while this dominant reading comes as no surprise for an autobiographical narrative, it has been criticized as being too narrow. For Dylan Miner, 'Campbell's body of work is about being, becoming, and belonging, not about the ambiguities of hybrid identities' (2012, pos. 4141), even though the identifications that are formed in the texts tend to shift and blur identity boundaries.

I read this autobiographical narrative as a self-reflexive testimony with an intensely political agenda that is less concerned with identity categories than it is with a story of individual survival that hinges on community survival and continuity; even more importantly for the context of this chapter, I consider it a text that uses a particular narrative structure to explore agency, belonging, and a non-national form of Indigenous citizenship. The narrative form of life writing, I suggest, is crucial in regard to how an autobiographical text can function as an act of cultural co-authorship, and this particularly applies to texts that draw on a range of autobiographical conventions. In my reading of Campbell's text, I would therefore like to focus less on the actual narrative and more on its structure; specifically, I will look at its use of paratextual elements and on the way in which it structurally embeds the autobiographical narrator's story in the history of the Métis people. Even though Foggo and Wah also strongly rely on the integration of family members' stories that complement and contextualize the autobiographical narrative, Campbell's text—with its pronounced pedagogical agenda—translates this individual connection to the community into a narrative structure that draws on both Indigenous conventions of life narration and the use of historical narrative for educational purposes.

4.2.1 *'I Will Begin Again': Narrative Structures and the Construction of Self*

Halfbreed has two beginnings: the 'Introduction,' which I will discuss in detail below; and a rendering of the history of the Métis and the Riel rebellion before the narrator gradually 'zooms in' on her own life. Chapter 1 sketches the history of the Métis from their move to Manitoba in the early nineteenth century to their military defeat at Batoche, SK in 1884. Chapter 2 focuses on the Métis after they had to give up their life as hunters, and depicts a story of a proud people who have been forced into poverty and desperation. Nevertheless, it also begins to connect said story to the narrator's family's story, and eventually to her own; the individual's story, Campbell thereby seems to suggest, is not understandable without this collective framework. Arnold Krupat has argued that Indigenous life narratives tend to project a different sense of self than 'Western' autobiographies, and he proposes to juxtapose these conceptions as 'metonymic' and 'synecdochic': where 'personal accounts are marked by the individual's sense of herself predominantly in relation to other distinct individuals,' he speaks of a 'metonymic' sense of self, whereas 'where narration of personal history is more nearly marked by the individual's sense of himself in relation to collective social units or groupings, one might speak of a *synecdochic* sense of self' (1991, p. 176). Krupat's distinction is highly problematic if understood as an ontological binary of an Indigenous and a Western sense of self as expressed in autobiographical narrative.[1] Yet, if understood as activating an autobiographical convention, therefore as performative rather than as an expression of a sense of self, this distinction helps to capture how Campbell follows what Deanna Reder has called a 'protocol' of Indigenous self-representation, that is, 'to introduce oneself by introducing one's nation, family, and territory' (2010, p. 160). Seen from this perspective, Campbell adheres to said protocol and makes communal history part of the autobiographical story and vice versa by so doing. This mutual embedding, I suggest,

[1] Krupat has used this distinction to argue that 'autobiography' is a Western genre built on a liberal notion of the autonomous self and as such has no equivalent in Indigenous tradition (1985, p. 29). I concur with the critique of his position as formulated by Deanna Reder, that such a position is not merely descriptive but prescriptive and that it 'naturalizes stereotypical binaries' (2010, p. 156). It does so only, however, when the autobiographical utterance is regarded as a self-expression unmarked by culturally established narrative conventions.

creates a tension to the narrative voice in the introduction that is at the core of the text's citizenship agenda promoting both communal and individual agency in addition to attempting to find an adequate narrative form for both, as I will discuss below. Furthermore, it also drives the educational agenda of the text: By providing a historical overview, the first two chapters most likely also seek to fill a gap in the general population's historical knowledge regarding the Métis people.

The 'Introduction' and the first two chapters circumscribe a social and historical context before the third chapter finally begins with 'I was born …' (Campbell 1982 [1973], p. 19). They are necessary to establish the speaking position as an authentication of a particular representative voice: the voice of an activist with an obligation to tell her story not as a form of individual self-expression but—the structure suggests—out of an obligation to her people to make her story heard as representative of the story of 'the Métis' generally and 'Métis women' in particular. As such, the text does not only narrate an individual life, but also reflects another narrative pattern that can be found in Aboriginal fiction of the 1960s and 1970s as well: frustration and desperation that make the protagonist leave the community, followed by a descent into hell and abuse, and finally a return to the community and a new beginning. The overall plot structure of *Halfbreed* thus appears to indicate yet another narrative pattern. Like many Indigenous life narratives of the 1970s and 1980s—including fictional ones, as illustrated in my reading of *Slash* in the previous chapter—Campbell's also emphasizes the centrality of return to place and community for the individual, thus rejecting a narrative convention of individuation, in which the individual requires a leave-taking from the community in order to mature, a pattern of narrative that William Bevis (1987) has referred to as 'homing-in.' I read this narrative pattern of return as a conscious reference to a time-specific convention that is not part of the main body of the story but hinges on the introduction, just like the 'zooming in' narrative strategy that was discussed above. As a peritext in Genette's sense (2001, pos. 539) and as a 'threshold' between the narrative and its framing (pos. 488), the 'Introduction' is a constitutive part of the self-narrative that situates it, as Smith and Watson explain, 'by constructing the audience and inviting a particular politics of reading' (2010, p. 101). The final passage of Campbell's 'Introduction' presents a realization that will shape the reader's perception of everything to come. She writes:

> Going home after so long a time, I thought that I might find again the happiness and beauty I had known as a child. But as I walked down the rough dirt road, poked through the broken old buildings and thought back over the years, I realized that I could never find that here. Like me the land had changed, my people were gone, and if I was to know peace I would have to search within myself. That is when I decided to write about my life. (1982 [1973], pp. 7–8)

To some extent the passage counters the narrative structure of return, as it is manifest for instance in *Slash*: here, returning is not homecoming, there is no community, and the turn to interiority (an indicator of a 'metonymic' sense of self for Krupat) appears to be the only refuge. However, the passage also explains Campbell's motivation for writing her life—and here the autobiographical narration is indeed a form of return. Life writing is not only a way of individually coming to terms with a history of dispossession and the experience of violence, but it also offers a way of coming to terms with the impossibility of return and thus simultaneously supports and counters a narrative convention of Indigenous (life) writing. The 'autoethnographic' gesture in the sense defined by Smith and Watson—that is, as characterized by 'its focus on the *ethnos*, or social group … rather than on the *bios* or individual life' (2010, p. 157)—is crucial for this text. The very structure of an individualized introduction, followed by a narrative process of 'zooming-in' from the Métis via her family history to herself positions the autobiographical subject in a context of community narration, but also as an educator and activist. It thus reverberates what I consider to be the dual citizenship agenda of this text: on the plot level—which I have discussed elsewhere—*Halfbreed* tells a life story that ends with a symbolic homecoming of the autobiographical protagonist and with her decision to get involved in the struggle for Métis rights (Sarkowsky 2018); on the discursive level, the text promotes an educational agenda of literary citizenship.

4.2.2 "I Write This for All of You": Pedagogy and Literary Citizenship

The memoir's emplotment and its previously discussed structure that leads from a political and self-reflexive framing to a 'zooming in' from the larger framework of community and family history to individual story

highlight its agenda of cultural citizenship. *Halfbreed* was published at a time that Donald Purich has labeled 'the rebirth of the Metis' (Purich 1988, p. 158) and two years before Howard Adams's important *Prison of Grass: Canada from the Native Point of View* and Lee Maracle's autobiographical *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel* (both of which were published in 1975). It must therefore be read in a context in which both the infamous 'White Paper'—which was discussed in passing in the previous chapter—as well as the angry and deeply frustrated reaction of Indigenous peoples to ongoing colonization and discrimination were not only present but paramount. Melissa Lam has read the tour de force through Métis history that I have discussed in the previous section as deliberate in its brevity, 'demonstrating that [Campbell] recognizes the telling of history as an unreliable, yet persistent human construct' (2012, pos. 579). I am not sure I agree; while Lam is right, of course, to remind us of the constructed nature of all historical narratives, including counter-narratives, I infer that Campbell—at least in this specific historical moment—is defiantly offering a counter-history concerning the legitimacy and authority which the text must insist upon for its revisionist and educational agenda. As indicated, *Halfbreed* is an utterly educational text, and deliberately so; the brief historical narrative in the first two chapters is part of it. In the 'Introduction' as well as toward the end of the narrative, the autobiographical narrator addresses the reader directly:

> I am not very old, so perhaps some day, when I too am a grannie, I will write more. I write this for all of you, to tell you what it is like to be a Halfbreed woman in our country. I want to tell you about the joys and sorrows, the oppressing poverty, the frustrations and the dreams. (Campbell 1982 [1973], p. 8)

This address is both conciliatory and confrontational: it creates a 'we'—'our country'—but it also emphasizes the political and didactic function of the autobiography to educate the public about life worlds they most likely have not come in contact with. The implied audience in this passage is most likely not Indigenous (or at least not comprised of Indigenous *women*), but presumably a 'national' audience that needs to be educated, not only about the history and contemporary lives of the Indigenous population, but also about the Métis as a group in its own right. As Miner writes, 'although Métis historical narratives commonly intertwine with both First Nations and settlers, their stories are uniquely

Michif' (2012, pos. 4052), an aspect that is particularly foregrounded in the early chapters of Campbell's narrative pertaining to her childhood. As Jolene Armstrong has stressed, the 'story that Campbell tells in *Halfbreed* is not merely an autobiography. It is an important history—a counter-narrative to the 'official' histories of the Métis people in Canada' (2012, pos. 86). In her conceptualization of literary citizenship, Donna Palmateer Pennee understands literary culture as a form of 'interventionist diplomacy' (2004, p. 79) and sees the function of literary texts (as well as the diversification of the literary canon) as a chance to 'get from *identity* to *identifying with* …, from a state of being to a process of being and of becoming, a process that includes the processes of being citizens, of being interventionist diplomats' (p. 80). Pennee's understanding of literary citizenship is clearly pedagogical, but it is equally clearly directed at an Anglo-Canadian audience in need of education.

Campbell's text achieves that, but it achieves much more, for it insists on an individual and communal narrative that reclaims both place and a discursive space for Métis women in the mid-1970s. Hers is not a story abstractly placed in 'Canada' but in specific locations in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, with northern Saskatchewan framing the narrative. These places, particularly the prairie locations, are historically and communally inscribed, and it is the identification with place and community that is being claimed in the narrative, which gains additional strength by means of the text's branching out toward national activism in the end when the narrator relates, 'I have brothers and sisters, all over the country' (Campbell 1982 [1973], p. 157). But even despite this apparent 'zooming out'—the inverse narrative move of the autobiography's beginning—the connection to the local remains and manifests itself in the narrator's great-grandmother Cheechum, a crucial person throughout the narrative: 'My Cheechum never surrendered at Batoche: she only accepted what she considered a dishonourable truce. She waited all her life for a new generation of people who would make this country a better place to live in' (p. 156). This is the narrator's own generation, and herein lies some of the text's challenge and invitation. While many elements of *Halfbreed* are directed at a broader audience, the text as such, however, has clearly offered Indigenous people and Métis women in particular a sense of identification; Reder has highlighted the 'importance of Indigenous autobiography to Indigenous readers' (2010, p. 154), and her own account of the reception of Campbell's book in her family attests to this importance (ibid.). This dual audience address

thus echoes the dual framework of autobiographical narrative conventions that I have discussed above; however, it is also crucial to the text's political and educational agenda and its possibility to not only narrate the increasing radius of Métis co-actorship and agency in the 1960s as both state-directed and Indigenous-nationalist, but also function as an act of co-authorship, which it has since its publication in the 1970s.

4.3 "Black, Canadian, One of My Family": Cheryl Foggo's *Pourin' Down Rain*

4.3.1 Black Canadian Spaces

The spaces most closely associated with black life in Canada are urban. However, George Elliott Clarke's (2002) project of recovering African-Canadian literature, while in its implications directed at the nation, have focused strongly on the local and regional, namely, on Nova Scotia and the long-standing black presence since the eighteenth century. More recently, Karina Vernon (2008) has looked at the prairies that previously had not featured strongly (if at all) on this literary map of black Canada. As this subchapter sets out to show, not only the cultural and historical presence of black people in the prairies, but also the struggles for citizenship bound to this particular setting find their manifestation in literature. Esi Edugyan's *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne* (2004) or Lawrence Hill's *Some Great Thing* (1992) provide important and place-specific fictional explorations of black life in the Prairie provinces. Life writing plays an important role in that it tends to connect the story of a maturing self with the discovery of that self's historical and ideological positionality.

So whereas *Halfbreed* asserts the Indigenous history of the prairies and its far-reaching implications for contemporary Métis self-understanding, Cheryl Foggo's memoir *Pourin' Down Rain* embeds the autobiographical narrative of 'growing up black in Alberta'—as George Elliott Clarke has entitled his review of the memoir (2002, p. 313)—in the autobiographical speaker's coming of age through a prism of personal memory and experience on the one hand and an exploration of black prairie history on the other hand. It shares with the two other texts discussed in this chapter the emphasis on an extended understanding of the individual life story by including biographical sketches of family members

and ancestors—a relational construction of self which, however, foregrounds this self to varying degrees and assigns different functions to these other stories.

In Foggo's memoir, I assert, these stories serve to draw attention to what Vernon has called the 'black prairie archive' that 'retains consciousness of the manifestly racial ideologies that have worked historically to produce the prairies as a social space' and that is thus—like the other spaces under discussion in this and the following chapters—understood 'not as a natural geographic location, but as an ideological and 'ideational space'' (2008, pp. 17–18)[2]; crucially, this archive is local and national as well as transnational, documenting the participation of black settlers in local and national spaces, but also a manifestation of transnational migration and diasporic community building. It is a simultaneous manifestation of belonging and un-belonging: the exclusion of non-white presences and experiences from both lived and imagined spaces is also documented in the memoir, which is both a part and an illustration of the workings of this archive. The recovery of these black life stories and spaces, both fictional and referential, not only explores and reveals the re-writing of citizenship scripts by those whose ancestors found sanctuary in Canada but were not meant to 'actively participate in the public sphere' (Walcott 2003, p. 36); it also constitutes an act of cultural citizenship in its own right.

In my reading of *Pourin' Down Rain*, I will focus on three interconnected aspects that I consider central to the memoir's negotiation of citizenship, belonging, and place: the autobiographical narrator's process of becoming aware of the specificity of the prairies as a space of black experience, of the possibilities and hindrances to black citizenship and belonging; the centrality of Canada and the USA as spaces of transnational black cultural citizenship; and the constitutive integration of family stories as simultaneously local, national, and diasporic that document how 'black Canadian spaces and places,' as Katherine McKittrick has put it in a more general context, 'speak to each other in ways that gesture to various historical, political, and social geographies inside and outside the Canadian nation-state, and inside and outside multiple black Canadian geographical locales' (2002, p. 31).

[2]I would like to thank Karina Vernon for allowing me to cite from her dissertation manuscript 'The Black Prairies: History, Subjectivity, Writing' (University of Victoria 2008).

In its focus on the autobiographical narrator's maturation, *Pourin' Down Rain* is structurally and thematically a *bildungsroman* (Vernon 2008, p. 168). Growing up and the process of increasing political and self-awareness are narrated on the one hand by systematically linking the protagonist to family, history, and place—an aspect I will turn to in more detail in the next two subchapters. On the other hand, maturation is presented as an act of self-reflexivity in which the narrating 'I' frequently comments on her growing understanding of what it means to be black in Canada and, more specifically, in the prairies. When the narrator relates how on the annual family trips to see the grandparents in Winnipeg, she and her siblings 'delighted in stopping for meals in towns like Medicine Hat and Swift Current, although the open-mouthed and unabashed stares that we received would be enough to put me off my dinner now' (Foggo 1990, p. 15), she explicitly speaks as the adult who looks back on her childhood with a deeper understanding of the prevalence of everyday racism. Even though, as George Elliott Clarke has highlighted, *Pourin' Down Rain* clearly 'showcases the richness, the joy, and the love of black family and community life' and thereby 'offers an accidental corrective to the vulgar, depressing interpretations of what it means to live in a black skin in a society that rejects blackness' (2002, p. 313), it nonetheless focuses strongly on its narrator's growing awareness of racism and the 'whiteness' of Canadian society as its taken-for-granted, normative self-image. The memoir sketches a development from a Freudian 'oceanic feeling' of unquestioning and unquestioned belonging (Vernon 2008, pp. 168–69) through experiences of alienation toward a self-reflexive identification as 'Black, Canadian, one of my family' (Foggo 1990, p. 117). The process of maturation described is one of increasing understanding that belonging is not a given, that has to be actively claimed, and that the resulting identification is not only complex but potentially even contradictory. The process of claiming increasingly extends from the literally territorial play of children (Vernon 2008, p. 170) to the literal *and* symbolical territorial claim of the young adult to belonging 'here in Western Canada where my family has lived and worked for four generations' (Foggo 1990, p. 83).

The narrator's claim to belonging on the basis of long-term occupancy and working of the land ties in with a settlement narrative that draws its legitimation from genealogical presence and from hard work. This is reflected in the title of the memoir: 'pourin' down rain' refers to

a narrative by the autobiographer's great-aunt Daisy and the family's move from Oklahoma to Saskatchewan: 'That day [April 16th, 1912], she said, it was 'pourin' down rain. It was pourin' down rain when we pulled out of the station in Oklahoma, and it was pourin' down rain when we pulled into Delmenie, Saskatchewan'' (p. 105). Signaling the importance of the family's settlement already in the title, Foggo's memoir at a first glance appears to be claiming a long-established black space that is subversive in its deconstruction of non-Indigenous settlement of the prairies as exclusively 'white,' but that nevertheless tends to 'deny other recent geographies' and 'suggest a linear history that reproduces a number of contained and nostalgic black Canadian pockets/sites,' as McKittrick (2002, p. 30) has put it in a different context. But the narrative is more complicated, for the focus of the memoir is not only on the story of settlement in Canada, but also includes long narrative passages relating the maternal family's migration story from Oklahoma to Alberta in the early twentieth century, thus establishing an important historical link to African American communities and to the history of slavery in the USA. And while clearly underdeveloped, there is the story of the autobiographical narrator's father, who migrated from Bermuda, thus signaling a more complex process of black community building that is not limited to black pioneers and their descendants but that also includes more recent diasporic contexts.

The history of the maternal family and the father's Bermudian background point to a crucial spatial constellation outlined in the memoir: while it affirms a sense of belonging based on a 'long and continuous black presence on the prairies' (Vernon 2008, p. 182), it also presents these communities as the result of migration—from the USA, from Bermuda—and thereby, as Winfried Siemerling has phrased it, offers a trajectory that 'includes both diasporic consciousness of black Atlantic routes and the knowledge of settler roots' (2015, p. 320). It also includes the USA—one node of the black Atlantic routes—as both a location of settlement and transition. In the following section, I will first look in more detail at the role of the family narratives between migration and settlement to argue that they both inscribe a black presence and provide the autobiographical narrator with a strong sense of 'being placed' at the complex intersection of individual and collective histories in a specific place. Whereas the family connection to the USA is a central historical facet of this self-narrative, the contemporary connection to the USA,

as I want to show in a second step, provides the autobiographical narrator with temporary identifications that are crucial for her exploration of both cultural and political citizenship and for her eventual acknowledgment of a black Canadian identity.

4.3.2 Border Crossings: Black History and Diasporic Inscriptions of Place

Pourin' Down Rain presents a complex exploration of identity formation through the inscription of place. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, place is both relational and dynamic, and Foggo's memoir clearly presents such an understanding of place and space. The tension between the places of potential belonging and 'elsewhere,' however, is crucial for spatial inscription as well as for the exploration of agency. A frequently recurring 'elsewhere' is presented not by other places in Canada, but by the USA. The USA is a place inextricably bound up with the family history of slavery and migration, with continuing family ties, and with political identification with the African American struggle. It also presents, as a political and social entity, a frequently evoked counter model to Canada.

The first chapter of Foggo's memoir is entitled 'Meeting Jim Crow.' The title is puzzling at first since the chapter stresses community solidarity and kinship among black families in Bowness, AB, and while it reports encounters that five-year-old Cheryl has with racism—one direct, others through stories about family members—the chapter appears to serve as an implementation of the complex family relationship to the USA rather than illustrating the mechanisms of a racist and legally instituted system of racial segregation. The young protagonist's direct encounter with racist attitudes narrated in this section concerns a brother and a sister who are forbidden by their father from associating with the black children in the neighborhood. This happens at an early point in the narrative; the protagonist is aware of her blackness, but not yet of its social implications, and the way in which the narrative voice phrases this instance of racial bigotry reflects that there is not yet a feeling of being excluded or marginalized: 'Their father … *effectively ostracized his children from the rest of the neighborhood* by prohibiting them from joining any games where we Black children were present…. They were there, we were aware of their presence, and in retrospect, their loneliness seems palpable' (Foggo 1990, p. 5; emphasis mine). From the narrator's perspective,

it is the two (presumably white) children who are ostracized by their father's prohibition, not the black children. While Cheryl will encounter exclusion and marginalization in the years to come, this passage presents a perception of the world where the group with which the protagonist identifies is not marginal but central.

It is another context in which the young protagonist 'meets Jim Crow' in this chapter, if indirectly. Eavesdropping on her mother's phone conversation with the principal of Cheryl's elementary school, she is confronted with a specter of Jim Crow. Declining the principal's request that she tries to convince a relative to keep his children from fighting at school, the narrator's mother explains to her: 'They couldn't fight Jim Crow down there, but he's determined to fight it here… . It's called Jim Crow when Black people aren't allowed to ride at the front of the bus, or drink from the same fountain as Whites' (p. 6). Her relatives come from Kansas, the narrator learns, seeking to escape the systemic racism of the South's Jim Crow laws. 'We don't have that kind of thing here. Kansas is in the States,' (ibid.) her mother assures her and the autobiographical narrator finds herself relieved 'to learn that Kansas was not in Canada. Here was yet another story, another horrific tale of life in 'The States,' fuelling my growing belief that I was lucky to have been born in Canada' (p. 7). From the child's perspective, the image of Canada as a sanctuary appears to be confirmed.

However, the phrasing has the narrating 'I' distance herself from the young narrated 'I' and the juxtaposition of Canada and the USA in this first chapter suggests a binary that does not hold throughout the memoir: neither is Canada as free of racism as the narrator had assumed as a child—as I will discuss in more detail below—nor is the USA a place with which all ties are severed. On the contrary, the family connections alluded to in this episode prepare an increasing narrative engagement of the autobiographical narrator with her family's past that is marked by border crossings of ancestors: fleeing the Jim Crow South is preceded by flight from slavery in the nineteenth century and by black farmers seeking to build a new life in the Canadian prairies in the early twentieth century (Vernon 2008, pp. 48–57). The 'criss-crossing of the Canadian-American border' that Rinaldo Walcott (2003, p. 34) has highlighted for the nineteenth century is a historical constant, even though its implications change.

'Any account of the past is relational, conceived from specific horizons of understanding. Perceptual position affects how we tell the story

(the choice of emplotment), the selection of incidents and angles, and the omission or sidelining of others,' argues Siemerling (2015, p. 24). While this statement does not explicitly refer to life writing, it certainly applies to the genre. In Foggo's memoir, there are two stories that link the autobiographical narrator and the locales of her life to the larger framework of the (both forced and voluntary) transgenerational mobility of the black Atlantic: the story of an African ancestor and the story of the autobiographer's father Roy. These stories have, I want to suggest, a similar function in what they narrate (and how they do so) and in what they omit or downplay, namely, the function to embed the family's 'Canadian' story in a diasporic framework while stressing the storyline that emphasizes the claim to Canadian space.

The first story traces the maternal family lineage to Africa. The family tree printed as an appendix to the narrative traces the lineage back to Jackson Smith, whose story is told in a late chapter, 'The Rumble of Wagons'; his father, 'an African man named Kudjo [who] lived near the Nile River in Ethiopia with his wife and three children' (Foggo 1990, p. 96), is not part of the family tree, but his story is related briefly in the same chapter. The autobiographical narrator carefully marks Kudjo's narrative of enslavement, his repeated attempts to escape bondage, and his death as the details of an orally transmitted family story 'which I now intend to relate as they were told to me' (ibid.). Most of the other stories clearly are, too, so this framing is noteworthy; it suggests an additional need to authorize the telling of events going back almost one and a half centuries. The story is thus claimed as a family story of African origins, but there is a distancing, too, in its relegation to another's voice. Kudjo's story complements the narrator's discovery of the role of slavery in her family history: 'Somewhere inside I must have known that I was a descendant of American slaves, but I had never acknowledged it. My own great-grandfather was a slave, and I had not known, perhaps had not wanted to know' (pp. 91–92). Kudjo's short narrative refers to both a pre-slavery past and to the traumatic rupture of enslavement.

The background of the narrator's father Roy provides yet another connection to the larger framework of the black Atlantic, but in contrast to Kudjo's, there is almost no story; the only story provided is that of the parents' courtship in Canada. The chapter entitled 'The Bermudians' introduces him and his friend Gilbert as Bible students from Bermuda. There is no mention of his family history, either in this or any other chapter; he arrives in Canada seemingly without a past, and all the reader

learns about him is that he is considered marriageable since he not only is black but also a member of the church (p. 73). There may be numerous reasons why Foggo has chosen to omit her father's story and to give him barely a supporting role in her life narrative. The *effect* of this omission, however, particularly when read alongside the expansive maternal family narrative, is an almost exclusive focus on the family's settlement in the Canadian prairies, excluding the line of the family that immigrated to Canada in the twentieth century.

This impression is confirmed by the final chapter of the memoir that jumps back to the family's migration from Oklahoma in 1912 and to the narrator's great-aunt's memory of 'pourin' down rain' (p. 105). This chapter can be considered a kind of stocktaking of the family's migration to Canada. It revisits the previously told stories and places them in the historical framework of two coinciding events, both in 1910: the loss of voting rights for the black population in what had just become the state of Oklahoma on the one hand and the Canadian government's recruiting of settlers to the prairies on the other. The chapter carefully sketches the hopes as well as the disappointments of the black settlers; the realization by the narrator's great-grandfather that 'Canada's message of welcome had not been intended for him, or others like him' (p. 110) is intertwined with the narrator's own realization of Canada's history of racist exclusion:

> I had experienced racism of the individual variety, but I trusted that my country's history was unblemished by sweeping, legislated bigotry. Only when curiosity about my family's place in the Canadian demography prompted me to read about the reception of Blacks into Canada, only after I dissected my own family's oral histories, did I recognize my error. (pp. 109–10)

The study of family history turns into a study of national history. As such, this closing chapter circles back to the first chapter and its seeming juxtaposition of Canada and the USA; it completes a journey of learning and understanding racism in Canada not as individual bigotry but as systemically ingrained. Yet, it also confirms that despite this realization, the decision to settle in the Canadian prairies was the right one; not only did the legal situation in Canada present a significant improvement (p. 112), but the family was also increasingly successful economically. In an important narrative decision in terms of the emplotment that

results in the memoir's conciliatory closure, the autobiographical narrator declares 1916, a year of comparative comfort and plenty, 'tangible, as though it was part of my own history and memory' (p. 115); the memoir thus ends with imagining the great-grandparents' arrival as successful Canadian citizens. While not all is well and racism persists—as their great-granddaughter will have to discover for herself—they have arrived and lay claim to both local and national belonging. The conciliatory ending of the memoir, in turn, constitutes the autobiographer's own claim to belonging and citizenship.

4.3.3 Black Canada, African America, and Cultural Citizenship

If the USA plays an important role as crucial location of family history and ties, it also presents a symbolic location of black identification and growing political awareness. As indicated in the beginning of this subchapter, the memoir moves from a feeling of unconditional belonging yet largely unmarred by racism as a destructive force via the realization of racist structures in the past and present to a nuanced understanding of positionality and claim to black Canadian belonging. Throughout the memoir, the growing realization of racism as systemic is tied not so much to personal experience but to the engagement with family history. In this process, US black culture serves as a form of time-specific, transitional identification and a trigger to political awareness and agency for the autobiographical narrator that at the end of the memoir transforms into the identification as being black in Canada.

The autobiographical narrator reflects at length on her search for a positive black identification as a teenager, but here as elsewhere, her tone suggests a critical distance between narrating and narrated 'I's. 'In the early seventies, North American Blacks experienced our episode of modishness, or what we referred to then as being 'in.' … It was a shortlived [*sic*] time, but fortunately for me occurred during my adolescence. While undergoing the standard severe pain of being fourteen, I had my newly 'cool' blackness to give me a sense of purpose' (Foggo 1990, p. 51). The distance implied in this passage, I want to suggest, is not just the reflective distance between the adult of the present and the teenager of the past in which the narrator places her search for 'purpose' in the context of both puberty and the specific situation of a black teenager in a largely white environment. It is also the realization that 'North American' refers to US American and Canadian blacks, but that the cultural and political

blackness emulated was US American, with African American culture providing a temporary lens through which to read the narrator's black Canadian experience, and a foil for the enactment of cultural citizenship. 'I began to retreat from what I perceived to be 'White culture.' I immersed myself in the literature of Black authors, became fascinated by the history of Black Americans and was attracted to Black music that reflected a 'revolutionary' message. I no longer believed that Canada was a refuge from racism and resented being raised in isolation from other Blacks' (p. 53). The narrator's fascination and identification with African American culture, particularly its music, thus extends to the desire for black spaces, demographically perceived as American but potentially encompassing a trans- or even post-national blackness.

'It is significant that, in her search for a positive blackness with which to identify, in her historical moment of the 1970s, Foggo looks to African America,' as Vernon (2008, p. 176) has argued, an identification very much in line with Clarke's assessment that 'African Canadians often utilize African-American texts and historical-cultural icons to define African Canadian experience' and that 'most African-Canadian writers, whether native-born or immigrant, eye African-American culture with envy and desire' (2002, p. 72). The narrator of *Pourin' Down Rain* clearly displays such a desire because African American culture appears to answer to a need to belong, and there is a strong sense for the young protagonist of transnational black solidarities. The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. touches her deeply, and the narrator attributes her political awakening to a march in his honor: 'Attending the march was my first political act. I was eleven-years-old [*sic*] and although I had only a vague understanding of what Martin Luther King had actually done in his lifetime, I felt changed by his death. That cool spring evening, *for the first time, I no longer felt far removed from the toil of other Black people'* (Foggo 1990, p. 45; emphasis mine). Political and cultural notions of blackness, throughout large parts of the memoir, are explicitly associated with African America.

However, her temporary identification with African American culture is not without ironic refraction. The narrative voice's constant oscillation between the perspective of young Cheryl and the adult narrator once more adds an ironic distance to the desire expressed in the teenager's identification with African American culture. When at some point she says, 'sometimes I wish I lived in the States …. At least I wouldn't have to walk around in a sea of White faces there,' this statement is answered

by parental amusement: 'We heard them giggle from the kitchen, so outrageous did it strike them that a child of theirs would fantasize about living elsewhere than Canada' (p. 67). I consider the placement of this passage significant: it closes the paragraph, and there is no further comment from the perspective of the teenager that would relativize the 'absurdity' of the very thought; as such, it is very much in line with the narrator's own declaration of identification with Canada at the end of the memoir. Indeed, the 'Black phase,' as the narrator's mother calls her period of identification with African America (p. 66), leads the protagonist to research her family's history and thus allows her to place herself in a black Canadian genealogy. As Vernon has concluded, 'after learning about her family history and the history of the Oklahoma migration, her sense of belonging on the prairies is experienced less as a cut-off, an amputation from African America and the rest of the black diaspora, than as a feeling of deep and meaningful connectedness to a unique and important aspect of 'North American' and 'world' history' (2008, p. 183). The engagement with this history is therefore crucial for the self-understanding the narrator is to develop as well as for the way in which this memoir on the one hand documents black co-actorship in the Canadian West and in which on the other hand it functions as a text of multiply directed co-authorship. As an act of cultural citizenship, the memoir contributes to the re-writing of the prairies as a black Canadian space and thus to a simultaneously local and national debate about place, identification, and belonging; and it contributes to a debate about black citizenship that in the 1990s began to slowly acknowledge that 'African Canada is a conglomeration of many cultures, a spectrum of ethnicities' (Clarke 2002, p. 14) and thus the heterogeneity of the black experience in Canada.

In its inscription of a black experience into the Canadian West and its exploration of the ways in which places 'are not just the sites of our being, but also of our becoming, thus integral to both personal agency and political action' (Tremblay 2014, p. 37), *Pourin' Down Rain* is also a text that addresses multiple audiences. As the introduction specifies, it is, on the one hand, a book for those close to the autobiographer, for 'the aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters, brothers, the friends who I believed to be Black in their own way,' but it is also for 'those who stared at us in Chinatown and wondered what we were doing there—this is so you will know' (Foggo 1990, p. 1). Those who stared at the black family in Calgary's Chinatown in 1965 (the 'you' of this passage) synecdochically

stand for Anglo-Canada, even the nation. The memoir engages—very much in line with the understanding of cultural citizenship as a pedagogical project—in educating a (implicitly white) readership very much unaware of how deeply inscribed Canadian spaces are by the presence, but also official history's 'glaring absences' (Walcott 2003, p. 137) of black Canadians. However, more importantly, it engages in a both defiant and celebratory claiming of literal and symbolic black Canadian space directed at a black audience. Remembering, as Smith and Watson remind us, 'involves a reinterpretation of the past in the present,' a process that is not passive and creates meaning in the act of remembering (2010, p. 22). As an element of an archive and cultural memory, it does so not only for the autobiographer, but potentially also for her audience.

4.4 The BC Interior and the Instability of the Subject: Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*

As the previous subchapter has shown, citizenship—even if it is understood as bound to the nation-state, its seemingly 'natural locus'—is always already marked by tensions, instabilities, and unequal possibilities. The autobiographical constructions of subjectivity in Foggo's *Pourin' Down Rain* challenge a normative understanding of citizenship from within a national geographical space based on historical memory that calls into question the exclusive whiteness of the historical archive. Citizenship necessarily becomes even more complicated when the language of citizenship is used to negotiate issues of membership and belonging that extend beyond and/or counter the claims and rights formulated within a national framework.

Whereas Campbell and Foggo thus engage at least in part in acts of national education, anticipating the pedagogical impetus of literary and cultural citizenship as it would be conceptualized throughout the 1990s, the third example discussed in this chapter defies pedagogy. Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* (1997) in its critical engagement with 'Canada' carefully avoids any reference to an inherently nation-oriented project such as Kogawa's or Foggo's. Wah has been known primarily as a poet and as the co-founder and editor of the Vancouver poetry magazine *Tish* in the 1960s. *Diamond Grill* is impossible to clearly categorize in terms of genre. The text consists of over one hundred sections, ranging in length from less than half a page to three pages at most; each of them provides

a snapshot, a memory, a meditation, or a reflection on the autobiographical narrator's life, primarily in the 1950s, or of the lives of his parents (particularly his father) and extended family, but also on migration, local history, and questions of race. These sections are held together in two ways: by the narrative voice that shifts at times to include voices other than the main narrator's and by the setting. The sections mostly revolve around the town of Nelson in British Columbia and, more specifically, Wah Senior's Diamond Grill Café. This specific place provides the grounds for membership and belonging because it provides a vantage point from which to reflect upon family, history, subject constitution, diaspora, and agency; however, this ground is not solid but, as will be illustrated, constantly shifting, and this instability of basis is determining for the agenda of the text. Like *Whispering in Shadows*, *Diamond Grill* seeks to avoid both the nation and the nation-state and instead negotiates membership and belonging with regard to other, equally instable frameworks. Unlike Armstrong's novel, and at times contradicting its own declared agenda of not being interested 'in this collective enterprise erected from the sacrosanct great railway imagination dedicated to harvesting a dominant white cultural landscape' (Wah 1997, p. 125), it nevertheless returns frequently to the nation, mostly by examining historical constellations and policies that are clearly national in scope.

4.4.1 Spaces In-Between and Ambivalent Identifications

One crucial aspect of what I propose to read as the 'citizenship agenda' of *Diamond Grill* is its narrative construction of the subject as indeterminate. As Paul John Eakin stresses,

> narrative is not merely a literary form but a mode of phenomenological and cognitive self-experience, while self—the self of autobiographical discourse—does not necessarily precede its constitution in narrative. (1999, p. 100)

While the text is autobiographical, Wah himself prefers to call the book a 'biotext' (Wah 1997, n.p.), a term adopted from George Bowering that circumvents the generic expectations of the much discredited 'autobiography' (Wah 2000, p. 97). The 'generic expectations' Wah seeks to bypass are not limited to textual genre, but include assumptions about the coherence of the narrated subject. Eakin has highlighted the

insistence of most autobiographers on the continuity between earlier and later 'versions of the self' and the identity of the 'narrating' with the 'narrated I' (as Smith and Watson have categorized these positions). However, as Eakin puts it, 'our sense of continuous identity is a fiction, the primary fiction of all self-narration' (1999, p. 93). Wah takes up this notion of coherence and unity only to deconstruct it; the 'identity' he narratively creates is fragmented, and even though he uses the first person singular, the subject, as Joanne Saul points out, 'will not stay still' (2006, p. 103).

Just as the notion of the autobiographical subject, the notion of the citizen is often based on the assumption of a coherent and unified actor; Wah's programmatic fragmentation thus has implications for the ways in which citizenship and agency are conceptualized in the text: They are precisely not built upon a unified notion of the autonomous subject, but on shifting subjectivities and positionalities. However, while rejecting the idea of a unified and autonomous subject, I argue, Wah nevertheless investigates the possibilities of agency on which 'co-authorship' and 'co-actorship' can be based.

In the very first section of *Diamond Grill*, Wah indicates the slipperiness and hesitations, but also the openness and possibilities of his undertaking when he writes, 'the journal journey tilts tight-fisted through the gutter of the book, avoiding a place to start—or end. Maps don't have beginnings, just edges. Some frayed and hazy margin of possibility, absence, gap' (Wah 1997, p. 1). The 'gutter,' the 'edge,' the 'margin' are the declared sites of this journey that rejects the notion of a stable, definable self. But not only are the boundaries of the self-shifting; their instability is connected to the role of 'others' in the ongoing constitution of the subject, in the construction of the self as relational. As a consequence, the text investigates the various displacements that have shaped the family and its individual members—Wah's father, of Chinese-Scots-Irish descent, had been raised in China and returned to his family in Canada as a young adult without any knowledge of English; his mother was born in Sweden and grew up in Saskatchewan. These multiple dislocations press home two aspects crucial for the issue at hand: 'the local' is a site of membership and belonging that is not necessarily marked by rootedness; and the agency of co-authorship that, while locally grounded, is not necessarily bound to a local identity, but can instead be generated by histories of both voluntary and involuntary mobility.

Despite the references to Wah's childhood and his maternal and paternal families in the individual sections, the text—unlike Foggo's—sets out not to accurately document family history, but rather through its bits and pieces—memories, assumed voices, extensive citations from other works and documents, theoretical segments, pure inventions—to probe the process of a hybrid subject's constitution between and across accepted categories. By critically engaging with Mary Louise Pratt's (2008) concept of 'transculturation,' as well as with her notions of the 'contact zone' and 'autoethnography' (e.g. Wah 1997, pp. 68–70n), Wah seeks to actualize, as Joanne Saul has it, the 'space between':

> For Wah this space includes the space between Chinese and Canadian, between reading and writing, between poetry and narrative, between father and son, between past and present, between public and private. (Saul 2008, p. 133).

These categories are clearly social, cultural, and political, and they are linked to both a specific locality and to the nation; however, marking the space of the subject as an 'in-between space' suggests a stability of the categories 'in between' which the subject is positioned. The spaces Wah explores in the text are liminal, 'in-between the designations of identity' (Bhabha 1994, p. 4); they—and the categories that mark their boundaries—are as unstable as the language that creates them.

This does not mean that this process is entirely arbitrary; on the contrary, it is intimately bound up with questions of social hierarchies and discourses of power. Thus, the links between language and these categories (as well as their power of ascription) are obvious throughout the text:

> Until Mary McNutter calls me a chink I'm not one. That's in elementary school. Later, I don't have to be because I don't look like one. But just then, I'm stunned. I've never thought about it. After that, I start to listen, and watch. Some people are different. You can see it. Or hear it. (Wah 1997, p. 98)

This demeaning but seemingly everyday exchange between children functions as a quasi-Althusserian interpellation, as Wah has conceded in an interview (Wah 2000, p. 100). This interpellation works as such because it activates the history of Asian exclusion and stigmatization in

Canada, with serious implications for the ways in which individuals (and to some extent groups) can act as agents, 'co-authors of the contexts in which they participate,' to put it once more as per Boele van Hensbroek (2010, p. 322). Wah includes numerous references to Canadian immigration and exclusion policies against Asians as well as extensive quotes from, for example, historical books about the region that affirm the categories of difference actualized here as 'real' and fixed. Mary McNutter's calling the young Wah a 'chink' is not simply a child calling another name but ties in with established categories of perception, social stratification, and discrimination. As such, it marks a difference that is linked to a history of denial of citizenship in both of its aspects, formal membership and affective belonging. The construction of difference in this scene is connected to the historical exclusion of Asians from both specific citizenship rights (such as voting) and from citizenship itself. As such it reflects ways in which national membership is conceptualized, as a separation of 'us' from 'them.' But through its manifestation in everyday life, this understanding more often than not extends beyond the limits of the law. It is also part of everyday practices that contest the belonging of those deemed 'different.'

In contrast to these rigid categories of self and other, the kind of difference *Diamond Grill* investigates is not fixed; just as the subject is narratively constituted, so too are the categories of difference. Therefore, Wah connects the process of writing to the processes of becoming and of ongoing subject constitution. The non-linearity and achronological arrangement of the narrative fragments create a direct link to Wah's poetry and destabilize the sense of 'self' suggested by the older concepts of 'autobiography' and 'life writing' rejected by Wah. Instead, as Saul has argued, 'the sanctity of the self or the 'auto' is interrogated, not only by his insistence on dialogue and collaboration … but also in his exploration of subjectivity as a complex construction' (2008, p. 141). Moreover, this interrogation has implications for the way in which 'subject' and 'citizen' connect—the citizen understood as an agent, a co-author who is not placed as an individual member vis-à-vis the state, but is conceptualized as belonging to a variety of collectives and as shaped by numerous, often contradictory processes of *identification* rather than identities. Citizenship is a relation also among citizens. The relationship between these different components and the practices connected to them is not fixed, either, but has to be constantly re-evaluated and negotiated.

4.4.2 'No Modified Citizen': Complex Recognitions

One of the text's challenges is how it sets out to renegotiate co-actorship and co-authorship in place, in particular with regard to its critical engagement with 'Canada.' According to Saul, Wah

> rejects what he sees as 'a nationalistic aesthetic that continually attempts to expropriate difference into its own consuming narrative' [Wah 2000, p. 60] and engages instead in debates around the constructedness of the Canadian nation and the role of the nation-state in the subject's identification. (2006, p. 126)

These identifications are the result of specific spatial, historical, and familial constellations; 'the nation' and state policies are examined and critically questioned as prime examples for such powerful constructions. Thus, like Kogawa and Foggo, Wah directly criticizes Canadian exclusionary policies in history and their effect upon individuals and communities:

> But no wonder my grandfather, my father, and their kin continue to look back at China. Canada couldn't be an investment for them. The 1923 Chinese Act of Exclusion isn't repealed until 1947. Even though my dad was born in Medicine Hat, he wasn't allowed to vote until 1948. Nor are any of the other *orientals* in Canada. (Wah 1997, p. 110; emphasis Wah's)

The reference is to the already-mentioned provincial laws that also had an effect on the national polls; like naturalized Issei and the Nisei, the narrator's father is a disenfranchised Canadian citizen, a member who cannot enact his membership and who does not fully belong. While at a first glance Wah's criticism may seem compatible with the claim for equal access and inclusion into the national collective as put forward by Kogawa's novels, his project goes beyond the deconstruction of national history 'from below'; *Diamond Grill* investigates the various possibilities of shifting cultural locations and of hybridity as impossible to be contained by the nation or national narratives. The subject constructed in *Diamond Grill* is thus not 'the idealized multicultural subject who can be known as a modified citizen' (Miki 2001, p. 68). Canadian multiculturalism provides no helpful angle in this context either, since it depends on fixed definitions of cultural origin and difference. As Homi Bhabha has argued,

> multiculturalists who strive to constitute non-discriminatory minority identities cannot simply do so by affirming the place they occupy, or by returning to an 'unmarked' authentic origin or pre-text: their recognition requires the negotiation of a dangerous indeterminacy. (1996, p. 56)

Indeterminacy, openness, a refusal of closure in Wah's text posits the central challenge to the notion of cultural difference that underlies institutional multiculturalism, multicultural citizenship as proposed by Will Kymlicka (1995), and an understanding of recognition as put forward by Charles Taylor (1994). While Kogawa's texts present an attempt to reinscribe Japanese Canadians into the nation, *Diamond Grill* can be seen as being closer to Armstrong's agenda of seeking to formulate a space of agency outside both the civic and the ethnic nation. It calls into question Canada's post-1960s self-definition through diversity and institutionalized multiculturalism and explores the limits of multicultural accommodation of 'difference.' Wah might even agree with Nancy Fraser's critique of Taylor's understanding of recognition and the link she sees to identity politics:

> The identity politics model of recognition tends also to reify identity. Stressing the need to elaborate and display an authentic, self-affirming, and self-generated collective identity, it puts moral pressure on individual members to conform to a given group culture. Cultural dissidence and experimentation are accordingly discouraged, when they are not simply equated with disloyalty. (Fraser 2008, p. 133)

Or, one might add, they might be equated or even charged with 'inauthenticity.' *Diamond Grill* depicts a Chinese-Canadian community—in fact families—that is anything but homogenous and defies any attempt to fix cultural identities or categories. Wah writes about his father,

> while he and [his sister] had been in China, their brothers and sisters had negotiated particular identities for themselves through the familiarity of a white European small prairie town commonality (albeit colonial democracy). Though he arrives back to everyone struggling through the thirties, they all have their place…. Hybridize or dis-appear; family *in* place. (1997, p. 20)

'Place' emerges as a central category of subject formation; it is a slippery category, because the text oscillates between 'place' as a physical and a metaphorical location. Notions of diaspora, place, and hybridization are significant to the ways in which different subjectivities are narrated in the text. Hybridity is social, cultural, and linguistic; the different genres on which this biotext draws, the mix of language levels, styles, and materials, illustrate this hybridity on the textual level. Roy Miki (2001, p. 72) points to Wah's 'performance of the position in between—for him the position of the hyphen—that the powers of social normalization cover over.' These powers of social normalization include institutionalized multicultural policies and the specific concept of recognition that underlies them.

However, this does not mean that recognition and citizenship are not an issue in *Diamond Grill*. Rather, the recognition claimed by Wah and other critics of institutionalized multiculturalism is, as Bhabha has it, the recognition of a 'dangerous indeterminacy' (1996, p. 56). These indeterminacies of identity are worked into the form of the text—its deep distrust of the fixity of genre, of authority, of voice, and even of language itself. As Wah insists, the hybrid writer must develop 'instruments of disturbance, dislocation, and displacement' (2000, p. 73) and maintain 'the ability to remain within an ambivalence without succumbing to the pull of any single culture (resolution, cadence, closure)' (p. 83), and this is certainly what he successfully sets out to do in *Diamond Grill*. He thereby upsets any attempt to 'reify' identity, alterity, and difference, any attempt to treat 'difference (a relation) as an intrinsic property of 'cultures' and as a *value* (a socially 'enriching' one), to be 'represented' as such' (Bennett 1998, p. 4). It is to a large extent this understanding of cultural difference as a kind of property that—according to its critics such as David Bennett, Bhabha, or Fraser—underlies both institutionalized multiculturalism and, closely related to it, Taylor's account of recognition, as well as the place that the 'citizen' is allocated within this constellation.

'Difference' in *Diamond Grill* is a shifting relation, not a cultural property; recognition of difference requires a constant renegotiation of both collective and individual identities as historically, culturally, socially, and politically constructed, and hence unstable and provisional—as situated, but not fixed, as Joanne Saul has phrased it (2006, p. 108). This is not a rejection of notions of recognition per se, but requires a different model of recognition than that put forward by Taylor and implemented

in multicultural policies—a model that rejects predetermined categories of identity and difference and insists on the centrality of the local and specific:

> That's it, the local. What is meant in the West by the term regional. The immediate 'here,' the palpable, tangible 'here,' imprinted with whatever trailing cellular memory, histology, history, story. (Wah 2000, p. 48)[3]

Nevertheless, unlike in Armstrong's texts, where the local is grounded in the relationship of individual and community to the land and its stories, marked by a spiritual continuity, and like in Foggo's memoir, the 'local' in *Diamond Grill* can only emerge through identifications that go beyond its immediate tangibility. The ways in which belonging manifests itself on the local level are bound up with translocal structures: migration, diaspora. This creates a continuous oscillation between the universal and the specific. As Axel Honneth argues,

> all struggles for recognition … progress through a playing out of the moral dialectic of the universal and the particular: one can always appeal for a particular relative difference by applying a general principle of mutual recognition, which normatively compels an expansion of the existing relations of recognition. (2003, p. 152)

This 'expansion' Honneth envisions may well mean a fundamental re-ordering of these relations without taking leave of the general principle.

In *Diamond Grill*, as in Kogawa's example, Honneth's tripartite division into different spheres of recognition is helpful to highlight the ways in which forms of recognition intertwine and contribute to the subject's ability to claim agency; more forcefully than any of the texts discussed so far, *Diamond Grill* illustrates, even performs, the close connection of 'private' and 'public' spheres of recognition in the constitution of the subject, and thus questions the very constitution of public and private that is of such paramount importance for modern citizenship (Yuval-Davis 1997, pp. 12–15). The understanding of citizenship, in turn, hinges crucially on this sceptical investigation of categories: since *Diamond Grill* directly addresses the question of narrative constitution

[3] For a discussion of the link of Wah's politics of the local and his poetics, see Saul (2008, in particular pp. 145–46).

of the subject and his/her agency and reflects its possibilities and limits, it can be read as exploring not only the dimension of citizenship as 'co-actorship,' but very literally that of citizenship as 'co-authorship.' By doing so, Wah's text highlights citizenship as 'embodied'; as a consequence, both forms of citizenship enactment are also emplaced. Despite the close attention to the local, the embeddedness of this locality in broader contexts is obvious.

This embeddedness of locality—in *Diamond Grill* the 'regional,' more specifically the BC Interior—in translocal or even global processes, manifest in the text in multiple migration histories, defies any juxtaposition of 'small town'/regional location and the multicultural city that rests on constructing the former as untouched by these processes. On the contrary, as in Foggo's memoir, the local is very much inscribed by its interaction with the national and the global, and the city presents its own localism; neither is per se 'cosmopolitan' or 'provincial,' and both generate, enable, and emplace specific practices of citizenship. Wah's biotext reveals a particular narrative practice of citizenship that draws out the entanglements of the local; while avoiding affirmations of grand national narratives, it nevertheless has to acknowledge the fundamental impact both the national frameworks and translocal and transnational processes have upon the local.

4.5 Claiming Place, Claiming Space

In their brief discussion of life writing and citizenship, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson highlight two important aspects: the relation of the individual life to the nation and the self-assertion of marginalized groups (Smith and Watson focus on women) in the national and international public sphere, both as the memoir's topic and as a practice of making one's life public through publication and circulation (2010, pp. 130–33). Important as these aspects doubtlessly are, this chapter has shown how the testimonial function of autobiography and its directedness toward a range of spatial and discursive frameworks—from the concretely local to the abstractly national—hinge on the form that has been chosen for the narrative and the autobiographical conventions it activates.

Form and narrative structure, I have suggested throughout this chapter, are crucial aspects of how literary citizenship can be enacted in place. Campbell's *Halfbreed*, Foggo's *Pourin' Down Rain*, and Wah's *Diamond Grill* differ significantly in their narrative form and structure, and so do

the frameworks they address. Campbell's text is narrated largely chronologically, but by way of the introduction presents a circular return to place; the chronology of the main text is created from a community perspective, not from an individual one, and the use of family and community history serves as a claim to place and belonging that both predates and struggles with the nation-state's claim to territory and historiographic authority; political citizenship (co-actorship) and cultural citizenship (co-authorship) are placed in a discursive space of competing claims to place and self-determination. While Foggo's and Wah's texts also lay claim to place, they engage very differently with the nation as a locus of citizenship. I do not want to argue that their respective alignment (Foggo) or breaking with autobiographical conventions of chronology and coherence (Wah) directly correspond to the way in which they seek to inscribe the individual life into a national framework; this would entail to automatically associate realism with the nation and postmodernism with its deconstruction, a binary that would not do justice to the complexity of either text. Yet, the way in which the autobiographers structure their narrative has implications for the text's cultural effect as eventually affirming (Foggo) or disavowing (Wah) national belonging or as exploring the possibility of alternative associations (Campbell).

My discussion of Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*, Cheryl Foggo's *Pourin' Down Rain* and Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* has foregrounded the complex relation of life writing to the nation as well as the process of exploring the intertwinement of individual and collective history in place. All three texts do express a relation to place and history that have been amply shaped by the experience of material and symbolic dispossession as well as by the exclusion from hegemonic national narratives and spaces. 'Those whose sense of land (and self, and the language of expressing this connection) reinforces and is reinforced by their dominant position within the culture at large will differ from those whose sense of land, self, and language (however acute and locally fulfilling) still divides them from the dominant forms of social power,' as W. H. New (1997, p. 117) has argued, and even among the latter, the narrative claims to belonging and the enactment of narrative agency and literary citizenship will differ. The claim to space and place inherent in all three texts is not a uniformly anti-hegemonic one; black and Asian-descended settlers' claims are not always easily aligned with those by Indigenous peoples (Lai 2014, p. 99), and, as Campbell's autobiography illustrates, Métis and First Nations people do not always have the same interests even if they share the same space and

struggle against similar structures of marginalization and colonial legacies. The texts that have been discussed here display an awareness of these difficulties and hence the realization that citizenship cannot be uniformly enacted—or even be uniformly conceptualized. This chapter's focus on life writing and hence on a strong sense of referentiality between literature and social realities draws this out most emphatically. 'Writers seem to have become fully aware of the potential of historical discourse as a powerful didactic tool that can show all parties concerned the path to social responsibility and help redefine the very concept of citizenship in more inclusive terms' (Cuder-Domínguez 2010, p. 114), and this is nowhere more evident than in life writings' investigation of 'placeness' (Tremblay 2014).

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CHAPTER 5

‘Cityzenship’? Writing Immigrant and Diasporic Toronto

5.1 Diasporic Spaces, Urbanity, and Localized Citizenship

The previous chapter has shown how unevenly the possibilities of citizenship—both as formal membership and as affective belonging—are distributed, by which means and on what terms individuals are able or unable to claim them, and how the practices of citizenship as cultural and political participation are bound to particular spaces and locations. As locally specific and removed from national centers as they may be, the narrative constructions of these places nevertheless display their deep entanglement with national and transnational histories.

The multicultural city is a particularly prominent location to explore such entanglements with concepts and practices of citizenship. Historically, the city has played a central role for the notion of citizenship. Theorists have frequently turned to the city in order to analyze both the making of and challenges pertaining to citizenship. The dynamic understanding of space and place, which has been elaborated in the previous chapter, is helpful for thinking through the complexities and contradictions of the city as a location for citizenship, as well as a location in literature. As James Holston and Arjun Appadurai have noted, despite the challenges and changes that have been brought about by nation building in the nineteenth century and enforced globalization in the twentieth century, the conceptual link between the city and citizenship remains important:

K. Sarkowsky, *Narrating Citizenship and Belonging in Anglophone Canadian Literature*,
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> Although one of the essential projects of nation-building has been to dismantle the historic primacy of urban citizenship and to replace it with the national, cities remain the strategic arena for the development of citizenship. They are not the only arena. And not all cities are strategic. But with their concentrations of the nonlocal, the strange, the mixed, and the public, cities engage most palpably the tumult of citizenship. (1996, p. 188)

Even though the establishment of the modern nation-state caused the nation to become the privileged—if abstract—space of citizenship, historically the city plays a crucial role as a place of its local and translocal enactment.

However, applying a constructivist and dynamic understanding of space, Engin Isin has argued that the city is not merely a place where citizenship 'happens' against pre-existing categories of inclusion and exclusion, but rather that it functions as a 'difference machine,' as he calls it,

> insofar as it is understood as that configuration that is constituted by the dialogical encounter of groups formed and generated immanently in the process of taking up positions, orienting themselves for and against each other, inventing and assembling strategies and technologies, mobilizing various forms of capital, and making claims to that space that is objectified as 'the city.' Neither groups nor their identities exist before the encounter with the city.… The city is neither a background to these struggles *against which* groups wager, nor is it a foreground *for which* groups struggle for domination. The city is the battleground *through which* groups define their identities, stake their claims, wage their battles, and articulate citizenship rights and obligations. (2002a, pp. 49–50)

'Identity' is a relational category, and the difference that is produced in and by the city depends on relational categories: The citizen is juxtaposed to the stranger, the outsider, and the alien—categories that Isin has defined by gradual proximity to the citizen (p. 50).

In the context of Anglophone Canadian literature, it is not so much the city per se, but the multicultural and particularly the diasporic city that operates as the crucial locus for the investigation, enactment, and redefinition of citizenship. Fainstein's (2011) concept of global cities as a 'microcosm of global culture' points to their function as 'nodes that gather and temporarily halt disparate global flows of people, culture, ideas, and capital to become "sites of heterogeneity juxtaposed within

close spatial proximity" (Amin 2004, p. 38)' (Tavares and Brosseau 2013, p. 14). The concept of the global city and its focus on economic flows potentially encompasses but does not distinguish between the different ways in which its constitutive transnationality comes into local play: As Lily Cho has argued, the diasporic needs to be distinguished from the immigrant on the one hand and the transnational on the other—the former because of its more clear-cut connection to the 'homeland,' the latter because of its privileged mobility and elitist 'detachment' from the specificities of place:

> Not all elsewheres are equal. The differences cannot be collapsed between the multiple-passport carrying transnational subject and the diasporic subject whose agonized relationship to home engenders a perpetual sense of not quite having left and not quite having arrived. (Cho 2007, p. 99)

The concept of diaspora as conceptualized by Cho thus addresses crucial questions of belonging and agency as well as identification, obligation, and community. It also highlights the vast range of possible relations between individuals, communities, and the local and transnational spaces to which they relate within the multicultural city. In such a space, it is not merely the question of who is a citizen and how individuals and groups are formed in relation to citizenship (as strangers, outsiders, or aliens, to put it with Isin [2002a, p. 29]), but even more importantly a question of how citizenship is to be understood—as status, institution, or practice.

Toronto serves as a prominent example of an urban space as a locus of exploring the range of citizenship relations, practices, and concepts. As Kit Dobson points out with an explicit reference to Toronto,

> what citizenship or political action might mean is contested in such a space. Living within a global city requires an assessment of what is included or permitted in official urban (or urbane) discourse, and requires admitting a wider range of alternatives than has hitherto been allowed. The problematics is one that extends to—and beyond—questions of Canadian multiculturalism. (2009, p. 183)

Thus, even though the limits of official multiculturalism are also undoubtedly tested in rural and small-town spaces, writing the multicultural city raises further questions concerning the various ways in which literature negotiates the possibilities of urban citizenship by virtue of its

high level of diversity, its multiple connections beyond the nation-state, and its complex location within discourses of the nation. As Caroline Rosenthal has remarked, 'as an imaginative city, Toronto is still in the process of becoming, not because there has been no fiction set in Toronto earlier in the twentieth century, but because it is only now that it is being discussed as a significant corpus of literature and as a way of symbolically building the city' (2011, p. 33).

The texts under discussion here indeed 'build' Toronto, albeit very different Toronto*s*, in very different discursive contexts. Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987) uses an image of the 'stranger' very similar to Georg Simmel's conception regarding the stranger's potential morphing into the citizen as a central formation through which to explore questions of agency and contradictory forms of belonging in a multicultural city that effectively represents the nation and its history. In contrast, Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* (2005) presents Toronto as a cosmopolitan space in which the protagonists—all of them affiliated with diasporic communities, even if they reject these communities' claims—enact a kind of citizenship that is largely disconnected from the nation-state; in *Love Enough* (2014) with analogous and at times even overlapping character constellations, Brand even further detaches citizenship and belonging from the nation-state.

5.2 Paradoxical Relations: Foreigners and Citizens in Michael Ondaatje's *in the Skin of a Lion*

> Patrick Lewis arrived in the city of Toronto as if it were land after years at sea. Growing up in the country had governed his childhood: the small village of Bellrock, the highway of river down which the log drivers came, drinking, working raucous, and in the spring leaving the in-habitants shocked within the silence. Now, at twenty-one, he had been drawn out from the small town like a piece of metal and dropped under the vast arches of Union Station to begin his life once more. He owned nothing, had scarcely any money. There was a piece of feldspar in his pocket that his fingers had stumbled over during the train journey. He was an immigrant to the city. (Ondaatje 1987, p. 53)

Thus begins the third part of Book One of Michael Ondaatje's 1987 novel *In the Skin of a Lion*, that is, with the arrival of Canadian-born anarchist-to-be Patrick Lewis in Toronto in 1930. His arrival is staged as that of a 'foreigner': His journey from rural Ontario into the city

is compared to an immigrant's journey across the sea. By reaching Toronto, he appears to reach a new country in hopes of a new future, a solid land after years of uncertainty. His 'foreignness' as a rural migrant to the city appears to be affirmed by the residence he chooses: Living among immigrants from Macedonia and other southern European countries, he initially finds himself in a linguistic environment in which he is indeed a foreigner (p. 132); nevertheless, his foreignness among foreigners is far from being alienating, as it essentially provides him with a new home and community, thus highlighting the ambiguities of the ways in which the novel negotiates foreignness throughout: not only as a state of dislocation, but also one of potential relocation.

This state, of course, is not without ambivalence. In Patrick's case, this foreignness is doubled, leaving him to ultimately realize that he will never be able to become a full part of the community of people to whom his life has become so intimately connected. At the same time, his limited perspective pertaining to their lives as immigrants with oftentimes-traumatic histories also causes Patrick to—at least to a certain extent—remain a foreigner to 'his country,' Canada:

> He was an abashed man, an inheritance from his father. Born in Abashed, Ontario. What did the word mean? Something that suggested there was a terrible horizon in him beyond which he couldn't leap.… He had lived in this country all of his life. But it was only now that he learned of the union battles up north where Cato was murdered some time in the winter of 1921.… And all of his life Patrick had been oblivious to it, a searcher gazing into the darkness of his own country. (p. 157)

So while 'foreignness' is not necessarily a negative state per se, it is not a comfortable and unambiguous position, either; Patrick's example illustrates that there are manifold ways to be foreign in the novel, all of them situational and relational (Waldenfels 1997, p. 23), and diversely bound to social positions and power structures. In my reading of Ondaatje's much-discussed novel, I will focus on the relation between foreignness and citizenship as relational categories. As with all of the other texts in this study, I do not intend to offer a comprehensive reading of the novel's complexities, but rather to highlight how the novel imagines forms of belonging and agency, how it refers to discourses of citizenship in its time, and how its exploration of co-actorship contributes to the ways with which the novel 'co-authors' the 'webs of meaning' in which it participates.

5.2.1 Foreigners

In her study *Democracy and the Foreigner* (2001), Bonnie Honig argues that political philosophy has usually treated foreignness as a problem that needs to be solved. According to Honig, classical nation-oriented political thought sees the foreigner and foreignness as the 'threat of corruption that must be kept out or contained for the sake of the stability and identity of the regime' (pp. 1–2). Postnationalists, she continues, by celebrating the deconstructive character of foreignness as a factor that undoes the nation, essentially re-articulate the same position, even if they evaluate it differently: 'they valorize the very fragmentation that earlier political theorists took to be a problem' (p. 2). Distancing herself from a view on foreignness as a problem, the question Honig then addresses is: 'What does [foreignness] mean? What sort of work does it do in cultural politics?' (ibid.). Honig is very much aware of the discrepancies between the use of the foreigner as a trope for national narratives, and the discrimination and exclusion of real-life people who are labeled 'foreigners' in political and social realities (p. 32). However, in her account of political and cultural narratives, 'the foreigner' becomes a figure of speech that, more often than not, is indispensable to the nation since he or she triggers its rejuvenation and re-founding, which is ultimately a crucial component of negotiating membership and belonging.

Honig's and Isin's concepts both build on an understanding of alterity beyond mere juxtapositions of insider and outsider, native and foreigner. I would like to take up these dialogical and constructive models in order to discuss the different images and functions of foreignness as well as the novel's investigation of agency and citizenship within the context of the shifting spatial arrangements of the city. The city is important in the sense outlined by Isin: as a battleground through which groups stake their claims and assert agency. This particular space of the city is also crucial with regard to the simultaneous sense of individual alienation and potential liberation from community restrictions that are associated with the modern city.

Ondaatje's novel has been read both in the context of the 'topocentric tradition of Canadian literary nationalism' (Hillger quoted in Ty 2011, p. 113n4) and as engaging in diasporic investigations that point beyond the borders of the nation-state and contextualize their questions in a transnational framework. This line of interpretation has more recently been reasserted by Eleanor Ty, who reads *Skin* as 'an early example of

[a] movement towards "global" Canadian postmodern fiction' (2011, p. 102). While this globality is by no means bound to the choice of a city setting (as will be demonstrated in Chapter 6), the city remains crucial because it combines, to refer once more to Ash Amin, a large degree of 'heterogeneity… within close spatial proximity' (2004, p. 38), the addressing of which takes into account and addresses various levels of 'foreignness' and difference.

Consequently, critics who, like Ty, highlight the postmodern and diasporic elements of *Skin* also tend to emphasize the strategies of 'de-familiarization' that are deployed by the novel—another level of working with notions of foreignness and estrangement. As Winfried Siemerling puts it,

> the novel defamiliarizes habitual perceptions of Toronto by superimposing a reconstructed and imagined new world. With the non-English-speaking immigrants of Toronto, Ondaatje follows a whole community that crosses boundaries and borders to another reality and a new language. (2004, n.p.)

I therefore argue that the ways in which Ondaatje stages different forms and images of foreignness serve to explore forms of individual and group agency between national and transnational contexts. In line with my previous discussions, it is this agency that I seek to capture by using the term 'citizenship' as a form of 'co-authorship' in Boele van Hensbroek's (2010) sense; and while *Skin* makes use of settings in the countryside and deliberately stages a juxtaposition between the urban and the rural, the locus where this tension and the negotiations of citizenship as agency are most prominently played out in the novel is the urban space of Toronto in the early twentieth century.

In *Skin*, images of foreignness and estrangement that are simultaneously productive and alienating abound. Keeping the quote pertaining to Patrick's arrival in Toronto—at the beginning of this subsection—in mind, in the following I will focus on the way in which the novel links notions of foreignness, (im)migration, and the claim to urban space by means of practices and agency that can be seen as 'acts of citizenship' in Isin's sense (Isin and Nielsen 2008, p. 10). These acts function as temporary interruptions of established scripts of citizenship that on the one hand challenge the nation-state and its codified forms of belonging and membership, and that on the other hand eventually turn the 'foreignness within' into assimilated citizenship.

The ways in which political and cultural agency is negotiated in *In the Skin of a Lion* focus on individual characters as well as on group constellations. In one scene, the workers who build the Toronto Waterworks and the Harris Plant Building close to Lake Ontario secretly meet with their families and friends in the almost finished building for a night of performances. The workers are immigrants, with the only apparent exception of Patrick Lewis. But even he, as the initial quote has highlighted, is 'an immigrant to the city' (Ondaatje 1987, p. 53). As the text makes clear, working conditions at the Waterworks are terrible, the pay is low, and by order of the Police Commissioner, immigrants are forbidden to speak their native languages in public. This is the socio-historical background against which the scene takes place. This meeting is both 'a party and a political meeting, all of them trespassing, waiting now for speeches and entertainment' (p. 115). However, the very fact that it takes place at all, secretly, illegally, is in itself political; it challenges the official allocation of space, the possibilities of voicing demands, and the sanctioned forms and language for doing so. The performance on which this scene centers is a performance with puppets, dominated by one character played by a real human being.

> The human puppet, alien and naïve and gregarious, upset everything. The face, in spite of the moustache, was dark and young. He wore a Finnish shirt and Serbian pants.… Laughing like a fool he was brought before the authorities, unable to speak their language. He stood there assaulted by insults. His face was frozen. The others began to pummel him but not a word emerged—just a damaged gaze in the context of those flailing arms. He fell to the floor pleading with gestures. The scene was endless. Patrick wanted to rip the painted face off. The caricature of culture. (p. 117)

Language is crucial, for the character is not able to speak the right language vis-à-vis the authorities, and in fact, he is not able to speak at all; instead, he 'upset[s] everything' by interrupting the order of things. At the same time, this scene does not merely point to the 'quintessential immigrant,' marked by his clothing as 'foreign,' but also to the very performativity of identifiable 'foreignness.' Patrick finally intervenes, and while his initial aggression is directed at the 'mask' of the puppet and its 'caricature of culture,' he now seeks to save the puppet and all that it, or rather, as it turns out, *she* stands for: the quintessential immigrant

who, unable to speak the language of authority, is insulted and abused by those in power. But this immigrant can also be seen as a hero of persistence and resistance, just like the actors and the audience that make up the crowd of the illegal gathering at the Waterworks that Sunday night. The immigrant upsets and challenges the order of a law intended to dictate, control, and thereby domesticate his/her foreignness.

In light of my previous considerations, I deliberately use the word 'foreignness' instead of 'difference,' for it appears that rather than focusing on difference, Ondaatje highlights a foreignness that is constantly performed—primarily through language—and thus to an extent reaffirmed by both the authorities and the immigrants themselves. This foreignness is in many ways related to Georg Simmel's notion of the stranger. The stranger, Simmel writes, is not necessarily just 'the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather… the man [*sic*] who comes today and stays tomorrow' (1971, p. 143). Despite the problematic aspects of Simmel's understanding of the stranger it nevertheless remains a helpful notion to untangle the issues that are dealt with in the novel, such as the almost exclusive attention to cultural difference and identity that have characterized much of the debates in the late 1980s and early 1990s. What both of these terms point to is not so much a certain set of attributes of culture, but rather a set of social and societal relations that are characterized by power hierarchies in which the immigrant negotiates spaces of agency, however limited, in the city.[1]

In the previously cited example, it is a foreignness that has literally created its own spaces besides those allocated and governed by the law of Anglo-Canada. In doing so, it actively changes spaces such as the Waterworks—monuments of power—by turning them into a stage for one's own story. In line with Michel de Certeau, these 'tactics' can all be seen as set against the planned strategies of those in power (1984,

[1]The terms are related but by no means identical. For the purpose of this study, I define 'stranger' as the broad category for those who are identified partly or wholly as being outside a specific social order; in this context then, the 'foreigner' and the 'immigrant' are subcategories, that is, specific forms of the 'stranger.' All of these categories, however, are relationally defined and have to be contextualized in constellations marked by power asymmetries.

p. 135). The 'opening' of the Bloor Street Viaduct by the workers on the night before its official inauguration is yet another example of such tactics: 'The previous midnight the workers had arrived and brushed away the officials who guarded the bridge in preparation for the ceremonies the next day, moved with their own flickering lights—their candles for the bridge dead—like a wave of civilization' (Ondaatje 1987, p. 27). Here, the workers claim the space they have created and commemorate their dead, if only for a night—one more way to lay claim not only to the city, but also to the country where the dead are buried.

In regard to the tactics, the scenes could be read as acts undermining the rules and mechanisms of exploitation: Though the actual effect is limited, the immigrants temporarily reclaim the very buildings they have erected. In the celebration of the buildings as public monuments, however, the workers are forgotten. As Meredith Criglington has it,

> it has become a commonplace of Canadian literary criticism to observe that *In the Skin of a Lion* imaginatively recuperates the stories of the immigrants, workers, and women marginalized by the official history of Toronto. The novel rededicates the city's public edifices to the workers who built them and, in the process, restores etymological and ethical meaning to these *monuments* as sites of *memory*. (2004, p. 133)

Skin is therefore regarded as a work of recovery that makes visible 'forgotten' histories. At the same time, Frank Davey and others have heavily criticized the novel's aesthetics and it's apparent failure to consistently criticize social hierarchies and class politics as well as its homogenizing portrayal of immigrant populations (e.g., Kamboureli 2004, pp. 49–51; Mason quoted in Dobson 2009, p. 108).

While I agree with the diagnosis that the text lacks overt politics, in my reading I will follow neither of the above-sketched interpretations and instead argue that—in and through such scenes—the text explores possibilities of citizenship as explicitly tied to foreignness in a particular place and context. A second look at Honig's analysis of the function of the foreigner as constitutive for national narratives is helpful—the foreigner as affirmation, challenge, potential for rejuvenation, etc. One of the aspects Honig highlights is the sense of irritation that is connected with the immigrant: He/she upsets order, temporarily or

permanently. This sense of irritation, perceived as such from a hegemonic perspective, is simultaneously a form of claiming space when seen from the perspective of marginalized groups. In Ondaatje's novel, the foreigner indeed fulfills the function of productively upsetting established structures and therefore succeeds in exploring and testing the possibilities and limits of societal and political participation that is citizenship.

5.2.2 Citizens

Honig's model of foreignness is ultimately tied to citizenship: The immigrant foreigner may eventually become a citizen. In the text, an example of this transformation from immigrant to citizen can be found in the character of Nicholas Temelcoff, former daredevil construction worker at the Bloor Street viaduct, whose strenuous immigration story is recounted early on in the novel (Ondaatje 1987, p. 46) and who, years after his work on the bridge, runs his own bakery and appears to have fully arrived in Canada:

> Nicholas Temelcoff never looks back. He will drive the bakery van over the bridge with his wife and children and only casually mention his work there. He is a citizen here, in the present, successful with his own bakery. (p. 149)

Dobson has read this passage not only as a reminder 'that his ownership of the bakery is what has rendered him a citizen' (2009, p. 109), but also as an indication of the novel's politics of difference that seem to require 'an acceptance of capitalist narratives of history in order to secure the participation of the marginalized, a stance that negates the novel's suggestions of alternatives to the dominant' (p. 106). I certainly agree that the cited passage clearly links citizenship and ownership; however, at the same time, it points to the complexities of the ways in which 'citizenship' is conceptualized in the novel: as both dependent on the acceptance of national narratives, *and* as undermining some of the very demands that are made by those narratives.

Even though it may initially seem that becoming or being a citizen means to forget, to 'not look back,' Nicholas Temelcoff realizes how crucial memory is for the present:

> Nicholas is aware of himself standing there within the pleasure of recall. It is something new to him. This is what history means. He came to this country like a torch on fire and he swallowed air as he walked forward and he gave out light. Energy poured through him. That was all he had time for in those years. Language, customs, family, salaries. Patrick's gift, that arrow into the past, shows him the wealth in himself, how he has been sewn into history. Now he will begin to tell stories. (Ondaatje 1987, p. 149)

In this passage, memory is a reminder of an earlier foreignness that apparently needed to be forgotten in the process of becoming a citizen whose products 'reach the multitudes of the city' (ibid.). In fact, however, it is the remembering and thus the acknowledgment of a 'surplus' of foreignness that is crucial, because foreignness itself as well as the attempt to overcome it provides a fundamental challenge to hegemonic notions of both membership and belonging.

Once again—and this comes as no surprise—this is closely connected to the question of language. The process of cultural arrival through the learning of English is a process of both familiarization and a modification of social and cultural practices that indeed proves to be the 'irritation through the foreign':

> Most immigrants learned their English from recorded songs or, until the talkies came, through mimicking actors on stage.... Usually by the end of an east-end production at the Fox or Parrot Theatres the actors' speeches would be followed by growing echoes as Macedonians, Finns, and Greeks repeated the phrases after a half-second pause, trying to get the pronunciation right. This infuriated the actors, especially when a line such as "Who put the stove in the living room, Kristin?"—which had originally brought the house down—was now spoken simultaneously by at least seventy people and so tended to lose its spontaneity. (p. 47)

The process of assimilation through language appears to be a process of interruption and irritation rather than one of blending in—a challenge to taken-for-granted cultural practices. Thus, I read Ondaatje's investigations of citizenship not in a framework of inclusion, but of constant interruption and intervention. While this example refers to a context that is seemingly removed from the kind of politics usually associated with the concept of citizenship, I would nevertheless like to stress the connection: The process of becoming a citizen is also a process of interrupting and challenging a given order, including cultural conventions and rituals.

Ondaatje's use of the figure of the 'foreigner' as a stranger 'who comes today and stays tomorrow' (Simmel 1971, p. 143), and whose contribution to the city (and by extension the nation) is more often than not underestimated, downplayed, or plainly ignored, ties in with the discourses that have among others shaped Kogawa's *Obasan*, namely discourses of recognition. This clearly has an impact on the way in which the novel addresses questions of citizenship: While it indeed highlights, as has been argued, the interruptive dimension of citizenship rather than its ritualized component, it nevertheless relies on the immigrant's absorption into the body of the nation, physically and metaphorically. Although Ty argues that 'what is highlighted by Ondaatje is an early 1930s version of what were to become the vibrant global or "multicultural" aspects of Toronto' (2011, p. 103), the city nevertheless remains a metonym for the nation: The immigrants who (literally) build Toronto by extension build the nation, and their citizenship is national, not localized 'cityzenship.' While the city is clearly multicultural, its presentation resonates strongly with a notion of multiculturalism and recognition that has immigrants turn into citizens at a price, where, as Glen Sean Coulthard has argued in a different context, '"recognition" is conceived as something that is ultimately "granted" or "accorded" to a subaltern group or entity by a dominant group or entity' (2014, pos. 705). Seen from this perspective, Ondaatje's protagonist, the anarchist Patrick Lewis, does not only leave the city to avoid persecution.

In the decades since the 1980s, discourses of multiculturalism and recognition faced increasing criticism for their reliance on a national framework and logic as well as for their potential reification of cultural difference—a criticism that is not only substantially reflected in, but also put forward by literary texts. The critical 'success' of the concept of diaspora in the 1990s contributed significantly to this criticism, for it did not only complicate the individual's relation to community and space, but also that of transnationally constituted communities to the nation and to citizenship. As Lily Cho has cautioned, diaspora and citizenship do not fit easily; while diaspora is collective, citizenship rests on the notion of individual autonomy. Accordingly, 'the subject of diaspora and the subject of citizenship do not map onto one another' (2007, p. 101). Nicholas Temelcoff may be a case in point: The citizen has moved out of the community.

5.3 Longing and Belonging: Claiming Citizenship in Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*

Dionne Brand's third novel *What We All Long For*, which was published in 2005, presents a paradigmatic example of an important shift in Anglophone Canadian literature since the 1990s. I generally agree with Ty (2011, p. 100) that *In the Skin of a Lion* and *What We All Long For* can both be read as part of a shift in the context of globalization and its impact on literature that has resulted in alternative articulations of affiliation, belonging, and membership. However, I argue that Brand's novel not only negotiates urban identities and agency, but also explores forms and practices of citizenship *in place* in such ways that do not rely on the kind of alterities on which political recognition and relationalities of citizenship are established in Ondaatje's novel. While Ondaatje's novel ties in with discourses of multiculturalism, recognition, and a nation-oriented understanding of citizenship, I argue that globalization, critical cosmopolitanism, and diaspora as well as a notion of urban diasporic citizenship provide the framework for Brand's novel. The latter examines the question of diasporic community building as shaped by staging not only the complicated relation between the (individual) citizen and the (diasporic) community, but also the relation of the second-generation protagonists to the nation as well as their parents' generation. If the subject of diaspora does not map onto the subject of citizenship, as Cho has argued, neither subject can be stable and coherent.

The importance of diaspora as a framework of reference is highlighted not only by the novel's choice of characters and the way in which they relate to the city, which I will discuss in more detail below, but also by its foregrounding of Toronto itself: The political and cultural agenda of *What We All Long For* is prominently put forward by how Toronto and its diversity are portrayed as 'secret protagonists.' The novel begins with the city, only gradually zooming in on its characters (Tavares and Brosseau 2013, p. 10) and highlighting the city's heterogeneous composition:

> There are Italian neighbourhoods and Vietnamese neighbourhoods in this city; there are Chinese ones and Ukrainian ones and Pakistani ones and Korean ones and African ones. Name a region on the planet and there's someone form there, here. All of them sit on Ojibway land, but hardly any of them know it or care because that genealogy is wilfully untraceable except in the name of the city itself. (Brand 2005, p. 4)

The city's spatial constellations are thus simultaneously transnationally and locally inscribed, creating the city as a 'node'—Kevin Lynch's (1960) term—of cultural and economic flows, migration movements, and the historical and contemporary displacement of Aboriginal peoples. Although the latter aspect of Indigenous dispossession does not play a role in the novel's plotline, it highlights the simultaneous fragility of genealogical meaning-making and its palimpsestic quality to be found also in the stories and identification of the diasporic characters. As Kit Dobson has pointed out, 'Toronto's shifting demographics, connected to the flows of transnational migration, present continual and massive generational shifts that change the sensibilities of the place, even while its formal political structures remain in place' (2009, p. 184). The shifting demographics that are highlighted by Dobson are taken up in the novel's focalization and the way in which the choice of characters reflects the transnational dynamics that make up the city: the four young protagonists, Tuyen, Oku, Carla, and Jackie, all in their twenties and Canadian-born; their parents, all of them migrants (either immigrant or domestic migrant) and citizens, but none of whom seems to have 'arrived' at a fundamental sense of belonging; and Quy, the only I-narrator in the novel, whose narrative of flight across Southeast Asia and to Canada frequently 'interrupts' the main narrative. Of all the storylines in the novel Quy's most directly engages with the nation-state by way of border crossing, but it also most fundamentally calls into question the conceptual promises of non-national forms and practices of citizenship.

5.3.1 Urban Dis/Placements

As Tavares and Brosseau have emphasized, the two generations of characters are central in the novel's investigation of urban citizenship and its transnational dynamics (2013, pp. 10–11). Tuyen, Oku, Carla, and Jackie are confronted with both their parents' sense of displacement and their own (and very different) struggles for belonging:

> They all, Tuyen, Carla, Oku, and Jackie, felt as if they inhabited two countries—their parents' and their own.… Each left home in the morning as if making a long journey, untangling themselves from the seaweed of other shores wrapped around their parents. Breaking their doorways, they left the sleepwalk of their mothers and fathers and ran across the unobserved

> borders of the city, sliding across ice to arrive at their own birthplace—the city. They were born in the city from people born elsewhere." (Brand 2005, p. 20)

The passage presents the experience of a clash between worlds in terms of 'countries' and 'border' crossings; it poetically renders the everyday life of the young protagonists as a frequently repeated migration, or even flight, that juxtaposes 'home' and 'birthplace'; genuine belonging—if it is to be found at all—is found in the city, not 'at home.' Their birthplace is their claim to citizenship; their parents' birthplace makes the older generation diasporic and the younger generation 'cityzens' who form their own community across and beyond the diasporic communities of their parents.

Toronto's urban space is thus presented as a collision of different, irreconcilable worlds—that of migrants and their children; Canada's hegemonic 'whitestream' (Denis 1997, p. 19) is mostly visible in its structural, usually marginalizing effects upon the young protagonists. Accordingly, critics have read identity formation as one of the novel's central themes (e.g., Tavares and Brosseau 2013, p. 11). However, while identity formation and transformation are indisputably important issues that concern all four protagonists in their own respective ways, the redefinition of identity appears less important than the exploration of agency. *What We All Long For*, I suggest, stages a form of 'cosmopolitan urban citizenship' that is bound but not restricted to the city and that provides the basis for complex *identifications* rather than identities.

The concept of 'cosmopolitanism' has been the controversial object of postcolonial theoretical debates—a role that it continues to play in more recent discussions of citizenship. Critics have located the concept of cosmopolitanism in two central fields of tension, both of which resonate strongly in postcolonial and citizenship theories (in addition to having a traceable literary impact): the tension between nation and transnational constellations, and the juxtaposition of cosmopolitanism as an elite phenomenon vs. as an experience of many. Pheng Cheah has emphasized the initially close link between the concept of the nation and cosmopolitanism (Cheah 1998, pp. 22–23; also Robbins 1998, p. 2; Mignolo 2002, p. 173). In Brand's novel, this link is manifest in the two generations: While for the protagonists' parents, Toronto is the place where (and through which) they relate to the nation, a diasporic space haunted by memories of 'home' without ever becoming 'home,' the

protagonists themselves relate to the cosmopolitan city as their birthplace and claim to citizenship. As such, it is connected to various other places, most obviously their parents' locations of origin, but these carry little meaning for the protagonists. Against the backdrop of their everyday experience of being denied a sense of genuine belonging since they are not 'of the required race' (Brand 2005, p. 47), they claim the city, not the nation, as a space of co-actorship and co-authorship.

Thus, while the parental generation's experience can be understood in terms of diasporic longing, that of their children has to be read in a framework of a cosmopolitanism grounded in place (Appiah 2006). As Donna Palmateer Pennee has argued, 'diasporas do not come from nor do they travel through and exist in thin air, nor do citizenships. They *are* grounded, even if not always landed' (2004, p. 83). Pennee's groundedness of citizenship (as well as diaspora, as this implies by extension) refers to the nation as a necessary framework. Building upon Pennee's argument, Lily Cho seeks to capture the undissolvable but ideally productive tension inherent in 'diasporic citizenship' by understanding it 'as a way of registering the profound unease with the idea of citizenship and as a way of recalling the anguishes attendant upon the project of citizen-making' (2007, p. 105). Hence, both Pennee and Cho see diaspora and citizenship as mapped onto the nation, however uneasily; 'diaspora' functions here as a safeguard against the totalizing demands of 'citizenship' as a national project.

In *What We All Long For*, neither citizenship nor diaspora are exclusively bound to the nation, but rather grounded in other spatial and symbolic constellations. In this novel, I suggest that 'diasporic citizenship' is the model applicable to the im/migrant generation of the protagonists' parents, whereas the protagonists themselves seek to enact a rather 'urban cosmopolitan citizenship.' 'Diasporic' then takes into account the experience of a dislocation that seeks and finds no closure; as James Clifford has illustrated, diaspora has to be understood in terms of how it differs from 'immigration' because 'peoples whose sense of identity is centrally defined by collective histories of displacement and violent loss cannot be "cured" by merging into a new national community' (1994, p. 307). As the initial quote from the novel conveys, even though the parents would certainly like to 'arrive,' they cannot simply do so, as they remain entangled with their painful histories and their longing for other places as home. In contrast, the protagonists themselves are shaped by a place-bound cosmopolitanism, and the citizenship they enact is a cosmopolitan citizenship that pertains to a particular place—Toronto.

Hence, my reading of *What We All Long For* will concentrate on the novel's exploration of political and cultural agency, membership and belonging, and co-authorship and co-actorship in the specific urban setting of Toronto. As Emily Johansen has argued, 'characters in Brand's novel negotiate their subjectivities in public places,' creating what Johansen calls

> 'territorialized cosmopolitan' subjectivities—subjectivities with multiple affiliations across axes of gender, ethnicity, class, and sexuality which are not unrooted or free-floating but are principally and firmly located in the physicality of Toronto. (2008, p. 49)

'Cosmopolitanism' has to be understood as a positionality that draws on a variety of cultural resources, yet is not bound to particular group identifications. Membership and belonging are thus negotiated with regard to both specific spatial constellations and a variety of possible community constructions that also depend on the renegotiation of what constitutes public and private spaces.

For Tuyen, Carla, Oku, and Jackie, the city of Toronto is central to their identification and sense of belonging; it is not a country, a nation, or even a specific community that frames these characters, but rather this particular city. 'The second-generation characters,' to quote Johansen once more, 'actively move into the city's public places to find and create new and different dialogues about what it means to be a citizen of the metropolis' (ibid.). The novel's emphasis on specific, recognizable public locations—Kensington Market, College Street, Alexandra Park, Eglinton Avenue—leads to an exploration not only of identifications that exceed or even contradict national identity, but introduces specific places in the city of Toronto as sites of contesting and contested agency. Tavares and Brosseau's reading focuses on the lack of agency and the denial of rights when they argue that

> lacking agency over the terms of their inclusion within the social and economic spheres of the city, Brand's immigrant characters are effectively denied informal citizenship by spatialized structural forces beyond their control. (2013, p. 17)

This certainly applies to Brand's first-generation migrant characters in the novel; their control over the terms of inclusion is not so different from that of Ondaatje's characters, even though the latter are presented

as laying claims to the city's public spaces more defiantly. However, the children of the migrant generation have a very different way of relating to, and indeed claiming, the city; while their movements are not entirely free, as Oku's subjection to racial profiling notably illustrates, they nevertheless actively claim the urban space of Toronto by their mobility, their art, and their economic activities.

In what follows, I will discuss some of the different strategies, both successful and failing, by which the novel's protagonists and their parents seek to claim and affirm their citizenship as a form of agency characterized by co-actorship and co-authorship. As Kit Dobson has noted and as the initial quote from the text indicates, there has been a generational shift: The younger generation

> feels little belonging to either the Canadian nation or to their ancestral homes; for them, finding community is an urban project, one engaged in the active social construction of space, and they fracture notions of belonging through a focus upon the component parts of that very word: being and longing. (Dobson 2009, p. 179)

Whereas the parents' generation—much like Fernando's parents in Verdecchia's (1998) short story that was discussed in the introduction—seeks to claim and affirm their status as citizens of the nation as a token of belonging, the protagonists' generation is not interested in the nation; it is the city to which they lay claim.

5.3.2 Claiming the Nation: Im/Migrants

The depiction of immigrants and migrants in *What We All Long For* works along very different lines as those portrayed in Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion*. As Ty has argued, 'it is not accidental that the two groups united in Toronto are Vietnamese Canadian and Jamaican Canadian. They are the postcolonial cosmopolitans who have been displaced by political or economic exigencies' (2011, p. 110).[2] While Ondaatje's immigrants are driven by such exigencies as well, Ty's observation points to what has changed between the time frames that are covered in these novels: While Ondaatje's characters have migrated to Canada

[2] It needs to be noted that the characters' backgrounds reflect upon the colonialisms of the two European charter groups, the English (Jamaica) and the French (Indochina).

in the context of the British Empire (and from Europe), the journeys of Brand's first-generation migrant characters are marked by the complexities of a globalized postcolonial world with its informal colonial continuities.

Read in light of this context, the protagonists' parents are haunted by insecurities regarding their status in that world; the sources of these insecurities differ, however, depending on their specific circumstances of migration and the interconnected importance that they ascribe to the different components of (Canadian) citizenship. For Tuyen's mother Cam, a Vietnamese refugee, formal citizenship is the bedrock of her existence in Canada; given her experiences of flight and the agonizing loss of her son Quy, the papers that attest to her and her family's status provide a sense of security, and yet are a source of much anxiety:

> Tuyen's mother had a mad fear of being caught without proof, without papers of any kind attesting to identity or place…. Cam's main occupation, though, was birth certificates, identity cards, immigration papers, and citizenship papers and cards. She checked incessantly and duplicated them tenfold, keeping them in cookie jars, vanity drawers, and breadboxes. (Brand 2005, p. 63)

Official papers serve as a proof of their identity and status, including their status as Canadian citizens. Dobson has argued with reference to Brand's earlier novel *In Another Place, Not Here* as follows: 'Citizenship is a passport to belonging, with its fixing stamp of approval' (2009, p. 185), and this clearly is the case for Cam Vu as well.

However, as I have argued throughout this study, formal membership and recognized belonging are ideally complementary, albeit not identical facets of citizenship, and citizenship exceeds nationality. Like her husband, Cam is set on carving out a space for herself in Canada, yet she is simultaneously confined to specific symbolic spaces beyond which she seemingly cannot go (Tavares and Brosseau 2013, p. 18). Highly educated professionals whose credentials are not recognized in Canada, both Cam and Tuan make a living in Canada as owners of a Vietnamese restaurant:

> The restaurant became their life. They were being defined by the city. They had come thinking that they would be who they were, or at least who they had managed to remain. After the loss of Quy, it made a resigned sense to

> them that they would lose other parts of themselves. Once they accepted that, it was easy to see themselves the way the city saw them: Vietnamese food. Neither Cam nor Tuan cooked very well, but how would their customers know? Eager Anglos ready to taste the fare of their multicultural city wouldn't know the difference. (Brand 2005, pp. 66–67)

Economically, the members of the Vu family are very successful and manage the move from their initial poor inner-city neighborhood to a 'giant house' in Richmond Hill, 'one of those suburbs where immigrants go to get away from other immigrants' (p. 54). However, like Nicholas Temelcoff's status in Ondaatje's novel, theirs also hinges on and is limited to their entrepreneurship; their agency is restricted to that of 'economic citizens.' So despite their financial success, they remain confined to ethnic categories that will prevent them from being fully recognized as 'Canadians,' regardless of their legal status as citizens. The city of Toronto indeed appears as a contact zone when one considers and the manifold ways in which Tuyen's parents, Cam and Tuan, endeavor to make Toronto their Canadian home. As Caroline Rosenthal has argued, 'it is here that many immigrants first come into contact with the space of the nation, a space into which they introduce their own narratives, histories, and subjectivities' (2011, p. 26). Nonetheless, the contact zone is always marked by power asymmetries that exist between the groups that are involved (Pratt 2008, p. 8). Toronto—at least for the parents' generation—appears as a metonym for the nation in what it offers and in what it withholds.

This relationship to the nation through the city differs for Jackie's parents: In contrast to the others, they are not immigrants, but have moved to Toronto from Nova Scotia. While the Vu family members lay claim to a notion of 'Canadianness' as a self-reinvention of recent immigrants, Jackie's parents are 'Africadians,' to use George Elliott Clarke's term (2002, p. 5), and their background testifies to a black presence in Canada that precedes post-World War II migrations from the Caribbean and Africa. Therefore, their symbolic claim is to the present as well as the past of the nation, and their immediate claim is one to the city of Toronto (and by extension Canada) as a black space. Thus, Clarke's charge against Brand's 'we' in an earlier novel as enacting 'a warm gesture of inclusion for immigrant blacks but exclud[ing] simultaneously the history of indigenous African Canadians' (p. 196) does not hold true for *What We All Long For*'s

emphasis on black experience as both immigrant and Indigenous. As Rosenthal has it, 'Brand not only inscribes a black presence into the urban realm of Toronto but makes it evident that there are black communities across Canada who, beyond their local and regional identities, draw on their own places for a collective identity' (2011, p. 237), even though this collective identity is volatile, contradictory, and shifting. 'Collective identity' does not exclusively mean 'black identity,' but also indicates the potentials of regionalized black identities within and across Canadian borders.

Given the various backgrounds that are activated and referred to in the text, the black space presented in the novel is obviously not homogenous: While it is circumscribed by specific locations such as the Paramount, 'the best dance club in the country [that] was about to close' (Brand 2005, p. 94), places in which the black community gathers and that function as urban nodes, the space is nevertheless marked not only by a heterogeneity of backgrounds, but also by tensions between groups:

> Jackie's mum got in with some girls who had a rivalry with some West Indian girls. Saturday nights they would settle all the scores in the women's washroom. The Scotian girls, and she was one, had a reputation for fighting. They would beat you like a man. Because their fathers beat them like men and their men beat them like men, so they beat each other and those West Indian girls like men. (p. 95)

This passage, almost in passing, points to the everyday violence that black women are subjected to and which they also enact against one another. Physical violence, born of marginalization and a denial of social recognition, appears here as a replacement for cultural and political agency. The 'Scotians' and the 'West Indians,' two groups equally marginalized by Anglo-Canadian society, illustrate the complexities of blackness and its relation to the nation and citizenship in Canada.

There are obvious disparities between the diasporic experiences of black Canadians and those of the Vu family. The crucial difference in this depiction constitutes the very existence of a black community; in contrast, the Vus appear not to have any chance (or desire) for building a community. While the Paramount frequented by Jackie's

parents and the neighborhood where Oku's parents live bear witness to the variety of black spaces in Toronto as well as to the broad range of black communities, the Vus are portrayed as being bound to transnational, rather than local (or national) constellations. The couple appears to be isolated and locked up in its tragic family history and painful memories, their lost son Quy tells a transnational story of flight and survival, their Canadian-born son Binh is involved in the transnational business of human trafficking, and their daughter Tuyen rejects any kind of clear-cut group affiliation and the attached obligations, both in her artistic work and in her everyday practices.

However, as the example of black communities also illustrates, community building does not per se equal agency. Community ties are volatile: The Paramount is closed, depriving the 'West Indians' and 'Scotians' of a place where community can be enacted, however problematic said enactment may be at times. And the neighborhood of Eglinton is for Oku a web of ambivalent relations: On the one hand, it provides him with a sense of belonging and familiarity, while it depicts an image of black masculinity that bound to the temptations of easy money and frequent run-ins with the law, on the other hand. Therefore, the very constitution of all of these community structures intersects with the marginalized position of black Canadians in national as well as local contexts.

Despite the different migration experiences of the parents' generation, they all share a fundamental and continuing sense of dislocation and unbelonging; regardless of whether their place of origin is Jamaica, Vietnam, or Halifax, they all long for what they have left behind and frequently try their children's patience by telling stories of 'how life used to be "back home"' and by giving 'inspired descriptions of other houses, other landscapes, other trees' (Brand 2005, p. 20). These other places continue to be present in the city of Toronto; for Tuyen's, Oku's, and Jackie's parents, these places mark Toronto as a diasporic space *between* their longed-for places of origin and the Canadian nation.[3]

[3]This remains more elusive with regard to Carla's parents, as her mother's dislocation is told in terms of community rather than space, namely her being ostracized by her Italian Canadian family because of her relationship with a (married) black man. Her father, beyond the circumstances of the family tragedy, is not fleshed out as a character, even though he is briefly used as a focalizer.

5.3.3 Claiming the City: 'Cityzens'

Questions of community, agency, and citizenship come into play very differently for the four second-generation protagonists. In contrast to their parents, they lack competing spatial and emotional attachments; at the same time, although their formal membership in the nation is uncontested, their affiliation—as has been argued—is not so much with the nation as it is with the city. In a 2007 article, David Chariandy looks at poll findings that seek to pinpoint the level of identification that immigrants have with Canada. The findings indicate that those belonging to visible minorities have an identification rate that is higher than that of other immigrant groups; in the second generation, however, the intensity of identification plummets below that of any other group. So, that is,

> despite the existence, in Canada, of seemingly robust policies, institutions, and discourses whose concerted purpose it is to instil a sense of cultural citizenship among all ethnic groups, the Canadian-born children of visible-minority immigrants were progressively identifying less with Canada. (Chariandy 2007, p. 818)

Like the protagonists in Brand's novel, these Canadian-born children are Canadian citizens; so while their membership is uncontested, their sense of belonging is less focused on national identification than on other categories of identification. Thus, when discussing the protagonists' tactics of 'making do' (to use de Certeau's terminology) in the city, the function of cosmopolitan Toronto as a metonym for the nation needs to be taken into account. As Johansen has noted in an endnote,

> Toronto as a cosmopolitan city in the novel seems to be separate from Toronto as a Canadian city. The city, for the most part, seems like an urban island unto itself with very little mention given to the country within which it is situated. Thus while the characters in the novel clearly territorialize their cosmopolitan subjectivities in the physical place of Toronto, the novel itself reiterates a common vision of the global cosmopolitan city as de-nationalized and even de-territorialized. (2008, p. 62n11)

Tuyen, Carla, Oku, and Jackie have few or no memories of another place that could have potentially created attachments and identification. Between attachment and dissociation, between their parents' past and their own present, the four protagonists struggle for an agency that

is bound to the specific urban spaces of Toronto. However, despite the fact that they all 'belong' to the city, this belonging has to be constantly reaffirmed by means of laying claim to the city's physical and symbolic spaces.

This claim, as I will show in the following section, is a claim to an alternative form of citizenship as belonging. Like for their parents, the protagonists do not take belonging for granted; unlike their parents, the protagonists define membership and belonging not in the context of the nation, but in the context of the city—a localized, cosmopolitan citizenship that disavows the nation and emphatically lays claim to place and relation. They do so by means of entrepreneurship (Jackie), mobility (Carla, Oku), and art (Tuyen).

In my previous discussions of Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* and the Vus' claim to Canadianness, I have highlighted the importance and the limitations of economic agency for the discussion of citizenship as co-actorship and co-authorship: Nicholas Temelcoff's citizenship is initially linked to his economic success and to his attempt to forget; he claims a more fundamental kind of citizenship when he finally allows himself to remember, to re-assemble pieces of his (and the city's) past. In contrast, the Vus remain limited to their citizenship papers and their economic success as expressions of both their membership and belonging because their present is so firmly circumscribed by the past and shaped by the symbolic spaces allocated to them as Vietnamese refugee immigrants; they lay no claim to the symbolic spaces of the nation. This is different for Jackie, the only one of the four friends who is economically successful, with her store called *Ab und Zu* (German for 'once in a while') that is located 'just on the border where Toronto's trendy met Toronto's seedy' (Brand 2005, p. 99). Her shop and its location embody the city's dynamism; the area is described as being in constant transition and the location of the store as one of spatial contestations and hope for success. However, while providing a degree of economic autonomy for Jackie, the *Ab und Zu* also appears as a space of stasis; despite Jackie's self-assertiveness, her insistence on apartness and 'safety' from boundary-challenging experiences such as her sexual encounter with Oku (which significantly happens in the back of the store) makes her appear as the least active of the four young characters. Her spaces are largely *inside*, while Tuyen, Carla, and Oku carry their claims to agency into Toronto's public spaces, and actively seek to inscribe and write them.

For Carla and Oku, this is mainly presented in terms of physical mobility. Urban space has been understood as a 'text' to be deciphered as well as a text that is actively being written, albeit in divergent ways by the onlooker, the pedestrian, the planner, and/or the writer. In his much-cited *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau juxtaposes the view on the city from above to the movement of the individual through the 'text' of the city. He argues that, while the bird's eye view produces 'imaginary totalizations' of city space (1984, p. 93),

> the ordinary practitioners of the city live "down below," below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk—an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers… whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it. (ibid.)

The former is associated with control, or rather with the illusion of control by way of the distant, ordering gaze, whereas the latter is marked by the sensual experience of the city, its sounds and smells, the movement through it devoid of the possibility to 'see everything clearly,' yet nevertheless simultaneously imbued with the possibilities of making and creating space: For de Certeau (and many theorists and readers of the city agreed with him on this), it is this movement that creates the urban text—a literal co-authorship of a constantly shifting and changing urban space that has been pre-structured by social and racial hierarchies.

In *What We All Long For*, the characters' movement through the city is not only decisive for the investigation of the novel's construction of urban space, but also for the way in which it serves to explore the possibilities and limitations of their agency. The characters' positions within the social hierarchy of the city determine how agency can be investigated and enacted both in and through movement. Oku walks the city, experiences it in his encounters with other marginalized people such as the Rastafarian, and enjoys it as an onlooker who, if he were of another race, could be a detached *flâneur*. However, as a young black man he has to negotiate his possibilities of movement and potential co-actorship against the obstacles of racial profiling that frequently make him a target for police officers. As he tells Jackie, 'I can get jacked up any night by the cops just for walking in the wrong place' (Brand 2005, p. 46)—and often enough he is:

> He had come to expect this passion play acted out on his body anytime he encountered authority, and it was played out at its most ecstatic with the cops. Whenever he encountered them, he simply lifted his arms in a crucifix, gave up his will and surrendered to the stigmata. Some of his friends didn't. They resisted, they talked, they asserted their rights. That only caused more trouble. They ended up in the system fighting to get out. They ended up hating everyone around them. Homicidal. (p. 165)

This passage underlines the different options that are depicted for young black men in the city in *What We All Long For*; Oku and Carla's brother Jamal—who repeatedly ends up in jail—embodies different choices as to how to deal with the precarious situation of black men in the Canadian metropolis, as well as the way in which the identification of citizenship as both membership and belonging does not apply to black Canadians. As Rinaldo Walcott has argued,

> even as nations give way to various forms of citizenship influenced by the latest trends in globalization, black people in Canada continue to exist in precarious relation to older versions of citizenship and older versions of belonging. (2003, p. 23)

These older versions call on the taken-for-granted 'whiteness' of Canadian citizenship and belonging that has already been discussed in the previous chapters. However, besides the novel's general criticism of these older notions and their underlying racial (and racist) assumptions, the frequency with which the novel refers to the limitation of mobility and agency for young black men—and hence the curtailing of their opportunities for co-actorship—could also point to the increasing practice of racial profiling in Toronto in the early 2000s (Walcott 2003, pp. 11–12), thus underlining very place-specific constellations of citizenship enactment and restrictions.

Nevertheless, the presentation of Oku's spatial practices and the containment and discrimination to which he is subjected are only one way in which the novel explores the second generation's possibilities (or lack thereof) for co-actorship and co-authorship. Carla's extensive bike rides provide another example that also works with the tension that exists between possibility and limitation, while also addressing different tactics at the same time. Her bike rides not only introduce the reader to different places within Toronto's urban sprawl, but also to the emotional impact that

the city has on her, that is, they introduce the reader to her inner landscape as a reflection of urban space (Rosenthal 2011, pp. 225–26), and thus to the basis on which her interaction with others and with the city rests.

So if we take the understanding of space as produced by action (unlike space as the container in which activity 'happens') seriously, as well as the interdependence of reception and production (Löw 2001, p. 81), and reading and writing, then Carla's bike rides and the other characters' movements in and through the city need to be understood as a form of production of Toronto's urban space on two levels that correspond to the novel's different levels of citizenship as co-authorship and co-actorship. On the level of the plot, Carla's movement through the city functions as a reading of the city, with the city as a reflection of her inner cityscape; on this level, her movement is an expression of and flight from inner turmoil, as well as a claim to space. In contrast to her brother Jamal, for Carla the city is 'a set of obstacles to be crossed and circled, avoided and let pass. He saw it as something to get tangled in' (Brand 2005, p. 32). On this level, the claim inherent in Carla's movement is literally fleeting. On the level of the text, however, Carla's bike rides function as a form of co-authorship, as a claim not only to the physical but also the symbolic spaces of the city. Carla moves indiscriminately and seemingly unhindered through different economic and residential spaces that become blurred to her in her fast movement; her movements appear to de-hierarchize these spaces, calling into question the taken-for-granted social structure of the city (cf. Johansen 2008, p. 50). In doing so, the novel not only lays claim to the way in which Toronto is represented, but also to how it is understood as a diversified and contested space—culturally, politically, socially, and economically.

While Carla and Oku move through the city, defiantly making it 'theirs' against the obstacles they frequently encounter, art emerges as a complementary tactic to lay claim to the city's public spaces. A group of young graffiti artists—who, like the four protagonists, are from families 'born elsewhere'—plays with the tension of presence and absence, visibility and invisibility of 'race' in Toronto:

> Kumaran's graffiti crew prided itself on fluency, stealth, and agility. They had made themselves shadowy and present in the city…. They were critical presences, unnoticed until they felt like being noticed. They saw their work—writing tags and signatures—as painting radical images against the dying poetics of the anglicized city. The graffiti crew had filled in the details of the city's outlines. (Brand 2005, p. 134)

Their public art questions the parameters of what co-actorship and co-authorship can mean. Their act of 'painting the whole city over' (p. 32)—spatially and symbolically—challenges the 'anglicised city,' in addition to objecting to its accepted means of participation. Both the visibility of the tags and signs as well as the invisibility of the artists within the realm of Toronto's public spaces complicate the relationship between agent, action, and effect—their art can be read 'tactics' according to de Certeau as well as 'acts of citizenship' according to Isin and Nielsen, that is, as an interruption instead of a reiteration of established procedure, 'collective or individual deeds that rupture social-historical patterns' (2008, p. 2).

However, Tuyen's own artistic activity is even more central in the novel. Less publicly visible than the art of the graffiti crew, her art nevertheless also plays with the distinction between public and private space that is so crucial for liberal notions of citizenship. The materials for her work are collected, found, or stolen on her tours through the city; Toronto's bits and pieces literally become hers and are reassembled in art. Her exhibits of constructed installations in her apartment and her hallway are not merely practical (given her constant lack of money), but can also be seen as an act of refusal to accept a liberal public/private distinction that expects the individual to divide herself into the public citizen—presumably unmarked by ethnicity, culture, religion, etc—and the private individual. What is more, Tuyen's art draws on numerous cultural traditions and a variety of materials and cannot therefore be categorized in terms of culture, nationality, or ethnic affiliation. At the same time, it is grounded in Toronto's urban materiality; the kind of enactment it represents occasionally rages against the city, yet always targets the city as a transcultural, even cosmopolitan space in which liberal understandings of citizenship as nation-bound and as dependent on a specific notion of public space are fundamentally questioned.

This has implications regarding the ways in which Tuyen's art ties in with questions of citizenship as membership and belonging. As argued above, none of the characters' formal membership is contested, including the parents' generation (even though for the Vus as former refugees the insecurity seems to be permanent); hence, it appears as if affective belonging is the crucial issue at hand. However, as previously pointed out by Dobson's quote (2009, p. 186), belonging is of no interest to Brand; as the title of the novel indicates, the crucial feeling addressed in the text is *longing*, which also becomes Tuyen's central project when she

assembles the 'longings of the city' (Brand 2005, p. 160). Once again, the boundary between public and private is paramount: For Tuyen, 'the city was full of longings and she wanted to make them public' (p. 151). She collects other people's stories of longing in a book—from personal conversation, from public sources such as newspapers, from bits and pieces she heard on the street, from imagination—and then transcribes them and pins them to a hanging. 'Longing' is both private and public; the longings that are recorded and imagined by Tuyen include arrivals and returns, the harmless, the sad, the hideous. What makes their recording and assembly into a work of art as well as a part of the novel's citizenship agenda should be understood on the textual rather than the plot level: This process has to be read as a further development of the early introduction of the city by way of its diverse population:

> In this city there are Bulgarian mechanics, there are Eritrean accountants, Colombian café owners, Latvian book publishers, Welsh roofers, Afghani dancers, Iranian mathematicians, Tamil cooks in Thai restaurants, Calabrese boys with Jamaican accents, Fushen deejays, Filipina-Saudi beauticians; Russian doctors changing tires, there are Romanian bill collectors, Cape Croker fishmongers, Japanese grocery clerks, French gas meter readers, German bakers, Haitian and Bengali taxi drivers with Irish dispatchers. Lives in the city are doubled, tripled, conjugated. (Brand 2005, p. 5)

In addition to being a conjugation of lives, Tuyen's project also drives the significance of imagination home for any form of subject and community formation. Like Carla's movement through the city, Tuyen's collection of the city's debris and its reinterpretation in terms of individual longings point to 'belonging' as a highly volatile sentiment that is instable in its relationship to space; thus, when Tavares and Brosseau argue that 'it is precisely through an engagement with the socio-spatial heterogeneity of downtown Toronto that Brand's second-generation characters formulate an alternative, politicized urban identity that acts as a basis upon which to claim informal urban citizenship' (2013, p. 23), they confine the agenda of the novel to questions of identity as the basis for citizenship. However, as I have argued throughout this chapter, the novel goes further and replaces questions of identity with questions of identification. The latter is situational yet not arbitrary; highlighting the necessity to constantly renegotiate what Edward Said has called 'filiation' and 'affiliation' (Said 1983, pp. 24–25), it denaturalizes both.

This denaturalization of *all* association leads to an insistence on negotiation and imagination that not only pertains to the characters and their struggle for co-actorship, but also extends to the novel's agenda of co-authorship.

5.3.4 Ghosted Citizens? A Coda on What We All Long For *and* Love Enough

In 2014, Brand published her fourth novel *Love Enough*. The novel stands in a complex relationship to *What We All Long For*: In some ways, it can be read as a 'ghost' sequel to the earlier novel, telling stories that connect to *What We All Long For*, but as their potential alternatives.[4] The storyline of Bedri and Germain (nicknamed 'Ghost') opens with the two of them fleeing in an Audi and a stolen Beemer; they have just beaten a man to near death for the car. *What We All Long For* ends on an almost identical episode: Quy, the Vus' lost son (maybe, no one really knows, least of all Quy), while waiting in a Beamer X5 to be introduced to his family,[5] is pulled out of the car and beaten; whether he survives is left open. The two perpetrators are Carla's brother Jamal, whose jail nickname is 'Ghost,' and his friend Bashir, and they are traveling in Jamal's father's Audi. The parallels go further: In *Love Enough*, Germain/Ghost has a sister, Lia; the siblings' mother Mercede is the daughter of Italian immigrants who have shunned her for the presumably 'immoral' life she leads. In *What We All Long For*, Carla and Jamal's mother has been shunned by her Italian immigrant family for her affair with a married black man.

The stories are not the same; the names obviously are not either. Yet, these and other parallels between characters and character constellations suggest that *Love Enough* continues the story web of *What We*

[4] I taught *What We All Long For* in the summer term of 2016 in a class on literary citizenship, and *Love Enough* in the winter term 2016/2017 in a class on Canadian Literature at the University of Muenster; a number of students attended both seminars and remarked on the close overlaps between the texts. One student even suspected that the later novel might have picked up narrative strands that Brand had decided not to pursue in her earlier novel. I relate this experience for I remain puzzled by the relation between the texts. I would like to thank the students of both seminars for their engaging discussions and astute observations.

[5] The car's brand is spelled differently in the two novels, 'Beamer X5' in *What We All Long For* and 'Beemer' in *Love Enough*.

All Long For and its exploration of Toronto's urban space as one of volatile assertion of citizenship. With the storylines more loosely connected to one another than in the 2005 novel, *Love Enough* presents a narratively more experimental text, a formal aspect with implications for the way in which it explores the characters' relation to the city, to one another, and as social and political agents. The title appears almost as an answer to the earlier novel's: What we all long for is to love or be loved 'enough,' which in itself is a difficult endeavor, as the turbulent struggle for mutually satisfying forms of intimacy between June and Sidney illustrates. However, *Love Enough* is not just a novel about the difficulties of building and maintaining relationships and forgiving—others and oneself—for the inevitable disappointments of expectations. It is also a novel about the fragility of agency in both private and public spaces. In this, *Love Enough* moves even further away from the type of story narrated in *In the Skin of a Lion* than Brand's earlier novel does: Whereas *What We All Long For* presented an immigrant generation for which economic success (as in the Vus' case) still does not equal full citizenship (as it appears in Nicholas Temelcoff's case), *Love Enough* depicts a set of characters whose agency appears to be reduced largely to the realm of intimacy—and even here, they are presented as restricted by the scripts of their pasts and the structural inequalities in which they live. While both Ondaatje's and Brand's 2005 novel explore the 'tactics' of urban citizenship in de Certeau's sense, *Love Enough* more strongly focuses on the limits of such tactics. As one reviewer has pointed out regarding the character Da'uud, a Somali economist and refugee from the civil war who now works as a taxi driver, 'we see the city as he does, through the windows of his cab' (Beattie 2014). In one very moving passage, he outlines the journey to Somaliland to his son Bedri as a process of transformation, a shedding of skin, explaining that each of the airports that Bedri will pass through is a place where old conceptions and anxieties are cast off and a new perspective can be gained. At the final destination, 'you breathe in the open world before you.… Here is your new life. You know no one and no one knows you. You will make no mistakes here and all past mistakes are erased. You begin' (Brand 2014, p. 84). The return of the diasporic subject to his father's homeland is narrated as a rebirth, but Da'uud only imagines the journey, and his son Bedri has no connection to the longed-for homeland of his father. 'Bedri returned from the African continent and slid right back into his bad habits. He was new for a while, full of all he had seen and learned from the five

airports, but after only a few months, *the city seeped into him once more'* (p. 85, emphasis mine). Like Oku's or Tuyen's geography in *What We All Long For*, Bedri's is that of the city. The city offers to both father and son not the hoped-for freedom and opportunities of citizenship and belonging, but confrontations with the limitations of such possibilities on a daily basis.

While it may be not entirely fair to the earlier novel to read its agenda more critically in light of its sequel, I nevertheless would like to conclude this subchapter with a brief discussion of the metaphors used for these limitations of agency and citizenship in both texts. In Brand's novels, the image of the 'ghost' offers such a metaphor to think through some of the complexities of urban citizenship in Anglophone Canadian literature. It is differently deployed in the two texts, drawing attention to different facets of said limitations. In *What We All Long For*, Jamal brags to Carla when she comes to visit him in jail: '"Ghost, them call me in here, you know, Carla! Ghost…." He pulled the neck of his gray issue aside, showing her a rough, ugly branded *G* on his breast under his left shoulder blade. Not a tattoo, but a brand rising in an unhealed keloid' (Brand 2005, p. 30). 'Keloid' is a scar that never fully heals.[6] Even though Jamal appears to be proud of what to Carla looks like a still-oozing wound, the brand thus echoes the bodily marking of slavery, a connection emphasized by the fact that Jamal has received this mark in jail. There is a sharp contrast between the indelible physicality of the brand—and its permanence—and the spectrality of the ghost; while one signals the inescapability of the marked black body in a racist society, the other suggests its fleetingness, even invisibility. Carla bitterly reflects on this contradiction: 'His ghostliness didn't stop the police from finding him. That's what she had wanted to tell him yesterday. You're such a fucking ghost, every time you do some shit they find you' (p. 37). Identifying as a 'ghost' does not make a young black man invisible in times of racial profiling; invisible as a citizen, he is highly visible as an 'anti-citizen,' social deviant, or criminal. 'Blackness in Canada is situated on a continuum that runs from the invisible to the hypervisible,' argues Walcott (2003, p. 44); young black men like Jamal in *What We All Long For* or Bedri in *Love Enough* are both.

[6]I am deeply grateful to Taija McDougall for alerting me to this aspect and for her insightful feedback on this subchapter.

If in *What We All Long For* the ghost suggests both the haunting of the past and its impact on the present, in *Love Enough* it implies an uncanny doubling: 'Lia and Germain had come one right after the other and so they were practically like twins, and like ghosts…. "Where's Ghost?" [Mercede] would ask Lia. "Where's Ghost?" she would ask Germain. Lia didn't like turning into something else, or turning into nothing, she hated the word. Germain took it as his real name' (Brand 2014, pp. 50–51). But not only are the siblings doubled as ghostly twins; they are also doubles to the siblings Carla and Jamal, and they share in their experience of being subjected to cultural scripts, in part internalized, over which they have no control and in the writing of which they cannot participate and that literally haunt the city.

The imagery of the ghost thus provides a bitter metaphor for a particular kind of citizen that I shall provisionally call 'ghosted citizens.' In its contemporary usage in political debates—for instance regarding citizens of Haitian origin in the Dominican Republic—the term denotes those whose citizenship has been revoked by the state. I would like to use the term 'ghosted citizens' for those positionalities in the texts I have discussed in this study who are marked by a simultaneity of status and non-status as citizens; as in-between the realms of those who can fully participate in urban society and those who cannot at all; those whose in-between status is a result of colonial or other oppressive legacies that haunt the city, with direct implications for their status as citizens. 'Formal citizenship is neither necessary nor a sufficient condition for substantive citizenship' (Isin 2002b, p. 311), and a close look at the different characters in all three novels touched upon here reveals the 'heterogeneity of marginalization' and the different ways and extents to which the individual characters are limited by the cultural and social scripts available to them. Even June's fierce belief in the need (and possibility) to change society and her involvement in social projects are haunted by a sense of futility and failure that the narrative traces back to her father, who 'taught her how to read the architecture of society in the printed word of passing governments and rising industry' (Brand 2014, p. 90), and who 'might have failed personally but not politically. That is, he had been right about the world' (p. 91). While some of the characters are 'ghosted' in the sense outlined above, all of them are haunted, and the boundaries are fluid for the minoritized subjects Brand portrays. 'Brand's city,' argues Joel Baetz, 'foregrounds not only the continual pleasures of coming in contact with different people from different places, but also

the obvious challenges and failures that come with it. The city is full of unbridgeable gaps—linguistic, socio-economic, generational, and so on—between people who live in such close proximity to one another' (2014, p. 391). Brand's portrayal of Toronto thus tests the possibilities of urban practices and agency, but despite the poetic, at times celebratory depiction of the city's diversity, the radius of the characters' co-actorship continually decreases.

5.4 The Limits of Urban Citizenship

As this and the previous chapter have shown, the enactment of citizenship—be it political or cultural or both—is bound to specific places. This also applies when citizenship is conceptualized regarding abstract collectives such as the nation. Despite its special status in citizenship theory, the multicultural city is just as particular a place as are the towns of Nelson or Bowness (now a part of Calgary) that were discussed in the previous chapter; small-town and rural spaces, even though they generally do not bring same the heterogeneous range of people together to the extent that cities do, are nevertheless deeply inscribed by transnational and diasporic processes, too.

A difference lies in the conceptualization of these located citizenship practices as potentially subversive. I have discussed Ondaatje's depiction of Toronto as being embedded in the discourses of liberal multiculturalism and argued that the city metonymically stands for the nation; the forgotten story of immigrants literally building the city, as uncovered in the novel, also brings into the open the contribution of 'foreigners' (in Simmel's understanding) to the national project, turning some of them from foreigner into citizen while others disappear from the city. In contrast, Brand's portrayal of Toronto in *What We All Long For* positions the city not as but against or at least outside of the nation; its protagonists are not citizens of the nation but citizens of the city and of the trans- or post-national spaces they inhabit.

What We All Long For in particular has been frequently read as presenting alternative citizenship practices and its diversity as providing liberating and liberated space (Baetz 2014, pp. 389–90); my own reading of it as the characters' claim to non-national spaces concurs, to an extent, with such optimism. But both Ondaatje's and Brand's novels, in their time-specific responses to explorations of citizenship, cultural diversity, and power, are also deeply skeptical of the city's possibilities and

limitations for marginalized groups. Seen from the perspective of such skepticism, Ondaatje's Toronto is, paradoxically, both a difference and homogenization machine built on a normative understanding of citizenship; the city as an ambivalent metonym for the nation retains its disciplinary function of the immigrant as a stranger who, in order to stay—or more precisely, fully arrive—has to become a citizen in a particular, economically defined way. Community building is a complex process among and across immigrant groups, as long as they are 'foreigners,' ideally to be replaced by the community of the nation.

Brand's novels present a more fragmented, yet not necessarily more optimistic notion of the city as a location of citizenship. Her characters struggle for the possibility to enact a substantive kind of citizenship that does not necessarily hinge on nationality, and that is not directed at the nation as an addressee. Brand's Toronto is emphatically not a metonym of the nation; it may even present the nation's antonym, its constant unraveling, haunted by the 'ghosts' of the national past as well as those of its own racialized present. While both 'multicultural' and 'diasporic' are apt descriptions of the city's demographic setup, in Brand's two novels under discussion here neither term translates into a community-oriented term of empowerment. And whereas in *What We All Long For*, the four young protagonists form an alternative community that rejects the cultural scripts and community expectations of their parents' generation, the concept of community plays no further role in *Love Enough*, and individual agency appears to be largely reduced to interpersonal relations. These are embedded in an awareness of larger webs of human connection, a kind of 'affective citizenship,' as Diana Brydon has called it (2007, p. 991)—an understanding that locates the possibilities of 'citizenship' in the act of witnessing rather than other forms of action.

Should my reading of these three novels, as indicative of conceptual debates of citizenship in the 1980s—in the context of multiculturalism and recognition—and the 2000s, seem to suggest a linear development that leads toward increasing fragmentation and denationalization, this is not my intention. 'Writing Toronto' is, like that of small-town and rural spaces, an exploration of the possibilities of agency at particular historical moments, and, even though Brand's are considerably more pessimistic than Ondaatje's, these examples are too specific and limited to suggest a generalizable development in the literary depiction of the city as a location of citizenship. That said, however, I do suggest that the novels can productively be read not only as examples of, but as participating in

current debates on place and citizenship. The ways in which they relate (Ondaatje), or refuse to relate (Brand), Toronto to the nation-state as the central or even exclusive locus of citizenship reflect not only the diversification of how the national, the diasporic, and the global intertwine in place, but also the diversification of citizenship practices—actual and symbolic—and, what is more, of citizenship *attitudes*. The latter are a prerequisite of the former, a stance of responsibility and answerability that may coincide with but largely exceeds the national community.

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CHAPTER 6

Cultural Citizenship and Beyond

6.1 Contradictory Negotiations: Membership and Belonging

The previous discussions have highlighted the various ways in which Anglophone Canadian literature engages with questions of citizenship. The focus on the tension between the understanding of citizenship as nationally oriented or as directed toward alternative frameworks of belonging within or across the boundaries of the nation-state sought to expand on the more frequent focus on what might be called a 'citizen typology' (as outlined, for instance, in Tan's 2015 study *Reconfigurations of Citizenship*); it was intended to thereby capture citizenship not only as a concept of political organization and cultural imagination, but also as a practice that rests on both rights and obligations. As such, 'citizenship' not only encompasses the subject formation and individual practices of citizens, but also status, recognition, spatial organization, and community formation as citizenry. My readings have shown how since the 1970s and particularly the 1980s and 1990s—which was a crucial time in the complex formation of ethnic minority literatures in Canada in an institutional sense—citizenship has been instrumental with regard to the very terminology that literary texts use to critically negotiate questions of rights and participation as questions of citizenship, membership, and belonging.

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Taking my cue from Pieter Boele van Hensbroek's conceptual distinctions between political citizenship as co-actorship and cultural citizenship as co-authorship (2010, p. 322), I have specifically focused my analyses on two aspects of the close link between literature and citizenship: firstly, citizenship, rights, and belonging as a literary subject of investigating, that is, citizenship as co-actorship claimed and enacted by or denied to the characters, as membership and belonging, as empowering and agency-oriented practice, but also as a potentially repressive regime; and secondly, literature as a form of co-authorship and the subsequent question of how the discussed texts function as critical negotiations, at times even interventions into contemporary discourses of membership and belonging by way of narrative structure, character constellation, and metaphorization of belonging as citizenship. The first aspect considers literature to be a medium where theoretical questions of social organization and hierarchies are addressed, and where ideas of the 'possible' or the at least 'thinkable' are thought through—literature, in this assumption, is a form of social theorizing. The second aspect takes this a step further and imagines literature as a field of symbolic action; while not measurable in terms of its effect, literature is assumed to tie in closely with other societal discourses, and to at least potentially have an effect by means of its engagement—'committed literature' in Theodor W. Adorno's (1992) sense, and part of what Seyla Benhabib has called 'democratic iterations' (2004, pp. 179–80).

In this context, the locus of citizenship and the addressee of citizenship claims have proven to be crucial to the understanding of what constitutes full citizenship in these literary negotiations. Formal membership in the national community has remained the foundation for understanding citizenship; the rights that are associated with such membership—like voting rights—are relevant to literary texts. However, the texts discussed in this study also highlight the frequent nonalignment of membership and belonging; as Rogers Brubaker has phrased it, 'for some marginal or minority populations, there is no doubt or contestation about their *formal* state membership …. But in such cases, there often is doubt or contestation about their *substantive* membership or citizenship status—that is, about their access to, and enjoyment of, the substantive rights of citizenship, or about their substantive acceptance as full members of a putatively national 'society'' (2010, pp. 64–65). As the texts that were discussed in this study clearly illustrate, substantive citizenship not only entails the possibility of actualizing the formal rights of membership

that one abstractly possesses as a citizen but also claiming the right to fully belong. On the basis of the previous readings, 'belonging' can therefore be specified as being both affective and symbolic. By 'affective,' I mean the individual feeling of belonging that is, at least in part, the result of being 'substantively accepted,' to paraphrase Brubaker, and hence a deeply political or politicized feeling. These 'emotional registers of the political' (Brydon 2007a, p. 997) are crucial for mobilization, rights struggles, as well as for solidarity with others; they therefore not only clearly go above and beyond individual sensitivities, but are also closely linked to what I would like to (albeit provisionally) call the symbolic component of belonging as the claim to and/or acknowledgment of a group's being part of a larger collective—for instance national—narrative. The inscription of the prairie as a space of Canadian blackness in Cheryl Foggo's memoir, for instance, is an example of a claim to symbolic belonging not only to the place, but also to the nation, as well as to a larger framework of black diaspora.

Nonetheless, as the analyses have also shown and the reference to Foggo highlights, the nation is neither the only nor even the primary addressee of some of the citizenship negotiations that are deliberated here. Indigenous and diasporic conceptions of citizenship have documented how contested the nation-state has become as the privileged or even exclusive locus of citizenship and belonging. Jeannette Armstrong's novels and Maria Campbell's memoir illustrate the problematic role that the Canadian nation-state plays in Indigenous conceptualizations of citizenship as well as the significance of alternative frameworks. Moreover, my discussions of Foggo and Fred Wah's autobiographical texts on the one hand and Dionne Brand's novels on the other have highlighted the importance of diasporic connections and identifications that have inscribed both metropolitan *and* provincial places, regardless of whether the respective texts direct their claims to belonging toward the nation-state (as Foggo's does) or seek to ignore, bypass, or even deconstruct the nation as a referent of citizenship practices (as Wah and Brand's texts do).

Despite the different agendas of the texts discussed in this study, they all are largely set in Canadian locales and have obvious connections to Canadian debates about citizenship, belonging, multiculturalism, and recognition. However, the simultaneous directedness of some of these novels toward 'alter-national' frameworks (Tan 2015, pos. 109) points to a broader question regarding the scope of literary negotiations of

citizenship in Anglophone Canadian literature. Literary negotiations of citizenship are embedded in specific contexts that they respond to as well as 'webs of meaning' (Boele van Hensbroek 2010, p. 322) in which they participate, in addition to being a component of Benhabib's 'democratic iterations,' as this study has suggested. What, then, is the space of circulation of these 'democratic iterations,' how national is said space, and which 'webs of meaning' are co-authored by literary texts? Last but not least, what are the implications for literary texts that explicitly connect questions of citizenship with broader considerations of human rights and that in their setting and subject matter have little or no relation to Canada? In the following sections, I will first briefly discuss the increasingly important, but by no means self-evident link between human rights and citizenship. I will then turn to a cursory reading of three novels that negotiate those rights in an internationalized setting, before revisiting the question of citizenship's contemporary discursive functions both in literary texts and in literary studies.

6.2 The Global Spaces of Human Rights and Citizenship

The renewed interest in citizenship theory that was noted by Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman in 1994 has become a highly internationalized debate that increasingly intertwines with debates pertaining to human rights, the plight of refugees and asylum seekers, and conceptualizations of 'transnational,' 'global,' and 'cosmopolitan' citizenship. Discussions of citizenship in the past two decades have with increasing urgency addressed the question of which frameworks can be identified and claimed for citizenship, other than the nation-state. What will happen to the institution of citizenship and the identificatory processes that are connected to it when 'the nation-state [of] today has to respond to the twin forces of globalism and localism, while the traditional basis for national citizenship is widely reported as being eroded' (Stevenson 2003, p. 35)? Some critics are skeptical, as Peter Spiro puts it, 'whether modern con-ceptions of citizenship can survive the transition to an order in which the state is not supreme' (2008, p. 138). In face of both global and local challenges—to varying degrees reflected upon in the texts that were discussed in the previous chapter—and collectives that are competing for regulatory power as well as for the individual's identification, for

Spiro, 'the institution of citizenship may be too anchored in the state, in the liberal state, to survive the ascendancy of these competitor organizations' (ibid.). For others, 'citizenship' as a concept and an institution is not 'over' yet, even in light of the global challenge; on the contrary, the prominence of the concept has illustrated its flexibility in the changing circumstances. The question remains, though, whether 'citizenship' cannot only be conceptualized in transnational frameworks, but also as a transnational concept. While most critics do not see the emergence of the 'world citizenship' in the strict sense of being related to a world government (Dower 2003; with modifications also Cabrera 2010), they see the concept being adapted to the challenges—both by expanding into broader conceptions of cosmopolitan citizenship and by changing the understanding of national citizenship. As Stevenson stresses, 'it is not that national forms of citizenship are finished but that they are being reconstituted' (2003, p. 35).

Literature, as I have sought to show for the Canadian context, plays an important part in imagining this reconstitution and that also pertains to the scope of the respective citizenship debates. Eleanor Ty has read texts such as Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* and Brand's *What We All Long For* as indicative of the emergence of what she calls 'global Canadian novels' (Ty 2011, p. 100); she sees this 'globality' manifest both in the novels' focus on 'other' diasporas (notably those the authors themselves do not belong to) and in increasingly global settings. 'What makes these particular authors 'global' in my view,' argues Ty, 'is the sense of the cosmopolitan in their works. The stories they tell are not just stories of one particular place, but are often multiply-located and multiply-centered narratives' (p. 101). I would like to pick up on the second aspect Ty highlights, namely the choice of settings outside of Canada. Even though a novel set in a location other than Canada can be very much part of specifically Canadian discussions and discourses, the choice of setting nevertheless raises important questions for any reading of a novel's citizenship agenda and the 'webs of meaning' (Hensbroek 2010, p. 322) in the production of which it participates, nationally and internationally.

Before I close with considerations pertaining to the currency of 'citizenship' in literary and cultural studies, I would therefore like to briefly discuss three examples of Canadian novels that have chosen a setting outside Canada for their critical explorations of citizenship and

belonging in contexts where bodily integrity is under threat, human rights are violated, and people flee their homes from persecution and poverty in search of better lives; in contexts where formal citizenship is nonexistent, irrelevant, or revoked, and substantive citizenship seems unattainable. Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* (2000) chooses the twenty-five-year-long Sri Lankan civil war (1983–2009) as a setting to engage with the question of human rights that are conceptualized as universal, yet have a problematic relationship to both national and other forms of citizenship. The two other novels were published after September 11, 2001, when citizenship and human rights began to be more closely connected also in national debates. Using very different settings and historical timeframes, Esi Edugyan's *Half-Blood Blues* (2011) and Lawrence Hill's *The Illegal*, published in 2015, both address the plight of refugees as well as the racialization of citizenship and the fetishization of racial 'purity' in that context. In addition to connecting questions of citizenship, belonging, and agency to debates about human rights, I suggest that all three novels negotiate the shifts in how citizens' rights and human rights have been related to one another in political theory as well as in public debates. As Will Kymlicka has argued, policies toward minority groups in Western nations, particularly those regarding citizenship rights, have been increasingly coded in the language of human rights since the end of World War II (2007, pp. 27–55). In literary studies, this

> gained formal momentum after September 11, 2001. The shift in political, social, cultural, and intellectual landscapes at that point seemed suddenly both to obviate and to render imperative the connection in relation to changing understandings and practices of war, imprisonment, torture, and immigration. (Goldberg and Moore 2012, p. 2)

At the same time, the relationship between citizenship and human rights continues to be complicated: While citizenship rights (such as voting rights) are only allocated to those individuals who are formally and legally members of the nation, human rights are meant to guarantee each individual's protection from violations, regardless of her or his membership in and belonging to a particular national community. As Seyla Benhabib has explained pertaining to Hannah Arendt's (1979, p. 274) pessimistic assessment of citizenship as the only guarantee for the protection of human rights:

> The right to have rights today means the recognition of the universal status of personhood of each and every human being independently of their national citizenship. Whereas for Arendt, ultimately, citizenship was the prime guarantor for the protection of one's human rights, the challenge ahead is to develop an international regime which decouples the right to have rights from one's nationality status. (Benhabib 2004, p. 68)

Joseph Slaughter echoes Arendt's sentiment (and Benhabib's reading of it) when he asserts: 'Human rights are not yet the rights of humanity in general; they are the rights of incorporated citizens' (2007, p. 89). The three texts I would like to briefly discuss in the following section display a deep mistrust in the relationship between citizenship rights and human rights and the role of the nation-state; citizenship as national is a repressive structure in all three novels. However, each novel also explores the possibilities—by different means and with different implications for the overall discussion—of countering repressive citizenship regimes by means of co-authorship and co-actorship that debunk the premises of national citizenship, but nevertheless retain an understanding of collective directedness and responsibility implied in citizenship understood as co-actorship and co-authorship.

6.3 Reframing Citizenship and Human Rights in the Canadian Global Novel

6.3.1 From Cosmopolitan to Local Citizen: Michael Ondaatje's Anil's Ghost (2000)

Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* (2000) is set in Sri Lanka during the civil war that lasted from 1983 to 2009. The protagonist Anil Tissera is a Sri Lankan-born, US-based forensic anthropologist, and a British citizen, who is sent to Sri Lanka to conduct a human rights investigation and at times appears almost embarrassed by her family ties to the country. The novel has mostly been read with regard to its critical questioning of the universality of a United Nations' conception of human rights, and its complex negotiations of notions of 'truth.' However, my own concern pertains to the way in which the novel deploys a terminology of citizenship in order to explore Anil's complicated process of increasing identification with her place of origin. I suggest that in the

course of her human rights investigations Anil moves from professional detachment to involvement, and from a position of 'belonging no-where and everywhere' to a reclamation of citizenship in Sri Lanka as a substantive practice of responsibility and identification, regardless of nationality; the inherent claim of this type of citizenship is not to specific citizenship rights but rather to the dignity and bodily integrity associated with human rights.

From early on in the narrative, the novel draws on a vocabulary of citizenship. On her way from the airport into Colombo, Anil observes the street scenery, and the comment we read is formulated from her perspective:

> Anil had read documents and news reports, full of tragedy, and she had now lived abroad long enough to interpret Sri Lanka with a long-distance gaze. But here it was a more complicated world morally. The streets were still streets, *the citizens remained citizens.* They shopped, changed jobs, laughed. Yet the darkest Greek tragedies were innocent compared to what was happening here. (Ondaatje 2000, p. 11; emphasis mine)

'Citizens remained citizens'—the language of citizenship appears somewhat odd at this point, but it opens up a number of levels on which the novel negotiates central questions of belonging and membership as well as the question of agency and responsibility. As Gillian Roberts has argued, referring to this particular passage early on in the novel, it

> aligns citizenship with an identifiable normalcy, comprising both public engagement and private response, suggesting that some things have remained intact; but human rights cannot be guaranteed for Sri Lanka's citizens, thereby throwing their citizenship into question in the first place. (2011, p. 68)

Roberts thus directly links citizenship to human rights: The rights of the citizen are worth little and are even fundamentally questioned, when their rights as human beings are not respected. However, she identifies yet another level on which this connection applies by arguing that the novel 'also uses the language of citizenship to realign Anil's claim to belonging' (ibid.). She thus insists on the very connection between citizenship and human rights that had been made by diverse ethnic rights movements within Canada, namely the close link between belonging and

citizenship rights; at the same time, given the potential rift between citizenship as formal and citizenship as substantial, the novel highlights 'the disaggregation,' as Katherine Stanton has suggested, 'of citizenship and nationality under contemporary globalization' (2006, p. 33).

These different levels emphasized by Roberts and Stanton suggest a complicated and complex overlapping of human rights and citizenship discourses. The question of human rights as it is addressed in the novel is not only connected to the experience of terror that underlies the above-cited passage, but also to Anil's work as an international forensic specialist in Sri Lanka, namely her UN-sponsored mission to investigate the Sri Lankan government's human rights violations. Therefore, I suggest that the connection between these different discourses is a complex movement that in part hinges on Anil: She develops from a global (or even cosmopolitan) citizen into a local citizen, moving from a feeling of responsibility for tortured victims worldwide—that nevertheless relies on distance and professional detachment—to a feeling of responsibility toward victims with whom she identifies at the end of the novel.

Anil's increasing sense of belonging is cast in a terminology of citizenship and related to different spheres of interpersonal relation. On the one hand, it develops through personal association: 'She was with Sarath and Ananda, citizenized by their friendship' (Ondaatje 2000, p. 200). To borrow Edward Said's (1983, p. 24) understanding of filiation and affiliation once more: Even though citizenship through filiation fails, it is nonetheless recreated by affiliation. It is no coincidence that the cited passage concludes the scene in which Anil saves Ananda, a sculptor whose wife had been abducted and killed, and who had tried to commit suicide. By saving him, she accepts responsibility for him. In turn, this responsibility and his friendship make her 'belong.' Ondaatje's use of the term 'citizen' in this context is noteworthy in consideration of the fact that it pertains to a private relationship; responsibility for an Other/another creates belonging. Casting this relationship in terms of citizenship, I suggest, not only renders belonging the central component of citizenship but also depicts it as a relationship of mutual responsibility and acceptance that is not bestowed upon a person as a status, but as a way of being.

This in turn directly connects to the second sphere of Anil's 'citizenship.' As the previous passage has illustrated, Anil becomes a citizen of Sri Lanka through identification not with 'the state,' but with

'the people,' an identification that rests on her ability to feel responsible for a concrete other, and thus also, in a next step, for strangers. As Elizabeth Goldberg and Alexandra Moore elaborate, this aspect is central to a human rights-oriented reading of such texts and their literary renderings of personal stories, since they can

> illuminate the names and faces of those whom we cannot know, but with whom we are imbricated in the Levinasian sense, while also providing a site for the imaginative reflection of variously-constituted subjectivities. (2012, p. 10)

While Goldberg and Moore refer to the responsibilities of literary criticism in the course of their argument, an aspect that I will turn to below, their focus on responsibility also rings true for the transformation of the fictional character Anil. Based on a developing sense of personalized responsibility, I argue, Anil shifts from an abstractly global to a local citizenship. In turn, this provides the grounding for her changed, less abstract sense of cosmopolitan citizenship, hence once again linking the discourses of citizenship and human rights to the literary negotiation of belonging, membership, and justice.

Toward the end of the novel, Anil presents her incriminating findings (without being in the possession of the evidence anymore) to a room full of hostile government officials. It is here that the novel once again—using her colleague Sarath as the focalizer—emphatically deploys the language of citizenship to denote belonging and to reverse previous disavowals of Anil's link to Sri Lanka:

> Sarath in the back row, unseen by her, listened to her quiet explanations, her surefootedness, her absolute calm and refusal to be emotional or angry. It was a lawyer's argument and, more important, a citizen's evidence; she was no longer just a foreign authority. Then he heard her say, 'I think you murdered hundreds of us.' *Hundreds of us.* Sarath thought to himself. Fifteen years away and she is finally *us.* (Ondaatje 2000, pp. 186–87)

By claiming a 'we'-position—by means of asserting herself against the state, that is, as a potential victim-citizen vis-à-vis the perpetrator-state—Anil not only reclaims the land of her birth, but is also simultaneously able to accept the responsibilities of a citizenship that goes beyond state

and nation. This kind of citizenship can be called a world citizenship or cosmopolitan citizenship, not in a sense of being detached from locality, but as an ethical commitment to concrete others (Appiah 2006).

Nevertheless, this moment of claiming is also the very moment in which the state both treats and disavows her as a citizen, a member of the national populace. Up to this point, Anil seemed (and felt) to be protected by her British passport and status as an international investigator; now, however, she becomes a victim of violence, too; the state responds to her claim to citizenship as 'we-ness,' her relinquishment of her international status, with a citizen's subjection. As with any other citizen deemed potentially dissident, the representatives of the government have illustrated their power to randomly violate or even kill.

This is, however, also the moment in which this dangerous and painfully regained sense of belonging is disavowed by the state: After her release, Anil has to leave the country and also disappears from the novel. Roberts comments on the same passage quoted above:

> By naming Anil a citizen through witnessing her performative belonging, Sarath bestows upon her the status of host, undoing her prior labelling as a prodigal. It is a temporary belonging, however, as the state's retribution will force her to flee the country: the moment of her renewed belonging also makes it impossible for her to live out both her rights and her duties as a citizen. (2011, p. 69)

By referring to both the rights and the duties of citizenship, Roberts takes up a point that I raised earlier: the question of responsibility. Notions of citizenship have always been framed in the context of rights *and* obligations; however, in both recent theories as well as in literary texts the focus has been much more strongly on rights. While the very shift toward the concept of human rights in citizenship debates may initially even suggest an intensified emphasis on rights and their protection, Ondaatje's novel seeks to tackle both: The guaranteed protection of citizens' and human rights, as well as the obligation individuals have toward one another, particularly as strangers. Anil enacts a form of global citizenship, claiming the 'right to politics,' as Stanton (2006, p. 32) has put it in reference to Étienne Balibar, that is, 'the right to involvement in the collective life of another country' (pp. 32–33), only that in Anil's example she simultaneously reclaims the right to 'her

homeland.' Global citizenship, as Luis Cabrera explains, 'fills the theoretical space of individual cosmopolitanism. It serves as a guide for individual moral action within an approach that would view individuals, not states or other groupings, as morally primary' (2010, p. 258).[1]

In the above-cited scene, Anil is therefore able to effectively claim both her belonging to Sri Lanka as well as her rights and duties as a world or cosmopolitan citizen: the duty to protect the rights of others, even if these others are dead, the rights of the dead to dignity, a voice, and a name, as well as the right to have one's rights as a human being respected. Even though this scene confirms Goldberg and Moore's hypothesis that human rights have become the 'dominant discourse for addressing issues of social justice more broadly' (2012, p. 2), I argue that it concurrently confirms a shift toward overlapping and interlinking discourses of human rights and citizenship in literary texts.

This dual aspect of the kind of citizenship that is bestowed upon Anil through Sarath's perspective thus leads to a final point to be made here that has not only characterized the debate revolving around citizenship and literature, but has also dominated my discussion of diasporic literatures: the relationship of citizenship to the nation. If *Anil's Ghost* is read as 'cosmopolitan fiction,' one can identify in the novel an 'uncoupling' of citizenship from nationality that nevertheless continues to 'attest to the persistence of the nation as, among other things, a structure of feeling' (Stanton 2006, p. 4); cosmopolitan fiction, as Stanton continues to argue, is not necessarily post-national, and a novel such as Ondaatje's illustrates 'the disaggregation of citizenship and nationality under contemporary globalization—Anil is *citizenized* rather than nationalized' (p. 33). Conceptualizing citizenship beyond, across, or even against the nation-state has an effect on the ways in which citizenship is addressed in

[1] Cabrera continues to argue that 'while it is formally true that individuals cannot be global citizens in the absence of some overarching set of global governing institutions, they can enact significant aspects of global citizenship by seeking to protect the core rights of others who do not share their state citizenship' (2010, p. 258). Cabrera's understanding of world citizenship thus differs from Katherine Stanton's who sees world citizenship and cosmopolitanism as almost synonymous; thus, she has highlighted that 'rather than world citizenship, cosmopolitanism now indicates a multiplicity or diversity of belongings—some carefully cultivated, others reluctantly assumed' (2006, p. 2). My own understanding follows Cabrera's rather than Stanton's: I regard 'cosmopolitanism' as an individual attitude, while 'global' or 'world citizenship' expresses a position from which to act responsibly, thus emphasizing not only the 'rights' of citizenship, but also the obligations connected to it.

literature and which function the use of the terminology of citizenship has in regard to how Ondaatje's novel negotiates questions of belonging, membership, rights, agency, and responsibility.

6.3.2 *'An Expression of Power': Black German Citizenship in Esi Edugyan's* Half-Blood Blues (2011)

Like Ondaatje's book, the two other novels that will be discussed in this conclusion play on the paradox that internationally instituted human rights are to be enforced and protected by the state, despite the fact that the state is often the perpetrator in violation of precisely the rights it is meant to protect. The time frame in Esi Edugyan's novel *Half-Blood Blues* partly precedes the implementation of an international human rights regime. However, its insights concerning the complicated role that citizenship plays in the construction and conception of belonging are clearly informed by contemporary debates about citizenship and human rights. Edugyan makes a pointed observation pertaining to the theme of the novel: 'Germany [in the 1930s and 1940s] did not eradicate its own citizens. That would have been appalling. Instead they denied them. Then they eradicated them' (2014, pos. 256). The term 'citizen' carries the symbolic weight of membership and belonging; citizenship is a powerful discourse that distinguishes 'us' from 'them' which, as Edugyan highlights, was the basis for the allocation of any rights in Hitler's Germany.

Half-Blood Blues is set in various locations in Germany as well as in Baltimore, Paris, and a remote region of Poland. Alternating between 1939/1940 and 1992, it tells the story of Hieronymus Falk, a young German jazz trumpeter in Nazi Germany, from the perspective of his US-American fellow band member Sid. 'Hiero,' as the protagonist is called, is black, the son of a white German mother and a Senegalese soldier who was stationed in the Rhineland as a member of the French occupation troops after World War I. As Sid tells the reader, he 'was a *Mischling*, a half-breed, but so dark no soul ever like to guess his mama was a white Rhinelander. Hell, his skin glistened like pure oil. But he German-born, sure. And if his face wasn't of the Fatherland, just bout everything else bout him rooted him there right good' (Edugyan 2011, p. 9). The novel's 1930s plot revolves around the band members' attempt to flee from German-occupied Paris for the USA and Hiero's arrest by the Gestapo; the framing story has the narrator and another

band member, Chip, return to Berlin in 1992 for a festival in celebration of Hiero's musical genius, and their journey to Poland where Hiero, as it turns out, has lived since the war's end.

Edugyan's novel is a complex exploration of friendship, ambition, jealousy, and betrayal, yet I would nevertheless assert that citizenship as 'an expression of power' (2014, pos. 245), as Edugyan has put it, is the novel's most essential aspect—the power to legally define belonging and to place those without that status outside the realm of those protected by the human right to dignity and bodily integrity. In my brief discussion of *Half-Blood Blues*, I will focus on the way in which it portrays Hiero as a disenfranchised German citizen during the so-called Third Reich and a reclaimed citizen in re-united Germany after the end of the Cold War. In the novel, citizenship shifts from an instrument of power to deny individual belonging to a sign of integration into the national narrative that is rejected by the individual. The novel thus combines a focus on practices of exclusion and violence in light of a fetishization of racial purity during Germany's Nazi regime with a concern for the plight of the stateless. Last but not least, it presents its characters as claiming a cultural agency that can be read as a form of co-authorship.

The novel's main plot is narrated against the backdrop of the early years of World War II and Nazi Germany's racial policies of disenfranchising those—mainly Jewish—citizens who were deemed 'un-German.' 'Under German law, preceding, during, and even after Hitler, to become a citizen required that one be descendant from Nordic bloodlines, that is, the state sought to create, consolidate, and defend what Uli Linke terms a 'community of blood,'' explains Clarence Lusane (2003, p. 7). Jewish Germans lost citizenship and were effectively made stateless.[2] While there was no consistent policy regarding Germans of African descent, sterilization programs were implemented that directly targeted black Germans among other groups deemed inferior; passports were confiscated, making it illegal to leave the country (pp. 88–89), and many black Germans were interned in concentration camps charged with 'race pollution' or 'anti-social behavior' (p. 149). Despite at times contradictory policies—no

[2]The novel engages with but does not focus on the situation of Jews in Germany, and it does so mainly pertaining to the fate of the band's Jewish pianist, Paul Butterstein. Their citizenship is a protection for the American and Canadian characters associated with the band, while Hiero's citizenship is effectively suspended and Paul's is revoked, making him, as a German Jew, stateless and deprived of both citizens' and human rights.

group-specific laws but de facto disenfranchisement—the overall official attitude toward Germans of African ancestry was clear: They were not considered German, which often—albeit not always—resulted in the effective loss of citizenship and protection under the law.[3]

The National Socialist conception of community, with formal citizenship as its ultimate indicator of both membership and belonging, conflated racial, cultural, linguistic, and political identity. In this context, Hiero's Germanness stands in stark contrast to the official understanding during the 'Third Reich.' His is a Germanness that is not only racially incompatible with the National Socialist fixation on racial purity and *völkischness* but that also finds its expression in a self-confident combination of multiple cultural influences; Hiero's is thus both a culturally national and transnational Germanness. The novel's narrator portrays him as someone who seeks community and finds it in an international community of jazz and of a shared sense of black identification, 'without disregarding the vast difference between German blackness and American blackness' (McKibbin 2014, p. 424). At the same time, he is also the only one of the characters who is monolingual: As cosmopolitan as he otherwise is, German is the only language that he speaks, and I consider this narrative choice to make a highly symbolic claim to belonging as German.

Nevertheless, the novel is not only concerned with the dehumanizing policies of the National Socialists but also has the characters rebel against them by means of what they do best: playing jazz music. The title of the novel not only points to the racial hybridity of its protagonist (or more precisely, protagonist*s*, all of whom are racially hybrid, a point that is repeatedly made by the narrator), but also to their act of cultural resistance, which I propose to read as an act of cultural citizenship, or more precisely, activist citizenship in Engin Isin's understanding of changing and writing rather than merely adhering to existing scripts of citizenship (2008, p. 38). While waiting for their visas, the protagonists

[3]A sketch of the situation of black people in Germany under the Nazi regime is integrated into the novel as part of the documentary film on Hiero, summarized and quoted by Sid (pp. 48–52). This is clearly a device to provide the reader with information he/she needs to adequately understand Hiero's situation, but it is also a device to claim Germany as a space of a black presence. Like in her earlier *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne* (2004), a novel that inscribes Prairie space as one of historical and contemporary black migration and diaspora, in *Half-Blood Blues* I see Edugyan also concerned with the broader question of black history, belonging, and citizenship.

begin to record a jazz version of the 'Horst Wessel Lied' under the title 'Half-Blood Blues.' Joseph Goebbels considered jazz a 'degenerate' art form and a prelude to moral corruption; the band's decision to record a Nazi mobilization song with Louis Armstrong in Paris is not only an act of defiance, but an act of resistance. As Armstrong declares: 'We goin to *do* this, brother. It ain't right what's goin on over there. We goin to burn this Horst Wessel to the record. Lay it down, a late track. What you think? Twist it up, make it pretty. Say somethin with it to the world, to the Krauts, that only us cats can say. We goin do this for your gate Paul [Butterstein]' (Edugyan 2011, p. 244). This jazz interpretation of the song, as Molly McKibbin asserts, 'is an overt challenge to Nazi ideology. But perhaps most interestingly, 'Half-Blood Blues' counters the attempts of the Third Reich to discard jazz as 'foreign' culture; indeed, the song entrenches jazz as irrevocably German' (2014, p. 426). In the terms used throughout this study, it is an act of co-authorship and hence of cultural citizenship across borders.

But the historical narrative of denying black Germans the right to citizenship and the band's claim to cultural citizenship is not the only engagement with citizenship in the novel. I consider the framing narrative of Sid and Chip's 1992 return to Berlin to attend a festival in Hiero's honor as equally important when it comes to the novel's conceptualization of citizenship not only as membership but also as belonging and as a form of cultural co-authorship. The festival is a way to reclaim Hiero as a black German, a reclamation and acknowledgment in post-reunification Germany of its black citizens; it celebrates his achievements and even more so his potential seemingly foreclosed by his arrest and by what is assumed his early death. There is a dual irony in this frame: Hiero has survived his internment in the camp Mauthausen, but he never returned to Germany; intentionally or not, his decision to remain in Poland, the country Hitler attacked as the prelude to World War II in 1939, can be read as a disavowal of the nation that had disavowed him. He cannot prevent his reintegration into the national narrative of a 'new' Germany, but he can refuse to participate in it; his presence in Berlin is indirect, only projected by way of the stories told about him by others. His insistence that he now be called 'Thomas' instead of 'Hieronymus' is an indication of the distance he has created to the young black German artist Hieronymus Falk who is celebrated in Berlin in 1992.

But there is yet something else. The year this festival takes place complicates the message the festival is meant to send: In 1991/1992,

attacks on refugees and immigrants reached a new height in Germany; in August 1992, over a period of several days a refugee center in Rostock-Lichtenhagen was attacked, besieged, and eventually set on fire. While I do not want to overemphasize Edugyan's choice of time frame, having the festival take place in this very year hints at Germany's contradictory and ongoing engagement with the question of 'who belongs' and on what basis. The very Germany that seeks to come to terms with its racist past only hesitantly addresses a racist present. Thereby, the novel not only explores what citizenship entails—as a political co-actorship and cultural co-authorship—for the individual when notions of belonging clash. It also examines citizenship as an institution of both political and cultural exclusion *and* integration, and thus thoughtfully comments on Germany's ongoing struggles with belonging as a racialized concept. As McKibbin has observed, 'Edugyan's novel subverts the conventional—and still prominent—understanding of Germanness and gestures toward the growing conundrum of Western European nations: how to reconcile black citizenry with a white cultural, national, and racial 'heritage'' (2014, p. 413). *Half-Blood Blues* hence engages with this topic not only historically but also in ways pertaining to post-reunification Germany.

6.3.3 Citizenship's Other: Lawrence Hill's The Illegal **(2015)**

Edugyan's novel explores a specific example of the obsessive connection of citizenship and national belonging to a notion of blood as supposed carrier of that identity in the past, whereas Lawrence Hill's most recent novel does so in the near future (seen from the time of its publication), in 2018/2019. Even though it is set in two fictional locations in the Indian Ocean south of Sri Lanka, namely Freedom State and Zantoroland, the references to historical geographical locations, and especially apartheid South Africa, are unmistakable. Hill's narrative of Keita Ali, a young marathon runner and refugee from Zantoroland—an economically struggling former colony with a population of largely African descent—who goes into hiding in the—overwhelmingly white and economically strong—Freedom State to the north combines the refugee narrative with explorations of political structures and mechanisms of belonging: Zantoroland is a dictatorship and shaken by strife and animosities between majority and minority ethnic groups; many Zantorolanders desperately try to cross the sea and seek refuge from

political persecution and economic hardship in Freedom State. Freedom State is a democracy with a history of institutionalized slavery ruled by a party elected into office on a drastic anti-immigrant agenda, and it displays increasingly authoritarian mechanisms of surveillance to control the composition of its *demos* as well as ensure the conformist behavior of its citizenry.

As this stark juxtaposition of locales already indicates, the novel combines a number of issues pertaining to questions of belonging that are not exclusively but most obviously the global plight of refugees. The descriptions of the overcrowded leaky boats from Zantoroland that arrive at Freedom State's main port after a weeks long odyssey, their exhausted, dehydrated, and desperate passengers—many of whom do not survive the ordeal—strongly resonate with the dramatic events that are currently transpiring in the Mediterranean. The reviews of the novel have frequently pointed to the effect of the fictional setting as suggesting that 'our problems are global, not isolated to any single nation' (Brodoff 2015). 'Freedom State may be fictional,' argues Carrie Snyder (2015) in her *Globe and Mail* review, 'but it stands in for wealthy, democratic nations, which benefit economically from global inequity and whose citizens fear inundation at the borders, or from within. Yes, Canada, too. The question is, what is more disruptive to a country's prosperity: the participation of the marginalized or 'illegal,' or the sacrifice of rights to security?'

Regarded from a perspective of literary ethics, the novel's contribution to understanding the plight of refugees is debatable, though; the plotlines combine too many issues and genres—including that of the political thriller—and are too neatly resolved to present substantially new reflections on the question of how the experience of the refugee can be adequately depicted without turning it into a voyeuristic spectacle for Western readership. But while the debate about undocumented migration in the novel is indeed set up 'in the crudest terms,' as Monica Ali (2016) has charged in her review with regard to its plot constellations and character depictions, it intriguingly combines different strands of current immigration debates in wealthy Western nations into a mix that glaringly illustrates how they tend to boil down to a normative model of citizenship and belonging. In addition to the fact that these are based on distinctions between 'us' and 'them,' the relegation of undocumented migrants to the state of the citizen's other unmistakably effects their dehumanization. The novel outlines the problematic use of

the term 'illegals' for such migrants, thus referencing a current debate about terminology and its problematic reification as a legislated, as well as an ontological status: 'The government called undocumented people 'Illegals,' but Viola [a black lesbian journalist in a wheelchair and citizen of Freedom State] refused to use the term. As far as she was concerned, it was fair to accuse somebody of *doing* something illegal but not to say that they *were* illegal' (Hill 2016 [2015], p. 70). The use of 'Illegal' (capitalized throughout as a category of state-defined identity) in Freedom State's official parlance not only makes the lack of documentation a crime but also turns it into an assigned identity.[4] If, as Trish Luker explains, in international refugee law 'refugee status precedes legal recognition: a person is a refugee prior to legal determination procedures' (2015, p. 92), legal recognition turns the refugee into a rights-bearing subject in the context where he/she seeks refuge.[5] In Freedom State, 'illegal' functions as an a priori category of non-recognition. The 'Illegal' is not and cannot become a rights-bearing subject. As Cecile Sandten has argued, 'illegality, statelessness, and forced removals point to current political processes, the roots of which are found in historical and postcolonial forms of belonging and non-belonging, as well as definitions of citizenship and accounts of exile and forced migration, deportation, and expulsion' (2017, p. 2). Freedom State's repressive understanding of citizenship, as well as the influx of refugees from Zantoroland, are both elements of a complex postcolonial legacy of racial domination.

In my reading of the novel, I am thus not concerned with its intertwining plotlines, in one of which Keita not only endeavors to remain undetected in Freedom State while escaping his exploitative marathon manager, but also to free his sister from Zantoroland's notorious 'Pink Palace' prison. Rather, I want to probe the novel's exploration of 'citizenship' as a fetishized status in Freedom State, built on a normative understanding of the citizen. Hill uses this fictional example to highlight the dangers of citizenship as a repressive instrument. Despite the fact that the regulations and policies may appear drastic in Freedom State,

[4]For an overview of the term's development in a North American, particularly US context, see Batzke (2018, pp. 35–41).

[5]In the Canadian context, any non-citizen, including refugees, enjoys the same Charter protection as citizens do. Paradoxically, therefore they 'often do not benefit from the protections offered by international human rights' (Dauvergne 2012, p. 307), at times to their disadvantage. For a detailed discussion, see Dauvergne (2012).

they draw on actual historical examples and existing contemporary tendencies that Western nations use to regulate who counts (or is eligible) as a citizen. As in Edugyan's novel, citizenship is first and foremost racialized; however, the novel also explores how racialization is part of a larger construction of citizenship that rests on an ideologically imbued notion of the ideal citizen, characterized not only by the 'right race,' but also by behavior regarded as 'rational.' Thus, even though the novel investigates citizenship as the basis for the enjoyment of particular rights, it appears to be even more interested in the ways in which states construct and enforce notions of the normative citizen.

The novel pays much attention to the way in which Freedom State not only defines and allocates citizenship, but also how it uses it as a form of control over both citizens (such as the elderly) and non-citizens. Allocation of citizenship is based on conformist behavior and on race in Freedom State; after the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834, a complex racial grading system determined who of the former slaves was granted citizenship and who would be deported to Zantoroland: '*If you were defined as full black, half black (mulatto), one-quarter black (quadroon) or even one-eighth black (octoroon), you were packed up and sent to Zantoroland. Even if you'd never seen the country. Even if you were born in Freedom State. But if you were defined as one-sixteenth black (quintoon) or less, then you were allowed to reintegrate into the white race and stay in Freedom State*' (Hill 2016 [2015], p. 75). This passage is part of a school essay in the novel, written by one of the main characters and used as a device to provide the reader with an overview of relevant elements of social organization in Freedom State. But these racial categories also link the fictional location to a referential social world, since historical models—such as the racial categories that are listed in Johann von Tschudi's 'table of Peruvian 'mongrelity'' (Young 1995, p. 176), for instance, or the nineteenth-century racial nomenclature in the USA—are unmistakable. The alterity of citizens and non-citizens is thus grounded in an ideological notion of who constitutes a good citizen. To borrow Engin Isin's words once more, 'citizenship is that kind of identity within a city or state that certain agents constitute as virtuous, good, righteous, and superior, and differentiate it from strangers, outsiders, and aliens …. Citizenship exists through its alterity and strategies, and technologies of citizenship are about the dialogical constitution of these identities via games of conduct' (2002, pp. 35–36). Some of Freedom State's citizens are black; but the 'virtuous, good, righteous'

citizen, the citizen who not only has formal membership but who also truly belongs, is white.

Freedom State is a hyperbolic, but in its essence prototypical example of such productions of difference and alterity as the basis of citizenship where non-citizens equal 'Illegals.' The novel depicts the counterpart to Freedom State's categorical whiteness in AfricTown, which is located just south of Freedom State's capital Clarkson and described as 'an island of poverty, right inside one of the world's richest countries' (Hill 2016 [2015], p. 122) populated by poor black citizens of Freedom State as well as by those born in the country who never had their citizenship status affirmed, and by undocumented migrants from Zantoroland. If Zantoroland is Freedom State's externalized 'other,' AfricTown, which is frequently raided by the police and a constant target of Freedom State's right-wing populists, is its domestic borderland where indeed, as Gloria Anzaldúa has put it in the US-Mexican context, 'the Third world grates against the first and bleeds' (1987, p. 37). The construction of domestic and international alterity is clearly about race, but it is equally clearly about negotiating the categories of belonging, rights claims, and agency within and across nation-states.

Pilar Cuder Domínguez has read Hill's 2007 *The Book of Negroes* as indicating a shift in his work from the exploration of 'roots' to that of 'routes' (2015, p. 92). I consider *The Illegal* part of this shift, not only within Hill's work but also one that is in line with Eleanor Ty's argument about the Canadian global novel, a shift that links citizenship debates in Canada to political, legal, and cultural discussions about human rights in the international arena. The novel not only self-referentially connects its fictional setting in the Indian Ocean to Hill's earlier settings in Canada (Mahatma Grafton, the young reporter in Hill's 1992 novel *Some Great Thing* is a close friend of Keita's father), but it also references contemporary debates about undocumented immigration, refugeeism, and the significance of racial categories for formal as well as substantive citizenship in Western nations by means of making his fictional Freedom State and Zantoroland a conglomerate of historical and contemporary international locations. Even though the novel is, thematically speaking, about the plight of refugees and other marginalized subjects who exist outside the framework of legal citizenship and hence formal belonging, it is more successful in highlighting the potential oppressiveness of citizenship regimes than it is in plausibly representing a narrative of flight and statelessness—which is obviously an ethically challenging undertaking

to begin with. As Janet Wilson has argued, not only the complexities and heterogeneity of experiences, but also the multiplicity of terms renders speaking about refugees, asylum seekers, and other displaced humans an ethical and political difficulty; referencing Thomas Nail she adds that 'the fact that some social commentators see migrants as a zeitgeist of our time and hence a universalising category has only magnified this problem' (2017, p. 2). Hill's narrative choices clearly illustrate this difficulty.

As my inevitably reductive discussion of these three novels has shown, the question of citizenship in Canadian literature has increasingly found reflection in explorations of transnational settings that do not only serve to highlight diasporic connections but also raise the question of how citizenship—as membership and belonging as well as co-actorship and co-authorship—can be conceptualized in a transnational 'web of meaning' (Boele van Hensbroek). None of the three novels that were discussed in this section disregard the nation-state as a locus of citizenship identification and practice—on the contrary: The nation-state remains a central element in the negotiation of citizenship. Nevertheless, they illustrate different facets of citizenship that have shaped the debate in the past two decades: citizenship as a socially and ideologically organizing regime with repressive and exclusive mechanisms; citizenship as a metaphor of belonging; and citizenship as an empowering practice both within the nation-state as well as directed at non- or transnational identifications and solidarities. These different facets point to the range of—at times conflicting, even mutually exclusive—meanings of citizenship and their function in literary texts, including its function as an increasingly transnationalized cipher for active belonging.

6.4 Cultural Citizens in a Globalized World

In Canadian literature, as I have argued, the citizen and citizenship have returned to prominence since the 1970s; in literary studies, the 1990s marked the arrival of the concept as an analytical lens. Much of what has formed the basis for recent modifications of the concept of citizenship is rooted in the effects that the fields of ethnic studies, women's and gender studies, queer studies, and postcolonial studies have had on theoretical debates and/or academic curricula, which largely overlaps with what Paul Jay has called the 'transnationalization' of literary studies. He sees the beginning of these modifications during the time period 'when the study of minority, multicultural, and postcolonial literatures began to

intersect with work done under the auspices of the emerging study of globalization' (Jay 2010, p. 2). It appears ironic that a concept such as citizenship—which, by and large, remains so closely tied to the nation-state—should come to the fore precisely at a moment in which the borders of nation-states and the concept of the nation per se came under scrutiny, or even attack, in the context of transnationalization and its effects; this obviously implies a shifting understanding of the nation and its potential role in literary studies. As for the changing role of the nation in the Canadian context in particular, Kit Dobson argues that,

> from a literary perspective, the nationalism of Canada in the 1960s and '70s that worked to consolidate this literature, and the multiculturalisms of the '80s, '90s, and new millennium that have sought to reformulate it through dismantling its ethnocentrism, have become conjoined with the world of globalization. While it was formerly popular to celebrate the nation as a bastion against globalization on the left, today it seems that the national and the global are, instead, interlocking scales of capital. (2009, p. x)

This specific confluence of critical issues and disciplinary developments raises questions not only about the effects that globalization and transnationalization have on issues of identity and belonging, but also concerning the very concept of literature and its relationship to the nation, specific groups, and society in times of rapid transnationalization and unprecedented mobility of people and cultural (as well as other) goods. Regarding literary studies, this interest in citizenship ties in with the question of literature's position within larger societal structures, that is, with discussions pertaining to the potential societal function of literature, but also with its institutionalization and hence disciplinary debates.

In closing, I would therefore like to briefly consider the astounding currency of citizenship in literary and cultural studies and assess its potential for future inquiries. As David Chariandy has rightly asked, 'how did we in the social sciences, and especially the humanities, come to bet upon 'citizenship'' (2011, p. 334) as a paradigm for understanding a variety of cultural forms, a concept that—in its close link to the nation-state and its foundation on dynamics of alterity—was, and thus continues to be, problematic in many ways? Even as a concept applied to transnational constellations, 'citizenship' retains connotations of 'us' and 'them'; it is necessarily built upon notions of inclusion and exclusion and related

but not identical to understandings of difference and implicit norms regarding citizens' identities. Referring to diasporic citizenship specifically and referencing Rinaldo Walcott, Chariandy suggests that the hope for the betterment of Canada (ibid.) may be a reason for the term's critical success; affirming the idea that literature still matters—and, by extension, literary studies—may be another. Along similar lines, Diana Brydon has observed that 'the trend within literary studies today is to valorize literature's extra-institutional qualities,' but she continues by cautioning:

> Without wishing to deny these, I have suggested that critics also attend to the ways in which literary studies, but also literature itself, are formed institutionally. Defenders of literature, myself included, write as if it had the power, if not to create a better world, then at least to disturb complacent understandings and enable imaginings of alternatives. (2007b, pp. 11–12)

As some scholars have critically noted, the manifestations of this desire for literature to matter can easily mean losing sight of important distinctions between fields and possibilities of action. With respect to the 'human rights turn' in literary studies, Julie Stone Peters puts it even more critically than Brydon does when she charges:

> However different the reasons for the narrative turn in human rights and the turn toward human rights in literary studies, they are both institutionally redemptive projects. By channelling rights culture, literary critics not only give voice to the silenced victims of atrocity. They also reclaim literary study's foundering political role and thus redeem themselves from the terrors of insignificance. While human rights is busy redeeming the injustices of violence and history, it can, at the same time redeem literary criticism from the guilt of aesthetic detachment. (Peters 2005, p. 278)

The 'human rights' turn is not identical with the 'arrival of the citizen,' but the valorization of human rights and citizenship in literary studies are clearly related. While I do not share Peter's bitter conclusion, her analysis nevertheless suggests related questions about the potentially redemptive function of frameworks such as citizenship in literary and cultural studies. In particular left-leaning critics have a strong incentive to link materials and their analyses to societal structures at large, and concepts such as diaspora, human rights, and citizenship provide an opportunity to read literature as socially viable and at the same time to insist on the political function of that reading.

I am aware of the problems inherent in 'citizenship,' its history, and the underlying structure of 'citizen' and 'non-citizen,' and I agree with the above-cited critics that literary scholars must be careful not to overestimate their material's and particularly their discipline's social impact. Yet, as should have become clear throughout this study, I am cautiously optimistic regarding the potential of citizenship as both a conceptual term for forms of participation and as an analytical lens in literary studies. I also subscribe to an understanding of literature's social and political function by considering it part of what Seyla Benhabib (2004, 2011) has called 'democratic iterations,' that is, as part of societal discourses. My adoption of Boele van Hensbroek's concept of 'co-authorship' and 'co-actorship' points even more strongly to a direction which indeed, as Brydon self-reflexively remarks, ascribes constitutive power to literary texts, and thus implicitly also to their reading. Despite all due caution, I do not think that scholars are in doubt about the level on which they can act as critics, even if they—to refer to Peter's challenging assessment—may indeed act out of guilt for their 'aesthetic detachments' and seek redemption in specific questions, terminologies, and fields of inquiry. It is not accidental that early concepts of cultural citizenship—such as Rosaldo's and Pennee's—have stressed pedagogical elements; curricular questions remain crucial as indicators of which types of societal conversations are seen as relevant, at what point in time, and to what ends. They imply fundamental questions of responsibility and answerability, not only as an ethical, but also a political imperative, as Engin Isin has noted in reference to Mikhail Bakhtin (2008, pp. 28–37). Responsibility is one of the components that has found little attention in literary studies debates of citizenship, and I regard as one of citizenship's strengths, precisely in its combination of rights with obligations as the basis for shared action.

At this point, it is thus essential to re-emphasize a distinction I made throughout this study between 'citizenship' as a frequent topic in Canadian literature, and as an act of co-authorship potentially performed by the texts. The novels and memoirs that I have discussed illustrate that, as a literary topic, 'citizenship' covers a range of facets: Citizenship can be a status to be gained, a set of rights to be defended or achieved, a practice of participation as well as an oppressive and exclusive regime built on normative notions of belonging, ideas of social homogeneity, and the desirability of specific identities. Many of the texts projected both emancipatory and repressive understandings of citizenship. Whether understood as inclusive or exclusive,

citizenship serves as a metaphor of belonging. But on the level of the texts' functions as forms of cultural citizenship, citizenship can also be understood as a metaphor of responsibility. As such, it implies an orientation toward a community that can be transnational, cosmopolitan, diasporic, or global as well as national. As a lens to analyze the political and social concerns negotiated in literary texts, it clearly remains an ambivalent concept that entails repressive as well as emancipatory agendas and constellations and therein lies its analytical strength. As a term that denotes a textual practice, it is not free of such ambivalences, either. Yet, it clearly captures the complexities of subjectivities and agency within and beyond the nation-state as bound to practice rather than status. As such, it proves productive for the reading of 'CanLit' as a transnationally oriented national literature; and even if not (yet) conclusive, it also proves productive for the critical investigation of literary studies as a cultural practice.

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